

Minutes of Regular Meeting August 13, 2025

PRESENT: Commissioners Pacheco, Daly, Poupore, McGill (Secretary), and Chairman Woehrle

Also Present: Chief Vena, Attorney G. Serio (7:36), NPFA President Baker, GBFC President Lieberman, GBFC Treasurer Vena, Executive Secretary Michelle Mazuryk, GBFC Aux. President L. Daly, various members of the department and family/friends of Chief Vena

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Woehrle.

Motion/ Poupore, 2nd / Pacheco: To approve July 9, 2025, **regular** monthly meeting minutes. As Read. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Pacheco, 2nd / Poupore: To approve July 16, 2025, **special** monthly meeting minutes. As Read. Passed 5-0.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- 7/15/25 meeting minutes of Schenectady County Civil Service Commission voting to approve the position of Assistant Fire Chief based on New Position Statement and revise the job description for Fire Chief.
- 7/17/25 notarized copy of Permissive Referendum notice (\$7,997 to be expended from the Building Reserve Account for purchase and installation of utility shed and pad).
- 7/11/25 notarized copy of legal notice for special meeting held 7/16/25.
- Positive Promotion Fire Prevention Week catalog.
- Letter from Civil Service announcing Jim Vena passed the Fire Chief exam and is hereby considered permanent.
- Building permit from the Town of Niskayuna for the utility shed and pad.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

None

BILLS: Commissioner Poupore stated that he has reviewed all the bills.

Motion/ Pacheco, 2nd / Daly: To pay bills for corresponding check #'s 20298-20357, 457Plan1, 64-65 From July 10, 2025, thru August 7, 2025 totaling \$196,855.45 as reviewed. Passed 5-0.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer Splendido Reported:

- The reserve accounts as of the end of July 2025 were reviewed.
- The comparison sheets for July 2025 vs. 2024 were reviewed.
- Budget versus actual expenses through July 2025 were reviewed.
- We are 58.3% thru the year and have spent 58.3% of the budget.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

Attorney Serio Reported:

- Discipline policy form was reviewed with the Chief and approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE:

Commissioner McGill Reported:

- All accounts were reviewed and everything looked good.

INSURANCE: No Report

MEDIA:

Commissioner Poupore Reported:

- Working with WRGB to make a story on a child we helped and made a positive impact on.
- We will have a media training.
- We will have a live interview on a Sunday morning to talk about fire prevention week (10/5-11/25).
- I will send a press release for the new recruit appointments.

APPARATUS & EQUIPMENT:

Commissioner Woehrle Reported:

- Chief Fritz's vehicle will need lightbar repairs.
- Chief would like to send 2 people to inspect the ambulance at the factory prior to completion and delivery.

Chief Vena Reported:

- Chief Fritz's car is a 2018 Tahoe that has been experiencing several repeated failures of its emergency warning lights. Upstate NY Plow and Truck Body, LLC is the authorized dealer for the SoundOff Signal, Blueprint lighting package that all three Tahoes and the Silverado were upfitted with, in 2018-2019. The packages installed carried a 5-year warranty. Due to the difficulty in acquiring parts and repairing old wiring, Upstate has recommended a complete refit using Whelen parts which will carry a 10-year warranty.
 - o **New Refit Cost** - \$13,829 (Parts - \$6,829, Labor \$2,000 to strip vehicle and \$5,000 to install).
 - o **Repair of Existing** – Estimated at \$2,700. This is the Apparatus Committees recommendation. Due to mixing old with new, however, Upstate has indicated any repair will carry little to no warranty.
- The new ambulance is under construction and expected completion is October. It

could be earlier or a bit later. Being that this is a new manufacturer we are using, I recommend we send two members from the ambulance specification committee to the factory in Grove City, OH for an inspection prior to it making the trip East for delivery. If you agree, I will leave the choice of attendees up to Committee Chair, Lt. Baker. The cost is expected to be approximately \$1,600 for travel, lodging and meals + overtime. I can't give a firm number due to fluctuations in travel and lodging fees based on the time of year. The \$1,600 is estimated based on travel and lodging today.

- ***Request to send Lt. Baker and FF/P Seiden to conduct a final inspection on the new ambulance in Grove City, OH at a cost not to exceed \$2,500 plus overtime.***
- SCBA – Grant submissions for replacement SCBA have been unsuccessful. Our SCBA currently are between 15-17 years old. While still functional as breathing apparatus and testing has passed them, repairs are mounting and the SCBA cylinders are 1-2 years away from end of life and require replacement. Additionally, NIOSH has recently released a safety advisory that Facepieces manufactured to the 2007 or earlier NFPA 1981 Standard, undergo thermal degradation at an advanced rate when exposed to the intense heat conditions experienced in today's fires. All our masks except for four, fall under this Standard. Replacement is necessary and the cost for masks alone exceeds \$10,500. The PPE Committee, Chaired by Commissioner McGill, has met and discussed options, and we recommend complete replacement of all SCBA (Pack, Mask, Bottles). There is new technology and significant differences between the old SCBA and new SCBA that necessitate complete replacement. Staggering implementation over three years is possible, however, I strongly recommend against it due to incompatibilities between the old SCBA's and the new. These incompatibilities will create unsafe situations for our firefighters.
- Request a permissive referendum for \$303,000 to purchase SCBA from DIVAL Safety Equipment on the NYS Hires Contract PC69018. This includes:
 - 30 SCBA
 - 30 AV3000HT Facepieces
 - 60 cylinders
 - 2 RIT PACK III's
 - 2 RIT PACK 75-minute cylinders

Commissioner McGill Reported:

- SCBA quote was received from Dival with special pricing from Scott. The committee recommends the purchase of 30 SCBAs, 30 AV3000HT Facepieces, 60 cylinders, 2 RIT PACK III, and 2 RIT PACK 75-minute cylinders for a cost of \$302,046. We recommend taking money from the Equipment reserve account to cover the cost. A permissive referendum will be needed.

TECHNOLOGY SERVICES:

Commissioner Pacheco Reported:

- We are still having issues with the phishing button on the email. We need to schedule a meeting to discuss.

Chief Vena Reported:

- ESO fire reporting software account has been established. Set up and the import of data is ongoing.
- Policy Builder reviews are ongoing.
- The NFIRS data submission issue I reported on last month has been corrected and 6,000 plus incidents have been uploaded to OFPC and USFA. This clears the backlog and allows us to proceed with the NFIRS setup.

EMS & EQUIPMENT:**Commissioner Poupore Reported:**

- Dr. McHugh has recommended we purchase video laryngoscope as they are becoming standard. Disposable units are costly, and reusable units are hard to sterilize. We are holding off for right now.

HEALTH & SAFETY: No Report**FACILITIES:****Commissioner Woehrle Reported:**

- Comalli completed basement outlets and outlets for new washer/dryer.
- Parts were ordered from JD Warren.
- We are looking to have NYSERDA come out and do an energy audit.
- I am getting a quote to repair the dayroom lights.
- We are looking at the lights out front on the sign that keep going on and off. Comalli will recommend what to replace with and submit a quote.
- The elevator company was here and is working on repairs to the elevator. It is safe to use and has been certified.

Chief Vena Reported:

- Electrical – Comalli Electric completed the outlet installs in the basement level that are needed for the dehumidification system. Additional electrical work is in progress, and I defer to Commissioner Woehrle for details.
- HVAC – Parts and equipment are on order and scheduling is in process for the plumbing and HVAC upgrades previously approved.
- Elevator mechanical concerns – Kone Elevator has serviced and adjusted the elevator as close to spec as possible. They confirm it is safe to use although at times it may grind and bounce when adjusting to stops at the floor it was called to. This is due to a two-stage hydraulic piston that connects to only one side of the car (as designed). It places uneven wear on the piston, and the sensors recognize this and adjusts. We experience those adjustments as minor bumping and grinding as it comes to a stop. Commissioner Woehrle has Kone researching repair and replacement options.
- Carpet Cleaning was completed July 18-19. The company did a great job and I'm pleased with the results. FF/P D. Ruth is obtaining quotes for cleaning the

upholstered chairs at both stations and the carpet at RR.

- Fire Alarm System – Sanders Fire & Safety has completed the Fire Alarm System inspection and testing at both stations and no unsatisfactory conditions were discovered.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Commissioner Pacheco Reported:

- The next committee meeting will be September 25 at 7:00PM.

ELECTIONS: No Report

PROTECTIVE GEAR & UNIFORMS:

Commissioner McGill Reported:

- I am working with a new vendor to get the shirts ordered.

SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM:

Commissioner Poupore Reported:

- I met with Chief Fritz to discuss the program and the OSC audits coming up. We are waiting on guidance from CAFDA.

INSTALLATION BANQUET: No Report

REPORT OF THE CHIEFS:

Chief Vena Reported:

- Access Compliance has been good thus far for firefighter physicals on the new recruits and existing personnel. The reporting is much quicker, and billing is timely. I have been through the process myself and found it to be streamlined and easy to navigate. We did have one problem with a form that needed to be signed for a recruit to participate in the Utica Fire Academy fitness program. Access Health was refusing to sign it. At FF/P Seiden's suggestion, I contacted Dr. McHugh for help and advice. Dr. McHugh took care of the immediate problem so the recruit may attend the academy. MANY thanks to FF/P Seiden and Dr. McHugh for the help on this! Moving forward, I had an impromptu meeting with an Administrator from Access Compliance following my own Physical, and we may hope to have the issue resolved moving forward. If not, Dr. McHugh wants to meet with them.
- The Certified Lists for hiring the new recruits have been signed and submitted to Civil Service as per their requirements.
- All new hires successfully met the conditions for employment. New hire orientation packets have been created for the new recruits, and an orientation will be held on Friday morning 8/15. On Sunday 8/17, 4 recruits will report to the Utica Fire Academy. Monday 8/18, the remaining recruits will report to BR to begin work. Schedules for them are still being ironed out due to their paramedic school schedules, National Registry and NYS Exams.

- Lt. William Sims last 24-hour shift is August 26th, and his retirement is effective August 30th. With Lt. Sims retirement, we will be left with a major void in experience and leadership. More importantly, his friendship and advice about the job (as well as numerous times over the last year helping me keep my sanity) will very much be missed. Lt. Sims has had an outstanding career and too many people to count have had their lives positively affected by his consistent level of dedication. While I know he will still be around, I will miss him here at work!!
- 7/14-7/18 - The summer enrichment program was very successful for 5 high school students. The parents and grandparents of the students were elated, and I received incredibly positive feedback at graduation. Great Job to Lt. Persons and FF Elliott for heading it up and making it the success it was. Also, many thanks to NFD 2 and SHFD who participated with personnel, Apparatus and equipment.
- 8/5/25 – Niskayuna National Night Out was held at Zenner road fields. Five career members and three volunteers participated (2 at the event and 1 vol. duty crew). The vehicle extrication demonstration put on by all three departments was fantastic. The engagement of the crowd was wonderful (despite us competing with a Blackhawk Helicopter that was flown in). NFD 1, NFD 2, and SHFD worked seamlessly together and really showcased our collective abilities. Once the demonstration was done, all three departments stayed for another hour using it as a drill for the members. It was great to see.
- The new Elkhart Chief XD nozzles have been placed in service on the fire apparatus. These nozzles match with our fire hose for an attack package far more effectively than the nozzles they replaced. The major advantages of having the matched nozzle and hose are decreased nozzle reaction and increased manageability in a simple design that produces 160 gpm at 50 psi.
- In the coming weeks, a vehicle for training will be delivered to RR Station by H&K for continued training on the new struts and practice creating a tension buttrice system to stabilize a vehicle on its side or roof.
- July 29th – Had a MVC involving two vehicles Westbound on Rt. 7 between St. David's Lane and Balltown Road. One of the vehicles rolled twice with an unrestrained driver inside. Extrication was required. The Duty Crew and the volunteer responders, led by Lt. Kaszuba, did an outstanding job.
- August 9th – I received a phone call from a Chief in NFD 2 that heard from a friend about “Niskayuna EMT's” who were amazing. This Chief recognized it was our department and reached out. Social Media posts from the family are also circulating. Call details:
 - The evening of August 7th, FF/P's Agans, Ruth and FF/EMT Dietrich responded to a 7-year-old boy in distress. The parents said finally someone listened to them, took them seriously and acted swiftly to take care of their son. He was found to be in SVT at a rate of 220. This is a short circuiting of the electrical system of the heart resulting in an

extremely fast heart rate. This rate, if not treated, is incompatible with life. After *two years* of repeated hospital trips, including Boston General, where none of the doctors could positively identify the problem, our Firefighter/Paramedics did! Their treatment and documentation of the incident was the catalyst needed for the pediatric cardiologist at Albany Med to finally have the information needed to treat this little boy's heart problem. Our crew just completely changed the life of a 7-year-old and his parents who have been desperate for answers. OUTSTANDING JOB!!

- We responded to a lift assist in Rotterdam (FF/P Marc Vinehout and David Dietrich) where the patients BP was so low he would have gone into cardiac arrest if we were not there. This is a reminder that even a routine lift assist can make a profound impact on a patient's life.
- Commissioner Daly thanked the FF/P who assisted him and stated they really did save his life.

• Department Activity	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
July Incidents	247	226	213	234
EMS	162	165	149	143
Fire/MVC/Other	85	61	64	91
Total YTD (3/31)	1607	1540	1306	1494

- Mutual Aid Requested 17
- Mutual Aid Denied 8
- Actual Mutual Aid Given 9
- Mutual Aid Received 4

Other Activities:

Emergency Callback	35.75	Staff Hours
Department Training	207.25	Staff Hours
Duty Crew Hours	59.25	Staff Hours

- ***Request to attend the NYSBOC Codes Conference October 14-16 at a registration cost of \$450 (education conference is in Albany).***

Chief Fritz Reported (Read by Chief Vena):

- New firefighters Shane Bracken, Vinny Nicci, and Matt Grygiel are doing great.
- Numbers are posted for July.

Report of the Niskayuna Permanent Fireman's Association:

President J. Baker Reported:

- Congratulations Chief Vena on your permanent appointment.

Report of the Grand Boulevard Fire Company:

President Lieberman Reported:

- We are grateful for the recruiting and retention efforts.

- Fund drive envelop stuffing will be September 4.
- Clambake will be September 27.
- The fire company is very happy with the permanent appointment of Chief Vena.

Report of the Auxiliary: No Report

OLD BUSINESS: No Report

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion/ Daly/ Second/ Pacheco: To approve the repairs Chief Fritz's 2018 Tahoe by Upstate NY Plow and Truck Body, LLC at a cost not to exceed \$2,700. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ McGill/ Second/ Pacheco: To approve the Chief to attend the NYSBOC Codes Conference October 14-16 at a registration cost of \$450 (education conference is in Albany). Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Daly/ Second/ Pacheco: To approve sending Lt. Baker and FF/P Seiden to conduct a final inspection on the new ambulance in Grove City, OH at a cost not to exceed \$2,500 plus overtime. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Pacheco/ Second/ Poupore: To approve spending \$7,997 per the approved permissive referendum for a new utility shed and pad. Passed 5-0.

The Town of Niskayuna did not charge us a Building Permit fee.

The Town of Niskayuna Zoning Board of Appeals requested, while reviewing the shed proposal, that we repair the fence on the one side of the property. This is owned by National Grid. We assured the ZBA that we would reach out to National Grid with the request.

Motion/ Daly/ Second/ Pacheco: To approve the Niskayuna Fire District No. 1 Code of Conduct. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Daly/ Second/ Poupore: To approve a permissive referendum to spend \$303,000 from the Equipment reserve account to purchase from DIVAL Safety Equipment:

- 30 SCBA
- 30 AV3000HT Facepieces
- 60 cylinders
- 2 RIT PACK III's
- 2 RIT PACK 75-minute cylinders

This purchase will be made on NYS Hires Contract PC69018. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Daly/ Second/ Poupore: To approve Clark Myers to blacktop a small section of the parking area near the front entrance for a cost not to exceed \$2,000.00 and provide a 1-year warranty. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Daly/ Second/ Pacheco: To approve sealcoating and striping at the Balltown Road station for a cost not to exceed \$7,000.00. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Daly/ Second/ Poupore: To authorize \$1,625 to purchase Simushare Software in accordance with the 2025 Budget. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ McGill/ Second/ Poupore: To adjourn to executive session at 7:50 to discuss Permanent Fire Chief appointment. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ McGill/ Second/ Pacheco: To return to regular session at 7:53. Passed 5-0.

Motion/ Pacheco/ Second/ Daly: To appoint Fire Chief James S. Vena from the position of Provisional Fire Chief to the position of Permanent Fire Chief with the Schenectady County Civil Service effective July 15, 2025.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Pacheco – YES

Commissioner Daly – YES

Commissioner Poupore – YES

Commissioner McGill - YES

Commissioner Woehrle – YES

Passed 5-0.

Motion/ McGill/ Second/ Pacheco: To adjourn the meeting at 7:57 PM. Passed 5-0.

The next regular business meeting will be held on September 10, 2025, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kevin J. McGill

Acting Secretary

Niskayuna Fire District No. 1