



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

May 4, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, I'll call the meeting to order and do a roll call. Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner 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. Uh, Treasurer Passikoff?

Treasurer Passikoff: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: Secretary O'Neill?

District Secretary O'Neill: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: Director of EMS Violante?

Director of EMS Violante: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: Assistant Chief Philipp?

Assistant Chief Philipp: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Chief Steenbergh.

Chief Steenbergh: Here.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, everybody is present and accounted for. Okay, "Public Comment Period". Um, we did have some comments that were sent in. I'll read them briefly. Uh, "Where is the proposed Personnel Administrator position in the 2020 budget?", "What line item in the

budget?", uh, "How much is budgeted for this position?", "Is there a job description the position?" and "Is the 2019 AUD prepared and available?" Uh, "the extension was 'no later than May 1st 2000..'.. I think he meant 2020 but wrote 2019. Umm, so those are the questions given and um, with that I'll close the Comment Period and go on to "Comments from the Board". Is there anyone on the Board that has any comments?

Commissioner Valdez: Commissioner Valdez, no.

Commissioner Adams: No

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, hearing none um, the only thing I have is, I believe just for uh, the information that the job description was posted today on the website. Um, that at least the proposed job description we will have to approve it later. (PAUSE) That being said, if there's anybody else, if not we'll go on to Abstract approval and...

Commissioner Adams: I move that we approve Abstract 20-5A consisting of paid bills in the accumulative amount of \$7,918.91, totaling 6 checks and unpaid bills in the accumulative amount of \$76,852.79, totaling 37 checks for a total of \$84,771.70 and 43 checks.

Commissioner Chiumento: Thank you Commissioner Adams. Is there a second?

Commissioner Longi: I'll second it.

Commissioner Chiumento: And that's Commissioner Longi seconding it. Uh, we'll go a roll call vote. Commissioner Valdez?

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento is an Aye. Next, "Minutes to be Approved". April 20, 2020 Board of Fire Commissioners Minutes. Uh, anybody make a motion?

Commissioner Adams: I move that we approve the, uh, minutes as described.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams makes the motion. Is there a second?

Commissioner Longi: Second it. Longi.

Commissioner Chiumento: Thank you. Um, roll call. Commissioner Valdez?

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Yes.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento is an Aye. Um, uh, we acknowledge the April 20, 2020 Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting transcript. Uh, "Monthly Committee Reports", uh, Service Awards, uh.

Commissioner Valdez: Yes, uh, Commissioner Valdez. Uh, we received from Glens Falls National Bank Statement of Value and Activity March two twenty. Number two, received an email dated April 22, 2020 from PenFlex regarding Service Awards during the COVID-19 pandemic. That's all. (PAUSE). I'm done.

District Secretary O'Neill: Chairman Chiumento, you need to unmute yourself.

Commissioner Chiumento: We'll move on to "Correspondence". Thank you. Um, received April 23, 2020, uh, my certificate, Commissioner Chiumento's certificate for completion of the required Commissioner training. It was done online through the, uh, link that Renee sent out and it's a good full six hours of fun. Um, with that being said, no other "Action to be Taken by the Board". No "Donations". Any "Commissioner Items"?

Commissioner Valdez: Valdez, none.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. Hearing none, we'll go on to "District Staff Items". Uh, Chief Steenbergh.

Chief Steenbergh: Uh, thank you. Good evening. Uh, number one on the list is I would ask the Board to uh, make a motion to accept a \$600 uh, donation from Friendly Ford that was presented to the fire department with the stipulation that it be used for personal protective equipment for our members.

Commissioner Adams: I move that we accept that donation of \$600 from Friendly Ford with the understanding as to use as described by the donor for personal protective equipment.

Commissioner Longi: I'll second it.

Commissioner Chiumento: Motion made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Longi. Any discussion? (PAUSE) Hearing none, all in fa...oh, we'll go by roll call. Commissioner Valdez?

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Commissioner Griffing, Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento is an Aye. Okay Chief.

Chief Steenbergh: Okay, thank you. Item, uh, item number two. Uh, we are finally at a point now where the portables that uh, we purchased uh, are rolled out into the field and we are in the process of collecting back the, uh, the old radios. That should be completed uh, this week and I would ask the Board to declare uh, 75 plus or minus of those radios as surplus and authorize the Chief to, to sell them. We own uh, right around 100 portables in total and the plan at this point is, uh, to keep a couple of them in service. The, uh, uh, the guys in the Shop, for example, don't need a portable that is several thousand dollars. They're going to continue to use, uh, the ones that we have. It certainly suits their basic communications needs and uh, they're not running into burning buildings where they need all of the additional features. We also want to allocate uh, probably a dozen or twenty or so, uh, radios to the technical rescue program and put them on the technical rescue trailers uh, in case we were ever, uh, deployed out of town we would have communication amongst the team members. So what I'm looking for is authorization uh, to sell the remaining ones after we have uh, skimmed off the top, the numbers that we need for continued use. And, I estimate that to be around 75 units.

Commissioner Chiumento: Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Adams: I move that we declare as surplus the radios formally used by the District and the number determined by the Chief uh, with the Chief retaining those he thinks are useful for continued use.

Commissioner Longi: Seconded it.

Commissioner Chiumento: Motion made by Commissioner Adams, seconded by Commissioner Longi. Um, any further discussion?

Commissioner Longi: I just wondered, how much he thinks the old radios are worth.

Chief Steenbergh: Uh, I think they're probably in the hundred or two-hundred dollar range, someplace like that.

Commissioner Longi: Okay.

Chief Steenbergh: And, there are a number of local departments who have reached out to me and expressed an interest so uh, (Commissioner Longi: okay, great), a fair number of them should go fairly easily. Um, and uh, I don't think it'll be hard to get rid of all of them over time.

Commissioner Longi: Thank you.

(PAUSE)

District Secretary O'Neill: Ralph, you have to unmute yourself again.

Commissioner Chiumento: I'll do a roll call. Commissioner Valdez.

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Yes.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento is an Aye.

Chief Steenbergh: Uh, number three on my list is, uh, I, I asked the Secretary to post and uh, had previously distributed to you a draft of the job description for the Personnel Administrator position. Uh, whatever discussion the Chairman would like to have on this uh, and then if you're so inclined to go ahead and approve that this evening.

Commissioner Chiumento: Motion to um, oh, do I hear a motion to approve the job description for the Personnel Administrator?

Commissioner Longi: (inaudible)

Commissioner Chiumento: Was that you Commissioner Longi? I didn't get, hear it.

Commissioner Longi: That I would, I would make the motion to approve (inaudible) as described it.

Commissioner Chiumento: A motion to accept. Is there a second?

Commissioner Griffing: I'll second that, Commissioner Griffing.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing seconds. Any discussion? (PAUSE) Hearing none, I'll call for a roll call. Uh, Commissioner Valdez.

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento is an Aye.

Chief Steenbergh: And I would ask, uh, I would ask for authorization to advertise for that position now and to solicit resumes and report back to the Board uh, as soon as possible.

Commissioner Chiumento: Would you like that in the form of a motion?

Chief Steenbergh: Uh, it's, it's your pleasure, Mr. Chairman. However you'd like, if you tell me it's okay, I will. I'm fine to go along with that.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, I'll make a motion to allow the Chief to at, umm, solicit resumes and or advertise for the position. Is there a second?

Commissioner Adams: Second.

Commissioner Chiumento: Any discussion? (PAUSE) Motion made and seconded. And I'll go through the roll. Commissioner Valdez?

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento is an Aye. Okay Chief.

Chief Steenbergh: Okay. Uh, next on the list is just to give you an update on, on where the Fire District is in terms of COVID and our response. Umm, the Fire District, uh, you voted tonight on the donation from Ford, uh, from Friendly Ford and uh, that's the only donation that we have received that was a cash donation. Uh, I have previously, uh, discussed donations of uh, materials that were uh, given to us by Vassar College and some of the local physicians. Uh, we continue to, uh, send thank you letters and give those, uh, people who are so generous, uh, some public recognition on the on the Facebook page, on the District Facebook page, and thank them for that. Uh, there's also been, uh, uh, a rather substantial number of people who are making food donations and things of that sort to the on duty career staff and that's, that's greatly appreciated as well. We certainly appreciate all of the, the public support and the fact that members of the community are thinking about us uh, at, at the present time and again, uh, I acknowledge all of those, uh, with follow up letters and public thanks, uh, on the Facebook page or another public kind of forums. Like most of the rest of the public safety agencies in the County, uh, we are participating in the, in the birthday drive bys. Uh, we are now at a point where uh, we share our list every day with the Town police to be as coordinated as possible and on average, we are doing three or four of those a day uh, and they are,

uh, fit around, they are fit in around uh, other duties and, and uh, emergency calls, obviously. So, uh, there really is uh, little or no impact, uh, in terms of our daily operations. Uh, and I do think it is something that the public, uh, is, is very uh, appreciative of and uh, we will continue to do those, uh, particularly at the volume, they are right now there are, it's not impactful uh, at all in terms of the operation. Uh, now that it's early May, uh, and the numbers, uh the response numbers are starting to drop off precipitously. Um, in the month of, in the month of March, 13% of our calls were either suspected or confirmed COVID patients. Uh, in the month of April, that shot up to 26%, just within that short period of time. Uh, it doubled and then so far, uh, just in the first, the first couple days of May here now it has dropped down to single digits. Which certainly would seem to follow the trends that, that are published, uh, by the County Executive and the things that are reported in both the local and, and, national media. So certainly, uh, our local experience is uh, in line with, with, everybody else that perhaps for us, the worst has passed. Um, on, on the other hand, you know, we have to be uh, mindful of the fact that in the last couple days, two firefighters in Westchester County died in the line of duty from COVID related illness. So, uh, it is still out there, it is still attacking first responders and uh, while I think it's reasonable to start talking about the future and looking towards what we do next uh, in moving back towards, uh, the way things used to be in the past, we can't ignore the fact that uh, not all that far from us, people, uh, in the fire service are still dying, uh, from COVID-19. So, uh, at this point, uh, I've been in discussions with the training department. Uh, we're going to start this week with some outside hands on training with the probationary firefighters. Um, the, the weather, hopefully, towards the end of this week is going to start, uh, cooperating and uh, provided that uh, you know that goes well and we don't have any problems and, and, uh, there are no real spikes or new concerns about any levels of virus in the community, uh, probably next week we will start uh, with some hands on training again for the on duty crews and we're going to take it slowly and kind of crawl before we run. Uh, we'll do some outside things with just two companies, kind of North and South, and uh, we're going to, we're going to, just kind of feel our way forward with this so that we don't, uh, uh, don't lose ground on what I think is an excellent track record. The guys have done a tremendous job keeping the virus out of the firehouse. We've had, you know, very fortunately only three or four people actually contract COVID-19 through, uh, the duration of this entire, uh, incident and out of the people who have gotten sick, uh, no one has required any hospitalization. So I think that's a testament to, to, how hard the guys are working uh, in terms of, of, uh, situational awareness and wearing the gear properly and decontaminating uh, themselves in their equipment and disinfecting the stations and all of those things. Uh, we have not all stayed healthy by accident, that people have worked really hard uh, at keeping each other healthy and uh, I, uh, think they should be commended, uh, for that. Um, and then the last thing I want to say in terms of the COVID-19, um, you know we, we still anxiously await, uh, some information from the Fire Academies about when the, uh, State training, the Fire Academy training is going to start back up again. We still have three people that we need to get to academies. Uh, you know, they've been working full time with, with, the training department and uh, they're going to be certainly ahead of the curve when they go to class because so much of the material has already been covered by, by the people in the, in the Training Bureau. But we anxiously await the State, uh, starting this training back up again, uh, so that we can get these guys through the academy and, and, online as quickly as

possible. And then the last thing I have, is, is just to advise you that we had applied for a grant to replace the washing machine at Headquarters and we did receive a letter that we were not awarded that grant. So, uh, we will have to revisit that topic another night. I mean, it's still, it's still dying. We've been told by the repair people that it's, you know, not really cost effective, uh, to put a lot of money into it and have it be, uh, our primary washing machine. So, uh, we'll have to revisit that at some point future, but I wanted to at least report on the fact that we did not get the grant. And, uh, that's everything that's on my list for now, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner Chiumento: Thank you Chief Steenbergh. Um, Assistant Chief Philipp, do you have anything?

Assistant Chief Philipp: Uh, there was, uh, another second alarm fire since the last meeting on South Road. Uh, it was a quick knock down so it's a great job by both the career and the volunteers at that one. And, uh, everything else is moving along.

Commissioner Chiumento: Thank you. Um, Director of EMS Violante.

Director of EMS Violante: Hi folks. Thanks. I'd like to, uh, echo Bill's sentiments and uh, you know, he's right. That's by no accident, um, that we are staying really healthy. Our guys are doing a tremendous job with everything that they're doing in terms of patient care, using PPE and uh, decontaminating themselves, the station's, the gear and all that sort of thing. Uh, we are going to see a bit of ebb and flow of cases as, as, Chief Steenbergh indicated, uh, some of that's related to weather. Uh, you know, really nice days people get out and get together uh, and then afterwards, some of the numbers tend to go up. Um, and some of the social distancing, uh, pieces of become a little bit lax, uh, we'll start seeing some of that as well. But we're going to keep our eyes on that uh, and not change our operations, uh, you know, until there, there really is, uh is, as Chief indicated, some dramatic changes as well. Uh, and, you know, some vaccines are available and that sort of thing. Uh, we're good at the moment with our PPE and, and our disinfectant. So, uh, we're going to keep on making sure that, uh, we've got everything uh, that we need for our operations. Uh, we've been keeping up on, uh, seemingly weak changes to protocols and policy updates uh, and implementing those, uh, as those are available and as they change, uh, with changes to research and data as well. Uh, and we are, uh, you know treating every patient as if they're positive patient, uh, just to make sure that, again, our folks are safe, uh, and they go home safely as well, to their families. Uh, so that's all I have, unless there's any questions for me.

Commissioner Chiumento: Hearing nothing. Um, we'll go on to the Treasurer Jim Passikoff.

Treasurer Passikoff: I have no report, uh, for this meeting.

Commissioner Chiumento: No repor...(inaudible) AUD?

Treasurer Passikoff: Uh, I asked for an additional extension and I'm waiting to hear back from, uh, uh, Albany.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, so then we don't have anything to acknowledge. And, going further, we have no "School Requests". Items for "Executive Session".

Chief Steenbergh: Uh, Mr. Chairman. I have one item that would imperil public safety. And I have one item, uh, for collective bargaining and negotiations.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay, that's two total items for Executive Session. Does anybody have anything else? (PAUSE) Hearing none, do I hear a motion to go into Executive Session?

Commissioner Adams: So moved, Jon Adams.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams, is there a second?

Commissioner Griffing: I'll second, Commissioner Griffing.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. Roll call. Commissioner Valdez?

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento, Aye. Okay, into Executive Session we go.

Chief Steenbergh: Okay, so, Mr. Chairman, just give me a minute and for the people who are logged in as guests, I'm going to put them back into, uh, the waiting room, and then we will bring them back in, when you're ready to come out of Executive Session. So give me just a minute to do that.

(BREAK FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION)

Chief Steenbergh: Allowed back into the meeting and the recording is back on Mr. Chairman, whenever you're ready.

Commissioner Chiumento: Okay. (inaudible) seeing none as a result of Executive Session, if I take a motion to adjourn?

Commissioner Longi: So moved.

Commissioner Chiumento: Moved by Commissioner Longi. Is there a second?

Commissioner Adams. Second. Adams.

Commissioner Chiumento: Seconded by Commissioner Adams. (inaudible) Motion and seconded and all in favor? Commissioner Valdez?

Commissioner Valdez: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Griffing?

Commissioner Griffing: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Longi?

Commissioner Longi: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: Commissioner Adams?

Commissioner Adams: Aye.

Commissioner Chiumento: And Commissioner Chiumento is a Aye. So, thank you very much. Have a good night and we'll see you in two weeks.

Chief Steenbergh: Alright, thank you.

Director of EMS Violante: Good night.

Transcribed and respectfully submitted by,

Renee O'Neill
District Secretary