



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 September 2, 2026

1. Present Thomas McCartney, Chairman
Daniel Kirchheimer, Vice Chairman
David Harrington, Commissioner
Mark Tomko, Commissioner (Absent)
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 (Absent)

Others Present: Charles Paffie, Dept. Chief
Bob Hamilton, 2nd Lieutenant, Station 2
Don Albrecht, 2nd Lieutenant, Station 4 (Arrived at 6:55 p.m.)

2. Meeting was called to order by Commissioner McCartney at 6:29 p.m.

3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner McCartney.

4. 2027 Fire District Budget review

4.1 A comprehensive review finalized the 2027 fire district tax rate with minor adjustments due to assessed value changes and confirmed capital reserve allocations. Plans were set to halt discretionary station spending on October 1, 2026, conduct a variance review, and potentially prioritize end-of-year purchases from 2026 funds.

2027 tax rate remains \$1.14 cents per dollar; increase per thousand is \$0.08; assessed value adjusted to \$2,686,827,413; total appropriations near \$3,593,192; amount to be raised by real property tax updated to \$3,334,086; capital reserves lowered to \$198,771 to keep rate unchanged; proposed budget prepared in state-approved format; hearings set for October 20, 2026, and final approval on October 28, 2026.

5. Approval to Properly Audit and Pay Claims as Submitted

5.1 Motion to Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy approve the Audit of Claims for 2026 Expenses dated September 3, 2026, in the total amount of \$101,408.89.

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko) Motion Carried.



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6. Director of Purchasing Report

6.1 Motion by Commissioner Purdy, seconded by Commissioner Kirchheimer to approve the following budget modification request:

Description/Reason for Modification

Increase the 2026 adopted budget by appropriating funds from capital reserve fund balance and increasing account A3410.208CR for the purchase of 2 chief vehicles

Budget Modification Detail

Increase in Funding Source

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A1011CR	Appropriated Cap Res Fund Bal	\$215,000.00

Increase in Expenditure Appropriation

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A3410.208CR	Capital Reserve Vehicle	\$215,000.00

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko) Motion Carried.

6.2 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to approve the following budget modification request:

Description/Reason for Modification

Increase the 2026 adopted budget by appropriating funds from capital reserve fund balance and increasing account A3410.210CR for Station 1 flooring

Budget Modification Detail

Increase in Funding Source

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A1011CR	Appropriated Cap Res Fund Bal	\$65,000.00

Increase in Expenditure Appropriation

Account Code	Account Description	Amount Requested
A3410.210CR	Capital Reserve Bldg. Cap Improv	\$65,000.00

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko) Motion Carried.



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7. Policies and Procedures

7.1 Review, discuss and approve the following policies:

- Policy # 101.00 Purchasing
 - Updated purchasers in the policy. Unified purchasing authority for Fleet Chief, Director of Purchasing, Director of Facilities, Director of IT at \$4,000 with two verbal quotes; items over \$4,000 require three quotes; suggestion to raise District Fire Chief, and Fire Commissioners authority to \$1,000.
 - Policy to be revised and bring back at September 23 meeting.
- Policy # 208.00 Key and Access Control Policy
 - Policy establishes key management system (tracked key fobs/boxes); enhanced control over vendor and visitor access; consideration for government entities (elections) with time-bound access.
 - Wording in Section 12 needs refinement to differentiate “visitors/non-members” requiring supervision/escort vs. “vendors/contractors” requiring authorization; ensure compliance for Board of Elections access
 - Policy to be revised and bring back at September 23 meeting.
- Policy # 402.00 Firefighter Physical Fitness Training Program Policy
 - Administrative burden reduced; updates to definitions and authority.
 - “May” language to be tightened (Section 10) to ensure clarity of board actions.
 - Program Administrator to apply board-approved eligibility standards; the board must define standards before policy approval.
 - Attendance documentation requirement depends on facility capabilities; reconsider if proof cannot be reliably provided.
 - Exception approvals for injury/illness: clarify whether the Board or Program Administrator (or both) approves to ensure consistency.
 - VFBL coverage: no guarantees; ensure language reflects that coverage determinations are made by VFBL, not the district.
 - Policy to be revised and bring back at September 23 meeting.
- Policy # 403.00 Fundraising Activity Policy
 - Policy was reviewed with brief discussion regarding committee member names vs station membership wording followed by rules for ticket sales as per General Municipal Law §204-a(8)(b).

Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to approve Policy #403.00 Fundraising Activity Policy as written.

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko)
Motion Carried.



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8. Unfinished Business

8.1 On August 26, 2026, the Board of Fire Commissioner accepted Chief Paffie's recommendation for 30-day suspension of 1st Lieutenant Shelby Frisby from July 27, 2026, to August 27, 2026.

Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to accept the Chief's recommendation of suspension to continue until August 27th with no further action.

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko)
Motion Carried.

8.2 Leader Group *Diphasic* System Demonstration Discussion

- *Diphasic* system demonstration requested for the second week of October 5 to October 8.
- Attorney coordination pending; plan, safety plan, and insurance certification to be prepared.
- Potential participation by neighboring departments (Endwell, West Corners, Apalachin) to be explored.

9. New Business

9.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to approve the request from Chief Paffie to allow Tower 32-1 to assist Silver Lake Fire Department with fire prevention at Choconut Elementary School on October 8, 2026.

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko) Motion Carried.

10. Announcements

- Fire District Office will be closed on September 7, 2026, for Labor Day.
- Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be September 23, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
- Vestal Fire Dept Fire Expo at Barnes & Noble Parking Lot on October 3, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Fire District Office will be closed on October 12, 2026, for Columbus Day

11. Public Input Session

11.1 Chief Paffie advised that the Air Trailer will be used during a training for the West Corner Fire Department on September 11 and 12.

12. Executive Session

12.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Purdy enter executive session to discuss the employment history of individual(s) under Public Officers Law Section 105 (f) at 7:32 p.m.

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko) Motion Carried.

Motion by Commissioner Purdy, seconded by Commissioner Kirchheimer to exit the executive session and return to the regular meeting at 7:59 p.m.

All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko) Motion Carried.



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There was no action taken nor decision was made.

13. Motion by Commissioner Harrington, seconded by Commissioner Purdy to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.
All in favor: 4 (McCartney, Kirchheimer, Harrington, Purdy) Opposed: None Absent: 1 (Tomko) Motion
Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Bowen
Fire District Secretary