

Town of Watertown Fire District  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
October 11, 2023

The October 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, Warren Day, and Meredith George were present.  
Michael Hanley and Brian Wilcox were excused.

Secretary/Treasurer: William Bamann

Chiefs: Chief David Johnston and First Assistant Chief Jason Lee

District Employees: Frederick Sourwine, Jessica Alvarado-Hudon and Justyn St. Croix

Guests: Nicole Meeker from Penflex Actuarial Services, LLC via Zoom.

The floor was opened for public comment. Nicole Meeker presented the change that McNeil and Company is implementing to change management of the LOSAP program from Ascensus Trust to Penflex Actuarial Services, LLC. The Board is required to approve the change by resolution. Nicole presented the background behind the change, the timelines and benefits. McNeil & Company will be picking up the termination fees charged by Ascensus. She will be sending more information via email.

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

Communications: Reminder of the emails sent out regarding the Association of Fire Districts news and events.

Minutes: The minutes of the September monthly and special meetings were provided via email for review/approval.

Upon a motion made by Warren Day, seconded by Meredith George, and after a discussion held in that there were no edits required, the following resolution was approved:

*Be it resolved that the aforementioned minutes from the September meetings 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.

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**Bills and Treasurer’s Report:** Secretary-Treasurer Bamann presented the bills (see attached Abstract of Bills), financial reports, and Bank Statements (attached). 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.

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

*Be it resolved that the bills presented in the amount of \$61,291.69 be paid (see Abstract of Bills).*

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

The Motion carried.

Quotes were presented for the purchase of a back-rack system for the new Ford F-250 so that the emergency lights and antenna can be mounted on without damaging the body of the truck (see attached).

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 purchase of the back-rack system from Ziebart 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.

The Chief reported that the Fire Department is no longer being dispatched for medical calls as First Responders. The ambulance can still request dispatch for manpower as needed.

The Fire Department has formed a Recruitment and Retention Committee and it is meeting tomorrow evening to discuss ideas. Some of the ideas to be discussed include a Ride-along program as well as a QR code on all the apparatus that leads to the website. The Commissioners were receptive to these ideas but want to consult with the district’s attorney to develop a waiver form before someone is allowed to ride the apparatus.

The Chief also reported on the status of the new Quint and that the delivery date is now pushed out to the second half of 2024. He asked that the district’s attorney be consulted as to

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whether the performance bond has been rendered null and void and whether we can get our money for the bond returned.

The Chief asked the Board of Fire Commissioners as to the status of the tax reduction program for First Responders. The Board will have to follow up with the town, the county, and the school districts.

The Chief reported that the Burn Building is still being worked on with the plan of having it ready to conduct live burn training later this fall.

District Manager's Report: See district manager's report attached.

Frederick Sourwine also reported that 46-8-1 failed the NFPA aerial ladder test and needs to go to Syracuse for repairs to the electronics and hydraulic systems. The truck is safe to operate and still in service but doesn't meet all criteria required by NFPA for certification.

There was a question as to the status on the digital sign. It was reported that the work will require to go out to bid and still needs to have a final scope of work decided upon including locations.

There was a discussion on whether the District should have its own web page. Jessy has experience in developing web pages and will look into costs and options.

Fred reported that he is trying to send out periodic status reports as to the daily activities to the Commissioners and Chiefs to ensure open communications and information flow.

Committee Reports: The Paid Firefighter and Chief Committee met with the City of Watertown to discuss the option of contracting for an engine company response from the city. The City told the committee that its costs will be some \$1 million a year and depending on the number and level of calls and duration of responses, the costs could be higher.

Secretary-Treasurer Bamann reported that the draft Fire Chief Job duties form is at Civil Service for their review. He also reported that he asked civil service whether we can appoint the current employees to the Firefighter position on a provisional status.

Old Business:

The new HR policy has been updated by Jessy but needs to be reconciled with the current policies. She will send it out for review with those portions needing to be reconciled highlighted so the Board can decide on the final policy and approve it.

New Business:

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

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*Be it resolved that the Board of Fire Commissioners will go into Executive Discussion to discuss personnel matters.*

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 Board went into Executive Session at 7:45 pm.

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 Board of Fire Commissioners will come out of Executive Discussion and continue the Regular monthly meeting.*

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 Board came out of Executive Session at 8:05 pm.

Upon a motion made by Meredith George, seconded by Arthur Cooley, and after a discussion held that there's no other business to discuss, 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 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William L. Bamann  
 Secretary-Treasurer