

EAST CLINTON FIRE DISTRICT

January 12, 2022

COMMISSIONERS MEETING – FINAL

Regular Meeting 7:35

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Stephen Forschler, Chairman
Kevin Fierro
Howard Shapiro
Russell Tompkins

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Mike DiGiacomio

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert Simon, Treasurer
Roderick MacLeod, Attorney for the Board, arrived at 7:45 p.m.

ABSENT:

Jim Passikoff, Accountant

Chairman Forschler called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Pinsky Law Group 14th Annual Fire & EMS Law & Management Conference, March 31 – April 3, 2022 - To Commissioner Shapiro.
- Two RBC prospectus – To Commissioner Shapiro.
- Ford Safety Recall – To Mr. Russell
- From Dutchess County Volunteer Firemen’s Association – Dues notice, Scholarship application, Firefighter of the Year application, and Brick application.
- RBC statement for LOSAP – Commissioners copied. Chairman Forschler noted the \$56,640 shows as deposited.
- Thank you card from Ulster Uniform
- M&T – Collateral Statement – Accounts are collateralized – To Mr. Simon

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Tompkins and seconded by Commissioner Fierro to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 15, 2021 as amended.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Tompkins	Aye
Commissioner Shapiro	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

FINANCIALS:

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins to pay the bills per the abstract (version 3) dated December 31, 2021.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Tompkins	Aye
Commissioner Shapiro	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins to accept the bank statement for the period ending on December 31, 2021 and in agreement with that noted on the balance sheet as put forward by Mr. Passikoff.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Shapiro	Aye
Commissioner Tompkins	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

FIRE POLICE: No representative present.

DEPARTMENT:

Cars 1 – Don Estes Monthly Calls: 9 Year to Date: 111

- The water pump is operating on 68 for decon – it will be going into service. As soon as the radio is in, it will be primary for ice and water and decon. We will notify the county. Chief Estes urged the commissioners to take a walk around the bay to get an idea of the maneuvering to get the trucks in properly.
- All drivers are certified on 68 since it is the main stowing place for the cold water/ice rescue equipment.
- We started the annual recertification for all drivers of all district vehicles.
- The drill is on 1/18 and is on cold water/ice rescue. All commissioners are welcome. It will be either at the pond at the church or over at the rec park.
- We are adding a new module to the six required modules which is vehicle operations. It is a critical part of the annual OSHA training and will be for all members.
- We are asking to be able to offer, not require, a defensive driving class this year sponsored by the district. Chairman Forschler suggested seeking a level of interest at the next company meeting and then we will move ahead accordingly.
- Classes are opening up well and we have members taking them. You need a New York number to register for classes.
- The LOSAP sheet is posted and there should be no surprises. He will encourage people to review it.
- The Company is attempting to spark an interest in new membership and encouraging residents to see the facility so we purchased smoke detectors and will give them away Monday nights, one per household. We are hopeful it is a good way to get people here to see the current facility and how inefficient the bays are to house the current apparatus.

Car 2 – Jim Bathrick – Not present.

Car 3 – Kevin Russell

- 68 and car 1 have tires and alignment.
- Car 1 has an appointment at Ford since the water pump is leaking and A-1 won't touch it since it requires a tool he doesn't have.
- Car 7 needs brakes. A-1 will take care of that.
- Hose test – We need to sign the quote Fail Safe sent if we want them to do the tests. Mr. Russell sent the email to Chairman Forschler. The hose test is done once a year, usually in July. They do the hose, hard suction, and ladders.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins to authorize Chairman Forschler to sign this agreement with Fail Safe to authorize them to do the fire hose test, the hard suction hose test and the ladder test not to exceed the amount of \$2,578.05.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Tompkins	Aye
Commissioner Shapiro	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

Support: Not present.

Membership – Not present.

EMS - Susan deHaan Monthly Calls: Year To Date: 189

- We went four times to Stanford in December. Totals for the year are 16 to Stanford and 35 for West Clinton.
- We received the iv pole for the stretcher and assembled it.
- The back-up battery for the stretcher is back ordered.
- The new ambulance is running great and is much more spacious.
- This month's drill will be on 1/25 and will follow along with the cold water/ice rescue drill, focusing on hypothermia, etc.
- In February we will do CPR at the BLS level and re-certify all members at the drill on the 28th.
- Ms. deHaan is still in conversation with DCC regarding the proposed contract as an affiliate with DCC about ride time.
- Zak Shapiro will be starting EMT classes at DCC. The class start date has been pushed back another week due to Covid. Zak has been a phenomenal asset already.

Future meeting sites – Everyone was agreeable to continue holding meetings here in the meeting room at the firehouse.

LOSAP – There are two forms this year for reporting to Penflex – one for defined benefit and one for defined contribution. The chief and secretary have met and updated the listings for each and they are ready for posting.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins that the board authorizes the posting as of January 13, 2022 and each commissioner will sign the sponsor approval form as presented.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Shapiro	Aye
Commissioner Tompkins	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

Treasurer's PC - Mr. Simon said his PC is very slow and is making memory errors. He tried to remove the old software and it is still slow and undependable. He can purchase a new laptop for \$550.

A motion was made by Chairman Forschler and seconded by Commissioner Tompkins to authorize Mr. Simon up to \$600 for the purchase of a replacement laptop to be used by the treasurer.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Tompkins	Aye
Commissioner Shapiro	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

Ice Machine – Chairman Forschler said in November, we declared the ice machine to be surplus and he posted it on Craig's List. Thus far, no minimum bids have been received.

Out of district application – Chairman Forschler said there is a person who used to be an active member of the district who now lives in Yorktown Heights but is in district every day as he works for the highway department in the Town of Clinton. The town allows highway employees to respond to calls during the work day. He is entitled to LOSAP points even though he is paid by the town. Per information forwarded by our insurance people, he would be covered by VFBL even though he is on town time. He can be paid by the town, attending a call, "working for us", and will be covered by VFBL. The secretary will put the insurance document in his file. He has assured us he can make the requirements for drills and other requirements. He is not a member of a fire department in Yorktown so he would have to be here to meet requirements. He has said he is willing to do that. Commissioner Tompkins said if legally we can do this, he has the skills and training which would benefit the department, and the town lets the men respond to calls, how is this anything but beneficial to the district. Commissioner Tompkins is in favor of this. Commissioner Fierro agreed with Commissioner Tompkins. Chief Estes said it looks good on paper but we have a lot of requirements that must be met as far as modules, drills, quick calls, etc. Yorktown is a heck of a stretch. Chairman Forschler said if he can't do this, he can't. If he can, we all benefit for it. Mr. Olson said there are no other town employees that are members of this company; they are all in West Clinton. Why doesn't he join West Clinton. It's a long way for him to go from town hall to East Clinton. Will they really let him come all by himself? If wants to get back involved in fire service, why not West Clinton? Chairman Forschler said he has roots here and this is where he put in his application. He is of

the opinion to see how this plays out. Commissioner Shapiro agreed we should give it a shot if he wants to try it. His application needs to be signed with a witness from the department then it will be sent to the sheriff's office for a background check. Commissioner Shapiro asked if he needs to refresh Firefighter One and Mr. MacLeod said there is no expiration on his training.

NYCOMCO radio proposal – Commissioner Tompkins said West Clinton got their own channel and they are paying \$1,000 for it. Stanford has their own channel too. Chief Estes said having your own frequency is more of a commonality than an exception and it's very handy. He does not agree with sharing a frequency with West Clinton or the town. He suggested asking NYCOMCO what it would cost to establish a frequency for East Clinton. It's a very good tool. We would need to find out how much it would cost to establish an East Clinton frequency and to re-program our radios. The town is out of contractual discussions. As stated, West Clinton has their own frequency which they paid \$1000 for and then they had to pay to re-program their radios. The \$500 is off the table. Commissioner Tompkins asked what is the advantage of having our own frequency. Chief Estes explained that when we have a fire, command requests a county frequency which the county delegates. It is a repeater channel on a county wide transmission. On the fire ground itself, you go to a non-repeater. Your own personal fire ground frequency is a non-repeater station and is not monitored or controlled by county. It's a great asset for informal internal communications. Certain protocols are required for county channels that would not be required for our own. It's also a great tool for drills allowing communication on who is doing what, getting what, and who's coming over. You are still monitored by the county. For \$1000 with \$500 to do radios, it's a great investment. Mr. Russell agreed.

Chairman Forschler said we need someone to do the legwork. Mr. Trzcinski has said he would help us write grants, etc. He has a lot of knowledge of radios. Chairman Forschler will ask Bob if this is something he would be willing to pursue. Mr. Russell said he will check with A-1 also.

ISO – Chairman Forschler spoke to Russ Craven from ISO regarding getting our ISO rating down a point to a point and a half and had a good discussion. Chief Estes is working on getting Dutchess County and 911 on one sheet. There is also water on wheels, a requirement that we need to be able to get water to the scene and be able to have 200 gallons per minute for 20 minutes. The tanker and the pumper satisfy this requirement. Russ Craven sent an equipment sheet and capabilities list for both vehicles that we will have to resubmit back to him. Mr. Craven's statement was if we get a 40% grade on these two vehicles, it will go a long way to lower the ISO rating for people in the district.

Chief Estes said he is looking for drill attendance sheets for 2021, manpower turnout for structure fires, potential structure fires and any mutual aid structure fires at which we have heavy involvement and how many people do we have responding to these types of calls. Heavy involvement means other than tanker support. He's looking for turn out on real

incidents and potential incidents. Chief Estes also added training on vehicle operations. Chairman Forschler will email those documents to Mr. Craven and we will keep working with him with the intent of getting the ISO rating down for the people in the district.

West Clinton – Chairman Forschler said there is still the ongoing problem with West Clinton and their inability to get off the floor and our continued support for their lack of effort. We had 35 responses to West Clinton last year. Chief Estes said between West Clinton, Stanford, Pleasant Valley and Hyde Park, 32% of our ambulance responses were out of district. So far in January, we had 11 ambulance dispatches and 7 were out of district. These are county wide issues. Chairman Forschler said from a staff perspective and fiduciary obligation towards our tax payers, are we doing the right thing letting this continue. He had a conversation with Dave Alfonso who is county car 2 in charge of dispatching for 911 (Dana Smith did not respond to his phone call or email relative to this concern) and explained the situation. Chairman Forschler said he was very explicit in our desire to continue to be part of the common mutual aid plan. We understand neighboring companies need us and we are in need of neighboring companies for structure fires and we want to be part of the county mutual aid plan for ambulance support. Dave understood. He stated that we would not be in any stretch of imagination the first district in county to state that we will no longer respond to neighboring districts for incidents where they are unable to get a crew together. He said if that's the way we choose to go, he would note that in the DC 911 call cards.

Chairman Forschler said 35 responses by East Clinton.....there is an inference that we in this district are responsible to cover their district because their plan isn't working which is not our obligation. If we let this continue, the residents are footing the bill and we are not satisfying our fiduciary responsibility to our tax payers. Commissioner Shapiro said it is putting our citizens at risk. Chairman Forschler said we have sent two communications to West Clinton. It was discussed at our last meeting to send a third letter which Chairman Forschler has not written. The situation just gets worse. Last week, East Clinton was dispatched for mutual aid to Pine Plains for the ambulance. Commissioner Shapiro said the county knows East Clinton is getting out so let them cover the whole end of the county. Do we legally have any recourse to put charges against another district? Mr. MacLeod said one district cannot charge another district for a mutual aid call. Your recourse is to tell 911 that you are not going on ambulance calls out of district. Commissioner Tompkins asked if we can specify West Clinton. Mr. MacLeod said yes you can. Mr. MacLeod said if West Clinton has an incident and can't handle it, they call mutual aid. Mutual aid is not there to cover a district that can't get off the floor. Other districts have pulled out of mutual aid to other districts due to too many calls. Chairman Forschler said we just discussed getting the ISO ratings down and to do that, we need mutual aid with West Clinton. For ISO, we don't need a contract with West Clinton. If we have automatic mutual aid for the impacted addresses, ISO will take that into consideration. Chief Estes said he thinks burnout is not applicable here. We are proud of our limited team and responses. He thinks we should try to resolve the situations with West Clinton and Stanford

one more time. Meet with their commissioners. Chief Estes and Ms. deHaan would be happy to go to any of the board meetings. Commissioner Tompkins said based on a discussion with a West Clinton commissioner, they have no EMT's in the department and were relying on paid people. Now they can't get paid people to come. Ms. deHaan said the new EMS supervisor for West Clinton was very vocal that he has been getting new EMT hires. However, their system is one paid EMT with a volunteer driver so the EMT could be sitting there with no driver. Chairman Forschler said we have heard this for at least six or eight months. How do we sit in front of our taxpayers and say 32% of calls are for out of district. Commissioner Shapiro said his perspective is that it is not a matter of if, it's a matter of when, we are in Pine Plains or Pleasant Valley or West Clinton tied upon a call and something goes out in East Clinton. Also, the fact that West Clinton won't acknowledge does not bode well for East Clinton. Chief Estes said there was one call to the drug center we were enroute to and got a call for a child in East Clinton and we re-diverted the ambulance and went to the P1. Two times or three times, we were off loading a patient at the hospital, got a call for East Clinton and made it. There is no incident in 2021 that has any stability in that comment. There is the factor that you are using fuel that the district is paying for to go on calls in other districts. Commissioner Fierro said he understands all points – should we be going, should we not be going. He does not want to see an incident where East Clinton is on a call for another district and something happens here. He thinks we should try one more time to meet with the commissioners – a bottom line, last stop meeting. Chairman Forschler said we can try but at one point, they did say they were unwilling to meet with us. Mr. MacLeod said all points are valid and he will add another – you will have to buy an ambulance sooner if a third of your calls are mutual aid. You could limit the calls you go on to be priority ones or priority twos. Commissioner Tompkins asked how many of the percentage falls into high priority. All agreed the vast majority is three and four. Chief Estes said it's a county, state and national problem to be short staffed. Commissioner Tompkins said if you eliminate threes and fours, you would lower your mutual aid calls. Ms. deHaan said the only risk is that what we have encountered in the past is the county may identify a call as a P3 or P4, we get there and it's a P1 or P2. Chief Estes asked the board to go back to the commissioners one more time. He said if we don't go to Cornerstone, it would alleviate a lot of this. More than half of the calls are to Cornerstone but he still thinks, before any action is taken, meet with the commissioners first. Mr. Olson suggested letting the West Clinton taxpayers know what is going on. Commissioner Tompkins said everyone has a shortage of personnel. He agrees with Chief Estes. Let's try to have another meeting involving both boards and both chiefs. We need to work something out. If we can't work it out, then stop Cornerstone and possibly, additional mutual aid. Chairman Forschler said if we cannot set up a meeting, we will start by eliminating Cornerstone and if that is not sufficient, we can consider further action. Ms. deHaan said the Cornerstone residents are transient and not residents of West Clinton. Chairman Forschler said people at Stewarts or on the Taconic are not our residents either.

Chairman Forschler will compose another letter to attempt to get a meeting set up between the two districts. This will be the third letter.

Public Comment: None

A motion was made by Commissioner Fierro and seconded by Chairman Forschler to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m.

Commissioner Fierro	Aye	Commissioner Tompkins	Aye
Commissioner Shapiro	Aye	Chairman Forschler	Aye

Motion carried 4-0.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be held on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Buechele, Secretary
East Clinton Fire District