

EAST CLINTON FIRE DISTRICT
February 14, 2024

COMMISSIONERS MEETING–FINAL
Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE:
Stephen Forschler, Chairman
Thomas Bonanno
Kevin Fierro
Russell Tompkins

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:
Howard Shapiro

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:
Robert Simon, Treasurer
James Passikoff, Accountant (left at 7:13 p.m.)

Chairman Forschler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- From ShelterPoint dated 1/12/24 – Group Term Life Insurance Policy
- From Charles Schumer, US Senate, Firefighters Grant Program – Chief Estes copied.
- From RBC – Portfolio Review for 12/31/23 to 1/5/24 – Commissioners copied.
- From RBC – Global Insight – to Commissioner Shapiro
- From Paychex - NYS Labor Law Postings – to Mr. Simon for posting.
- Blanket Volunteer Firefighter Enhanced Cancer Insurance document – emailed to commissioners and Mr. Simon

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Bonanno and seconded by Commissioner Fierro to approve the re-organizational meeting minutes of January 10, 2024 as presented.

Commissioner Bonanno	Aye	Commissioner Fierro	Aye
Commissioner Tompkins	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tompkins and seconded by Commissioner Bonanno to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 10, 2024 as presented.

Commissioner Bonanno	Aye	Commissioner Fierro	Aye
Commissioner Tompkins	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

FINANCIALS:

A motion was made by Commissioner Bonanno and seconded by Commissioner Fierro to pay the bills per the modified abstract dated January 31, 2024 with the addition of voucher number 3954 for \$77.90 for the Fire Police meeting that did not happen due to anticipated weather.

Commissioner Tompkins	Aye	Commissioner Bonanno	Aye
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Commissioner Fierro
Motion carried 4-0.

Aye

Chairman Forschler

Aye

38-63 - Mr. Simon provided the final expenses with the total cost of the new 38-63 at the last meeting.

Budget Alignment - The budget will be aligned at March's meeting. As long as each major category is within the budget, you can choose, if you have line items that go over budget within the broad category, to make an adjustment to the budget to those accounts to bring them to zero. Chairman Forschler said we got dinged in an audit once for not doing that so we've been making that adjustment ever year.

AUD – Mr. Passikoff said the unfunded liability from the LOSAP program needs to be included in the AUD. That information won't be available by February 28th. Mr. Passikoff will file an extension at the end of February and should have the AUD by the March meeting except for the LOSAP number for the board's review.

Independent Audit – Mr. Simon will call the auditors to get that process started.

CDs – Mr. Passikoff has a call into two institutions to invest in – one BOCES uses and the one he will probably recommend. The problem with both is that NYS has not given them their seal of approval, but the state is not challenging anyone who uses them. They are basically investing in treasuries which is as good as you can get. One has been in business for about 35 years and that is the one that BOCES uses. Mr. Passikoff will have more information for the next meeting.

Forestry Grant – We paid the bill and we have the machine. Chief Estes will contact the forest ranger who will see that we have the machine and will then process the form needed to get the grant amount refunded to the district.

Financial Statement – Mr. Passikoff said this month is just a basic statement for the end of January since the year end isn't finished.

LOSAP – The Service Award Program 2023 records have been posted for the required 30 days with the posting period ending February 11, 2024 and the Sponsor Authorization Forms can now be signed.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins that Chairman Forschler be authorized to sign both the Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution forms and he read the authorization statement as follows: "I hereby authorize Penflex Actuarial Services, LLC, to use the data submitted herein about active volunteer firefighter Service Award Program 2023 records. Furthermore, I have reviewed the plan provisions detailed in the most recent LOSAP Report and confirm there have been no subsequent changes to the plan provisions. Penflex Actuarial Services, LLC, will assume there have been no referendums, resolutions, or other plan provision amendments unless notified otherwise. I understand this

data will be used to determine the funding requirements of the Service Award Program, the eligibility of participants to be paid Service Award Program benefits and the amount of benefits to be paid to such persons. I understand that if any of the administrative services provided by Penflex Actuarial Services, LLC, must be redone due to errors in the data submitted herein, there may be an additional charge payable by the Program Sponsor. I further understand that Penflex Actuarial Services, LLC, will not be liable for any errors in the calculation of the amounts due or payable from the Service Award Program Trust Fund which are the direct result of an error(s) in the data submitted herein.” The verbiage is the same on the Defined Contribution and Defined Benefit Plan.

Commissioner Tompkins Aye Commissioner Bonanno Aye

Commissioner Fierro Aye Chairman Forschler Aye

Motion carried 4-0. Chairman Forschler signed both the Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution forms and handed them to the secretary.

Active Member Roster – Mr. Ruffell is working on updating the roster which must include everyone’s drivers license even if they are not drivers. It was the recommendation of the board attorney that every member’s license should be on the license event notification system (LENS). If they ever decide they would like to become a driver, we will already have their driving history. We also need a copy of everyone’s driver’s license on file. Mr. Ruffell will have the AMR for the March meeting.

Car 1 Don Estes Monthly Calls: 7 Year to Date:

- Gordon’s will be here tomorrow to do the annual fire extinguisher inspections.
- 63 is in service and is going through organization changes. All the immersion suits and all the water rescue gear had to be added so we can respond expeditiously since 68 is shoehorned in the back of the firehouse.
- The drill this month will be on air bags. The evening drill is on February 20th and the day drill is on February 22. We will be starting on some of the required modules.
- An interesting call last month was to the Taconic State Parkway two weeks ago Sunday. Chief Estes said he has never seen anything like it in his 47 years. There were 20 MVA’s and 12 of the cars were totaled. We were called as mutual aid. Stanford and Milan were both involved. It was a Sunday afternoon with bad weather.
- There is still room for others in the class we took two weeks ago in West Clinton. The class is through Marshall and Sterling and is excellent training. Chief Estes advises anyone who hasn’t gone yet to go. It’s four hours of quality OSHA.
- Starting tomorrow night and every week going forward for at least an hour, Chief Estes is doing the standard operating guidelines working with the two lieutenants and the captain. It’s basic standard operating guidelines for all kinds of calls we get and it’s a great educational review for all members. It is an operating guideline, not a procedure.
- The siren is not working. They have been called to take a look. We may need to put an external antenna on the firehouse to get it working. We can live without it for a year. Commissioner Forschler asks about thoughts on the siren. Chairman Forschler said his thoughts are that if people in town are paying attention and hear the siren, it indicates

that there will be activity around this area so it has value in that aspect. Chief Estes agreed on that point and asked for a dollar number so he can get it fixed. He thinks it could be around \$500. Chairman Forschler said he is authorized up to \$2,500 so Chief Estes should let him know what the cost is.

- Annual driver certifications are going well.
- New pump is in that we got through the forestry grant. It will go on 63, not on 61, because of the size, etc. It is the logical place to put it.
- The old combi tool is going to the Tsatsawassa Fire Department.
- The gas meter is back in service so we still have two multi meter gas meters, one on the tanker and one on 12.

Car 2 – Jim Bathrick – Not present.

Car 3 - Chris Gammone – Not present.

Fire Policy - Jim Ruffell Sr. – Company President

- Mr. Ruffell asked to get 50 green vests for the company. Chairman Forscher said we don't have 50 members. Mr. Ruffell wants to get extra so we don't have to re-order every time a new member joins. Mr. Ruffell said the vests we have are not recommended to use on the roads directing traffic as they are not visible. The fire police class and other classes are suggesting lime green vests for visibility as well as the Dutchess County Sheriffs, NYS Troopers and the Fire Association. OSHA said the best color to use is white but white gets dirty. Mr. Ruffell said they are \$9 each at Harbor Freight. Chairman Forschler said he thinks we have about 20 active members and we would want to keep a couple of the vests on each apparatus. You will need the active member roster updated to know how many vests to order.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins to approve purchase of 30 lime green vests at \$9.00 apiece in various sizes. Mr. Ruffell said 20 large and then a few of the other sizes to include medium, extra-large, extra extra large. They should be bigger since they are worn over clothing and coats. Chairman Forschler said these vests need to be worn for visibility on any roadway on any call, not just for directing traffic. Chief Estes said if the road is totally blocked off, it's a moot point but if the road is open, then yes, the vests should be worn.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Tompkins	Aye
Commissioner Bonanno	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye
Motion Carried 4-0			

EMS – Susan deHaan

Monthly calls: 13 Year to Date:

- We are doing a CPR class on the February 29th for the entire company.
- We have been doing coordinated CME's with Milan rescue. The next class is Tuesday the 27th for trauma Tom Starks is teaching.

- Tomorrow we have Land Pro coming to do the fittings for the EMS turnout gear. This is in the budget. Chairman Forschler said before the purchase is made, the board needs to approve the expenditure. Ms. deHaan said we are doing the sizing and will then get the quote which should be available in March. The pricing went up 6%. Ms. deHaan is going to try to get some grant money to help with the expenditure. It's a good time to get some grant money from the county as the state is trying to make EMS an essential service as at present, it is not. There are five rescue squad members that currently make over 5% of the calls.
- Mr. Simon and Ms. deHaan have been asked to attend the Milan Rescue Squad polar plunge in Fishkill to cheer them on from the sidelines.
- Commissioner Tompkins asked about the status of mutual aid for Cornerstone since the ECFD letter was sent to the county. Chairman Forschler said a letter was sent and he had a conversation with David Alfonso from 911 in which he was explicit in that they were not to dispatch ECFD to Cornerstone and if they ever do, Dave Alfonso knows he will get a call from Chairman Forschler asking for an explanation. Commissioner Tompkins said he had a call from someone watching the Clinton Planning Board meeting and apparently, Cornerstone is trying to increase the population by 50%. Brian Dingee from West Clinton was there to answer questions about handling the increase in calls. Chairman Forschler said we sent a copy of the Cornerstone letter to Jerry Dolan, Chairman of the Town of Clinton Planning Board. We can certainly provide the number of calls we responded to in 2022 to Cornerstone which is not even in our district. Chairman Forschler said Cornerstone is in West Clinton's district and county is well aware we are not responding. Chief Estes said if the call volume does go up due to the expansion, the first dispatch is always to Northern Dutchess. Northern Dutchess covers Cornerstone if they have units available. If they have no units available, then the call goes out to West Clinton. If West Clinton has a unit available, they go out to Cornerstone which leaves West Clinton uncovered and, in that instance, we would be called to cover West Clinton. So while we are not directly covering calls from Cornerstone, we are impacted. Ms. deHaan said Cornerstone is asking for an increase to 99 beds.

Jim Ruffell Sr. – Company President

- We would like to use the pavilion to store the truck that we will be dismantling and using for parts. This is a donor truck that we don't even have the keys for. Chairman Forschler said it will be unsightly for a while – how long will it be there. Mr. Ruffell said probably about four months. We will put mats on the floor and it will be sheltered. There were no objections. The district will not insure it.

New Business:

Attorney – Chairman Forschler did not get a proposal from Terry Hannigan. Mr. Hannigan was clear he could not come to every meeting but open to attending when needed via zoom. Mr. Simon said he could subscribe to zoom for another year. Chairman Forschler will do a follow up call with Mr. Hannigan if there are no reservations from the board. Mr. MacLeod was doing at

least twelve other districts. At least two other districts have called Mr. Hannigan. There were no reservations from the board. There will probably be a fireman's service for Mr. MacLeod sometime in June. The board agreed to send a fruit basket to the MacLeod family.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins to authorize \$75.00 to send a fruit basket to the MacLeod family to express our condolences.

Commissioner Bonanno	Aye	Commissioner Tompkins	Aye
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Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye
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Motion carried 4-0. Chairman Forschler will get the information to the secretary to order the basket.

OSHA Webinar – OSHA has updated their guidelines which involves 600 pages to wade through. The commissioners and chief officers should be looking at this information. We need to understand it. There is a 90 minute webinar that provides an overview which we can all do together at the firehouse. Everyone agreed to meet on Tuesday, February 27th at 6:00 p.m. at the firehouse. The commissioners and chief officers need to attend. Pizza will be provided. Chief Estes will let the chief staff know.

Workshop – The secretary will send out a notice for a board workshop to be held on March 6, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the firehouse for the purpose of discussions regarding a new firehouse.

Website Improvements – Bob Simon signed paperwork for the website that is currently being used. Sometime in the summer he will switch to a new one. He found one for approximately \$20.00 per month. It's more flexible. Chairman Forschler said the existing website is difficult to navigate. There is much opportunity for improvement.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins to authorize improvements to the website at \$300.00 annually. Commissioner Tompkins said you don't want to buy the cheapest one. Chairman Forschler said it is a district website, people need to easily maneuver for information and announcements, and we need to provide links for easy access. Mr. Simon will provide a full report at the March meeting describing what is provided at the different cost levels of website improvements. Chairman Forschler, with the agreement of Commissioner Tompkins, withdrew the motion.

Grant Writer – Commissioner Bonanno said we sent in the pre-qualification application for the grant three weeks ago and we received confirmation. With that and the \$2,000 down payment, we can get a conversation going with the grant writer. The grant writer, Steve Densmore, said he will be looking to us to provide as much information as we can to write the grant. If we can all take a piece of the puzzle, we may come in under the 40 hours. The contract with the grant writer is for 40 hours for \$4,000. Chairman Forschler said we are paying for this grant writer once. We need to know if we can use the verbiage for this grant for other grant application. In other words, once we pay for this grant, is it our property to re-use. Commissioner Bonanno said the second part of this grant is for equipment so hopefully, we can re-use the verbiage.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Fierro to approve \$4,000 for a grant writer. We want to know if we are able to take this verbiage and wordsmith it to make it appropriate for other grants. Commissioner Bonanno will ask that question. The deadline for the grant is April 30th. Mr. Densmore said he can meet that deadline with the district's participation. Once Commissioner Bonanno meets with Mr. Densmore to find out what he needs from the district, he will provide an update. Everyone will get assignments and Mr. Densmore will put it all together and ask for anything we've missed. The contract is worded that he will work closely with the East Clinton Fire District. Commissioner Bonanno will find out if Mr. Densmore can attend the board workshop on March 6th at 6:30.

Commissioner Tompkins	Aye	Commissioner Bonanno	Aye
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Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye
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Motion carried 4-0.

Building committee – Commissioner Fierro asked if the plans prepared by McCormack's office were the property of the district? Chairman Forschler said he believes so – anyone looking at them isn't going to copy them. They were just a guideline. Commissioner Fierro said Butler has no interest in building a firehouse. Commissioner Fierro said he called Morton in Cobleskill. They said they would be interested but would like to see the basic plans to get an idea. He will send the plans. Chief Estes asked if anyone knows who built Falls Village firehouse? Morton built the metal buildings on the Millbrook Golf and Tennis property. They did say that this project may be a bit outside of their scope. The Lebanon Valley addition they did was 80 x 80. Commissioner Fierro said he will ask Morton to have a response back by March 6th.

Public Comment: - None

Chief Estes asked again if we know who built Falls Village. Chairman Forschler will look for the plans and if he finds them, will let Commissioner Fierro know who the builder was. Commissioner Fierro will follow up with Butler again to make sure they are not interested in taking on this project. Commissioner Bonanno has not seen the Falls Village firehouse. He would like to see it. Ms. deHaan will contact Falls Village to find out how to set that up.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Fierro to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Commissioner Bonanno	Commissioner Fierro	Aye
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Commissioner Tompkins	Chairman Forschler	Aye
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Motion carried 4-0.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be held on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the firehouse.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Warren, Covering Secretary
East Clinton Fire District Board of Commissioners