

Town of Watertown Fire District
Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2024

The April Monthly Meeting was called to order by Arthur Cooley at 6:00 pm.

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

Attendance:

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

Absent: Brian Wilcox

Clerk/Treasurer: absent

Deputy Clerk/treasurer: William Bamann

Chiefs: David Johnston Fred Sourwine

District Clerk: Fred Sourwine

Guests: David Roof, Wayne Scott Sr.

Duty Crew: Captain R. Wareham, Firefighter J. Lyndaker, & Firefighter K. Jones

The floor was opened for public comment.

David Roof addressed the Board regarding the Rec Hall and reported they netted some \$5,500 some 2023. The Rec Hall Committee is raising the rental rates to cover the costs to pay bartenders and he's not sure how to do this. Clerk Bamann sent him the insurance company's replies that our bartenders should do their training and document it for liability purposes and paid personnel need to be listed on our payroll for workers comp coverage. After a lengthy discussion, it was recommended the Rec Hall Committee should provide stipends in the form of gift cards and/or tips for their bartenders and ensure they are properly vetted and trained.

There being no one else who wanted to speak, the floor was closed to public comments at 6:35 pm.

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

Upon a motion made by Michael Hanley, 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 is approved.

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

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Brian Wilcox				X		
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The Motion carried.

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

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 on the attached abstract of bills 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.

Chief’s Report: See Chief’s Report attached.

Chief Johnston reported that we’re up to 20 part-time firefighters now working the night shift with some four others still needing to be vetted. He also reported we’re having a hard time getting firefighters to work the Friday night shift. With the change to First Due software, scheduling is becoming more efficient.

The Chief also reported the new KME Aerial Truck delivery is now postponed until January 2025 due to skilled labor issues. He’s still working with the Fleet Committee on a new rescue-pumper and as soon as there’s a demo to look at it, they will finalize recommendations.

The Chief reminded the Board of the new draft OSHA regulations that they should be aware of as it will put additional requirements on the Fire Department and likely increase costs make the requirements for volunteers more stringent.

He also reported that he met with our regional rep from NYSOFPC and we are doing well so far implementing our part-time firefighter program.

The Civil Service test results were published and he’s still working on the issue of how to proceed hiring anyone from that list.

Chief Johnston recommended the Board consider implementing another special tax district for the car dealerships and other businesses on US Route 11.

He also brought up new information from the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) on the 80/20 rule for paying stipends to volunteer firefighters (see attached). He would like to form a committee including the Commissioners on how the Town of Watertown Fire Department could implement this.

He also mentioned he is looking into purchasing another two pick-up trucks for the Chiefs per this year’s budget.

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District Employees Report: District Manager Sourwine reported per the attached notes as well as the Fire Department personnel changes.

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

Be it resolved that the members Merissa Lee (Junior member) and Brittany Myers are approved for membership.

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

The Motion carried.

Old Business:

The Draft Audit Reports (see attached) were emailed to the Board Members for review and Deputy Clerk Bamann reviewed the salient points.

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

Be it resolved that the Audit performed by Bowers and Company for the year ending 31 December 2023 is approved per the reports received.

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

The Motion carried.

New Business:

Deputy Clerk Bamann discussed the Length of Service Awards program (LOSAP) and presented the list of participants including those who qualified for 2023 (see attached). The board will need to approve the list of those who earned the award for 2023.

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 Board of Fire Commissioners approves the list of twelve members qualifying for the LOSAP award for 2023.

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

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Deputy Clerk Bamann discussed the New York State Deferred Compensation Program’s method of receiving funds using the Fast Pay system. As the Board previously approved participation in the Deferred Comp program last month, it is understood that we will have to use the Fast Pay system. The Board agreed.

Deputy Clerk Bamann presented quotes for approval of the following purchases: Uniform Job Shirts for employees, air filters for the heat recovery system at Station 3 and a new sign to be placed at the Spring Valley Drive entrance of Fire Station 1 (see attached).

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

Be it resolved that the three purchases per the three aforementioned quote packages 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.

The issue of having a Municipal Training Officer was discussed by the Chief and the Board to ensure our paid firefighters and volunteers are meeting state requirements.

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

Be it resolved that Captain Ronald Wareham is appointed the Municipal Training Officer (MTO) for the Town of Watertown Fire District.

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 Michael Hanley, seconded by Arthur Cooley, and after a discussion held, the following resolution was approved:

Be it resolved that the District shall purchase and provide appropriate refreshments (breakfast and lunch) for the Commissioners training on April 20th.

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

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Brian Wilcox				X	
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The Motion carried.

Upon a motion made by Arthur Cooley, seconded by Meredith George, and after a short 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 Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William L. Bamann
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer