

MINUTES  
LAGRANGE FIRE DISTRICT  
SPECIAL/WORKSHOP MEETING  
7:30 pm FH2

4615

The 898<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Lagrange Fire District was held on March 24, 2009 at 7:30 Pm at Firehouse #2. Present were Commissioners Ziedan, Hines, Canero, Smith, Lantzky; Chief Barry Ward; Secretary Holzberger and firefighters.

Hines called the meeting to order and led the salute to the flag. Hines welcomed everyone and stated that this is a meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners held in public and not a public meeting. There will be an opportunity for public comment at least once during the meeting, and if time permits, a second opportunity later in the meeting.

**Sleight Plass Road Fire/James Baird Park Brush Fire-**Hines congratulated and thanked all the volunteers and career staff for their effort at the fire on Sleight Plass Road; it was controlled and stopped, as well as the brush fire at James Baird Park. Hines stated that on behalf of the board that this be conveyed back to the companies and staff that a job was well done.

**Parade Uniform Bid-** Secretary Holzberger stated that one bid was received at 12 noon on March 20, 2009 from Buckshollow Emergency Equipment. Hines stated that Lantzky and Ralph Francisco should review the bid to ascertain that it complies with our specifications, and the Board can act on it later in the meeting.

**Public Comment-**Hines asked for any comment or question from the floor. Bruce Duckwitz stated that he received a bill from Alamo despite the letter from Mr. Raines that he would not be billed. Hines suggested that Mr. Duckwitz calling Mr. Raines and if he is still not successful to please contact him (Hines) for follow up. Mr. Duckwitz stated that when the canvass letter is sent out for donations for the LaGrange Fire Department; he believes there should be some changes regarding statements that the service is provided at no additional cost to the taxpayer and it is part of the overall operating cost. Mr. Duckwitz stated that these statements should be removed as this was not the case in his situation. Hines stated that he understands Mr. Duckwitz's point; however, he stated that that situation is an extremely rare occurrence, and does not think that should be pointed out in that type of correspondence. Hines stated that our residents enjoy some of the EMS services in the county, in his opinion. However, like other districts, our resources are limited; we had 8 mutual aid companies at the fire at Baird Park at no cost to the taxpayer; and we would reciprocate if another district needed help, at no cost. The same applies to EMS; Arlington responds to us; if they are not available to it continues to Pleasant Valley. In your case, it was Pleasant Valley and Alamo responded. Hines stated that without changing state legislation we have this situation. Mr. Duckwitz asked if agreements could be made with the other Towns. Hines stated that was in process and looks favorable. Hines stated that to remove that statement from that (donation) letter would communicate the wrong message. Hines stated that we are all in agreement and would take the position that if there is a way we would address that with you.

Mr. Duckwitz stated that he had some questions regarding the Agriculture Exemption. Hines stated that in 2007 Ed Mulford was a member of this Board and is no longer a member. Mr. Duckwitz stated that it was stated in the minutes \$6 million would be re-distributed over the taxpayer. Rod Macleod (legal counsel) stated that the reference to the \$6 million was to the \$6 million fire district budget that would be re-distributed over the taxpayer base. Agricultural exemption if in place, would exempt certain land from being taxed fire tax. Mr. Duckwitz asked what the \$6 million is. Rod MacLeod stated that is the Annual Fire District budget. Chief Barry Ward stated that an assessment was done by the Town of Lagrange Assessor that determined the rate per thousand; the Town Tax Assessor would have that number. Mr. Duckwitz stated that there was an article in the Poughkeepsie Journal on November 18, 2007 that discussed the tax exemption for the farmer for one year. Hines stated that the exemption stays until this Board would attempt to rescind it. Mr. Duckwitz stated that there are over 4 million in agricultural exemption for the Domins; he would rather see the volunteers get the tax break. Mr. Duckwitz stated that the criteria for agricultural can be obtained. Lantzky stated that the farmers land was quote illegally taxed, and the thought process was to relieve this and it is up to the Town to police the criteria. Ziedan asked if it was a reduction in fire tax or an exemption. Hines stated that the rate is an agricultural exemption instead of residential. Mr. Duckwitz stated that the bottom line is that we are paying for what the farmer is not paying. Hines stated that if we give an exemption it goes to everyone; if it is taken away it comes away from all.

**Boot Drive**-Jim Broderick requested approval for a boot drive to be held on April 18, 2009 with a rain date of May 2, 2009. It is good public relations; we always say thank you whether it is a quarter or ten dollar bill dropped in the boot.

Lantzky moved to approve the boot drive, seconded by Ziedan and carried unan.

Jim Broderick stated that it would be held on Route 55 near McDonalds and M & T Bank.

Jim Broderick stated that he has done a little over 500 responses and recently received a warm jacket and radio which he would like to say thank you to the Board.

Jason Lopes, President of the Local, requests five minutes in executive session. Hines stated that we would take a break between regular and executive and he would meet with Lopes to determine if executive session is needed.

**Minutes**-Hines asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2009 minutes.

Lantzky moved to approve, seconded by Ziedan and carried unan.

**Correspondence**-Secretary Holzberger reported the following received:

\$32.00 check received for the Sale of Bike Helmets. Lantzky moved to allocate to the 2009 Misc. /Fire Prevention Budget, seconded by Ziedan and carried unan.

**Correspondence continued-**

Fuel Tax Refund checks-\$159.44, \$211.81, \$228.56; Ziedan moved to allocate to the 2009 Gas Budget, seconded by Lantzky and carried unan.

NYS Tax Refund check received for \$1069.06. Ziedan moved to allocate to the 2009 Personnel Services Budget, seconded by Lantzky and carried unan.

Rose & Kiernan check received for credit/refund of premium for \$12556. Ziedan moved to allocate to the 2009 Insurance Budget, seconded by Lantzky and carried unan.

Donation of \$100 from Andrew Bartoes. Secretary Holzberger explained that the check was made out to Lagrange Fire Company Emergency Squad. Canero stated that there is no emergency squad. Secretary Holzberger stated that any donations to the district are placed in the equipment fund. Hines asked the Secretary how other checks are handled when made payable like this. Secretary Holzberger explained that the bank will accept them. Ziedan stated that the funds should go to the company. Hines explained that the check is not made out to the company; and he had the Secretary check with the bank and the bank stated they would process the check. Lantzky stated that at the last meeting, we would agree to set up a budget account for covering ambulance bills (from residents such as Mr. Duckwitz). Hines stated we did have the discussion but did not vote on it. Hines stated in light of his discussion with Alamo, this may not be necessary. Hines stated that without the check being specific (as to who it is payable to) we should process as we normally do. Lantzky moved to set up a budget line item for covering commercial for residents who are charged. Legal Counsel Rod MacLeod stated that the District cannot reimburse individuals for commercial ambulance charges. Lantzky moved to place the \$100 check into the 2009 Equipment Budget, seconded by Smith and when the Board was polled the vote was as follows: Ziedan Nay Lantzky Aye Smith Aye Canero Aye Hines Aye The motion was carried.

**FOIL fees**-\$5.50 received in cash from Mr. Bruce Duckwitz. Ziedan moved to allocate to the 2009 Misc. /Fire prevention budget, seconded by Smith and carried unan.

Assoc. of Fire Districts, Dutchess County-minutes of 1/27/09 meeting received.

Reminder-Dutchess County Board of Elections 2009 Special Election on March 31, 2009

**Dutchess Overhead Doors**-maintenance proposal received; Canero to review

**Workers Comp**-follow up received from Mr. Danzig regarding our meeting on 3/12/09.

**VFIS**-Secretary Holzberger reported that there was paperwork that required the Chairman's signature- termination of inactive members (2 Yrs), disbursal and withdrawal form, invoice and post entitlement members (chairman's signature required). In addition, members who are over the age of 62, and applies for membership, there is additional medical information required as well as the possibility of not being able to get coverage. Rod Macleod to review the disbursal and withdrawal form.

**Bills-** Secretary Holzberger reported that the planner invoices are included in the bills submitted for approval. Lantzky moved to approve payment of the bills, seconded by Smith and carried unan.

Hines stated that if the Secretary cannot hear the vote, it will be recorded as an affirmative.

**Manitou Planner-** Secretary Holzberger reported that Mr. Jennings sent a survey for the Board's review and comment; he wishes to send this out to the membership and is waiting to hear from the Board to do so. Ziedan stated that the planner will send this out to the membership and if everyone would look at this and get back to him with input; he wishes to send this ASAP. Chief Barry Ward to review and get back to the planner.

**Annual Inspection Dinner-**Lantzky moved to authorize payment of the \$500 deposit, seconded by Ziedan and carried unan. Secretary Holzberger reported that the cost of the DJ is \$900 and we are required to pay for this that night. Ziedan moved to authorize payment to the DJ the night of the Annual Inspection Dinner, seconded by Smith and carried unan.

**GYM-**Smith moved to permit the career staff use of the gym while on duty, seconded by Lantzky. Questions-Ziedan asked if a career staff member were to get injured while working out, would that be 207(a). Hines stated that the point is well taken. Lantzky stated that is a possibility, however if you don't work out, you will be more likely to hurt yourself on the fire ground. Hines stated that we have a motion on the floor. Lantzky asked if the motion may be amended to include the secretaries. Smith amended his motion to include the secretarial staff. When the Board was polled the vote was as follows: Lantzky Aye Canero Aye Smith Aye Ziedan Nay Hines Aye. The motion was carried.

**Windows-**Hines asked for a motion to obtain estimate for the replacement of the windows on the second floor of Station2; second part would be to get an estimate for some of the windows. Ziedan asked which windows; do they all need to be replaced. Hines stated that ideally they all should be able to be opened based on input he received. Ziedan asked who provided the input. Hines replied that the career staff and other employees in the building. Ziedan stated he does not have a problem with some of the windows being able to open, but doesn't think we need all of them. Lantzky stated that there are no more than six windows need to be replaced as the large picture windows would be a huge job to replace. Hines stated that is why he is asking for an estimate for all and some. Canero stated that we need to investigate. Hines asked for a motion to request an estimate. Canero moved to obtain an estimate for the windows, seconded by Smith and when the Board was polled the vote was as follows: Lantzky Aye Smith Aye Hines Aye Canero Aye Ziedan Nay  
The motion was carried.

Smith stated that he would contact a vendor to obtain an estimate.

**Snowplowing-**Hines stated that in a meeting with the Local the question of snowplowing came up-and asked if a motion is needed at this time. Smith stated this should be tabled.

**Flags**-Lantzky stated that our flags are worn out and ST.3 requested a replacement as it is torn. Lantzky stated that he has a catalog and there is a promotion buy one get one free. Lantzky moved to purchase a total of three flags which would yield three free, for a total of six flags, seconded by Ziedan and carried unan.

**Letter of Appreciation**-Lantzky stated that he wrote a letter of appreciation to the Ladies Auxiliary for their efforts at the brush fire yesterday. Lantzky read the letter. Hines agreed to send this letter out to with his signature on letterhead.

**Photo Id**-Canero stated that they are 50 % there; he is working with the company regarding software.

**Insurance for Ladies Aux**-Hines stated that it is a company issue, Secretary to follow up with our insurance regarding coverage. Are the Ladies on our policy now? Ziedan will contact Todd McNutt.

**Door FH2**-Smith stated that the door (for meeting room) still back ordered.

**Generators certificate**-Canero stated he believes we may have gotten them.

**Public Official Bond**-Secretary Holzberger reported that it is process.

**Grant writer**-Hines stated that he wishes to invite him to the next meeting to update us.

**ST.2 Storage/Window Blinds**-no report at this time

**ST.3 insulation**- Smith obtaining an estimate.

**2009 Vendor List**-Secretary Holzberger to send via email. Hines stated that he wishes to have it sent to the companies so that they are aware of whom we use. Canero has some updates. Secretary will send when the list is updated.

**Eyewash St1**-Lantzky stated that there is a problem and he will check it out.

**Training**-Lantzky stated that there was no mention of approval of FDIC. Secretary Holzberger reported that FDIC was approved at a previous meeting for four, however two would be attending and Southwest Airfare credit was used.

**Parking Lots St 1, 3**-Smith stated that the lights at St1 need to be looked at. St.3 lights are okay.

Ralph Francisco stated that the parking lot where street and lot meet are breaking up. Smith will contact the County regarding this.

**Town Website**-Lantzky reported that the information on the web needs to be updated. Hines asked Ziedan to follow up with Town. It was noted that the Town's website is under repair.

**Return to Work policy**-Hines reported that it is in process.

**Drug & Alcohol policy**-Hines reported that it is in process.

**Planner**-Hines stated that the report is set to be completed in May 2009 and we will continue with the endeavor.

**Letters of Appreciation for Chief**-Lantzky stated that letters of appreciation have been prepared for the former Chief and Chairman. Lantzky stated that they are lengthy. Hines asked for them to be sent to him for review.

Hines asked for a five minute recess at 8:40 PM. At 8:45 PM Hines called the meeting back to order.

**Chiefs Report**-Chief Barry Ward requested the purchase of additional gear for back up when gear gets dirty or is damaged. A lot of our older gear has expired and would like to purchase 25 sets of gear. Hines asked if it is in the budget. Chief Barry Ward stated yes. Hines asked for a motion. Lantzky moved to authorize the purchase of 25 sets of gear, seconded by Canero and when the Board was polled the vote was as follows: Lantzky Aye Smith Aye Hines Aye Canero Aye Ziedan Aye  
The motion was carried unan.

Ziedan asked the Chief to review the survey prepared by the planner and let him know if there are any changes; we need to get back to the planner by Friday.

Chief Barry Ward stated that he has met with the individuals regarding responding to calls while on 207(a). Hines stated that he is aware of the situation and asked the Board if they need any further information. Chief Barry Ward stated that he would provide that in executive session if requested.

**Uniforms**-Ralph Francisco stated that the cost of the braid on the sleeve is determined by size and thickness that we select. (On class A). He also stated that the work uniform prices were submitted. The prices seem to be fair. Hines asked if that is in compliance with the specifications. Ralph Francisco stated it is. Hines asked for a motion from the Board to purchase parade uniforms. Smith asked if that price includes shoes and shirts. Ralph Francisco stated that everything but socks, caps, underwear and badges are included. Shields would need to be ordered for the hats and should match the shield on the blouse. Canero stated that the problem he sees is that there are 60 uniforms outstanding now; what is the procedure going to be as far as control of the uniforms; are they going to be stored in a locked closet here or at someone's house. Ralph stated that he understood that this would be like other equipment and issued in the same manner- the member would be held accountable if it is not returned. Members on probation will have to return the uniform at the end of the event-cleaned. Members will have to sign for it. Hines stated that the function of the Board is to determine the expenditure; Canero is asking who is responsible for keeping track of the uniforms. Canero stated that answers the questions. Chief Barry Ward stated that we have the ability to track that data in Firehouse software. Ziedan asked what we do now to track gear-if it is lost. Chief Barry Ward stated that there is no repercussions-historically it has been a challenge. Ziedan stated that we need to look at. Chief Barry Ward stated that it is not a problem now; we have better control now more than ever. Ziedan stated that we need to hold them liable. Chief Barry Ward stated that we have been hearing about these outstanding 50-60 uniforms for that past 1—15 years; they are probably dust by now.

Hines asked who manages the bunker gear now. Chief Barry ward stated that we have it entered in Firehouse software by Lt .Lopes. Chief Barry Ward stated that we track everything now over \$250. Hines asked that parade uniforms now be tracked as well. Chief Barry Ward stated that Ralph Francisco can track the parade uniforms. Ziedan asked legal counsel, Rod MacLeod if a member can be held liable. Rod MacLeod stated yes. Hines asked for a motion to purchase parade uniforms. Ziedan and Canero asked how many do we need to purchase. Ralph Francisco stated 30; cost for blouse \$190 (jacket). Hines stated that we estimated \$16,000. Secretary Holzberger stated that there is only \$6000 budgeted for uniforms and badges; the funds would have to be moved from another budget.

Ziedan asked if we could discuss the work uniform. Ralph Francisco described it as follows: it has been spec'd out to match the career staff- blue pants, blue shirt with patches, boots, long sleeve shirt and izod style short sleeve, job shirt, belt and hat. Ziedan asked when this will be worn. Ralph stated that this would be worn at special events, such as Safety Day, and when on duty. We would purchase the uniforms gradually, as members come off probation. Ziedan stated that we need the cost. Hines stated that we needed to go to executive session and at that time the Chief and Ralph could calculate the cost and bring it back to us after our executive session.

At 9:15 PM, Smith moved to go to executive session, seconded by Canero and carried unan.

At 10 PM, Hines called the meeting back to order.

Chief Barry Ward and Ralph Francisco had reviewed the cost for the uniforms; Cost is \$429.36 per member which is a total of \$14000. (For 30). Hines asked for a motion for the purchase of these uniforms and where the funds would come out of to purchase. Chief Barry Ward stated that the funds would come out of the Equipment Budget. Hines asked if there are equipment needs. Chief Barry Ward stated that safety is of utmost concern. Canero stated we need to upgrade our scot paks. Ralph Francisco stated that the work uniform is a safety concern. Hines asked for a motion to spend \$15000 for parade uniforms. Smith stated that funds have not been budgeted this year; we should table for next year. Ziedan asked if the companies could come up with half-\$7500. Hines stated we should table until April 14, 2009 meeting. Ziedan stated that safety equipment is critical. Ralph Francisco stated that a work uniform is more professional to the public eye, and it would be a great morale booster.

Canero stated that speaking as Captain, the uniform would only be used for community events; Cody Vetter bought his uniform on his own. Hines asked for a recommendation from the Chief. Chief Barry Ward stated that he would like to see the work uniform. Ziedan asked if the class A shirt could be worn at community events. Chief Barry Ward explained that the work uniform is 100% cotton; Dress uniform is polyester.

Smith moved to advertise for sealed bid the Class B uniform, seconded by Lantzky and when the Board was polled the vote was as follows: Ziedan Aye Lantzky Aye Smith Aye Canero Nay  
The motion was carried. Date for bid opening is April 28, 2009 at 7:30 PM.

**Deputy Chief**-Smith stated that we discussed with Legal counsel and Dutchess County Department of Personnel regarding creating a second Deputy Chief position and upon notification of the current Deputy Chief's retirement, we would dissolve the position, and Smith moved that Barry Ward be appointed Deputy Chief on April 1, 2009, and when the Board was polled the vote was as follows: Ziedan Nay Canero Aye Lantzky Aye Hines Aye Smith Aye.  
The motion was carried.

Ziedan stated that he wanted it noted in the record that he received a letter requesting his resignation and he has refused that request.

There being no further business, Smith moved to adjourn at 10:30 PM, seconded by Lantzky and carried unan.

Respectfully submitted,  
Denise A. Holzberger, Secretary/Treasurer