



Arlington Fire District

11 Burnett Boulevard
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
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For Emergencies
DIAL 911

“Safeguarding Our Community”

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES August 21, 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 – (absent)
Director of EMS: David Violante
District Secretary: Renee O’Neill – (excused)
Treasurer: James Passikoff – (absent)

Chairman Dore opened the Arlington Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners’ meeting at 7:00 p.m., took a roll call of the attendees and everyone stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

At this time, Chairman Dore offered a moment of silence for Denise Holzberger, who was our Bookkeeper for 10 years who passed away on August 12, 2023.

1. PUBLIC HEARING – Property tax abatement for volunteer firefighters

Comm. Chiumento made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Seconded by Comm. Van Itallie.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

Chairman Dore stated that this is to clarify the language at the request of the Town of Poughkeepsie. There were no public comments.

Comm. Chiumento made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Comm. Longi.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

Comm. Longi made a motion to adopt the Arlington Fire District Resolution concerning the New York Real Property Tax Law (as outlined in the minutes below) Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

ARLINGTON FIRE DISTRICT RESOLUTION

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 (10%) 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; and

WHEREAS, RPTL §466-a requires that a minimum service requirement for each applicant be set between two to five years of service; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Arlington Fire District desires to adopt a resolution providing for such partial tax exemption on real property used as the primary residence of, and owned by, qualified volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers of their qualified spouse in accordance with the provisions of RPTL §466-a; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Fire Commissioners, as follows:

A. Grant of Exemption.

1. Residential real property owned by an enrolled member of an incorporated volunteer fire company, volunteer fire department, or incorporated voluntary ambulance service shall be exempt from taxation and assessments levied by the Fire District to the extent of ten percent (10%) of the assessed value of such property, exclusive of special assessments, subject to the requirements set forth in this Resolution.

B. Eligibility.

1. Such exemption shall be granted provided that:
 - a. the applicant resides in the Fire District, which is served by such incorporated volunteer fire company, volunteer fire department or incorporated voluntary ambulance service;

- b. the property is the primary residence of the applicant;
 - c. the property is used exclusively for residential purposes; provided, however, that if any portion of such property is not used exclusively for the applicant's residence but is used for other purposes, such portion shall be subject to taxation and the remaining portion only shall be entitled to the exemption provided by this Resolution; and
 - d. the applicant has been certified by the authority having jurisdiction for the incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department, or voluntary ambulance service as an enrolled member of such incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department, or voluntary ambulance service for at least two (2) years.
2. Proof of certification must be submitted to the Town Assessor, together with the application for an exemption, which shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
- a. The exact date the applicant became an enrolled member of an incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department, or incorporated voluntary ambulance service;
 - b. Proof of residency, shown through a valid New York State Driver's License, Non-Driver ID, or current New York State Car Registration; and
 - c. Proof of home ownership is required, as shown by a deed or certification of shares.

C. Grant of lifetime exemption and exemption for un-remarried spouses.

- 3. Any enrolled member of an incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department or incorporated voluntary ambulance service who accrues more than twenty (20) years of active service, and is so certified by the authority having jurisdiction for the incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department or incorporated voluntary ambulance service, shall be granted the ten percent (10%) exemption authorized by this Resolution for the remainder of his or her life as long as his or her primary residence is located within the Fire District.
- 4. Un-remarried spouses of volunteer firefighters or volunteer ambulance workers killed in the line of duty shall be entitled to continue an exemption or re-instate a pre-existing exemption claimed under this Resolution by an enrolled member of an incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department, or incorporated voluntary ambulance service, to such deceased enrolled member's un-remarried spouse if such member is killed in the line of duty, provided that:

- a. such un-remarried spouse is certified by the authority having jurisdiction for the incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department, or incorporated voluntary ambulance service as an un-remarried spouse of such enrolled member who was killed in the line of duty;
 - b. such deceased volunteer had been an enrolled member for at least five (5) years; and
 - c. such deceased volunteer had been receiving the exemption prior to his or her death.
5. Un-remarried spouses of deceased volunteer firefighters or volunteer ambulance workers shall be entitled to continue an exemption or reinstate a pre-existing exemption to an un-remarried spouse of a deceased enrolled member of an incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department, or incorporated voluntary ambulance service, provided that:
- a. such un-remarried spouse is certified by the authority having jurisdiction for the incorporated volunteer fire company, fire department, or incorporated voluntary ambulance service as an un-remarried spouse of such enrolled member;
 - b. such deceased volunteer had been an enrolled member for at least twenty (20) years; and
 - c. such deceased volunteer and un-remarried spouse had been receiving the exemption for such property prior to the death of such volunteer.

D. Application and no diminution of certain real property tax benefits.

1. Application for such exemption shall be filed with the Town Assessor on or before the taxable status date of each year (i.e., March 1, 2024, and March 1 thereafter) on a form as prescribed by New York State Commissioner of Taxation and Finance.
2. No applicant who is a volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker who by reason of such status is receiving any benefit under the provisions of Article 4 of the state Real Property Tax Law on the effective date of this Resolution shall suffer any diminution of such benefit because of the provisions of this Resolution.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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**

Re-approve Abstract 23-8A from the August 7, 2023 meeting. Incorrect dollar amount and number of checks were stated.

Comm. Longi made a motion to approve Abstract 23-8A. This consists of \$4,038.13 in paid bills with a total of 1 check and \$44,980.13 in unpaid bills with a total of 32 checks for a grand total of \$49,018.26, totaling 33 checks. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

B. Approval of Abstract 23–8B

Comm. Van Itallie made a motion to approve Abstract 23-8B. This consists of \$367,277.25 in paid bills with a total of 5 checks and \$78,410.04 in unpaid bills with a total of 34 checks for a grand total of \$445,687.29, totaling 39 checks. Seconded by Comm. Valdez.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

5. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

A. August 7, 2023 Board of Fire Commissioners’ Meeting

Comm. Longi made a motion to approve the August 7, 2023 minutes. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

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

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

1. Received August 4, 2023 from Glens Falls National Bank – “Investment Update”.

2. Received August 10, 2023, the 2022 LOSAP Annual Report.

3. Received from Glens Falls National Bank – “Statement of Value & Activity” - July 2023.

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*

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

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

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

11. **DISTRICT STAFF ITEMS**

A. Chief William Steenbergh

1. Reminder: the September BOFC meetings will be Tuesday, September 5th and Monday, September 18th.
2. School Fire Prevention schedule. Requesting approval of 108 hours of overtime to conduct the program at the nursery schools, elementary schools and to provide programs for home schooled children at ROM.

Comm. Longi made a motion to approve the Fire Prevention Bureau up to 108 hours for overtime to attend and supply the program to the kids in schools. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

B. Assistant Chief Eric Philipp – (absent)

C. Director of EMS David Violante

1. Congratulated Murray Hastie for obtaining his paramedic practicing privileges.

- D. Treasurer James Passikoff – (absent)
 - 1. Chairman Dore acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer’s July 2023 Financial Report for the District.

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. Jason Fisch: “Heavy Vehicle Stabilization”, September 30, 2023 at DCFTC. (No cost)

The following school requests require consideration by the Board of Fire Commissioners:

- A. Branden Benedetto: “Swift Water / Flood Rescue Technician”, September 7 – 10, 2023 at State Preparedness Training Center. (No cost)

Comm. Longi made a motion to approve. Seconded by Comm. Chiumento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

13. **ITEMS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. Chief Steenbergh – three (3) 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.

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

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

The Board adjourned to Executive Session at 7:18 p.m.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:40 p.m. and returned to Open Session.

There were no open items for discussion and/or approval as a result of Executive Session.

With no further business to conduct, Comm. Van Itallie made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Comm. Chimento.

- Motion Carried, 5 – 0 – 0

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee O’Neill
District Secretary



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING PUBLIC ATTENDANCE SHEET

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.

DATE OF MEETING: _____

8/21/23
