



# *Arlington Fire District*

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**For Emergencies**  
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*“Safeguarding Our Community”*

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## **BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES January 23, 2023**

### **ATTENDEES:**

Comm. Richard Dore – Chairman  
Comm. Peter Longi  
Comm. Ralph Chiumento, Jr. – Vice Chairman  
Comm. Phil Van Itallie  
Comm. Peter Valdez

Chief: William Steenbergh  
Assistant Chief: Eric Philipp  
Director of EMS: David Violante  
District Secretary: Renee O’Neill  
Treasurer: James Passikoff

Chairman Dore opened the Arlington Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners’ meeting at 7:03 p.m., took a roll call of the attendees and everyone stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

Chief Steenbergh requested to have a moment of silence for past Deputy Chief Jeff Pells. Today is the one-year anniversary since his passing. Chairman Dore mentioned it also has been 18 years since the “Black Sunday” fire in NYC.

### **1. PUBLIC HEARING – “VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT”**

Chairman Dore opened the public hearing for the “Volunteer Firefighter Property Tax Abatement” at 7:05 p.m. There was no public present.

A motion was made by Comm. Chiumento to close the public hearing. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

The Board of Fire Commissioners returned to Open Session at 7:05 p.m.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD** – *No action(s) taken by the Board, unless otherwise noted*

3. **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD** – *No action(s) taken by the Board, unless otherwise noted*

4. **ABSTRACT APPROVAL**

A motion was made by Comm. Van Itallie to approve Abstract 23–1B. This consists of \$427.20 in paid bills with a total of 1 check and \$400,384.56 in unpaid bills with a total of 38 checks for a grand total of \$400,811.76, totaling 39 checks. Seconded by Comm. Valdez.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

5. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

A. **January 9, 2023 Board of Fire Commissioners’ Organizational Meeting**

A motion was made by Comm. Chiumento to approve. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 4 – 0 – 1 (Comm. Dore abstained)

B. **January 9, 2023 Board of Fire Commissioners’ Meeting**

A motion was made by Comm. Chiumento to approve. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 4 – 0 – 1 (Comm. Dore abstained)

6. **MONTHLY COMMITTEE REPORTS** – *No reports given unless otherwise noted.*

Chairman Dore thanked the Board for selecting him to be Chairman for this year. He is going to keep the same Committee members as last year for continuity and also reported that he is going to appoint Comm. Chiumento as Vice-Chairman for 2023.

A. Service Awards – Comm. Valdez & Comm. Longi

1. Received from Glens Falls National Bank:

A. “Investment Update”

B. “Statement of Value and Activity” – December 2022

C. December 31, 2022 LOSAP Quarterly Report

Comm. Valdez reported that he has a call into Glens Falls to discuss the portfolio. Also discussed target numbers and interest rates with PenFlex. Will follow up with recommendations at a later time.

B. District Inspections – Comm. Longi & Comm. Van Itallie

C. District Officers / Chief Liaison – Comm. Chiumento & Comm. Dore

- D. EMS & Paramedic Liaison – Comm. Valdez & Comm. Van Itallie
- E. Public Relations – Comm. Chiumento & Comm. Dore
- F. Equipment Maintenance – Comm. Valdez & Comm. Van Itallie
- G. Buildings and Grounds – Comm. Dore & Comm. Van Itallie
- H. Capital Equipment – Comm. Dore & Comm. Longi
- I. Union Negotiations & Contract – Comm. Chiumento & Comm. Dore
- J. Career Staff Liaison – Comm. Chiumento & Comm. Dore
- K. Volunteer Recruitment – Comm. Valdez & Comm. Longi
- L. District Safety & Health – Comm. Dore & Comm. Valdez
- M. Strategic Plan – Comm. Longi & Comm. Valdez
- N. Finance Committee – Comm. Chiumento & Comm. Van Itallie
- O. IT Operations Committee – Comm. Van Itallie & Comm. Longi
- P. Croft Lease – Comm. Valdez & Comm. Longi
- Q. Rochdale Lease – Comm. Chiumento & Comm. Van Itallie

7. **CORRESPONDENCE** – *None unless otherwise noted*

- A. E-mail dated January 6, 2023 from Chris Rinck of Local 2393 regarding having the same Officers for 2023 as prior year.

8. **ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD** – *None unless otherwise noted*

- A. E-mail dated December 28, 2022 from Codie Brazee of Rochdale Fire Company resigning as a member.

A motion was made by Comm. Longi to drop Codie Brazee from the active roles. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

- B. E-mail dated January 15, 2023 from Lisa Jackson, Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator, requesting the Board to drop Jessica Martin from the roles for lack of activity and failure to complete Orientation.

A motion was made by Comm. Van Itallie to drop Jessica Martin from the roles. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

9. **DONATIONS** – *None unless otherwise noted*

10. **COMMISSIONERS ITEMS** – *No reports and/or discussions unless otherwise noted*

Comm. Chiumento read the following Resolution regarding the “Volunteer Firefighter Property Tax Abatement”.

**WHEREAS**, New York Real Property Tax Law (“RPTL”), §466-a permits real property owned by an enrolled member of an incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department or incorporated voluntary ambulance service, or such enrolled member and spouse residing in any county to be exempt from taxation to the extent of up to ten percent of the assessed value of such property if so determined by a governing body of a city, village, town, school district, fire district or county, after a public hearing, subject to the conditions set forth in RPTL, §466-a(2); and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Arlington Fire District desires to adopt a resolution providing for such partial real property tax exemption by such qualified members and their spouses; and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing was held in accordance with RPTL, §466-a;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Arlington Fire District, grants a partial tax exemption of ten percent of the assessed value of real property, which is owned by an enrolled member that has been certified as having been an enrolled member of an incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department or incorporated voluntary ambulance service for a minimum of at least two years, subject to the conditions set forth in RPTL, §466-a(2).

Discussion.

Comm. Chiumento disclosed that he would be eligible if its passed.

A motion was made by Comm. Chiumento to approve the Resolution as read. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

11. **DISTRICT STAFF ITEMS**

A. Chief William Steenberg

1. Bookkeeper Denise Holzberger is retiring effective January 31<sup>st</sup>. Thanked her for her years of service and wishes her a long, healthy and prosperous retirement.
2. Opportunity to switch our Workman’s Compensation and Disability insurance to Marshall & Sterling at the same cost – wants to know if the Board wants to continue with the idea of keeping vendors local.

The Board is ok with switching the Workman’s Compensation and Disability insurance to Marshall & Sterling.

3. Working with OCIS on freshening up the AFD website.

4. NYS Department of Health processed the application for the worker COVID bonus program. Money has been transferred into the account and will be distributed through the payroll process.
5. Septic problem at HQ – still fact finding and investigating. There is approximately a 12-foot dip in the line by his office/Secretary's office and is causing back up issues. Will bring forth information to the Board as he receives it. Has no idea on costs. Wanted to give the Board a heads up.
6. Two fires last week and one had a fatality. Helicopter was called to transport the elderly patient to Westchester, and he passed away the following day.
7. Notifying the Board that he will be on vacation 1/27 – 2/3.
8. One (1) member was awarded disability retirement; will process over the next few weeks. Recommends his final cash out to come out of the Employee Benefit Accrued Liability Fund in the amount not to exceed \$150K.

A motion was made by Comm. Chiumento to approve. Seconded by Comm. Van Itallie.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

B. Assistant Chief Eric Philipp

1. Thanked the Board for approving the tax resolution for the volunteers.
2. Requesting approval to participate in the Dutchess County St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 4<sup>th</sup>, using either 32-57 or 32-45, starts at 12:00 in the Village of Wappingers.

A motion was made by Comm. Valdez to approve. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

C. Director of EMS David Violante

1. Medic students all took their State and Regional Exams and have started orientation with their mentors and preceptors. Progressing well.

D. Treasurer James Passikoff

1. Chairman Dore acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer's October, November and the December 31, 2022 Preliminary Financial Reports for the District.

Chief Steenbergh reported that the overtime is \$1.1 million over budget but need to subtract the grant funds to offset the overtime. Estimated to be over \$45K in the end. Also reported that the utilities for HQ have not been billed for five months due to the Central Hudson billing issues.

12. **SCHOOL REQUESTS**

The Board of Fire Commissioners authorized the Chief to approve in advance, school requests that are located inside or outside of Dutchess County and is either contractually required or required to maintain a certification or does not exceed \$100.00.

For Commissioners notification purposes only:

- A. ~~Gary Lewis: “NY Task Force 2 training”, January 19, 2023 in Guilderland, NY.~~  
(No cost) (*CANCELED DUE TO WEATHER*)
- B. Hunter Rogers: “Fire Instructor I”, January 23 – 27, 2023 at Westchester Fire Academy. (No cost)
- C. Anthony Crandall: “Principles of Instruction”, February 23, 28, March 2, 8, 14, 2023 at Roosevelt Station 3. (No cost)

**The following school request requires consideration by the Board of Fire Commissioners:**

- A. (Names to follow) Requesting approval for three members to attend “NYS Instructor Authorization Conference”, March 23 – 31, 2023 at the NYS Fire Academy in Montour Falls to receive Instructor Authorizations for Water Rescue Awareness, Trench Rescue Awareness, Confined Space Awareness and Basic Structural Collapse Operations.

Discussion.

A motion was made by Comm. Longi to approve. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

13. **ITEMS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. Chief Steenbergh –two (2) items for the purpose of the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.
- B. Comm. Valdez – one (1) item for the purpose of the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

With no further open business to discuss, a motion was made by Comm. Longi to adjourn to Executive Session. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

The Board adjourned to Executive Session at 7:47 p.m.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:41 p.m. and returned to Open Session.

15. **OPEN ITEMS**

As a result of Executive Session, a motion was made by Comm. Valdez to approve to amend District Secretary Renee O'Neill's employment contract. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 4 – 1 (Comm. Dore opposed)

A motion was made by Comm. Chiumento that we approve the Arlington Fire District State Comptroller's Audit Corrective Action Plan and file it with the State of New York. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

With no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Comm. Chiumento to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee O'Neill  
District Secretary



## BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING PUBLIC ATTENDANCE SHEET

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NOTE: This sheet will be attached to the Board of Fire Commissioners meeting minutes as part of the official record. If you agree to have your name as part of the official record and published on our website, please legibly print your name below. Thank you.

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DATE OF MEETING: 1/23/23
