

Town of Watertown Fire District
Monthly Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2023

The April Monthly Meeting was called to order by Arthur Cooley at 5:35pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited by all.

Attendance:

Commissioners: Arthur Cooley, Michael Hanley, Meredith George, Warren Day and Brian Wilcox.

Secretary/Treasurer: William Bamann

Chiefs: None.

District Employees: Fred Sourwine

Guests: None.

The floor was opened for public comment. There being no one who wanted to speak, the floor was closed for public comments.

Communications: None.

Minutes: The minutes of the March Monthly meeting were provided via email for review/approval.

Upon a motion made by Arthur Cooley, seconded by Warren Day, and after a discussion held, the following resolution was approved:

Be it resolved that the aforementioned minutes from the March meeting are approved.

Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent		Recuse
Arthur Cooley	X					
Michael Hanley	X					
Meredith George	X					
Warren Day	X					
Brian Wilcox	X					

The Motion carried.

Bills and Treasurer's Report: Secretary-Treasurer Bamann presented the bills (see attached Abstract of Bills), financial reports, and Bank Statements. The Commissioners were reminded to review and sign the Abstract of Bills as well as sign all the Vouchers for payment. One Commissioner also needs to review and sign/initial the account reconciliations and Bank Statements.

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Upon a motion made by Michael Hanley, seconded by Meredith George, and after a discussion held, the following resolution was approved:

Be it resolved that the bills presented be paid.

Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recuse
Arthur Cooley	X				
Michael Hanley	X				
Meredith George	X				
Warren Day	X				
Brian Wilcox	X				

The Motion carried.

Upon a motion made by Meredith George, seconded by Brian Wilcox, and after a discussion held, the following resolution was approved:

Be it resolved that The Rec Hall event request (attached) for April 29, 2023 is approved.

Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recuse
Arthur Cooley	X				
Michael Hanley	X				
Meredith George	X				
Warren Day	X				
Brian Wilcox	X				

The Motion carried.

Chief's Report: See Chief's Report attached. Fred Sourwine noted that the Chief is on an extended Leave of Absence due to medical issues and First Assistant Chief Ron Wareham is Acting Chief.

Employee's Report: Fred Sourwine did not have time to prepare a written report as he just returned from vacation. There were no extraordinary occurrences since last meeting. Routine repairs and maintenance to the buildings and apparatus occurred. Items from the Chief's Budget were ordered and have started to arrive.

Committee Reports:

The Paid Firefighter Committee met with Lawyer Bradley Pinsky to get clarifications as to hiring paid firefighters. Some of the issues resolved included:

- Up to five paid Firefighters can be hired before they must be "NYS 229 qualified"; six or more must be "NYS 229 qualified" regardless of part-time or full-time status.
- We use the same job description for Firefighter even if they're not "NYS 229 qualified".

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- Any Firefighters we hire must have taken the civil service test from Jefferson County (and be on the County's list) or already be working as a Firefighter where the County can get the certifications from that person's civil service office.
- The Fire Chief will be the supervisor of the paid Firefighters. The District Manager could be the supervisor of some administrative tasks performed by the paid Firefighters.
- A Volunteer Fire Chief can be the supervisor of the paid Firefighters, however if there's six or more paid Firefighters, regardless of part-time or full-time, the Fire Chief must meet NYS qualifications for Fire Chiefs.
- We are never required to have a paid Fire Chief, but if we want to hire one, we'll have to go through the same process as for paid Firefighters.
- We are not required to have a Public Referendum to hire career/paid Firefighters, but we will be required to have a public referendum if we hire a paid Fire Chief.
- We can still have a District Manager along with paid Firefighters.
- A Fire Chief Officer cannot be a paid Firefighter. There are no provisions to override the law that says a Chief officer cannot be an employee other than a paid Fire Chief.

A discussion also occurred with the lawyer regarding other organizations using our training building as the City of Watertown recruit training wanted to use it and we stopped it. A hold harmless agreement should be in place and Lawyer Pinsky will draft one up for our use.

Secretary-Treasurer Bamann also reported the annual Audit was completed by Bowers & Company and presented to the Finance Committee. Bowers completed the Annual Financial Report Update Document (AUD) for the New York State Comptroller and submitted it on-line. The audit report findings (attached) were not any different than previous year's findings. The Fire District needs to update its agreement with Payroll by McWiz to ensure we know the exact costs of administering our employees' payroll.

Old Business:

The Fire District Manager Job Description is still awaiting approval.

The new HR policy and Union Negotiations are on hold until the disposition of the new job descriptions is finalized.

New Business:

Upon a motion made by Meredith George, seconded by Arthur Cooley, and after a lengthy discussion held, the following resolution was approved:

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Be it resolved that The Town of Watertown Fire District shall allow the Town of Watertown Fire Department to rent out use of the Recreation Hall at Station 1 to raise funds to benefit the volunteer fire department and shall charge no less than \$50.00 for Fire Department members in good standing, \$350 for Town of Watertown Residents (including members not in good standing), and \$550 for non-Town of Watertown residents and that Fifty dollars of the rental fee shall be refundable after the event as long as the Recreation Hall is left cleaned (floors swept, spills cleaned up, tables and chairs cleaned/wiped down, and trash removed). The Board reserves the right to collect the \$50 fee not refunded to cover the costs of its employees cleaning the Rec Hall.

Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recuse
Arthur Cooley	X				
Michael Hanley	X				
Meredith George	X				
Warren Day	X				
Brian Wilcox	X				

The Motion carried.

Upon a motion made by Meredith George, seconded by Arthur Cooley, and after a discussion held, the following resolution was approved:

Be it resolved that this meeting is adjourned.

Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recuse
Arthur Cooley	X				
Michael Hanley	X				
Meredith George	X				
Warren Day	X				
Brian Wilcox	X				

The meeting adjourned at 6:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,


 William L. Bamann
 Secretary-Treasurer