



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING TRANSCRIPT
(AS REQUIRED BY NYS GOVERNOR CUOMO'S EXECUTIVE ORDER 202.1)

APRIL 6, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, trying to make this a little bit easier here, umm, instead of a roll call, (inaudible), all five Commissioners are present either by phone or by uh, computer and the Chief, the Assistant Chief, Chief Steenbergh, Assistant Chief Philipp, Director of EMS Violante, District Secretary O'Neill and Treasurer Passikoff all are present.

Commissioner Adams: You should do a roll call uh, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. Umm, Commissioner Longi.

Commissioner Longi: Longi here.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Valdez.

Commissioner Valdez: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing.

Commissioner Griffing: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams.

Commissioner Adams: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: And I am present. Umm, we'll move on to public comments. Uh, seeing the way this is being run, there will be no public comments, uh, but they can be submitted via email at contactus@afd.org. Umm, comments can be submitted before or after the meeting. Any submits during or after the meeting will be on next month's, um, or next meetings agenda.

Commissioner Chiumento: Comments from the Board. Does anybody have any comments on anything?

Commissioner Valdez: None.

Commissioner Longi: Nope.

Commissioner Chiumento: Abstract 20-4A were reviewed by Commissioners Adams and Longi. Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Adams: Uh, Commissioner Adams, motion to approve Abstract 20-4A. This consists of \$279,910.16 in paid bills with a total of 12 checks and \$48,202.03 in unpaid bills with a total of 44 checks for a grand total of \$328,112.19, totaling 56 checks.

Commissioner Chiumento: That was the motion. Is there a second?

Commissioner Valdez: Second, Valdez.

Commissioner Longi: I'll second it.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay Pete Valdez seconds it. Any further discussion? All in favor?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Aye.

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Valdez: (inaudible)

Commissioner Chiumento: Any opposed? Abstention? Approved. Okay, uh, B. Re-approval of Abstract 20-3B due to transposed numbers on the New York State Academy of Fire Sciences bill umm, that was found by Commissioner Griffing. The motion to approve Abstract 20-3B. This consists of \$12.18 in paid bills with a total of 1 check and \$112,314.16 in unpaid bills with a total of 42 checks for a grand total of \$112,326.34 totaling 43 checks. I'll make that motion. Is there a second?

Commissioner Longi: So moved, second.

Commissioner Valdez: Second.

Commissioner Chiumento: Motion made and seconded. Uh, any discussion? All in favor?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Aye.

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay I'm hearing five Ayes. That's five zero, in favor. Umm, minutes to be approved. March 16, 2020 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting and debating on how to do that. I guess we should approve the meeting and then we rescind the title and reassign it.

Commissioners Adams: I move that we approve the March 16th.

Chief Steenbergh: I misspoke, uh and used the wrong title, uh, in that motion. So I think, I think you're probably correct. Uh, the minutes are correct as published. The motion itself needs to be redone due to my error.

Commissioner Chiumento: Correct. So, I heard a motion to approve the March 16th minutes, did I hear a second?

Commissioner Griffing: I'll second that.

Commissioner Chiumento: Motion made and seconded. Any further discussion?

District Secretary O'Neill: Who made that motion? I didn't hear that. I'm sorry.

Commissioner Chiumento: I made the m...oh who did make? I made the motion. Any...uh. Okay no further discussion. All in favor? Aye.

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Adams: (inaudible)

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, I hear five again. So it's five 0 in favor. Umm, and I'd like to make a motion to rescind the motion that um, we had made to establish a new title of personnel assistant. Do I hear a motion to rescind that motion? Or I can, I made the motion. Is there a second?

(inaudible, talking over each other)

Commissioner Adams: Second.

Commissioner Chiumento: Motion made and seconded. Discussion? All in favor?

Commissioner Adams: Aye

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Aye.

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: I hear five again so, Okay, that is rescinded. Umm, now will somebody like to make a motion to establish the civil service title of personnel administrator?

Commissioner Longi: I'll make a motion to uh, retitle the, uh, to the position at to personnel administrator and not personnel assistant.

Commissioner Chiumento: Is there a second?

Commissioner Adams: Second.

Commissioner Griffing: Second.

Commissioner Chiumento: Further discussion? All in favor? Aye.

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: I heard three. Umm..

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Anybody oppose? Any abstention? Okay, I heard at least a forth so.

Commissioner Adams: Oh, I, I, if you didn't hear me, I voted yes.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. I did not, that'll be five.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. "Monthly Committee Reports"?

Commissioner Valdez: Valdez, nothing.

Commissioner Chiumento: Umm, we need to..

Commissioner Valdez: Unless you want me to go over the, uh, received on March 17th.

Commissioner Chiumento: Yeah, we had some small errors didn't make any difference in who got awards, but there were some small errors. So we just want to reapprove um, both Engine Company 1's and Engine Company 3's Service Awards or LOSAP umm, spreadsheets.

Commissioner Valdez: Make a motion.

Commissioner Chiumento: So made. Is there a second?

Commissioner Longi: I'll second.

Commissioner Griffing: Second.

Commissioner Chiumento: Any further discussion? All in favor?

Commissioner Valdez, Commissioner Chiumento, Commissioner Adams, Commissioner Longi (at once): Aye.

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Opposed? Abstention? Approved. Thank you. Okay "Correspondence". There was an email dated March 23, 2020 from Jim Beretta to the Board of Fire Commissioners regarding meetings during COVID-19, umm, and "No Actions to be Taken by the Board". Any

"Commissioners Items"? Hearing none, we'll move on to the "District Staff Items". Chief, do you want to take it away?

Chief Steenbergh: I just want to bring you up to date a little bit with uh, some of the activities in the Fire District. Uh, it's been a very challenging time as you can imagine. Uh, the good news is that, uh the staff for the most part remains healthy and the Fire District remains fully operational. Uh, since this all started, we've had a total of three members uh, get sick, develop symptoms and test positive. Uh, none of them have gotten serious enough to require hospitalization. Uh, two of the three, uh, have gotten healthy and have returned to work. Uh, up to this point, we've had a total of uh, eight people who were quarantined or on self isolation. Uh, through a combination of being exposed on calls or having family exposures or uh, things that were not uh, necessarily directly relatable to work. We're probably at a point in time where the entire career staff uh, like most of our locality has, has had some sort of exposure or another. Uh, and we are continuing to follow the CDC guidelines, uh, and the guidance from the state and county health departments as to when people are uh, fit for duty and when they need to be isolated and when they should be quarantined. Uh, we've made a number of adjustments, uh, in terms of staffing and scheduling, uh, to reduce the potential for spreading, uh, the virus through the stations. Uh, all of the career staff is, is essentially locked into one workstation now we don't rotate people around from building to building as, as we typically have done in the past, uh, and that's an effort to try and reduce the opportunities for something to be spread from one person, uh, on the career staff to another. Uh, all four companies have, have canceled their monthly meetings. We have temporarily suspended, uh, district training and, uh, we have procedures in place that, uh, with the exception of the mechanics, uh, who have to travel from station to station to fuel the vehicles and things of that nature that there is no, no one else in the Fire District who is touring the stations. We're relaying information from, from building to building via telephone and by, uh, email. The Officers still check in with, with their men as you would imagine, uh, but we're doing it all, all remotely now. Uh, supplies continue to be a challenge, uh, and we've gotten some supplies through, uh, the County as part of the State and National stockpile. Uh, but that those quantities have been insufficient for us to continue operation. Umm, we have the members of the staff spend a couple hours per day on the internet, looking for places where we can buy different types of personal protective equipment and we've had, uh, as well as disinfectant and sanitize things that we need to maintain the stations and the fleet. So we've actually been fairly successful with that. Our stock of personal protective equipment at the moment, uh, is sufficient to last us you know, at least a couple of weeks, uh, maybe a little bit longer. Continue to, uh, make requests through the Dutchess County EOC for resupply and we uh, will continue to search, uh, through our local vendors and new vendors when we can find them to continue to, uh, purchase new items when we, you know, if we're not able to get what we need, uh, uh, through the resupply through the governmental resupply process. Uh, we're going to continue to go out and make purchases for, uh, the things that we need so that we can remain operational. Uh, is there anyone that that has any specific, you know, questions for me about what we're doing, day to day? Umm, call volume for non-COVID related incidents is somewhat down, uh and the number of calls for COVID related emergencies continue to, to climb. Uh, I've attended, uh, through web through, uh, through webinars and, and

phone conferences, uh some of the introductory meetings on what the FEMA reimbursement process might look like and, uh, you know, there's no timelines at this point, for how long, any of that was going to take everything at this point is very open ended, uh and we have put internal measures in place to categorize any expenditures that are related to the COVID emergency.

Commissioner Chiumento: Is that it Bill?

Chief Steenbergh: That is it.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. Any other questions for the Chief?

Commissioner Adams: Jon Adams, what is the daily COVID activity? Is there an average, you can give us?

Chief Steenbergh: Uh, not off the top of my head. I would, I would rather uh, do a little research and send something out to you. It's umm, its, its certainly climbing. Let me, let me just look, I can look quickly at today's and tell you that fairly easily. 50% of the calls today, five out of 10 were COVID related.

Commissioner Chiumento: Or suspected COVID related.

Chief Steenbergh: Or suspected COVID related. Right, based on you know, flu symptoms, has a fever. You know, we're, we're treating all of those as COVID related until proven otherwise because it takes several days to get the test data back from the hospitals anyway. Umm, but so today, you know, today, up to this point has been 50%.

Commissioner Longi: Chief, I've got a question.

Chief Steenbergh: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Longi: Umm, is there any prospects on getting a test kits that we can get all of our guys, uh, all our first responders tested to see if they're positive or negative. Is that something on the horizon?

Chief Steenbergh: So, uh, up to this point, we have only been testing people who develop symptoms. Uh, we have a set up an, set up an arrangement with, umm, the Pulse Urgent Care which is up the hill from Headquarters and we have the ability to send people there, uh, for tests. Uh, at this point we're making decisions about whether people are able to work or not based on whether they are symptomatic and that's, that's following the most recent guidance from the CDC. So not that, not that testing isn't important, but, uh, we're focusing on whether people have symptoms, whether they're, whether they develop a fever things or whether they have a contact with someone who is known to be positive or is ill. I'm, I'm, hoping sooner rather than later, we will be able to move on to the antibody testing which would tell you whether a person had been exposed previously or not, since they seem to think more and more that there are a potentially sizable percentage of the population has been exposed and would test positive for antibodies and just never became symptomatic. Uh, I'm very interested in when that test might be available and they're just starting to roll that out nationally now.

Commissioner Longi: Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Chiumento: And the tests, you're doing are two day tests right, not the immediate one?

Chief Steenbergh: Uh, the testing that is available now, uh, if you're lucky, comes back in two days. We have had some that took four days for family members, uh, to get their testing results back. I don't know what the pattern is. I can't tell, you know, if going to one place or another gets the results any quicker but, uh, we've had some take as many as, as four days, umm, with having employees spread over three counties, uh, every county has a little different procedure on how they test people. So we've had to navigate, uh, that as well.

Commissioner Chiumento: Anyone else? Hearing none. Umm, go Assistant Chief, do you have anything?

Assistant Chief Philipp: Uh, the only thing I have is uh, two weeks ago, the 21st of March there was, uh, a chimney fire in Kingwood Park and uh, it sustained very minor damage to the house. You know, they had to get their chimney looked at and the crew did a great job and just want to say, keep up the good work, especially during this time of the COVID, so, uh, that's all.

Commissioner Chiumento: Thank you. Any questions for the Assistant Chief? Director of EMS.

Director of EMS Violante: Hey guys, thanks for being here tonight. Umm, I first want to say much thanks to all of our crews are doing a tremendous job, uh, in this particular timeframe. Uh, they're under a ton of stress and trying to follow a lot of guidelines. And umm, I would like to thank specifically Bill also, uh, for being very supportive and forward thinking and how we're doing things. Uh, and of course our Commissioners for being supportive with all of us as well. There are a lot of moving parts. Uh, it continues to change daily, sometimes hourly, uh, but we're trying to keep on top of it and keep things going and uh, we think we're in a pretty good place. Uh, as you know, Bill uh, related most, most of this information now so I don't want to reiterate, much of it at all. Other than we continue to be on, uh, conference calls with the New York State Department of Health, uh, and Regional conference calls, uh, and following up with the Dutchess County Department of Public Health, uh, and with the local hospitals as to where things are, in addition to the other EMS agencies around the region, uh, to make sure that, that, we provide continued operation of our services and the services, uh, around the rest of our community as well. Umm, the State has put out some certification updates to provide, uh, to make sure that everybody stays certified since this is difficult to do a number of those things now. Uh, the State's backing up a lot of policies and procedures to help maintain that continuity of operations among all their providers. Uh, we do follow all the CDC guidelines for personal protective equipment and, uh, the State guidelines for that as well, uh, and we're continuing to monitor situation and, of course, respond accordingly, while working with other agencies local businesses, etc. We continue to be in the community, part of the community, provide for the community, uh, umm, and uh, if you have any questions please reach out and let me know. Uh, we're trying to keep

everybody as informed as possible and be flexible as possible, uh, as well. And that's all I have.

Commissioner Chiumento: Any questions for Dave? Okay, Treasurer all yours.

Treasurer Passikoff: I sent out, umm, the February report to everybody. Umm, I'm, we don't have any of the bank statements for, umm, March yet. Umm, I've asked Denise to contact you when they come in, so hopefully we can have another statement for the next meeting. Umm, there's really nothing to, nothing to say, at this point that, that way too early in the year. Uh, we won't really...I'd be interested to see what the overtime is at the end of March, umm, to give us a feel. It doesn't look like we've had a lot of overtime, uh so far, because the money that I'm transferring to cover weekly payroll hasn't really jumped, uh, significantly. It has been jumps when people retired, but on a normal week it stays pretty consistent. Uh, Bill mentioned that the, umm, uh, uh, the big separated out the COVID-19 expenses and we're keeping track of those on page eight of the report. It's at the top under fire operations, uh, section. Uh, and that'll be an ongoing so that will know what it is. Other than that, I have nothing.

Commissioner Chiumento: Is that just a memo number up there? Umm, because it would combine from all different categories such as payroll and..

Treasurer Passikoff: We (inaudible). Payroll is in a different area. This is just the, umm, just as this, umm, the equipment and that kind of stuff that we bought that we're putting it there so it's easy, it's easy to keep track of for the FEMA.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. Any other questions for Treasurer?

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. Hearing none, there are no "School Requests". So, um, unless any Commissioner have anything else? If not, I just want to thank everybody. Umm, the, obviously the employees that are doing above and beyond, as well as us for attempting this meeting for the first time, uh, in a way that none of us have ever done before, or least I have never done before, I speak for myself. Umm, Uh, so I want to thank you all. Umm, and the Chief said, we probably going to be doing this for the next few meetings at least and hopefully, we're going to try and keep them as brief as far as agenda items, as possible. Umm, I mean, they may not all be as quick and brief as tonight, but, uh, we're trying not to put anything in that isn't urgent to be going over and approved. So, to try and keep it as quick and easy as possible, certainly easier when you're sitting around a table than it is on this. So with that being said, do I hear a motion to adjourn?

Treasurer Passikoff: Hey Ralph, (inaudible) its Jim.

Commissioner Chiumento: Yeah Jim.

Treasurer Passikoff: Uh, you probably should acknowledge the receipt of the report.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, we will acknowledge receipt of the report. Thank you. Umm, so with that being said, umm, do I hear a motion to adjourn?

Commissioner Griffing: Motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Adams: Move to adjourn.

Commissioner Longi: Motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Chiumento: Second?

Commissioner Valdez: Second, Valdez.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, all in favor?

Commissioners Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Griffing: Aye

Commissioner Chiumento: Aye.

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. Very good. Okay. Thank you all. Have a great night.

Commissioner Valdez: You too.

Commissioner Chiumento: Be safe.

Commissioner Longi: Night, everybody. Good night.

Commissioner Valdez: Thanks, Bill.

Transcribed and respectfully submitted by,

Renee O'Neill
District Secretary