

EASTCHESTER FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE EASTCHESTER BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
NOVEMBER 14, 2024

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Eastchester Board of Fire Commissioners held on Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., at Eastchester Town Hall, 40 Mill Road, Eastchester, New York.

Board Members Present:

Chairman Paul Carlo
Commissioner Paul M. Ranellone
Commissioner Anthony J. Lore, Sr.

Board Members Absent:

Commissioner Brian E. Keating
Commissioner Tony Cerasi

In Attendance:

Chief Brian Tween
Secretary Marissa “Isang” Smith

● ***CALL TO ORDER***

Action: 1.1 - Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Carlo

● ***SALUTE TO THE FLAG***

● **Treasurer Report**

Treasurer Jamie Hedstrom was not in attendance at the meeting and submitted the following report to the Board, which is available online at www.eastchesternyfd.gov:

November 14, 2024

To: Board of Fire Commissioners, Eastchester Fire District
From: Jamie Hedstrom, Treasurer
Subject: Actual vs. Budget Comparison, October 2024

The financials as of October 31, 2024 present a net budget deficit of approximately \$12K.

The budget transfers that were recommended at the September meeting have been made. However, additional budget transfers will be necessary at or before year end, including for GL 3413.1 Overtime-Firefighters, which has been exceeded as of Pay #20, GL 3416.1 Terminal Leave, GL 3060.2 Fuel and Electric, and others.

Funds allocated to 2024

Below is the current list of budget encumbrances for 2024:

Budget Encumbrances- Purchases initiated that won't be complete until 2024

Coats, Boots, Helmets- fully expended as of June 2024	\$69,000.00
Radio Equipment- partially expended May 2024	\$75,294.65
Hoses and Nozzles – fully expended Feb 2024	\$22,210.00
Fire Equip and Capital Outlay- Cruisers Division – fully expended as of August 2024	\$120,000.00
Fire Equip and Capital Outlay- Ladder Truck- expended March 2024	\$400,000.00
Total Budget Encumbrances	\$686,504.65

The majority of the budget encumbrances have been fully expended at this time, with the exception of the radio equipment encumbrance. I will work with the Chief to determine what budget encumbrances, if any, are anticipated for 2025.

The ladder truck has been delivered and paid for as of March 31st. The additional funding required of \$515,163.38 was appropriated from the unreserved surplus available.

Construction Projects:

Current Balance in Capital Reserve: \$373,944.45

Location	Vendor	Description	Cost	Remainder	Funding
Station 4	Vinco	Apparatus Floor	\$ 852,474.76	\$ 5,800.00	Split- remainder General Fund
Station 3	Highland Associates	Apparatus Floor- Architectural Only TO BE REVISED	TBD (was \$34,500)	TBD (was \$34,500)	General Fund

Other:

Treasury Direct Investments

We currently have \$8M invested in Treasury Direct Investments, in \$2-3M increments. Interest rates have decreased and are currently around 4.5%. We will continue to decrease our investments to cover operating expenses through our next tax collection in May 2025.

NYSHIP Updates

- We are waiting on NYSHIP to publish the 2025 rates, at which time we will notify contributing employees and those retirees paying the District directly (vs. through a pension deduction) of any changes.
- Medicare Part B reimbursements will be issued to eligible retirees in December. The 2024 standard Medicare Part B premium is \$174.70/month, or \$2,096.40 per individual for the calendar year.

New York State and Local Retirement System Invoice

Included in tonight's warrant is the New York State and Local Retirement System invoice for 2025. In order to take advantage of the prepayment discount, the invoice must be paid by 12/15/2024.

The invoice matches the projection previously provided, and is broken down as follows (net of the prepayment discount):

PFRS:	\$3,137,606
ERS:	<u>\$16,431</u>
Total:	\$3,154,037

Note that this amount represents a 15.86% increase in the District's NYSLRS contribution as compared to 2024. This amount does not exceed the budgeted amount of \$3,250,000.

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2024 - FY24 P&L
January- October 2024

	Total			
	Actual	Budget	over Budget	% of Budget
Income				
Use of Capital Reserve	188,847.00	188,847.00		
Appropriated Fund Balance	495,163.38	495,163.38		
Budget Encumbrances	1,546,849.08	1,546,849.08	0.00	100.00%
1001 Real Property Taxes	20,866,263.00	20,866,263.00	0.00	100.00%
2401 Interest Earnings	368,335.08		368,335.08	
2705 Miscellaneous Income	7,254.00		7,254.00	
2770 Workers Comp - Reimbursement	26,900.18	17,500.00	9,400.18	153.72%
Total Income	\$ 23,499,611.72	\$ 23,114,622.46	\$ 384,989.26	101.67%
Gross Profit	\$ 23,499,611.72	\$ 23,114,622.46	\$ 384,989.26	101.67%
Expenses				
1110.5 Outside Services	16,380.46	10,000.00	6,380.46	163.80%
1120.5 Fire Prevention	8,547.09	9,000.00	(452.91)	94.97%
1140.5 Payroll Processing Expense	8,569.18	9,166.70	(597.52)	93.48%
1150.5 Insurance	164,261.82	165,000.00	(738.18)	99.55%
1170.5 Other Miscellaneous Expenses	1,120.35	10,000.00	(8,879.65)	11.20%
1180.5 Education & Travel	2,294.84	4,166.70	(1,871.86)	55.08%
1200.5 Recruitment	0.00	4,166.70	(4,166.70)	0.00%
3010.2 Coats, Boots, Helmets	96,457.94	131,500.00	(35,042.06)	73.35% BE
3020.2 Tank Refills, Testing & Rep	5,087.35	16,666.70	(11,579.35)	30.52%
3030.2 Hoses & Nozzles	78,894.32	58,876.70	20,017.62	134.00% BE
3040.2 Tires	14,467.93	13,333.30	1,134.63	108.51%
3050.2 Gasoline, Oil, Grease, Etc.	31,667.47	41,666.70	(9,999.23)	76.00%
3060.2 Fuel & Electric	107,024.71	66,666.70	40,358.01	160.54%
3070.2 Telephone	12,171.47	45,833.30	(33,661.83)	26.56%
3090.2 Certiorari	24,972.98	60,833.30	(35,860.32)	41.05%
3105.4 Uniforms	50,725.85	65,000.00	(14,274.15)	78.04%
3110.4 Shop Equipment & Tools	2,583.20	4,166.70	(1,583.50)	62.00%
3115.4 Emergency Equipment	110,822.35	125,000.00	(14,177.65)	88.66%
3120.4 EMS Supplies and Services	12,745.36	16,666.70	(3,921.34)	76.47%
3125.4 Computers, Software & Internet	53,918.45	55,166.70	(1,248.25)	97.74%
3130.4 Office Supplies	6,187.36	6,666.70	(479.34)	92.81%
3135.4 Postage	980.59	1,250.00	(269.41)	78.45%
3140.4 Subscriptions	245.00	1,000.00	(755.00)	24.50%
3145.4 Association Dues	1,375.00	1,250.00	125.00	110.00%
3150.4 Elections & Referendums	2,051.70	0.00	2,051.70	
3155.4 Sewer Tax	12,994.04	14,000.00	(1,005.96)	92.81%
3160.4 Fire Training	36,000.00	36,000.00	0.00	100.00%
3210.3 Vehicle Maintenance	78,323.78	73,333.30	4,990.48	106.81%
3220.3 Radio Equipment & Maintenance	75,640.72	80,000.00	(4,359.28)	94.55% BE
3230.3 Ladder & Pump Testing	5,416.20	3,333.30	2,082.90	162.49%
3240.3 Bldg/Prop Repairs & Maintenance	161,444.17	133,333.30	28,110.87	121.08%

3410.11 Fire Chief salary	175,296.00	180,000.00	(4,704.00)	97.39%
3410.12 Assistant Fire Chief salary	155,073.60	145,833.30	9,240.30	106.34%
3410.13 Fire Captains salary	680,501.60	725,000.00	(44,498.40)	93.86%
3410.14 Fire Lieutenants salary	1,042,294.80	1,083,333.30	(41,038.50)	96.21%
3410.15 Uniformed Firefighters salary	4,717,529.72	4,833,333.30	(115,803.58)	97.60%
3410.16 Maintenance Workers salary	60,589.20	62,354.20	(1,765.00)	97.17%
3410.17 Mechanics salary	36,581.25	41,666.70	(5,085.45)	87.79%
3410.18 Treasurer/Secy/PT Asst salary	138,920.20	146,833.30	(7,913.10)	94.61%
3410.2 Fire Equipment and Capital Outlay	2,201,147.72	2,201,147.72	0.00	100.00% CAP/BE
3410.42 Accountants / Auditors fees	13,500.00	17,500.00	(4,000.00)	77.14%
3410.44 Year-End fees		0.00	0.00	
Total 3410.42 Accountants / Auditors fees	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ (4,000.00)	77.14%
3410.46 Consultants fees	1,500.00		1,500.00	
3410.465 Consultant Fees- Engineers	28,380.85	44,041.70	(15,660.85)	64.44%
3410.47 Professional Consultants fees	7,120.00	33,333.30	(26,213.30)	21.36%
Total 3410.46 Consultants fees	\$ 37,000.85	\$ 77,375.00	\$ (40,374.15)	47.82%
3410.49 Payroll Clearing account	67,845.43		67,845.43	
3410.81 Disabled Firemen salary -207A's	131,036.72	142,500.00	(11,463.28)	91.96%
3411.1 Holiday Pay	249,698.64	280,000.00	(30,301.36)	89.18%
3413.1 Overtime - Firefighters	881,990.63	691,875.00	190,115.63	127.48%
3413.12 Overtime- Training	0.00	0.00	0.00	
3413.13 Overtime- Sick Incentive	35,535.34	83,333.30	(47,797.96)	42.64%
3413.2 Overtime - Fire Prevention	35,783.99	33,333.30	2,450.69	107.35%
3414.1 EMT Training	13,343.00	16,666.70	(3,323.70)	80.06%
3416.1 Terminal Leave	367,449.66	307,000.00	60,449.66	119.69%
9010.8 NYS Retirement		0.00	0.00	
9020.8 Social Security	653,925.75	649,166.70	4,759.05	100.73%
9030.8 Payroll Tax - MTA	29,208.73	32,352.50	(3,143.77)	90.28%
9040.8 Workers Compensation	225,425.00	235,000.00	(9,575.00)	95.93%
9045.8 Life Insurance - Local 916	42,661.13	43,000.00	(338.87)	99.21%
9050.8 Physician / Medical costs	28,136.00	50,000.00	(21,864.00)	56.27%
9060.81 Hospital	3,070,489.27	2,923,166.70	147,322.57	105.04%
9060.82 Dental	140,000.00	140,000.00	0.00	100.00%
9060.83 Optical Plan - Local 916	48,000.00	45,000.00	3,000.00	106.67%
Total Expenses	\$ 16,462,335.91	\$ 16,449,814.52	\$ 12,521.39	100.08%
Net Operating Income	\$ 7,037,275.81	\$ 6,664,807.94	\$ 372,467.87	105.59%
Net Income	\$ 7,037,275.81	\$ 6,664,807.94	\$ 372,467.87	105.59%

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2024 Budget - FY24 P&L
 January - December 2024

	Actual	Appropriated for 2025	Actual + Appropriated	Budget-with Modifications	Total		over Budget	% of Budget
					Original Budget	Budget Encumbrances from 2024 & Mods		
Income								
Use of Capital Reserve	188,847.00		188,847.00	188,847.00	0.00	188,847.00	0.00	100.00%
Appropriated Fund Balance	495,163.38		495,163.38	495,163.38	0.00	495,163.38	0.00	100.00%
Budget Encumbrances	1,578,046.62		1,578,046.62	1,623,341.27	0.00	1,623,341.27	(45,294.65)	97.21%
1001 Real Property Taxes	20,866,263.00		20,866,263.00	20,866,263.00	20,866,263.00	0.00	0.00	100.00%
2401 Interest Earnings	368,335.08		368,335.08			0.00	368,335.08	
2680 Insurance Recoveries			0.00			0.00	0.00	
2701 Refund of PY Expenditure			0.00			0.00	0.00	
2705 Miscellaneous Income	7,254.00		7,254.00			0.00	7,254.00	
2770 Workers Comp - Reimb	26,900.18		26,900.18	21,000.00	21,000.00	0.00	5,900.18	128.10%
Total Income	\$ 23,530,809.26	\$ -	\$ 23,530,809.26	\$ 23,194,614.65	\$ 20,887,263.00	\$ 2,307,351.65	\$ 336,194.61	101.45%
Gross Profit	\$ 23,530,809.26	\$ -	\$ 23,530,809.26	\$ 23,194,614.65	\$ 20,887,263.00		\$ 336,194.61	101.45%
Expenses								
1110.4 Archiving Services & Exp	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1110.5 Outside Services	16,380.46		16,380.46	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	4,380.46	136.50%
1120.5 Fire Prevention	8,547.09		8,547.09	9,000.00	9,000.00	0.00	(452.91)	94.97%
1140.5 Payroll Processing Exp	9,509.23		9,509.23	11,000.00	11,000.00	0.00	(1,490.77)	86.45%
1150.5 Insurance	164,261.82		164,261.82	165,000.00	145,000.00	20,000.00	(738.18)	99.55%
1170.5 Other Miscellaneous Expenses	1,120.35		1,120.35	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	(10,879.65)	9.34%
1180.5 Education & Travel	2,294.84		2,294.84	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	(2,705.16)	45.90%
1200.5 Recruitment	0.00		0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	(5,000.00)	0.00%
3010.2 Coats, Boots, Helmets	96,457.94		96,457.94	144,000.00	75,000.00	69,000.00	(47,542.06)	66.98%
3020.2 Tank Refills, Testing & Rep	5,087.35		5,087.35	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	(14,912.65)	25.44%
3030.2 Hoses & Nozzles	78,894.32		78,894.32	62,210.00	20,000.00	42,210.00	16,684.32	126.82%
3040.2 Tires	14,467.93		14,467.93	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.00	(1,532.07)	90.42%
3050.2 Gasoline, Oil, Grease, Etc.	31,667.47		31,667.47	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	(18,332.53)	63.33%
3060.2 Fuel & Electric	110,131.30		110,131.30	80,000.00	80,000.00	0.00	30,131.30	137.66%
3070.2 Telephone	12,171.47		12,171.47	55,000.00	55,000.00	0.00	(42,828.53)	22.13%
3090.2 Certiorari	24,972.98		24,972.98	73,000.00	200,000.00	(127,000.00)	(48,027.02)	34.21%

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2024 Budget - FY24 P&L
 January - December 2024

	Total							
	Actual	Appropriated for 2025	Actual + Appropriated	Budget- with Modifications	Original Budget	Budget Encumbrances from 2024 & Mods	over Budget	% of Budget
3105.4 Uniforms	50,922.85		50,922.85	75,000.00	75,000.00	0.00	(24,077.15)	67.90%
3110.4 Shop Equipment & Tools	2,974.40		2,974.40	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	(2,025.60)	59.49%
3115.4 Emergency Equipment	111,177.25		111,177.25	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00	(38,822.75)	74.12%
3120.4 EMS Supplies and Services	12,745.36		12,745.36	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	(7,254.64)	63.73%
3125.4 Computers, Software & Internet	67,385.30		67,385.30	66,200.00	66,200.00	0.00	1,185.30	101.79%
3130.4 Office Supplies	6,430.36		6,430.36	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00	(1,569.64)	80.38%
3135.4 Postage	980.59		980.59	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	(519.41)	65.37%
3140.4 Subscriptions	245.00		245.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	(955.00)	20.42%
3145.4 Association Dues	1,375.00		1,375.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	(125.00)	91.67%
3150.4 Elections & Referendums	2,051.70		2,051.70	10,500.00	10,500.00	0.00	(8,448.30)	19.54%
3155.4 Sewer Tax	12,994.04		12,994.04	14,000.00	14,000.00	0.00	(1,005.96)	92.81%
3160.4 Fire Training	36,000.00		36,000.00	36,000.00	26,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	100.00%
3210.3 Vehicle Maintenance	79,390.30		79,390.30	85,000.00	70,000.00	15,000.00	(5,609.70)	93.40%
3220.3 Radio Equipment & Maintenance	75,640.72		75,640.72	135,294.65	60,000.00	75,294.65	(59,653.93)	55.91%
3230.3 Ladder & Pump Testing	5,416.20		5,416.20	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00	1,416.20	135.41%
3240.3 Bldg/Prop Repairs & Maintenance	165,502.70		165,502.70	155,000.00	130,000.00	25,000.00	10,502.70	106.78%
3410.11 Fire Chief salary	183,264.00		183,264.00	216,000.00	216,000.00	0.00	(32,736.00)	84.84%
3410.12 Assistant Fire Chief Salary	162,122.40		162,122.40	175,000.00	175,000.00	0.00	(12,877.60)	92.64%
3410.13 Fire Captains salary	708,251.20		708,251.20	870,000.00	870,000.00	0.00	(161,748.80)	81.41%
3410.14 Fire Lieutenants salary	1,091,831.40		1,091,831.40	1,300,000.00	1,300,000.00	0.00	(208,168.60)	83.99%
3410.15 Uniformed Firefighters salary	4,945,716.92		4,945,716.92	5,800,000.00	5,800,000.00	0.00	(854,283.08)	85.27%
3410.16 Maintenance Workers salary	63,474.40		63,474.40	74,825.00	74,825.00	0.00	(11,350.60)	84.83%
3410.17 Mechanics salary	38,850.00		38,850.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	(11,150.00)	77.70%
3410.18 Treasurer/Secy/PT Asst salary	145,523.40		145,523.40	176,200.00	176,200.00	0.00	(30,676.60)	82.59%
3410.2 Fire Equipment and Capital Outlay	2,201,147.72	500,000.00	2,701,147.72	2,702,997.00	520,000.00	2,182,997.00	(1,849.28)	81.43%
3410.42 Accountants / Auditors fees	13,500.00		13,500.00	17,500.00	17,500.00	0.00	(4,000.00)	77.14%
3410.46 Consultants fees	1,500.00		1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2024 Budget - FY24 P&L
 January - December 2024

	Total							
	Actual	Appropriated for 2025	Actual + Appropriated	Budget-with Modifications	Original Budget	Budget Encumbrances from 2024 & Mods	over Budget	% of Budget
3410.465 Consultant Fees- Engineers	28,380.85		28,380.85	52,850.00	65,000.00	(12,150.00)	(24,469.15)	53.70%
3410.47 Professional Consultants fees	7,120.00		7,120.00	40,000.00	90,000.00	(50,000.00)	(32,880.00)	17.80%
3410.48 Labor Consultants	0.00		0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total 3410.46 Consultants fees	\$ 37,000.85	\$ -	\$ 37,000.85	\$ 92,850.00	\$ 155,000.00	\$ (62,150.00)	\$ (55,849.15)	39.85%
3410.49 Payroll Clearing account	17,580.19		17,580.19			0.00	17,580.19	
3410.81 Disabled Firemen salary -207A's	137,255.18		137,255.18	171,000.00	201,000.00	(30,000.00)	(33,744.82)	80.27%
3411.1 Holiday Pay	249,698.64		249,698.64	560,000.00	560,000.00	0.00	(310,301.36)	44.59%
3412.1 Retroactive Salary	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
3413.1 Overtime - Firefighters	932,268.02		932,268.02	830,250.00	830,250.00	0.00	102,018.02	112.29%
3413.12 Overtime- Training	0.00		0.00	96,965.00	96,965.00	0.00	(96,965.00)	0.00%
3413.13 Overtime- Sick Incentive	40,136.14		40,136.14	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00	(59,863.86)	40.14%
3413.14 Overtime- Chiefs	563.13		563.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	563.13	
3413.2 Overtime - Fire Prevention	37,481.85		37,481.85	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	(2,518.15)	93.70%
3414.1 EMT Training	13,343.00		13,343.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	(6,657.00)	66.72%
3416.1 Terminal Leave	367,449.66		367,449.66	307,000.00	200,000.00	107,000.00	60,449.66	119.69%
9010.8 NYS Retirement	3,154,037.00		3,154,037.00	3,250,000.00	3,250,000.00	0.00	(95,963.00)	97.05%
9020.8 Social Security	682,875.48		682,875.48	779,000.00	779,000.00	0.00	(96,124.52)	87.66%
9030.8 Payroll Tax - MTA	30,518.54		30,518.54	38,823.00	38,823.00	0.00	(8,304.46)	78.61%
9040.8 Workers Compensation	225,425.00		225,425.00	235,000.00	255,000.00	(20,000.00)	(9,575.00)	95.93%
9045.8 Life Insurance - Local 916	42,661.13		42,661.13	46,000.00	46,000.00	0.00	(3,338.87)	92.74%
9050.8 Physician / Medical costs	29,816.00		29,816.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	0.00	(30,184.00)	49.69%
9060.81 Hospital	3,350,242.66		3,350,242.66	3,507,800.00	3,507,800.00	0.00	(157,557.34)	95.51%
9060.82 Dental	140,000.00		140,000.00	140,000.00	140,000.00	0.00	0.00	100.00%
9060.83 Optical Plan - Local 916	48,000.00		48,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	(2,000.00)	96.00%
Total Expenses	\$ 20,296,667.10	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 20,796,667.10	\$ 23,194,614.65	\$ 20,887,263.00	\$ 2,307,351.65		87.51%
Net Operating Income	\$ 3,234,142.16	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 2,734,142.16	\$ -			\$ 2,734,142.16	
Net Income			\$ 2,734,142.16	\$ -				

- **Chief Report**

Chief Tween submitted the following report:

Alarm Activity: 374

Fire: 9

EMS/Rescue: 212

Mutual Aid Given: 1 (FDMV)

1) I want to thank the members of L-916 for their participation in the October Halloween events. The District sends an engine with on-duty members, but the off-duty firefighters participation in handing out candy and entertaining the young residents helped make the Eastchester Town Hall Truck or Treat, the Tuckahoe Creepy Candy Crawl, and the Greenvale Elementary School Trunk or Treat even more successful. Thank you to all the members that participated.

2) The five probationary firefighters in the Career Fire Academy are on track to graduate the Fire Academy in mid-January 2025.

3) Vehicle and equipment maintenance is being done in house as much as possible by part-time mechanic Hank Henninger. Hank Henninger's mechanic report for October and Tim Dalton's maintenance report for October was emailed to the Board on 11/7/2024.

4) Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement activities continue with numerous plan reviews and inspections. October was Fire Prevention month and Captain Thomas Pintavalle and the members conducted fire safety demonstrations for over 1,500 students at the local schools. Thank you to the members that participated. The Fire Prevention reports for October were emailed to the Board on 11/7/2024.

5) Currently there is one member are out on long term absence and one member is assigned to light duty and is working with Isang on digitizing the Fire Prevention records.

6) I request the Board's authorization to hire Dragon Rescue Management to teach a course in Elevator Emergency Management Operations Level. The cost would be \$21,600.00 for six days of training divided amongst the four Groups, or approximately \$300.00 per member, each receiving one day of classroom and one day of operational field training. NY Presbyterian Westchester Hospital has agreed to allow us to use two of their elevators for the four field training days. The proposal was emailed to the Board this afternoon.

7) I request the Board's authorization to sign the Hazmat vehicle Intermunicipal Agreement subject to C&G legal and insurance company review. The IMA was emailed to the Board on 11/13/24.

8) As the holidays are approaching, I have a few safety reminders for the residents. Please use caution when cooking holiday dinners and keep candles out of the reach of pets and children. Do not park cars and trucks on leaf piles as vehicle catalytic converters get very hot and can catch the leaves on fire. Do not obstruct fire hydrants with leaf piles. Never use a power strip for a space heater as it cannot handle the higher amperage of the heater.

9) I ask the Board to close tonight's meeting with a moment of silence in memory of Volunteer members Joseph Henwood and Nicholas Ciampanelli. Joseph Henwood was a member of the Eastchester Fire Patrol Company for over 20 years, from 8/1/1955 – 3/11/1976. Nicholas Ciampanelli Badge #1407 was a member of the North End Hose Company for over 7 years, from April 13, 1961 – 5/16/1968.

Respectfully submitted November 14, 2024 by Fire Chief Brian Tween

- **Secretary Report**

Secretary Marissa “Isang” Smith submitted the following report:

Monthly District Secretary Report - November 2024

FIRE DISTRICT ELECTION

- Fire District Election materials are available on the Eastchester Fire District website (EastchesterNYFD.gov)
- At this time we have three candidates officially on the ballot.
- Thank you to the Election Inspectors who have expressed interest in working at our election. We are still in need of election inspectors, and another request will be sent shortly.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Social Media

- **October Activity:** 4 posts
- **Community Forms:** Continued work for After the Fire pamphlet project for website and for handouts. Spanish version for Resident Safety and Lithium Ion Battery Safety being prepared.

Website and Notices

- Ongoing updates to the website and review of social media records retention options.
- Collaborating with Chief Tween on an updated annual report for 2024 for the Eastchester Fire District.

FOIL OFFICER

- **October Activity:** Received 3 FOIL requests

RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER

- **Records 2024:** Preparation for relocation of the HQ 2024 records to Station 3 records room.
- **Ongoing Projects:** Continued work on organizing loose records and scanning projects

OFFICE - GENERAL

- Prepared the OML document for the November meeting.
- Updated and posted minutes on the website.
- Updated the 2024 resolutions spreadsheet.
- Performed regular office tasks including scheduling, billing, customer service, and staff support.

Business Office Recommendations

Subject **7.1 - Payment of Bills**

Recommended Action BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Fire Commissioners approves to pay the bills and vouchers as presented. The Board has been supplied with one set of bills, and one credit card bill. Chief Tween has reviewed all prior to the meeting, except certiorari claims and those specifically marked as reviewed by the Treasurer. The Treasurer has requested the Board approve the following:

Warrant 1- 11/14/24- \$3,533,005.48
Credit Card – 11/18/24 - \$1,964.86
Total: \$3,534,970.34

Motion by Chairman. Carlo, seconded by Commr. Ranellone
Aye: Commr. Lore, Commr. Ranellone, Chairman. Carlo
Final: Motion Carried

NOTES: Chairman Carlo addressed Chief Tween’s request to purchase on the box truck and proposal for the course for the Dragon Rescue Elevator Emergency Management Operations. Commissioner Ranellone and Chairman Carlo said they had no problem with either request. Commissioner Ranellone found it great that the county was purchasing the District and supplying several departments in the county. Chief Tween clarified it was for the Eastchester Fire District and Fairview Avenue, adding that they needed the trucks since the buses were not worth fixing. Chairman Carlo advised he would look at the proposals tonight and visit Chief Tween to review later.

Future Meeting Dates

9.1 - December 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM - Regular Meeting - Eastchester Town Hall - Courtroom

Comments from Local 916

Costanzo congratulated Lieutenant David Stupple on his promotion to Captain and Firefighter John Pinto on his promotion to Lieutenant. He also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Discussion on Station 3 Proposal

Chief Tween inquired about the status of the Station 3 proposal, noting that he believed it was already on the agenda. Chairman Carlo acknowledged awareness of two specific proposals concerning the floor and the archway.

Chief Tween clarified details about the proposal submitted to the Board:

- The company providing the proposal would hire a contractor if the Board proceeded with constructing an entirely new firehouse, with a fee of 8% of the total project cost.
- For repairs to the floor, the company offered a flat fee estimate of \$50,000. If the Board chose to proceed with the floor and archway design, an additional fee would apply for designing the archway.
- A contract for the floor design was signed a year ago.

Chief Tween outlined the steps required if the Board opted to move forward with only the floor and archway. He also noted that Station 3 requires additional upgrades. If these upgrades are deemed necessary, the costs would likely need to be bonded due to insufficient funds, which would require public approval.

Chief Tween emphasized the urgency of the decision, citing upcoming inspections and the potential risk of the firehouse being deemed unfit for use due to an unsafe floor.

Commissioner Ranellone asked if it would be possible to obtain estimates for both the discussed upgrades and the cost of building a brand-new firehouse. Chief Tween explained that the architects and engineers would not prepare estimates unless the District formally hired them, as the work involved requires significant effort.

Chief Tween recommended that the Board deliberate on how to proceed.

Chairman Carlo proposed deferring the discussion until next month and assured Chief Tween that a decision would be reached by then. Chief Tween noted that the engineers conduct inspections every six months.

Chairman Carlo reiterated that the Board would provide a resolution during the next meeting.

Comments From The Public:

Jeff Zuckerman (24 Bronx Street, Tuckahoe):

Mr. Zuckerman began by stating that everything he shared was true to the best of his knowledge. Mr. Zuckerman alluded to a potential solution to address what he described as the "juggernaut" of issues facing the Eastchester Fire Department. He expressed significant concerns about the Eastchester Fire Department's budget, particularly the unprecedented 14.4% increase. He highlighted that such a rise far exceeds what is typically seen in local governments, schools, or other departments and emphasized the long-term tax burden this could impose.

Mr. Zuckerman noted that the fire department's budget had grown by 30% over the past three years, comparing this to other taxes, such as school and county taxes, which took a decade to increase by the same percentage. He expressed frustration at the pace of the fire department's budget growth, warning that it could continue unchecked, leaving residents with little say.

Mr. Zuckerman asked if anyone believed the Board of Education wouldn't welcome a similar 14.4% budget increase or if police departments wouldn't find use for such additional funding. He pointed out that school districts are subject to a 3% tax cap and require a 60% supermajority to exceed it, while fire districts face no such restrictions. He criticized what he believes is the lack of oversight and accountability, stating that fire districts can raise funds without a cap or voter approval, creating an untenable situation for taxpayers.

Mr. Zuckerman alluded to a potential solution to address what he described as the "juggernaut" of issues facing the Eastchester Fire Department.

Mr. Zuckerman raised concerns about firefighter overtime, alleging it was treated as a guaranteed addition to firefighter salaries, which he found troubling. He criticized Chief Tween and Commissioner Carlo for failing to address the growing overtime expenses.

Mr. Zuckerman further accused Chief Tween of being eligible for overtime, a claim that Chief Tween clarified. The Chief explained that his eligibility was limited to specific circumstances, such as professional development. For example, if he needed to take Chief-level courses like Fire Officer 3 outside normal working hours, the Board had agreed to pay straight time for up to 60 hours of development. Additionally, overtime could apply if he were called out for mutual aid outside office hours, though such instances would be minimal.

Drawing comparisons to his own experience as a teacher, Mr. Zuckerman shared that educators are not compensated for additional work hours. He questioned whether the Board fully understood the implications of overtime policies.

Mr. Zuckerman questioned the medical call responses, noting that in Scarsdale, firefighters typically do not respond unless specifically requested by the ambulance corps. He shared a personal anecdote that, in his view, demonstrated unnecessary resource utilization by the fire district. During the discussion, Mr. Zuckerman became visibly upset. Commissioner Lore requested that Mr. Zuckerman lower his voice for a calmer discussion.

Mr. Zuckerman then recounted another personal story from a day he was golfing, during which his friends commented on the frequent sight of fire trucks passing by. This led them to assume there were multiple fires in the area, and Mr. Zuckerman stated they were rare. Mr. Zuckerman cited this as another example of what he perceives as unnecessary resource use by the fire district.

Mr. Zuckerman concluded by challenging the Commissioners, leaders and residents to address these systemic issues, calling for new candidates in upcoming elections to change what he described as unchecked spending.

Chief Tween explained the tiered response system for medical calls, established decades ago to ensure rapid response times for critical emergencies. He noted that firefighters are often the first to arrive on the scene due to their strategic stationing, emphasizing that minutes can mean the difference between life and death in cardiac or other serious medical cases. The Chief also pointed out that reducing fire department responses to medical calls would not result in significant savings, as personnel costs remain fixed.

Additionally, Chief Tween explained that the ambulance corps often handles multiple calls simultaneously, necessitating a tiered system to ensure firefighters can respond when needed. He emphasized that the district cannot rely solely on mutual aid. Chief Tween also addressed Mr. Zuckerman's comment about not hearing of many fires, explaining that this is because firefighters respond quickly and extinguish them before they escalate.

Chief Tween defended the department's financial practices, emphasizing their strategy of saving in advance for major purchases, such as fire trucks, rather than relying on bonding. He noted that this approach sets them apart from other municipalities, which often use bonds for such expenses. While he acknowledged that this method can lead to short-term budget spikes, he argued it prevents long-term debt.

Mr. Zuckerman returned to the podium to challenge Chief Tween's example of bonding and debt service, arguing that other municipalities manage to stay within 3% budget increases despite using bonds. He questioned the validity of Chief Tween's explanation, asserting it did not adequately justify the fire department's budget increase.

Chairman Carlo responded to Mr. Zuckerman, explaining that the budget increase was largely driven by rising expenses beyond the district's control, such as pension and healthcare costs, which accounted for 8.5% of the increase. The remainder of the increase, he clarified, was allocated to improve staffing levels for the safety of both residents and firefighters. Chairman Carlo further challenged Mr. Zuckerman's implication that the district was being fiscally irresponsible, emphasizing their efforts to manage the budget prudently and not simply pass costs onto personnel.

A discussion ensued between Mr. Zuckerman and Chairman Carlo. Chairman Carlo invited Mr. Zuckerman to attend the next meeting to address additional questions directly to the Treasurer.

Kenneth Simonides (144 Anderson Avenue):

Mr. Simonides, a retired firefighter, defended the critical role of firefighters in responding to medical emergencies, citing personal experiences where their swift actions saved lives. He expressed frustration with criticism directed at the fire department and highlighted the emotional toll such incidents take on first responders.

Addressing Chairman Carlo, Mr. Simonides inquired whether the Fire District receives a share of the sales tax similar to other municipalities. Chairman Carlo confirmed that it does not. Mr. Simonides noted that this sales tax offsets the budgets of other municipalities, making the Fire District's situation different.

In closing, Mr. Simonides announced his candidacy for commissioner, pledging to address these concerns if elected.

Ray Rooney (Channing Place, Eastchester):

Ray, a retired NYC police officer and volunteer firefighter since 1975, acknowledged the passion brought during the discussion and remarked he would maintain professionalism.

Mr. Rooney raised concerns about the cost-effectiveness of recent budget increases, requesting clearer metrics to demonstrate how additional funding has improved services. He questioned

what benefits the budget increases have brought to residents and emphasized that the board and chiefs are responsible for running the department in the residents' best interests.

Responding to comments made by Mr. Simonides, Mr. Rooney inquired about the department's vital responses. He shared that he had reviewed the department's website and remarked on its lack of updates, stating he could not locate specific documents dating back to 2022. He requested clarification on the website's features and suggested it be improved to enhance accessibility and transparency.

Mr. Rooney also addressed minimum staffing levels, noting he was unable to find this information on the website. Chief Tween clarified that the minimum staffing is one captain, two lieutenants, and 12 firefighters per shift, 24/7.

Mr. Rooney expressed concern about overtime, focusing on the example of a four-month period Chief Tween indicated when members typically take vacation. Mr. Rooney proposed that the scheduling process within the fire district be improved. He questioned the department's vacation scheduling policy, unsure if senior members have priority in choosing vacations like other departments. Assistant Chief Bruce Yozzo remarked from the public seating that disagreed with Mr. Rooney's comments. Chief Tween added that vacation picks occur throughout the year, with only a few openings in January and February. He clarified that coverage is also provided for personal days. Mr. Rooney suggested the department improve transparency through its website and reports to enable the public to make informed decisions about budgets and staffing.

Mr. Rooney raised concerns regarding the prolonged process surrounding Station 3 - Bronxville Firehouse, which has been ongoing for a year and a half. He reviewed the activities related to the firehouse, noting that an engineer had been paid to provide an assessment and approximate costs. He mentioned that the initial plans included opening the archway, but now there are discussions among some commissioners about replacing the firehouse entirely. Mr. Rooney questioned when the board would make a definitive decision to move forward.

He also referenced the lengthy six-year process concerning Chester Heights and asked how it was possible to continue with such delays. Chief Tween clarified that he had advised against closing two firehouses simultaneously, as it would leave no space to park an apparatus.

Mr. Rooney inquired about an apparatus he observed parked outside Chester Heights, suggesting it appeared to remain there year-round. Chief Tween explained that the truck is moved to headquarters when temperatures drop below 30 degrees to protect it from the cold.

Mr. Rooney pressed further, asking what the fire department's plans are to address the challenges of closing a fire station for renovations in Bronxville. He also requested clarification on the Chief's report.

Secretary Isang Smith asked Mr. Rooney to specify where he had been reviewing documents. She recommended that he refer to the "Documents" section of the website, specifically under *About Us > Documents*, to locate the Chief's report in the meeting minutes. Secretary Isang acknowledged Mr. Rooney's feedback and agreed that website improvements could be made.

Mr. Rooney expressed frustration over difficulties in finding financial and other documents on the website. He urged for better organization and accessibility of the information. Secretary Isang

thanked him for his input and committed to exploring ways to improve the website's document navigation and user experience.

Mr. Rooney raised additional questions about response times and the coordination of multiple units during emergency responses. He shared a personal story about a neighbor requiring medical assistance, where he observed a delay in response. He noted that a rig from North End arrived approximately eight minutes after the initial call, which he found unacceptable.

Mr. Rooney expressed concern about the apparent lack of coordination among multiple responding agencies and emphasized the importance of a tiered system where decisions about dispatch are improved. Chief Tween explained that dispatchers may not always have real-time information about the exact locations of multiple vehicles. Mr. Rooney interrupted, asserting that dispatch should have this capability.

Mr. Rooney stressed the need for accurate metrics when evaluating district performance and urged the board to expand data collection to make informed decisions about budgets, manpower, and staffing. He questioned the justification for budget increases without sufficient data and expressed concern about rising costs associated with staffing expansion. He proposed exploring alternatives, such as taking over EVAC operations or implementing other measures to manage costs for medical calls.

Chief Tween responded by noting that similar staffing models are used successfully in other municipalities. While Mr. Zuckerman had referenced Scarsdale as an example, Chief Tween explained that Scarsdale's situation is unique, as its budget does not include benefits like health insurance and pensions, which are funded separately by the village.

Mr. Rooney disagreed, stating that urban examples were not applicable to the town's model. He also highlighted the reduced use of volunteers since 2007, suggesting that re-engaging volunteers or finding alternative solutions could alleviate some challenges. He concluded by thanking the board for their time.

Mr. Zuckerman returned to the podium and shared his perspective as a former resident of Scarsdale, noting that there were no complaints about the fire service or ambulance corps in that community. He emphasized that Scarsdale covers a larger area than the Eastchester Fire District.

Chief Tween remarked that Scarsdale's fire department budget, while appearing smaller, excludes the cost of benefits such as health insurance and pensions, as those are funded by the village. Mr. Zuckerman interrupted, citing budget numbers of \$2 million for Scarsdale and suggesting that even if the budget were \$10 million, Scarsdale's larger area still makes it a valid comparison.

Chief Tween disagreed, explaining that the population size and other factors impact response needs and costs differently. Mr. Zuckerman countered that Scarsdale residents never complained about response times, emphasizing the importance of efficiency and community satisfaction.

Anthony Fiore (Tuckahoe):

Mr. Fiore, shared he was another candidate for commissioner, and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving to everyone. Mr. Fiore suggested seeking grants from state and federal sources, such as SBA programs or through representatives like Amy Paulin, to help offset budget increases. He encouraged collaboration with local mayors and supervisor during the budget process.

Mike Parisi (Eastchester):

Mike Parisi introduced himself as a former volunteer firefighter for the Eastchester Fire Department and a former EMT for the City of New Rochelle. Drawing on his experience, Mr. Parisi shared examples of the extensive territory they covered and noted that during his time, the fire department was transitioning to include EMT-focused services.

Mr. Parisi emphasized the significant benefits that EMT training for firefighters brought to the community, particularly given the limited resources available at the time. He recalled his involvement in the Valentine's Day Massacre in New Rochelle, highlighting the fire department's critical role in supporting the incident by deploying apparatus to the scene.

He also credited Commissioner Bell, who was the fire chief at the time, for his instrumental leadership in ensuring firefighters were trained as EMTs to save lives. Mr. Parisi clarified that the State of New York establishes the protocols for providing health benefits and pensions to firefighters.

Acknowledging the challenges of working in the fire service, Mr. Parisi remarked that it is a demanding profession. While he recognized that no one likes increased taxes, he expressed his belief that the value of emergency services justifies the cost.

Commissioner Lore reflected on his time serving in the National Guard and emphasized the importance of emergency response services. He recounted the tiered response system where ambulances often accompany fire trucks. Commissioner Lore, who also works for Scarsdale, praised the Eastchester Fire Department, describing it as one of the top departments. He reminded attendees that most fire services outside White Plains rely on volunteers and acknowledged the value of paying taxes to support professional fire services. As an example, he mentioned how Assistant Chief Yozzo resolved an issue with a fire hydrant covered by landscapers.

Commissioner Carlo brought up a 30-year-old report on Eastchester Fire Department staffing, which identified understaffing as an issue. He outlined three options presented at the time: take no action, close two firehouses, or address the staffing shortage. Commissioner Lore stated that as long as he is on the board, firehouses will not be closed. Commissioner Carlo added that

increasing staffing and budgets are critical to avoiding closures and ensuring safety. Mr. Parisi supported these points, sharing the benefits of tiered responses and the need to adapt emergency services to changing times.

Mr. Zuckerman approached the podium, expressing respect for firefighters but voicing concerns about the board's decision-making. He questioned the board's composition, which includes former firefighters. Commissioner Lore, visibly upset, asked for clarification regarding Mr. Zuckerman's comments. Mr. Zuckerman reiterated his concerns about rising budgets and contrasted them with teachers' limited benefits and fixed budgets.

Commissioner Ranellone noted the department's budget had grown from \$10 million in 2004 to \$23 million in 2023, with minimal increases in prior years. He referred to a 1995 manpower study recommending expanded staffing, including lieutenant positions, to improve operations. Chief Tween explained the current staffing structure, emphasizing the challenges posed by low staffing levels during incidents, such as fires in areas like Garth Road.

Assistant Chief Yozzo addressed the board, defending the department's budget increases. Assistant Chief Yozzo criticized prior boards for failing to invest adequately in staffing and resources, which placed additional burdens on the current leadership. He praised the department's members and reiterated the Eastchester Fire Department was a consolidated entity serving the entire town.

In closing, Mr. Parisi questioned Mr. Zuckerman's comparison of firefighters to teachers. Commissioner Lore stated that individuals choose their careers and associated benefits. The board reinforced the critical need for adequate staffing and funding to ensure the safety and well-being of the community.

Comments from the Commissioners

Commissioner Ranellone reported that on October 18th, he attended the wake for former Town Supervisor Colavita. On October 20th, he joined 20 members of the department at the Fallen Firefighters Wall ceremony at the Westchester County Fire Training Center. On November 13th, he participated in interviews for the Lieutenant Captain position. He also shared a personal highlight, noting that his younger daughter was married on November 9th.

The board observed a moment of silence in memory of Joseph Henwood and Nicholas Ciampanelli.

Adjournment

There being no further commissioner comments, Chairman Carlo adjourned the meeting at 8:48pm.

***EASTCHESTER FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE EASTCHESTER BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
NOVEMBER 14, 2024***

*Minutes prepared by:
Marissa “Isang” Smith
Secretary to the Board of Fire Commissioners*

DRAFT