

EASTCHESTER FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE EASTCHESTER BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
AUGUST 14, 2025

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Eastchester Board of Fire Commissioners held on Thursday, August 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., at Eastchester Town Hall (40 Mill Road) Eastchester, NY 10709.

Board Members Present:

Chairman Paul M. Ranellone
Commissioner Paul J. Carlo
Commissioner Anthony J. Lore, Sr.
Commissioner Tony Cerasi
Commissioner Luke Yankowski

In Attendance:

Chief Brian Tween
Treasurer Jamie Hedstrom

1. Call to Order

1.1 - Meeting Called to Order

Chairman Ranellone called the August 14, 2025 Regular Meeting meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Salute to the Flag

3. Treasurer Report

Treasurer Jamie Hedstrom presented the Treasurer report to the Board:

August 14, 2025

To: Board of Fire Commissioners, Eastchester Fire District
From: Jamie Hedstrom, Treasurer
Subject: Actual vs. Budget Comparison, July 2025

The financials as of July 31, 2025 currently present a net budget surplus of approximately \$1.4M.

Funds allocated to 2025

Below is the current list of budget encumbrances for 2025.

Budget Encumbrances- Purchases initiated that won't be complete until 2025

Emergency Equipment	\$26,204.90
Coats, Boots, Helmets	\$22,836.00
Total	\$49,040.90

Budget Encumbrances- Engine to be delivered in Q3 2026

Ladder Truck Commitment	\$1,064,000.00
2024 Encumbrance- Fire Equip and Cap Outlay	(\$500,000.00)
2025 Encumbrance- Fire Equip and Cap Outlay	(\$500,000.00)
Additional Funding Required	\$64,000.00

Other:

Treasury Direct Investments

We have resumed our Treasury Direct Investments, in \$3M increments. Interest rates remain around 4.2%.

Year-End Audit

Our 2024 financial statements are being finalized and will be available in the office and via FOIL by the end of the month. They will also be posted to our website.

2026 Budget Updates and Factors

As with 2025, no carryover will be available for purposes of the 2% tax cap. Based on currently available data, we could increase the budget approximately 2.4%, or approximately \$540,000, without exceeding the tax cap.

Budget Factors

- At this time, we do not have a negotiated contract for 2025 and beyond. This will impact the budgeted amounts for various salary and benefit lines.
- GL accounts that will require increases in the 2026 budget based on 2025 spending and trends include:
 - 3210.3 Vehicle Maintenance
 - 3115.4 Emergency Equipment
 - 1140.5 Payroll Processing Expense
 - 3060.2 Fuel & Electric
 - 9045.8 Life Insurance- Local 916
 - 3010.2 Coats, Boots, Helmets
- The budget includes replacing the following vehicles per Assistant Chief Yozzo's Apparatus Plan:
 - 2104: Replace with Chevy Tahoe or Ford Explorer
 - 2105: Replace with Chevy Tahoe or Ford Explorer
 - 2106: Replace with Ford Transit Vehicle

The anticipated cost for these replacements is approximately \$250K. No other apparatus replacements or additions are contemplated.

- The budget does not include any funds for future capital improvements. The Board is contemplating bonding a 2025 renovation to Station 3.
- Based on the 2026 projected invoice provided by NYSLRS, which is not final, our pension costs to be paid in 2025 are likely to come in approximately \$58K under budget. At this time we do not have a projection of rates for the 2027 NYSLRS invoice, which will determine whether a budget adjustment is necessary for 2026. We anticipate receiving this projection prior to the budget's final adoption, and potentially prior to the September 11th meeting.
- NYSHIP premium rates for 2026 will not be released until after the October Budget Hearing. It is unknown at this time what the percentage increase will be. Last year the rates remained largely the unchanged from 2024, which was an anomaly. Rate increases from 2023 to 2024 were approximately 10% for non-Medicare plans and over 20% for Medicare primary plans.

Budget Timeline

The Board's September monthly meeting is scheduled for September 11th, and the proposed budget must be adopted by September 30th.

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2025 - FY25 P&L
January - July 2025

	Actual	Budget	Total over Budget	% of Budget
Income				
Use of Capital Reserve				
Appropriated Fund Balance				
Budget Encumbrances	49,040.90	49,040.90	0.00	100.00%
1001 Real Property Taxes	23,872,423.00		23,872,423.00	
2401 Interest Earnings	189,618.03		189,618.03	
2701 Refund of PY Expenditure	14,328.76		14,328.76	
2705 Miscellaneous Income	5,450.00		5,450.00	
2770 Workers Comp - Reimbursement	17,485.84	12,250.00	5,235.84	142.74%
Total Income	\$ 24,134,017.77	\$ 61,290.90	\$ 24,072,726.87	39376.18%
Gross Profit	\$ 24,134,017.77	\$ 61,290.90	\$ 24,072,726.87	39376.18%
Expenses				
1110.5 Outside Services	5,025.00	7,000.00	(1,975.00)	71.79%
1120.5 Fire Prevention	1,450.00	0.00	1,450.00	
1140.5 Payroll Processing Expense	10,067.89	6,416.69	3,651.20	156.90%
1150.5 Insurance	141,003.87	168,750.00	(27,746.13)	83.56%
1170.5 Other Miscellaneous Expenses	293.95	7,000.00	(6,706.05)	4.20%
1180.5 Education & Travel	2,543.66	2,916.69	(373.03)	87.21%
1200.5 Recruitment		1,952.30	(1,952.30)	0.00%
3010.2 Coats, Boots, Helmets	100,025.81	66,586.00	33,439.81	150.22%
3020.2 Tank Refills, Testing & Rep	5,969.71	11,666.69	(5,696.98)	51.17%
3030.2 Hoses & Nozzles		11,666.69	(11,666.69)	0.00%
3040.2 Tires	4,645.82	9,333.31	(4,687.49)	49.78%
3050.2 Gasoline, Oil, Grease, Etc.	24,768.99	29,166.69	(4,397.70)	84.92%
3060.2 Fuel & Electric	63,696.70	58,333.31	5,363.39	109.19%
3070.2 Telephone	8,690.18	32,083.31	(23,393.13)	27.09%
3090.2 Certiorari	15,260.33	116,666.69	(101,406.36)	13.08%
3105.4 Uniforms	52,293.28	53,800.00	(1,506.72)	97.20%
3110.4 Shop Equipment & Tools	1,009.84	2,916.69	(1,906.85)	34.62%
3115.4 Emergency Equipment	124,542.23	113,704.90	10,837.33	109.53%
3120.4 EMS Supplies and Services	10,955.90	11,666.69	(710.79)	93.91%
3125.4 Computers, Software & Internet	44,616.77	38,616.69	6,000.08	115.54%
3130.4 Office Supplies	3,326.98	4,666.69	(1,339.71)	71.29%
3135.4 Postage	681.91	875.00	(193.09)	77.93%
3140.4 Subscriptions	140.00	700.00	(560.00)	20.00%
3145.4 Association Dues	1,581.25	1,375.00	206.25	115.00%
3150.4 Elections & Referendums	335.00	0.00	335.00	
3155.4 Sewer Tax	15,153.18	15,153.18	0.00	100.00%
3160.4 Fire Training	27,279.20	18,000.00	9,279.20	151.55%
3210.3 Vehicle Maintenance	78,745.53	58,333.31	20,412.22	134.99%

3220.3 Radio Equipment & Maintenance	37,501.68	35,000.00	2,501.68	107.15%
3230.3 Ladder & Pump Testing		2,333.31	(2,333.31)	0.00%
3240.3 Bldg/Prop Repairs & Maintenance	94,781.40	116,666.69	(21,885.29)	81.24%
3410.11 Fire Chief salary	129,177.60	134,166.69	(4,989.09)	96.28%
3410.12 Assistant Fire Chief salary	116,096.00	144,916.69	(28,820.69)	80.11%
3410.13 Fire Captains salary	499,080.00	525,000.00	(25,920.00)	95.06%
3410.14 Fire Lieutenants salary	742,068.00	775,833.31	(33,765.31)	95.65%
3410.15 Uniformed Firefighters salary	3,520,032.98	3,850,000.00	(329,967.02)	91.43%
3410.16 Maintenance Workers salary	44,493.20	44,916.69	(423.49)	99.06%
3410.17 Mechanics salary	26,478.75	29,166.69	(2,687.94)	90.78%
3410.18 Treasurer/Secy/PT Asst salary	100,792.14	102,783.31	(1,991.17)	98.06%
3410.2 Fire Equipment and Capital Outlay	60,314.52	65,000.00	(4,685.48)	92.79%
3410.42 Accountants / Auditors fees	18,502.37	17,500.00	1,002.37	105.73%
3410.44 Year-End fees		0.00	0.00	
Total 3410.42 Accountants / Auditors fees	\$ 18,502.37	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 1,002.37	105.73%
3410.46 Consultants fees	4,500.00	4,500.00	0.00	100.00%
3410.465 Consultant Fees- Engineers		0.00	0.00	
3410.47 Professional Consultants fees	11,315.74	52,500.00	(41,184.26)	21.55%
Total 3410.46 Consultants fees	\$ 15,815.74	\$ 57,000.00	\$ (41,184.26)	27.75%
3410.49 Payroll Clearing account	22,937.03	0.00	22,937.03	
3410.81 Disabled Firemen salary -207A's	93,276.90	117,250.00	(23,973.10)	79.55%
3411.1 Holiday Pay	252,023.64	299,930.56	(47,906.92)	84.03%
3412.1 Retroactive Pay	69.44	69.44	0.00	
3413.1 Overtime - Firefighters	473,938.64	729,166.69	(255,228.05)	65.00%
3413.12 Overtime- Training	101,606.06	110,000.00	(8,393.94)	92.37%
3413.13 Overtime- Sick Incentive	15,783.91	43,750.00	(27,966.09)	36.08%
3413.14 Overtime- Chiefs	11,923.57	14,583.31	(2,659.74)	81.76%
3413.2 Overtime - Fire Prevention	26,324.29	23,333.31	2,990.98	112.82%
3414.1 EMT Training	17,400.00	15,000.00	2,400.00	116.00%
3416.1 Terminal Leave	127,856.85	130,000.00	(2,143.15)	98.35%
9010.8 NYS Retirement		0.00	0.00	
9020.8 Social Security	476,055.98	501,666.69	(25,610.71)	94.89%
9030.8 Payroll Tax - MTA	21,158.74	22,646.75	(1,488.01)	93.43%
9040.8 Workers Compensation	213,356.00	255,000.00	(41,644.00)	83.67%
9045.8 Life Insurance - Local 916	52,065.18	46,000.00	6,065.18	113.19%
9050.8 Physician / Medical costs	27,698.50	35,000.00	(7,301.50)	79.14%
9060.81 Hospital	2,192,892.36	2,620,000.02	(427,107.66)	83.70%
9060.82 Dental	140,000.00	140,000.00	0.00	100.00%
9060.83 Optical Plan - Local 916	45,600.00	53,000.00	(7,400.00)	86.04%
Total Expenses	\$ 10,461,204.45	\$ 11,891,373.92	\$ (1,430,169.47)	87.97%
Net Operating Income	\$ 13,672,813.32	\$ (11,830,083.02)	\$ 25,502,896.34	-115.58%
Net Income	\$ 13,672,813.32	\$ (11,830,083.02)	\$ 25,502,896.34	-115.58%

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2025 Budget - FY25 P&L
 January - December 2025

	Actual	Appropriated for 2026	Actual + Appropriated	Budget - with Modifications	Total Original Budget	Budget Encumbrances from 2025 & Mods	over Budget	% of Budget
Income								
Use of Capital Reserve	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Appropriated Fund Balance	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Budget Encumbrances	49,040.90		49,040.90	49,040.90	0.00	49,040.90	0.00	100.00%
1001 Real Property Taxes	23,872,423.00		23,872,423.00	23,872,423.00	23,872,423.00	23,872,423.00	0.00	100.00%
2401 Interest Earnings	199,628.04		199,628.04			0.00	199,628.04	
2701 Refund of PY Expenditure	14,328.76		14,328.76			0.00	14,328.76	
2705 Miscellaneous Income	5,450.00		5,450.00			0.00	5,450.00	
2770 Workers Comp - Reimb	17,485.84		17,485.84	21,000.00	21,000.00	21,000.00	(3,514.16)	83.27%
Total Income	\$ 24,158,356.54	\$ -	\$ 24,158,356.54	\$ 23,942,463.90	\$ 23,893,423.00	\$ 23,942,463.90	\$ 215,892.64	100.90%
Gross Profit								
	\$ 24,158,356.54	\$ -	\$ 24,158,356.54	\$ 23,942,463.90	\$ 23,893,423.00		\$ 215,892.64	100.90%
Expenses								
1110.4 Archiving Services & Exp	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1110.5 Outside Services	5,025.00		5,025.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	(6,975.00)	41.88%
1120.5 Fire Prevention	1,450.00		1,450.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	0.00	(7,550.00)	16.11%
1140.5 Payroll Processing Exp	11,010.98		11,010.98	11,000.00	11,000.00	0.00	10.98	100.10%
1150.5 Insurance	141,003.87		141,003.87	225,000.00	225,000.00	0.00	(83,996.13)	62.67%
1170.5 Other Miscellaneous Expenses	293.95		293.95	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	(11,706.05)	2.45%
1180.5 Education & Travel	2,543.66		2,543.66	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	(2,456.34)	50.87%
1200.5 Recruitment			0.00	3,346.82	5,000.00	(1,653.18)	(3,346.82)	0.00%
3010.2 Coats, Boots, Helmets	100,025.81		100,025.81	97,836.00	75,000.00	22,836.00	2,189.81	102.24%
3020.2 Tank Refills, Testing & Rep	6,189.51		6,189.51	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	(13,810.49)	30.95%
3030.2 Hoses & Nozzles			0.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	(20,000.00)	0.00%
3040.2 Tires	4,645.82		4,645.82	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.00	(11,354.18)	29.04%
3050.2 Gasoline, Oil, Grease, Etc.	24,768.99		24,768.99	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	(25,231.01)	49.54%
3060.2 Fuel & Electric	69,441.69		69,441.69	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00	(30,558.31)	69.44%
3070.2 Telephone	8,690.18		8,690.18	55,000.00	55,000.00	0.00	(46,309.82)	15.80%
3090.2 Certiorari	15,260.33		15,260.33	200,000.00	200,000.00	0.00	(184,739.67)	7.63%
3105.4 Uniforms	54,430.32		54,430.32	76,000.00	76,000.00	0.00	(21,569.68)	71.62%
3110.4 Shop Equipment & Tools	1,009.84		1,009.84	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	(3,990.16)	20.20%

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2025 Budget - FY25 P&L
 January - December 2025

	Total							
	Actual	Appropriated for 2026	Actual + Appropriated	Budget- with Modifications	Original Budget	Budget Encumbrances from 2025 & Mods	over Budget	% of Budget
3115.4 Emergency Equipment	125,352.58		125,352.58	176,204.90	150,000.00	26,204.90	(50,852.32)	71.14%
3120.4 EMS Supplies and Services	10,955.90		10,955.90	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	(9,044.10)	54.78%
3125.4 Computers, Software & Internet	44,616.77		44,616.77	66,200.00	66,200.00	0.00	(21,583.23)	67.40%
3130.4 Office Supplies	3,326.98		3,326.98	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00	(4,673.02)	41.59%
3135.4 Postage	681.91		681.91	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	(818.09)	45.46%
3140.4 Subscriptions	140.00		140.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	(1,060.00)	11.67%
3145.4 Association Dues	1,581.25		1,581.25	2,000.00	1,500.00	500.00	(418.75)	79.06%
3150.4 Elections & Referendums	335.00		335.00	10,500.00	10,500.00	0.00	(10,165.00)	3.19%
3155.4 Sewer Tax	15,153.18		15,153.18	15,153.18	14,000.00	1,153.18	0.00	100.00%
3160.4 Fire Training	27,279.20		27,279.20	44,000.00	44,000.00	0.00	(16,720.80)	62.00%
3210.3 Vehicle Maintenance	78,745.53		78,745.53	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00	(21,254.47)	78.75%
3220.3 Radio Equipment & Maintenance	37,501.68		37,501.68	60,000.00	60,000.00	0.00	(22,498.32)	62.50%
3230.3 Ladder & Pump Testing			0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00	(4,000.00)	0.00%
3240.3 Bldg/Prop Repairs & Maintenance	97,937.05		97,937.05	200,000.00	200,000.00	0.00	(102,062.95)	48.97%
3410.11 Fire Chief salary	137,251.20		137,251.20	230,000.00	230,000.00	0.00	(92,748.80)	59.67%
3410.12 Assistant Fire Chief Salary	123,352.00		123,352.00	197,000.00	197,000.00	0.00	(73,648.00)	62.62%
3410.13 Fire Captains salary	532,352.00		532,352.00	900,000.00	900,000.00	0.00	(367,648.00)	59.15%
3410.14 Fire Lieutenants salary	791,591.54		791,591.54	1,330,000.00	1,330,000.00	0.00	(538,408.46)	59.52%
3410.15 Uniformed Firefighters salary	3,749,012.98		3,749,012.98	6,600,000.00	6,600,000.00	0.00	(2,850,987.02)	56.80%
3410.16 Maintenance Workers salary	47,465.20		47,465.20	77,000.00	77,000.00	0.00	(29,534.80)	61.64%
3410.17 Mechanics salary	26,478.75		26,478.75	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	(23,521.25)	52.96%
3410.18 Treasurer/Secy/PT Asst salary	106,097.34		106,097.34	176,200.00	176,200.00	0.00	(70,102.66)	60.21%
3410.2 Fire Equipment and Capital Outlay	60,314.52	500,000.00	560,314.52	630,000.00	630,000.00	0.00	(69,685.48)	9.57%
3410.42 Accountants / Auditors fees	18,502.37		18,502.37	17,500.00	17,500.00	0.00	1,002.37	105.73%
3410.46 Consultants fees	4,500.00		4,500.00	4,500.00	0.00	4,500.00	0.00	100.00%

Eastchester, NY Fire District
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2025 Budget - FY25 P&L
 January - December 2025

	Actual	Appropriated for 2026	Actual + Appropriated	Budget- with Modifications	Total Original Budget	Budget Encumbrances from 2025 & Mods	over Budget	% of Budget
3410.465 Consultant Fees- Engineers			0.00	95,500.00	100,000.00	(4,500.00)	(95,500.00)	0.00%
3410.47 Professional Consultants fees	11,315.74		11,315.74	90,000.00	90,000.00	0.00	(78,684.26)	12.57%
3410.48 Labor Consultants			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total 3410.46 Consultants fees	\$ 15,815.74	\$ -	\$ 15,815.74	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ -	(174,184.26)	8.32%
3410.49 Payroll Clearing account	12,940.63		12,940.63			0.00	12,940.63	
3410.81 Disabled Firemen salary -207A's	99,495.36		99,495.36	201,000.00	201,000.00	0.00	(101,504.64)	49.50%
3411.1 Holiday Pay	252,023.64		252,023.64	604,930.56	605,000.00	(69.44)	(352,906.92)	41.66%
3412.1 Retroactive Salary	69.44		69.44	69.44		69.44	0.00	
3413.1 Overtime - Firefighters	509,296.74		509,296.74	1,250,000.00	1,250,000.00	0.00	(740,703.26)	40.74%
3413.12 Overtime- Training	101,606.06		101,606.06	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00	(48,393.94)	67.74%
3413.13 Overtime- Sick Incentive	18,571.15		18,571.15	75,000.00	100,000.00	(25,000.00)	(56,428.85)	24.76%
3413.14 Overtime- Chiefs	13,084.15		13,084.15	25,000.00	0.00	25,000.00	(11,915.85)	52.34%
3413.2 Overtime - Fire Prevention	27,465.35		27,465.35	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	(12,534.65)	68.66%
3414.1 EMT Training	17,400.00		17,400.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	(2,600.00)	87.00%
3416.1 Terminal Leave	127,856.85		127,856.85	400,000.00	400,000.00	0.00	(272,143.15)	31.96%
9010.8 NYS Retirement			0.00	3,600,000.00	3,600,000.00	0.00	(3,600,000.00)	0.00%
9020.8 Social Security	504,481.72		504,481.72	860,000.00	860,000.00	0.00	(355,518.28)	58.66%
9030.8 Payroll Tax - MTA	22,422.15		22,422.15	38,823.00	38,823.00	0.00	(16,400.85)	57.75%
9040.8 Workers Compensation	213,356.00		213,356.00	255,000.00	255,000.00	0.00	(41,644.00)	83.67%
9045.8 Life Insurance - Local 916	52,065.18		52,065.18	46,000.00	46,000.00	0.00	6,065.18	113.19%
9050.8 Physician / Medical costs	28,448.50		28,448.50	60,000.00	60,000.00	0.00	(31,551.50)	47.41%
9060.81 Hospital	2,475,338.65		2,475,338.65	4,100,000.00	4,100,000.00	0.00	(1,624,661.35)	60.37%
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	45,600.00		45,600.00	53,000.00	53,000.00	0.00	(7,400.00)	86.04%
Total Expenses	\$ 11,159,152.19	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 11,646,068.04	\$ 23,942,463.90	\$ 23,893,423.00	\$ 24,040.90		46.61%
Net Operating Income	\$ 12,999,204.35	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 12,512,288.50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,512,288.50	
Net Income			\$ 12,512,288.50	\$ -				

Treasurer Hedstrom reminded the Board that the contract between the union and the district is a key in developing the proposed budget. She reminded the Board that the proposed budget must be approved prior to September 30th.

Treasurer Hedstrom also referenced a previous email she sent the Board regarding the Assistant Chief position. Hedstrom advised that a new Assistant Chiefs List has been established. Hedstrom asked the Board to authorize her to request the list in order to transition the position of Assistant Chief from provisional to probationary status.

Additionally, Treasurer Hedstrom reported that she, Chief Tween, and Assistant Chief Yozzo, met with a representative from J.P. Morgan Chase, who routinely reviews the district's accounts. The representative discussed the district's credit card and noted the existence of a New York State Credit Card Consortium, for which J.P. Morgan won the bid. The representative advised that the district should consider switching to the government credit card program to qualify for quarterly rebates and gain financial flexibility.

Chairman Ranellone thanked Treasurer Hedstrom for her report. He then asked whether the Board should address the Assistant Chief position at this time, to which Treasurer Hedstrom agreed. Chairman Ranellone proceeded to introduce the following motion:

Assistant Chief Position - Civil Service List

BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Fire Commissioners authorizes Treasurer Jamie Hedstrom to request the Assistant Chief's list from Westchester County Civil Service and to authorize the Treasurer to complete the relevant paperwork to initiate civil service status change for Assistant Chief Bruce Yozzo, Badge # 124, from the position of Provisional Assistant Chief to Probationary Assistant Chief, based on the newly established Assistant Chief's list.

Motion by Chairman Ranellone, seconded by Commr. Carlo
Aye: Commr. Yankowski, Commr. Cerasi, Commr. Lore, Commr. Carlo, Chairman.
Ranellone

Final: Motion Carried

● **Chief Report**

Chief Tween presented the following Chief's Report to the Board:

Alarm Activity: 295
Fire: 5
EMS/Rescue: 160
Mutual Aid Given: 1 (Hartsdale FD)

- 1) Five probationary firefighters graduated the Career Fire Academy on Friday July 11th after completing 20 weeks of training. They are working in their assigned Groups and will work on an engine with a Lieutenant for their first few months.
- 2) Hank Henninger's mechanic report for June was emailed to the Board on 8/7/2025.
- 3) Tim Dalton's maintenance report for June was emailed to the Board on 8/7/2025. Tim is currently working replacing exterior doors at Station 1.
- 4) Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement activities continue with numerous plan reviews and inspections. The Fire Prevention reports for July were emailed to the Board on 8/8/2025.
- 5) Currently there is one member are out on long term absence.
- 6) The Board has met with two project management firms for the repairs/replacement for the Bronxville firehouse. What information does the Board need to select a firm

to begin the project? Our engineering firm has already advised the District that the apparatus floor needs attention, the temporary repair has been there 20 years. We also know the roof, windows, exterior brickwork, interior walls, and ceilings all need attention. Please consider hiring DACK Consulting Solutions, Calgi Construction, or some other firm to move the project forward. Chief Tween reminded the Board that the floor could become unsafe and may have to close the firehouse to address the issue.

- 7) I would like to offer my congratulations to Firefighter Billy George on his retirement effective July 17, 2025. Billy began his career with the Eastchester Fire District as a volunteer firefighter with the Tuckahoe Hose Company on January 14, 1988 and was issued badge #1744. He was appointed as a career firefighter on June 22, 2002 and issued badge #172. Billy served the residents of the Eastchester Fire District for over 37 years of combined service. I wish him a long and healthy retirement.

Respectfully submitted August 14, 2025
by Fire Chief Brian Tween

**** Additional Note*** Chief Tween advised that Treasurer Hedstrom provided the costs for the Chester Heights Firehouse if some Commissioners were considering repairing: the roof cost (\$382,000), the exterior windows and the brick repointing cost (\$437,508), the apparatus floor (\$852,000) and the heating and ADA upgrades was (\$802,000), so just for the contractors, they were paid \$2,474,000 and the architects were paid \$323,000. Chief Tween advised if the Board was considering repairing the firehouse, Chester Heights Firehouse project was started in August 2017 and they moved into the firehouse in 2024, for a total of a 7 year project. He advised the total project was close to \$2.8 million. He again asked the Board for guidance and a decision on moving forward with a project management firm. ******

Chairman Ranellone advised that the Chief, Assistant Chief and Commr. Lore met with DACK Consulting solutions and felt comfortable working with them for the Station 3 project. Chief Tween advised that he did not have the proposal with him but asked that the Board consider passing a resolution at the next meeting.

- **Secretary Report**

Secretary Isang Smith was not in attendance at the meeting and submitted the following report:

MONTHLY DISTRICT SECRETARY REPORT

AUGUST 2025

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Social Media

- July Activity: 3 posts

Website

- Ongoing maintenance and updates.

FOIL OFFICER

- **July Activity:** 2 FOIL requests

RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER

- **Records Projects:** Continued work on organizing loose records and scanning projects

OFFICE - GENERAL

- Onboarding for Probationary Firefighters for the Fall 2025 Academy
 - Prepared the OML document for the July meeting.
 - Updated and posted minutes on the website.
 - Updated the 2025 resolutions spreadsheet.
 - Performed regular office tasks including scheduling, billing, customer service, and staff support.
-

6.1 - Payment of Bills

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- 8/14/2025 - \$677,785.20

Credit Card – 8/18/25 - \$6,379.60

Total: **\$684,164.80**

Motion by Chairman Ranellone, seconded by Commr. Carlo

Aye: Commr. Yankowski, Commr. Cerasi, Commr. Lore, Commr. Carlo,
Chairman. Ranellone

Final: Motion Carried

7.1 - Volunteers

Commr. Lore asked Chairman Ranellone if, before addressing the volunteer item, he could discuss a message sent by Commr. Yankowski to the Board regarding a request for an apology.

Commr. Yankowski clarified that his message to the Board was a question: by Commr. Lore leaving the Board table and sitting with the public at a prior meeting, was he indicating his resignation?

Commr. Lore denied that he had any intention of resigning. He explained that, before offering any apology for his conduct at the previous meeting, he noted his 52 years of service, dating back to 1973, and expressed frustration, stating that he had never seen Commr. Yankowski at a fire meeting or ceremony. He pointed out that Commr. Yankowski had only been with the district for eight months and that he was frustrated with Yankowski possibly suggesting he resign.

Commr. Yankowski reiterated that he did not ask for Commr. Lore's resignation but simply posed a question based on Lore's actions. He further explained that his request for an apology came from Commr. Lore's

statement at the last meeting that he was “blindsided” by the Board’s actions regarding the volunteer item. Commr. Yankowski stated that, from his perspective, the Board's actions were appropriately communicated.

Commr. Lore responded that he was not fully made aware of the nature of the volunteer item prior to the meeting. Commr. Yankowski asked if it was possible there had been a misunderstanding between them.

Commr. Lore then shared that a Benevolent Association meeting had recently been held at Town Hall, and shared that others were frustrated they were not using the firehouse for such meetings.

At that point, Chairman Ranellone moved the discussion forward to the volunteer agenda item. A member of the public, Mike Parici, called out, asking why there couldn’t be a discussion about the item first. Chairman Ranellone then proceeded to read the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Eastchester Fire District (the “District”) is a duly organized fire district governed by a Board of Fire Commissioners pursuant to the laws of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Fire Commissioners (the “Board”) is responsible for the management, control, and oversight of all real and personal property owned by the District; and

WHEREAS, the District’s property, including but not limited to fire stations, apparatus, equipment, and other assets, is held for the benefit of the public and must be used in a manner consistent with the District’s mission and applicable laws; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to establish clear guidelines to ensure that any use of District property by volunteer fire companies or other entities is subject to appropriate oversight and authorization;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Eastchester Fire District as follows:

1. **Use of District Property:** No volunteer fire company, fire department, or any other organization or individual shall use, occupy, or access any property, equipment, or facilities owned by the District without the prior written approval of the Board of Fire Commissioners.
2. **Approval Process:** Any request for use of District property must be submitted in writing to the Board, specifying the nature, purpose, date, and duration of the proposed use. The Board shall review such requests at a duly convened meeting and may approve, deny, or conditionally approve the request in its sole discretion.
3. **Enforcement:** Unauthorized use of District property shall be deemed a violation of this Resolution and may result in disciplinary action, revocation of privileges, or other remedies as permitted by law.
4. **Effective Date:** This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

Chairman Ranellone asked if there was any discussion on the motion. Commr. Lore inquired about the origin of the resolution and who authorized it. Commr. Carlo clarified that the resolution was drafted by the District's attorney. Commr. Lore expressed frustration that the volunteer item had not been shared with him prior to the meeting and questioned why Commr. Carlo had contacted the attorney without informing the rest of the Board.

Commr. Carlo responded that any Board member has the authority to contact the District's attorney. The disagreement continued between Commissioners Lore and Carlo regarding the process for drafting items and the proper protocol for engaging legal counsel. Commr. Lore further questioned whether taxpayer funds were used to draft the resolution and who had authorized the attorney's involvement.

Commr. Carlo reiterated that any commissioner has the right to consult with the attorney. A resident, Mike Parici, expressed disagreement with Commr. Carlo's position. Chairman Ranellone attempted to restore order to the discussion.

The exchange between Commissioners Lore and Carlo continued. Members of the public also began calling out, voicing their concerns. Chairman Ranellone reminded attendees that public comment would be taken later in the meeting.

Chairman Ranellone clarified that the proposed resolution establishes guidelines for access to firehouses, applying not only to volunteers but to all individuals. Members of the public questioned why the union was not subject to the same guidelines. Chairman Ranellone responded that the union had formally requested and received permission to use a station as their office.

Commr. Lore stated that Chief Tween had authorized volunteer firefighters to use the union's office space for their meetings. Chief Tween clarified that he had not given blanket authorization. Volunteers were expected to coordinate their use of the space directly with the union. Commr. Lore added that the volunteers had only used the room once every three months, at most three times total, and that part of the space belonged to them.

A member of the public voiced disagreement loudly. Commr. Carlo responded that the volunteers were inactive and therefore should not be using the firehouse. Chairman Ranellone again attempted to restore order to the meeting.

As public disruptions continued, Chairman Ranellone responded to a member of the public, Tom, disagreeing with Tom's characterization of the volunteer relationship with the District. Tom alleged that the Board was targeting volunteers. Chairman Ranellone denied this, stating that the Board was simply establishing guidelines.

Another member of the public called out in disagreement with the guidelines. Commr. Carlo stated that the volunteers do not currently provide a service to the District, and therefore should not be present in the firehouses. Chairman Ranellone requested clarification on the motion. Commr. Carlo made the motion, which was seconded by Commr. Yankowski.

Commr. Lore objected, noting that members of the public still had not been given the opportunity to voice their concerns. Several members of the public called out, accusing the Board of hiding information and not allowing public input.

Commr. Carlo clarified that the resolution was meant to establish a formal process for authorizing access to District firehouses. Chairman Ranellone agreed, reiterating that the process ensures proper coordination.

A member of the public objected again, stating they should not be required to follow this process as a member of the District. Commr. Carlo engaged further with members of the public, leading to a contentious exchange.

Commr. Lore invited a member of the public to come forward and speak at the microphone. Tom asked Chief Tween to clarify the total cost of constructing Station 4. Chief Tween confirmed the cost was **\$2,798,032.73**. Tom stated that the firehouse had been under construction for seven years and claimed it was still not finished. Commr. Carlo disagreed, stating that the firehouse was, in fact, complete.

Louis Russo, a member of the public and former Volunteer Deputy Chief, addressed the Board to correct the record. He disputed a previous statement made by a Board member that volunteer firefighters had not responded since 2008. Russo asserted that volunteers were still actively responding through 2012.

Russo also commented on a statement he claimed to have heard suggesting that public opinion "doesn't matter." He urged the Board to follow a more transparent process by listening to public input and recommended tabling the vote to allow for further discussion. Commr. Carlo responded, stating that public comments should be kept brief. Russo acknowledged.

Addressing a prior comment that "volunteers are never coming back," Russo stated that such a position reflects the wrong attitude. He encouraged the Board to reconsider reintegrating volunteers into the department. He argued that doing so would enhance the safety of both career firefighters and the public, help control costs, and potentially reduce the need to hire additional career staff, thereby limiting future tax increases.

Russo asked the Board to consider what the downside would be to recruiting and training new volunteer firefighters. He recommended that the District undertake an outreach effort and suggested that if the effort was unsuccessful, the Board could revisit the discussion at that time.

He questioned why eliminating the volunteer program appeared to be treated as a "badge of honor" and challenged the Board to explain why volunteers are being portrayed negatively. He stated that the Board should be ashamed of such a position and asked if anyone could offer a valid reason why volunteers are considered a problem.

Commr. Carlo responded that the matter was not up for debate and noted that many surrounding departments are now fully staffed by career firefighters.

Chairman Ranellone then shared that he himself had a background as a volunteer firefighter. He explained that over time, issues arose with training compliance and attendance among volunteers, which eventually led to the shift toward a career staff model as a necessary step to ensure consistent service to the community.

Chairman Ranellone stated that the era of volunteer firefighting in the District had passed. In response, Russo questioned why that had to be the case. While he acknowledged that past volunteer models may not have worked well, he argued that there remains an opportunity to create a better model today.

Russo asserted that with effort, the department could reintroduce a smaller, more structured volunteer force integrated alongside the career firefighters. He expressed disagreement with the notion that the chapter on volunteers was closed and stated that the Board should be ashamed of comments suggesting volunteers would never return. He asked what the downside would be to giving the idea a chance. His remarks were met with applause from a member of the audience.

Chairman Ranellone responded by referencing past rules that required volunteers to reside within the town. If a volunteer moved out of town, they were expected to obtain their exempt status. He stated he was unsure how many of the individuals currently identifying as Eastchester Fire District volunteers still lived in town, and suggested that if they had moved, they should have taken out their exempts.

Russo disagreed. Ranellone reiterated that volunteer requirements were based on longstanding rules and regulations. Russo acknowledged Ranellone's point but questioned the relevance. He emphasized that the core question should be what is in the best interest of the citizens of the Town of Eastchester? He repeated his belief that there was no clear downside to giving volunteers another chance, provided training and accountability were in place.

Chief Tween entered the discussion, clarifying that one of the original challenges had been maintaining adequate training. He explained that the department expected volunteers to attend two drills per month, roughly 48 hours of training per year, but consistency and attendance had been

problematic. He referenced the 2007 “stand down” letter, which was issued due to concerns about insufficient training and a lack of accountability among the volunteer force.

Russo acknowledged the issues that occurred in the past but maintained that they could be addressed. Chief Tween asked Russo what he believed should be done differently. Russo responded that he and his fellow volunteers had shown up when called upon and that he believed the problems could be solved moving forward with a renewed focus on accountability and training.

A brief back-and-forth followed between Russo and Chief Tween regarding accountability. Russo proposed exploring a new volunteer model that includes improved expectations and oversight. He noted that the majority of fire departments across the country rely on volunteers and argued that Eastchester could adopt a similar model.

Chief Tween reiterated that the stand-down order was issued due to concerns at the time and believed that Volunteer Deputy Chief Peter Watson had been the one in command when the order was implemented.

Russo continued his remarks, and expressed a desire to learn from the past and look toward the future. Russo stated he was confident that Eastchester could rebuild a functioning volunteer force. His comments were met with applause from members of the audience.

Mr. Richard Rooney, a member of the public, introduced himself as an exempt volunteer member and former captain of Tuckahoe Engine 28. He noted that his family has been involved with the department since 1920 and estimated that over 2,000 individuals have served in the department over the past century.

Rooney expressed concerns about several issues, beginning with the conduct of the July 10, 2025 meeting. He addressed Commr. Lore and questioned Chairman Ranellone’s leadership, asking why he allowed that meeting to devolve into what he described as a “spectacle,” involving two commissioners and members of the public. Rooney also asked if Chairman Ranellone had authorized Commr. Carlo to contact legal counsel to draft what he called a “controversial amendment” that would prohibit volunteers from entering firehouses and using fire apparatus at public events.

Rooney raised questions about compliance with Open Meetings Law and how such communications are documented. He then asked: if, as Commr.

Carlo claims, the Eastchester volunteer firefighters no longer exist, why would Commissioners Lore and Ranellone have to abstain from voting on related matters?

He went on to state that there are five firehouses in the Town of Eastchester. Rooney cited Chief Tween's comments from the July 24 meeting, where he said that four of those stations—Waverly, North End, Tuckahoe, and Chester Heights—are owned by the Town of Eastchester, while Bronxville Station is owned by the Fire District. Rooney asked whether the Chairman sought authorization from the Town Supervisor to restrict access to these town-owned buildings.

Rooney went on to question why the Board, both current and past, has failed to maintain proper living and working conditions in each firehouse. He asked how much money has been spent on the Chester Heights renovation, whether it is completed, and whether it is true that the basement was gutted but remains unusable due to water infiltration. He also questioned whether the second floor is condemned and inaccessible to the public, and why a handicap ramp was installed if the public is not permitted to enter the building.

Rooney pointed out that firehouses have hosted public events for the past 90 to 100 years and asked what specific risks now justify restricting access. He questioned why the District's budget has increased by 34% over the past five years and why the overtime budget stands at approximately \$1 million. Referring again to the July 24 meeting, Rooney recalled that the Assistant Chief recommended selling surplus yet roadworthy fire vehicles, then requested the purchase of four new vehicles for the 2026 budget. He questioned whether that represents sound financial planning or ongoing mismanagement by the Board.

Rooney also raised concerns about personal, historical, and company property stored in firehouse meeting rooms. He emphasized that many of these items, such as documents, memorabilia, and artifacts, belong to the individual volunteer companies, not the Fire District. He cited the disappearance of a classic helmet from the Tuckahoe firehouse following COVID closures, noting that the District was supposed to be securing the premises at that time. He expressed concern over how volunteer property is handled when it is located within District buildings.

When Rooney asked whether any Board member would respond to these concerns, Commr. Carlo stated the statements were being noted as

comments. Rooney again asked if Chairman Ranellone had a response, to which Commr. Carlo reiterated that no answers would be provided at that time.

Commr. Lore addressed the issue of volunteer property, stating that he personally keeps certain records and materials at his own home to ensure their safety. He assured Rooney that the property of volunteers would not be tampered with and that the District would handle such items with care if a decision were made to prohibit volunteer access.

Rooney repeated his concern about the missing helmet, questioning how such an item could have disappeared when only paid personnel had access to the space. Commr. Lore noted that the District had moved toward limiting volunteer access to prevent missing property. Rooney countered that only career staff were present at the time. He concluded by reiterating his concern over how volunteer-owned property is treated.

Chairman Ranellone then asked if there were any additional members of the public who wished to speak.

Dave Horne, a member of the public, approached the microphone. He stated that he is a 64-year member of the Waverly Engine Company, an ex-Deputy Chief, and currently a 50-year Honorary Chief. He shared key points and noted that they might impact how the Board approaches voting.

Horne explained that about two months ago, there was a meeting held to plan a volunteer recruitment drive for the end of the summer. They intended to use Engine 29, which had been restored, to promote recruitment efforts. One idea was to bring the engine to a local school hosting a car wash, where they could distribute recruitment materials and gauge public interest. Horne referenced the Scarsdale Fire Department as an example, stating they had recently accepted another volunteer. Commr. Carlo interjected, stating that Scarsdale operates differently and is not a reasonable comparison.

Horne continued, sharing a personal story about growing up in Eastchester. He recounted standing in front of his house in the 1950s when his neighbor's home caught fire. Engine 29 was in service at the time, operating out of Waverly. Horne ran to notify the volunteers and, from that moment on, committed himself to becoming a firefighter. He expressed disappointment in the current Board's actions, calling current actions disgraceful.

Horne expressed frustration that the Board had never meaningfully addressed volunteerism and stated that volunteers had to conduct their own recruitment without support. He questioned why the district, with a \$24 million budget serving 30,000 people, couldn't allocate even a small fraction of funds toward volunteer recruitment.

Horne cited legal research conducted by two attorneys, stating that New York State is fundamentally a volunteer based system. He read a prepared statement, asserting that there have only been three incidents since 2015 in which volunteers were restricted from entering firehouses. One involving a burning building and another in Albany. He also noted that no blanket statewide ban exists.

Horne emphasized that Eastchester had never previously restricted volunteer access to firehouses. He said one attorney advised that municipal authorities are legally obligated to support volunteer firefighters under benevolent law. He added that if the district prohibits volunteers from accessing firehouses, the same would apply to school children and the general public.

Commr. Lore asked what would happen if schools requested to visit stations for Fire Prevention Month? Chief Tween responded that while the firehouses are public buildings, school groups are not holding meetings and that requests to use the firehouse, particularly for meetings or apparatus usage, must be made in writing under the proposed resolution.

Commr. Lore questioned how the new resolution would affect general public access and emphasized that, historically, they had always sought permission for such use. He expressed concern that the written request requirement could lead to denials and reiterated that volunteers had never misused or damaged property. Chairman Ranellone acknowledged Lore's comments, stating the resolution was intended to establish consistent guidelines.

Commr. Lore argued that Commr. Carlo was attempting to exclude volunteers. Commissioner Carlo denied the accusation. Louis Russo returned to the microphone, urging the Board to base its decisions on facts. Russo challenged a prior statement from a board member suggesting volunteerism "doesn't work in this part of the country," pointing out that neighboring departments like Scarsdale and Fairview maintain volunteer models.

Russo suggested the Eastchester Fire District could adopt a similar approach with proper support and implied that the resolution reflected an alternate

agenda. He asked the Board whether there was any downside to volunteer outreach or reviving a volunteer model.

Chairman Ranellone reiterated that the resolution was not targeting volunteers specifically, but was a general policy requiring written permission for anyone requesting use of district facilities. Russo asked if volunteers wishing to hold a meeting would simply need to submit a written request; Chairman Ranellone confirmed. Commr. Lore reviewed the resolution and pointed out a section that referred specifically to volunteers. Chairman Ranellone noted that it also applied to any organization.

Commr. Carlo expressed frustration with Russo, questioning why he was so concerned. A contentious exchange followed between the Board and members of the public. Richard Rooney reapproached the microphone and asked which organizations other than the Benevolent Association currently use the firehouses for meetings. He argued there was no need for the resolution and interrupted a commissioner who attempted to speak.

Mike Parici also approached the mic and asked the Board who had voted them into office. The commissioners responded that the public had. Parici criticized the process by which the policy had been introduced and called the entire matter embarrassing. He argued that the resolution should have been presented more formally to the full Board and handled with greater professionalism.

Parici questioned why the Board appeared to be comparing Eastchester to large cities, noting that it is a town and not directly comparable to departments that do not use volunteers. He disagreed with Commr. Carlo's statements about nearby volunteer departments.

Ray Albanese approached the microphone, stating that he had served as a fire commissioner for 28 years and had always been tax oriented in his decision making. He expressed disappointment in the current Board's attitude. Albanese said he was proud of his legacy as a volunteer and reminded the Board that their first responsibility was to represent the taxpayers. He urged the commissioners to prioritize the interests of the public.

Chairman Ranellone then asked if anyone else from the public wished to speak. The Board began to discuss voting on the resolution. Chief Tween reminded the Board that there was already a motion and a second on the floor. Chairman Ranellone again clarified that the resolution was not aimed

specifically at volunteers but was meant to establish a written process for access to district property.

Members of the public called out, expressing concern that they were being asked to vote prematurely without full understanding or established guidelines for how the process would work. A heated exchange continued between members of the public and the Board. Commr. Carlo stated that the Board had the ability to move forward with the vote.

Chairman Ranellone responded to additional public questions about the resolution. He noted that the district is required to provide a meeting space for firefighters. Chief Tween confirmed that this requirement may stem from either the 1935 regulations or the collective bargaining agreement (CBA), but he wasn't certain. Ranellone clarified that this was the reason career firefighters were permitted access for meetings.

A member of the public shouted that they had a right to access the firehouse. Commr. Carlo questioned who claimed such a right. Chairman Ranellone attempted to restore order. Commr. Lore asked whether, in the case of a union member retiring and holding a celebration with family and friends, the use of district property would be permitted. He questioned whether similar volunteer events would be restricted and expressed concern about potential unequal treatment.

Chief Tween asked that members of the public speak only at the microphone. Russo returned to the mic and expressed concern over the meeting's format. He emphasized the importance of working through the nuances of the policy and resolution and advocated for a collaborative approach. Commr. Carlo maintained that all that was required was a written request.

Commissioners Lore and Carlo engaged in a contentious exchange. Russo offered additional suggestions but continued to clash with Carlo, accusing the Board of having a hidden agenda. Commr. Carlo asked Russo why he felt compelled to speak on behalf of the volunteers. Russo responded by asking Carlo why he had claimed that the volunteers would never return. The exchange escalated until Chairman Ranellone used the gavel to end the discussion.

Commr. Lore made a motion to adjourn the meeting. However, Commr. Yankowski opposed the motion, citing unfinished business, including setting

the next meeting date and addressing the remaining agenda items. A brief discussion followed on whether to proceed with adjournment.

Ultimately, Chairman Ranellone declared the meeting adjourned.

Submitted Agenda Items:

Future Meeting Dates

September 11, 2025 - Regular Meeting - Eastchester Town Hall - Court Room

Comments from Local 916

Comments from the Public

Comments from the Commissioners

Adjournment – With no further business to discuss, Chairman Ranellone made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

**EASTCHESTER FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE EASTCHESTER BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
AUGUST 14, 2025**

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