



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-797-2756
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney
Keith Purdy
Mark Tomko

Special Board of Fire Commissioner Meeting Minutes AUGUST 12, 2026

1. Present Thomas McCartney, Chairman
 Daniel Kirchheimer, Vice Chairman
 David Harrington, Commissioner
 Mark Tomko, Commissioner
 Keith Purdy, Commissioner

District Staff: Susan Bowen, Fire District Secretary
 Erika Pereira, Assistant Fire District Secretary
 Paige Willes-Brown, Director of Purchasing
 Marisa Butler, Fire District Treasurer
 Clay Ellis, Director of Communications

Others: Chuck Paffie, Fire Chief
 Steve Langeland, 3rd Asst. Fire Chief
 Bob Hamilton, 2nd Lieutenant, Station 2
 Rebecca Cetta, Station President, Station 4

2. Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Commissioner McCartney

3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner McCartney

4. Review and Discussion of the 2027 Fire District Budget

The Board conducted a thorough line-by-line review of the proposed 2027 budget. The proposed final appropriation is \$3,593,421, including \$252,010 for the foam district, yielding a net appropriation of \$3,341,411 without foam. Spending (excluding foam) increases by 5.42%. The property tax levy is set at \$3,082,305, with a final tax rate of 1.147106—representing a 7.5% increase (an \$0.08 rise per \$1,000 of assessed value). The household impact translates to \$8 for a \$100,000 home and \$24 for a \$300,000 home.

Section-specific decisions and notes:

- Station budgets: Station 2 TIC allocation standardized to \$13,240; Station 3 removed items (portable pump, suction hose, strainer); Station 4 increased to \$13,240 for consistency.
- Commissioner McCartney wanted it documented in the minutes that Station 3 removed items (portable pump, suction hose, strainer) Chief Paffie's noted that they are "B" items to be removed even though Assistant Chief Miller felt the station needed the items.
- Fire Police: "Miscellaneous" retitled to "Miscellaneous small tools and equipment" and increased by \$1,000 to \$1,500.
- Water Rescue: Removed AquaEye Pro to contain costs.



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-797-2756
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney
Keith Purdy
Mark Tomko

- Added flexible policy management at \$7,600 (Lexipol/SOG management) and allocated \$10,000 for priority traffic light preemption system repairs (DOT-led, focusing on receivers).
- Webpage/Training Site: Funding for a dedicated training site website was excluded from the district budget pending other funding sources.
- Training Site: Budget includes \$23,000 for network connection and camera system; revenue projection updated to \$8,750.
- Administration: Removed \$6,000 previously considered for grant writing services; included \$20,000 for the OptiCam subscription license.

Facilities and maintenance notes included using operational funds (including tank farm-derived building maintenance lines) for near-term projects like Station 4 office window tinting and communications room work. The Board confirmed adherence to the budget calendar: current draft is the proposed budget, with subsequent review at the special meeting on September 2, and final approval targeted for October.

Long-Term Financial and Apparatus Replacement Planning

The Board reviewed existing 2027 bond obligations and long-range capital planning. Bond payments cited for 2027 include Station 4 (\$46,000), Ladder 4 (\$55,000), Engine 3 and 2 (\$115,000), Fire Station 4 (\$388,000), Tower 1 (\$156,000), and Midi 2 and 3 (\$89,000). Recognizing volatility in costs and revenues, the District will describe its outlook as a “20-year projection” rather than a fixed plan, while maintaining a solid 5-year plan in the black.

Facilities: The capital improvement reserve for buildings/grounds is targeted at \$75,000 annually, supporting structured maintenance such as crack filling and seal coating for Stations 1–4 on a three-year cycle to avoid future base resurfacing costs. Planned future projects include roof replacements and drainage/resurfacing orders following prerequisites like Station 2 shed relocation.

Apparatus financing strategy: With apparatus and operational costs rising beyond the historical 2% baseline, the District may selectively bond major assets (e.g., Rescue 1, Tower 4, Engine 5) or employ hybrid solutions (partial bonding plus cash) to reduce immediate tax impacts. A tax-rate simulation considered an \$0.08 increase in 2027 followed by \$0.05 increases annually from 2028 through 2031, reflecting a pragmatic approach to maintaining solvency while acknowledging likely cost escalations.

Risks/pinch points were identified for multi-million-dollar apparatus in the projection, including Rescue 1 (2031), Tower 4, and Engine 5, where cash-only models may prove unsustainable. The Board emphasized the national trend of extending service life via preventative maintenance, re-chassis of commercial units, and purchasing used equipment to realize substantial cost savings. Beyond year 5, the projection contains red (deficit) years subject to change, reinforcing the need for iterative planning and ongoing financial collaboration among commissioners and District leadership.

5. Director of Purchasing Report

5.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, Seconded by Commissioner Kirchheimer to approve the following budget modification request:



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-797-2756
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney
Keith Purdy
Mark Tomko

Description/Reason for Modification: Increase the adopted 2026 budget by allocating funds from appropriated fund balance and increasing account A3410.401 for purchase of Lexipol Services.

Budget Modification Detail

- Increase in Funding Source

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A1011	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$26,418.20

- Increase in Expenditure Appropriation

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A3410.401	Contract & Professional Services	\$26,418.20

All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None

5.2 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Tomko to approve the following budget modification request:

Description/Reason for Modification: Increase the 2026 adopted budget by allocating sale proceeds of old Station 4 and interest earned on the proceeds and increasing account A9730.6 to pay down BAN principal.

Budget Modification Detail

- Increase in Funding Source

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A2665	Sales of Equipment	\$834,602.76
A2401	Interest & Earnings	\$6,397.24

- Increase in Expenditure Appropriation

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A9730.6	BANS - Principal	\$841,000.00

All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None

6. Approval to Properly Audit and Pay Claims as Submitted

6.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Tomko to approve the Audit of Claims for 2026 Expenses dated August 13, 2026, in total amount of \$131,805.52.

All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None

7. New Members

7.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Tomko to approve Memorandum of Understanding with the Danby Fire District for Firefighting Services of Firefighter Mia Metz at Station 4 while attending Binghamton University.

All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-797-2756
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney
Keith Purdy
Mark Tomko

8. Unfinished Business

8.1 Midi Pumper Truck Weight Issues: Commissioner Purdy discussed the two midi pumper trucks being over their Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) when fully loaded. A consensus was reached to put the out-of-service truck (M3) back in service with a reduced water load. The manufacturer, Darley, suggested drilling holes in the overflow tube to limit capacity. Operators will be mandated to drive cautiously and to direct any concerns to the chief officers. Long-term solutions, like replacing the heavy steel bumper, are being explored.

8.2 Proposal to offload the chief vehicle project execution from Commissioner Purdy to Fleet Manager Steve Langeland so Commissioner Purdy can focus on other fleet project areas. Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to authorize Assistant Chief Steve Langeland (Fleet Manager) to approve items under \$4,999.99 (current procurement policy gives up to \$2,000).
All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None

8.3 Director of Communications Clay Ellis presented a fundraising poster and informational/marketing flyer for the Fred Singer training site. The deployment strategy for posters/flyers has not yet been defined.

9. New Business

9.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to approve Commissioner McCartney to enter into an agreement to purchase a used 2016 HME Ahrens-Fox 4 x 4 Vehicle VIN# 44KFr4481HWZ22918 from the Katonah Fire District (65 Bedford Rd, Katonah, NY 10536), in the amount of \$300,000.
All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None

10. Resolution

10.1 Resolution 2026-008

WHEREAS, pursuant to General Municipal Law § 6-g, the Vestal Fire District in the Town of Vestal, County of Broome, State of New York, established the “Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund” to pay for the cost of fire fighting vehicles of the Vestal Fire District, including, but not limited to, ladder trucks, pumpers, tankers, rescue vehicles, squads and vans; or modification and improvement pertaining to such vehicles; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public meeting held on Wednesday, August 12, 2026, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Vestal Fire District authorized and approved the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$300,000 from the Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund to purchase (1) used Rapid Attack Truck (RAT) 4 x 4 Pumper to replace a current utility response vehicle as determined to be necessary for the Fire District pursuant to Section 6-g of the General Municipal Law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this resolution is subject to permissive referendum.

Motion to adopt the Resolution made by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy.

A vote was then taken upon the motion for adoption with the following results:

THOMAS MCCARTNEY, CHAIRMAN	VOTING	AYE
DANIEL KIRCHHEIMER, COMMISSIONER	VOTING	AYE



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-797-2756
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney
Keith Purdy
Mark Tomko

DAVID HARRINGTON, COMMISSIONER	VOTING	AYE
MARK TOMKO, COMMISSIONER	VOTING	AYE
KEITH PURDY, COMMISSIONER	VOTING	AYE

The Chairman then declared said Resolution adopted by the majority of the permanent vote of the total voting power of the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Vestal Fire District in the Town of Vestal.

Publication to be published on August 16, 2026, in the Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin.

11. Announcements

11.1 Meeting Schedule:

- Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be on August 26, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
- Special Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be on September 2, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
- Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be September 23, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

12. Public Input Session - None

13. Executive Session

13.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko , seconded by Commissioner Kirchheimer to enter executive session to discuss the employment history of individual(s) under Public Officers Law Section 105 (f) at 7:39 p.m.
All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None

Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Purdy, to exit the executive session and return to the regular meeting at 8:14 p.m.

All in favor: 5 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: None

No action was taken or decision were made at this time.

14. Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Bowen
Fire District Secretary