

**WADING RIVER FIRE DISTRICT**  
**1503 North Country Road**  
**Wading River, NY 11792**

Minutes of August 7, 2022, Work Session Meeting

The meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Deveny at 0900 hours with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our First Responders, EMS, Police, Fire and Military who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Chairman McQueeney, Vice Chairman Moreno, Commissioner Deveny, Commissioner Wallace, District Manager Michalakopoulos, EMS Coordinator Danowski, Secretary Manitta, Chief Gluck, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Chief Berg, 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Chief Donnelly and 3<sup>rd</sup> Assistant Chief Whelan were present. Treasurer Cangeleri, President Hammer and Attorney Ring were absent with prior notice.

Chairman McQueeney began the work session by stating the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the future of the EMS program. He explained that the District is being faced with increased calls and a dwindling pool of paramedics. He encouraged members of the work session to help brainstorm ideas how to improve the EMS program with the goal of getting calls covered.

**Chief Gluck:**

- Presented historical data regarding volume of calls for the past three years
  - Highest volume alarms 10-12 and 6-8 pm; the least number of calls early morning
  - Most multiple alarms between 5-7 pm
  - Greater coverage Monday-Friday; not enough on weekends
- Raised questions concerning a double medic program
- **Recommend focusing assistance during highest volume hours 10 am - 7 pm**
- **Recommend scheduling existing staff for weekend and/or evening shifts (10-7 pm)**
- **Recommended a weekend driver**
- **Recommended the District develop a policy for District crew response to alarms**
  - Reported that there is some confusion regarding when District crew is needed
  - BOFC will follow up with District crew and Chief's Office to put rules in place

**EMS Coordinator Danowski**

- Presented 2022 data regarding alarms and volume
  - Volume of calls has greatly increased especially between 10-2pm
  - Higher percentage of BLS calls than those requiring ALS
  - Discussion regarding availability of ALS
  - Discussion regarding how to utilize a full-time paramedic
  - Discussion regarding EMS Coordinator role
  - Discussion the need to have latitude in scheduling. Full-time 12-hour shifts allow more flexibility. 8-hour shifts are prohibitive if they are locked into.

- Global issue with acquiring per diem EMTs.
- Commended existing staff for loyalty and willingness to step up during the past 18 months.
- **Recommended BLS Driver**
  - **6 am to 10 pm; 7 days per week**
  - **1 paramedic and 1 EMT driver on duty**
  - **Recommended shifts 6 am-2 pm, 2 pm-10 pm, 10 pm-6 am**
- **Recommending hiring another full-time paramedic**
- **If only 8 hours to start with, then agrees with Chief Gluck 11-7 or 10-6 pm**
- **Recommended considering doubles of 8-hour tours**
- **Recommended moving to full-time and adequately compensate**
- Discussion various scheduling options for shifts. Presented some possible schedules to BOFC for consideration.

#### **Chief Whelan**

- Agreed call volume has gone up tremendously
- Raised concern that the call load is burning members out during the day; members are stretched too thin
- Discussion regarding 12-hour shifts
- Discussed hiring changes in EMS program at Stonybrook

#### **Chief Donnelly**

- Reported on changes in EMS program at Stonybrook in order to attract and retain paramedics.
- Discussion regarding LOSAP percentages for alarms
- Chief staff looking at changing the structures – hours of standby time to meet requirements; to keep people engaged and available for responding

#### **Chief Berg**

- Discussion regarding rising costs overall and salary competition for EMTs.
- Raised concern regarding why the District is having trouble retaining EMTs

#### **District Manager Michalakopoulos**

- Discussion regarding full-time vs per diem
- **District must plan for employees replacement through attrition**
- Discussion regarding LOSAP percentages based on alarms
- District Manager Association are creating a committee to address EMT scarcity and standardization of pay. District Manager has requested to be part of this committee.
- **Recommended BOFC review proposal shift schedule submitted by the EMS Coordinator for consideration**

### **Commissioner Deveny**

- Recognized that WRFD is not the only district in this predicament
- Reported that the Fire Commissioner Associations are working together to come up with solutions
- Affirmed that the District should do whatever it takes to service our community
- Suggested the BOFC consider the EMS Coordinator's schedule proposal that includes paramedic

### **Commissioner Wallace**

- Reiterated that the District needs help to address the volume of calls.

**Chairman McQueeney made a motion to break for executive session at 0952, seconded by Commissioner Deveny, unanimously approved.**

Adjournment for Executive Session: **0952**

Reconvene from Executive Session: **1043**

Chairman McQueeney thanked the District staff and Chiefs for participating in the work session and presenting their ideas.

Commissioner Wallace made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Deveny, unanimously approved to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at **1046 hours**

Respectfully submitted,

**Eileen F. Manitta  
District Secretary  
Wading River Fire District**