

Fly Creek Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners
Monthly Meeting Minutes - DRAFT
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2023, 7:00PM

Present: Pam Deane (PD) (Treasurer), Keith Dickison (KD), Sam Hoskins (SH), Ed Kukenberger (EK), Cassidy Lent (CL) (Secretary), Betty Staffin (BS)
Absent (due to work): Christine Voulo (CV)

Present: Shirley Dickison, Caspar Ewig, Claire Kepner, Patti Schultz, Harry Winnie, Dianne Eldridge, Mary W, Liz Susman, Joan Kegelman, Christopher Kegelman, Connie Hobbie, Margaret Wolff, Mike Staffin, Eileen Kukenberger

1. Call to order - 6:59pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Presentation by John Clark. Website and Email suggestions
 - a. John Clark gave a presentation that included suggestions on website and email security. He suggested going through the county to see if they have resources we can use. He also suggested having a separate email that isn't linked to personal accounts. We could do this with Microsoft or Google, among others. A question was asked about tablets/Chromebooks and John thought this was a good idea. We thank John for coming!
4. Review and approval of January minutes
 - a. Addition of election results
 - i. Keith Dickison was elected to a five-year term
 - ii. Sam Hoskins was elected to a three-year term
 - iii. Ed Kukenberger was elected to a one-year term
 - iv. All five propositions were rejected
 - b. SH contacted AFDSNY, who sent copies of policies – must have these policies in paper
 - c. Policy on public comment – The board has the right to acknowledge people in audience during specified time during meeting, but outside that, there should be no comments. The Chief is to speak on behalf of the company unless there is a personal question. Expecting a civil discussion, and will not tolerate anything else.
 - d. Correction in the public comments section - AK asked that it read “HH made a statement in support of the Voulos.”
 - e. Motion to accept minutes with above corrections made by AK, seconded by BS; passed and approved
5. Correspondence
 - a. Safety recall on 2018 RAM 5500
 - b. Change of address to Fly Creek Fire Company – EMS
 - c. Kinsley bill
 - d. Otsego County Office for the Aging brochures
6. Treasurer's Report

a. Payment of Bills	
Firematic Supply (truck maintenance)	\$648.49
Sam Hoskins (misc)	14.00
Spectrum (cable)	275.94
Town of Otsego (truck fuel)	182.25
Fly Creek Post Office (misc)	114.00
Superior Plus Propane (heating fuel)	1339.32
NYSEG (electric)	408.91
Kinsley Group (building maintenance)	305.00
Putnam Pest Control (building maintenance)	35.00
<u>Hughson and Benson (insurance)</u>	<u>11,895.05</u>
TOTAL	\$15,217.96

b. Questions

- i. EK asked about fuel oil. There was much discussion about how best to go about this. It was decided that EK would call around to several different places, plus Superior, to get more information. EK to report back next month.

c. Motion to accept report made by EK, seconded by KD; passed and approved

7. Chief's Report: Chief Voulo

- a. January calls – 8 Fire, 16 EMS toned calls (8 in Fly Creek, 6 Cooperstown, 1 Otego, 1 Hartwick); the one in Otego was a mistake
- b. Working on updating our Dry-Hydrants to be compatible with our mutual aid departments
- c. Fixing in-house phone system
 - i. SH volunteered to work on this. Will get a bill from PD to get a number to call with the account number.
- d. Hribar Benefit Saturday February 25 at noon – Insurance binder will be provided before the dinner
- e. 3rd Thursday of the month is the fire advisory board, which conflicts with the Commissioners meeting
 - i. There was discussion as to when to hold this meeting. It was suggested that the board table this and come back to it next month. SH asked everyone to check their schedules to determine what works best for the majority.
- f. Reimburse Chris Kegelman \$375.32 for EMS training
 - i. This comes from the Chief's training budget
 - ii. Motion to reimburse CK made by SH, seconded by KD; passed and approved
- g. Fly Creek Fire Company has retained Terry Hannigan as the company's attorney
- h. Truck inspections – Where do we go? Trucks have passed inspections in the past, but were not really inspected.
 - i. SH, EK, and chiefs offered to ask around to see who could help. Will report next month.

- i. 75th anniversary of the Fly Creek Fire – Do we want to do something for the anniversary?
 - i. Chief Voulo brought about some ideas, but wanted to see what the board and public thought before bringing it to the company. After receiving approval, will bring to next company meeting and will report more at next commissioners’ meeting.
 - j. Motion to accept report made by KD, seconded by BS; passed and approved
- 8. EMS Report: Patti Schultz
 - a. Runs covered in Chief’s report
 - b. Meeting on March 8, no calls, attempted to go but was told to turn around because the county was already there
 - c. Discussed past records and run sheets and good record keeping
 - d. Motion to accept report made by EK, seconded by KD; passed and approved
- 9. Fire Police Report: Chief Voulo for John Phillips
 - a. John Phillips not here, at fire advisory board for us
 - b. Upcoming meeting at the county building
 - c. Motion to accept report made by BS, seconded by KD; passed and approved
- 10. Auxiliary Report: Shirley Dickison
 - a. CV is president until April, Adam Kantor is vice-president
 - b. Will be helping to clean fire hall on Friday night for Hribar benefit; Auxiliary will also be there to help on Saturday
 - c. Helped Chief Voulo retrieve free items from Otesaga give-away
 - d. Plan to clean out cupboards after benefit
 - e. Pancake breakfast in April
 - f. Motion to accept report made by BS, seconded by EK; passed and approved
- 11. Old business
 - a. Forensic Audit
 - i. SH has looked into this and found that best practices suggest an annual audit be conducted to protect all. SH proposed that there be research into companies who do this and make a decision at the next commissioners’ meeting.
 - b. Saving documents in file cabinets
 - i. KD and SH went through these, cleaning up; some records need to be kept for a certain period of time, per law. There is a retention policy for all records.
 - c. AFDSNY Annual Meeting May 18-20, Turning Stone
 - i. This is the annual meeting and leadership expo; \$125/day/person, \$150 for secretary, \$125/\$150 for treasurer
 - ii. Available if anyone wants to go
 - d. **N**ew member vote
 - 1. Shean Robinson – was a junior member, but recently turned 18 and now wished to become a full member of fire company
 - 2. Motion to accept made by BS, seconded by EK; passed and approved

- e. Request monthly equipment report with company minutes
 - i. This has been requested by the board and accepted by the engineer
- f. Resolution – Rescind Edward Hobbie Ban from the Fire House
 - i. Before voting of the resolution, CL read an email from CV pertaining to this resolution– See Appendix A
 - ii. There was quite a bit of discussion about this agenda item. After such discussion, the voting took place on the following resolution:

Notice is hereby given that the Fly Creek Fire District of Fly Creek New York, at a regular meeting held on the 16th of February and a majority of the Board being present, the following Resolution was offered by Commissioner Keith Dickison, seconded by Commissioner Ed Kukenberger

Whereas the Fly Creek Fire District Commissioners at a regular meeting on January 7, 2022 Banned Edward Hobbie from entering upon the Fire District property for unruly, threatening, and disruptive conduct and

Whereas the Fly Creek Fire District Commissioners in view of 37 plus years of service to the Fly Creek Fire District believe one year of sanctions has been more than enough punishment and

Whereas the ban was limited to further notification from the Board

Therefore, let it be resolved that the Fly Creek Fire Commissioners have decided to rescind Edward Hobbie’s ban from the Fly Creek Fire Hall effective immediately.

Votes:

Chairman Hoskins – Aye
Commissioner Dickison – Aye
Commissioner Staffin – Aye
Commissioner Kukenberger – Aye
Commissioner Voulo – Absent

- g. Policy Update
 - i. SH has been talking with Cathy DeLuca of AFDNYS and reviewing these. They are open to the public, the board is bound by these policies, and they are continually being updated. The board will follow recommendations and have a book with them along with commissioners’ signatures

12. New Business:

- a. Due to the NBT Bank issues with PD getting statements, SH proposed a motion to transfer fire district funds from NBT Bank to Bank of Cooperstown

- i. Motion to transfer fire district fund from NBT Bank to Bank of Cooperstown made by BS, seconded by KD; passed and approved

13. Seeking legal counsel

- a. SH has spoken with other districts, and about half have counsel, so he believes the district should have one. He has reached out to several attorneys. He will update at the next meeting.

14. Motion to rescind previous absentee ballots at elections of the Fire District

- a. Resolution – Rescinding Absentee Ballots

Notice is hereby given that the Fly Creek Fire District of Fly Creek New York, at a regular meeting held on the 16th of February and a majority of the Board being present, the following Resolution was offered by Commissioner Ed Kukenberger, seconded by Commissioner Keith Dickison;

Whereas the Fly Creek Fire District Commissioners at a regular meeting on September 17, 2021 adopted a Resolution allowing absentee ballots for Fire District Elections by 3 votes after extensive discussion and advice not to have absentee ballots and

Whereas in the 2020 Elections 32 absentee ballots were cast and in the 2021 Election 11 ballots (1 rejected for no signature) were cast and there was no impact on the result and

Whereas there is significant expense and time to properly conduct an election with absentee ballots therefore be it

Resolved, that the Fly Creek Fire Commissioners have decided to rescind the Resolution of September 17th, 2021 and effective immediately will no longer allow absentee ballots for Fire District Elections.

Votes:

Chairman Hoskins – Aye
Commissioner Dickison – Aye
Commissioner Kukenberger – Aye
Commissioner Staffin – Aye
Commissioner Voulo – Absent

15. BS made a motion to make KD co-chairperson of the Board of Commissioners. As it was decided at an earlier meeting that one wasn't necessary, this went no further.

16. Public Comments – limited to 3 minutes per speaker

- a. Waylon Cassell – What if you bring Ed Hobbie back and the chiefs leave, what happens to company, what can we do?
 - i. SH – We will cross that bridge when we come to it

- b. Claire Kepner – Wish to treat each respectfully and has seen worse behavior by other closely involved in the Ed Hobbie incident, should just blow over
 - c. Adam Kantor, first assistant chief – Would like to understand the correlation between moving banks and solving the issue of the person pulling the money
 - i. SH stated that the fire district will use a different bank so that there will be no confusion
 - d. Joan Kegelman –
 - i. Suggests that minutes go to town for their website
 - ii. Had questions about the money that was used to pay the January bills, as there was concern that there wouldn't be enough money from 2022 to pay those. Wanting to make sure all the money ends up back where it belongs.
 - iii. Asked if there was a thank you note done for the items from the Otesaga. There was not, so she will do one.
 - iv. The forensic audit was suggested since no audit has been done. There were no accusations made.
 - e. Troy Hight – being that Ed Hobbie is coming back, if he starts anything, would he get a warning?
 - i. SH – yes, don't care who you are, this can't be happening
 - ii. BS and KD both voiced that this conduct was unacceptable
 - f. Unnamed individual – Is EMS still going to calls even if you know county is going
 - i. Patti Schultz – yes
 - g. SH – As of February 10th, the mask mandate was removed from most buildings
 - i. Motion to remove signs on doors made by KD, seconded by EK; passed and approved
17. Next meeting: Thursday, March 9, 2023 if no conflicts
- a. Will discuss potentially moving date of future meetings for chiefs
18. Adjournment
- a. Motion to adjourn made by KD, seconded by BS; passed and approved
 - b. Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm

Respectfully submitted,
C. Lent

APPENDIX A: Email from CV, read during the discussion about rescinding Ed Hobbie's ban

Good afternoon,
When we met last week in the spirit of comradery and trying to improve relations on this board, many of us felt like we accomplished a great deal that night including myself.

Now we see a last minute agenda item added for the rescinding of Ed Hobbie's ban from the firehouse. With all due respect, I have included the chiefs on this email and they feel this an absolute non- starter as do I.

There is no reason for Mr. Hobbie's presence at these meetings- he cannot control his temper, has a foul mouth and threatened two board members last year myself being one of them. A police report was filed with the Otsego County Sheriff's office that he is not allowed in the building and Sheriff Devlin's office served him the notification from legal counsel which was Mr. Hannigan. That same notification was also filed with the Sheriff's Department.

He obviously did not learn from this and also tried to start trouble the night of the most recent district election by staring down my 19 year old son which was witnessed by election officials. Vincent Ruggiero is still a company member and Mr. Hobbie persisted numerous times to threaten, swear and bump into him intentionally at the post office even after he was banned from the building.

The fact that this has even been added to the agenda after the fact has caused the chiefs to possibly think about leaving the company all together as this a complete lack of respect towards them and the members of the Fly Creek Fire Company.

I would hope this was not intentionally added to the agenda since I am working this evening and knew nothing about it until I asked for an updated version today.

I would like this email read tonight at the board meeting in my absence and added to the meeting minutes.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,
Christine Voulo AEMT
Fly Creek Fire Commissioner