



# CITY OF LANSING

## BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

120 E. SHIAWASSEE ST., LANSING MI 48933  
(517) 483-4200 | [LANSINGMI.GOV/FIRE](https://lansingmi.gov/fire)



Andy Schor, Mayor

Brian Sturdivant, Fire Chief

### REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, September 13, 2023, | 5:30 PM |

EMERGENCY OPS CENTER | 815 MARSHAL ST | LANSING MI

1. Call to Order – Establish Quorum - 5:32 p.m.
  - 1.1. Present: Barbara Lawrence, Kathleen Tobe, Gina Nelson, Steven Purchase, Charles Willis, Kris Singh, Jarrod LaRue (arrives at 5:40)
  - 1.2. Absent: Rodney Singleton
2. Additions to Agenda:  
None
3. Approval of Minutes:
  - 3.1. August 9<sup>th</sup> approved with minor grammatical corrections.
4. Public Comment – Agenda Items (Time Limit: 3 Minutes):
  - 4.1. Captain Jim Garlitz thanks the board for their work and dedication. He has been with LFD for 25 years and is retiring in September. He thinks Commissioners Willis and Singh for working with LFD, as he worked with them throughout his career. Captain Garlitz appreciates the opportunity to serve the city, it's been a great time, and this will be a difficult transition for him.
  - 4.2. The board thinks Captain Garland for his service and congratulates him on a long career. They wish the best for him.
5. Review Communications
  - 5.1. Letter of appreciation from Captain Tim Ness regarding the Martin St collapse on the night of August 24th. See packet for complete letter.
6. Comments from Chair
  - 6.1. Chair Purchase shares that this month is not that busy, but next month the Board will begin to go over items for the year-end review.
  - 6.2. Chair Purchase continues to encourage the Commissioners to attend Council meetings, emphasizing September and October specifically.
7. Presentations

#### Fire Commissioners

1st Ward Barbara Lawrence – Vice-Chair  
2nd Ward Jarrod LeRue  
3rd Ward Kathleen Tobe  
4th Ward Gina Nelson  
At-Large Steve Purchase –Chair  
At-Large Rodney Singleton  
At-Large Charles Willis  
At-Large Kris Singh

7.1. None

8. Fire Administration Report – Chief Sturdivant

- 8.1. Chief Tobin's last day is September 14th. Chief Sturdivant shares the date and time for the retirement ceremony. Assistant Chief Lay will temporarily take the Assistant Chief Ops position as of 1600 on September 14th. He will oversee the Battalion Chiefs, Training, and EMS. Chief Sturdivant is overseeing Prevention, Logistics, and Admin.
- 8.2. Chief Sturdivant hopes to have the Assistant Chief of Operations position filled within 90 days. Public Safety Answers is a third party who will be doing the recruitment. They will be able to cast a nationwide net; both internal and external candidates will be considered. Public Safety Answers will get the application and resume and they will screen the applicants with a video interview and half a dozen questions. Once Public Safety Answers has completed those steps any remaining candidates will go to Chief's office and HR here at the City to have additional interviews. Chief Sturdivant's goal is to have this be one of the last high-ranking position to need external candidates. He encourages current members to have some skin in the game, and get the formal education needed to be considered for these positions.
- 8.3. Chief Sturdivant is looking forward to seeing what Public Safety Answers can provide. If this goes well LFD will hand over firefighter recruitment to Public Safety Answers.
- 8.4. On the topic of firefighter recruitment, LFD has extended 27 contingent offers for firefighters. Physicals and background checks are to be conducted. October 23rd is the first day of the recruit academy. There are three phases for recruits: those with no training, those with only EMS, and those with only fire. As LFD does not have a large training facility, it is a challenge to coordinate with other organizations in the region. Chief is looking forward to having the training space once the new station is built.
- 8.5. Chief Sturdivant met with the designers for the new station. Everything is still on time. Breaking ground should take place the last week of October. Chief Sturdivant will be sure to keep the Board and the public apprised of the timeline. River Caddis, the developers, will have a presentation for City Hall and the Fire Board soon. SWOC will be demolished, and the new building will have an increased footprint to encompass the needs from SWOC. Station 2 will be a new build on the same site, Station 8, 4, and 6 will get updates as they are newer builds. LFD will get creative with how they will cover the rebuild/remodel for 2 and 8 as they are the most extensive. We need to ensure the community and team members are all safe.
- 8.6. Mental health of LFD employees is a concern for Chief. The current system is stretched to the max with call volume and resources assigned mismatched. Chief has entered conversations with the Union regarding solutions for this and has some good meetings with the mayor. LFD needs at least 20 new position full-time employees. They also need two to three more ambulances on the street to adequately address call volume.
- 8.7. He has had contact with ISO to begin the assessment. It should begin before Thanksgiving for first steps. Primary factors where LFD lost points on their last assessment was on training documentation and other documentation. Another big piece was that Lansing does not have company level fire inspections, but that is something that prevention will be kicking off ASAP.
- 8.8. Lexipol is still going well; is almost done, and procedure is next. Teams have been assigned on procedures and they are currently being worked on.
- 8.9. A vendor has been selected for NFPA. BioMed is a local company out of Holt. They bring a semi and the employee walks through and is screened by the time they exit the truck. BioMed works directly with the primary care providers of the employee, so that there is no chance of HIPAA violations in the

department. Ideally firefighters are having a screen with LFD once a year, and their primary care provider once a year. So, every 6 months, the employee should be before a care provider for a screening. This year the expenses are coming internally. Next year it will be in the budget proposal. Chief understands that it is not cheap, but it is a needed expense.

- 8.10. Commissioner Willis has a question regarding the recruiting for the Assistant Chief Position. He asks if the recruiting is for ops or admin.
- 8.11. Chief: While Assistant Chief Lay is currently doing suppression, he is not looking to be in Ops long term. Chief is hoping to fill the position with someone with a strong tactical background, but also has some admin experience.
- 8.12. Commissioners Singh asks what is the mayor saying when Chief Sturdivant indicates that LFD requires more funds?
- 8.13. Chief: the mayor states that there are multiple competing needs throughout the city. Public safety is always a priority, but there are many needs. The bulk of the conversation that Chief has with the mayor is regarding competing needs within the city.
- 8.14. Chief and the Commissioners have a discussion regarding the new city hall. The new city hall is funded by State money.
- 8.15. Commissioner Singh inquires after the status of the ladder truck.
- 8.16. Chief states that the ladder truck should be in Lansing by Thanksgiving. It is the only one in the city, so LFD has let the surrounding teams know that the city of Lansing is lacking a functioning ladder truck.
- 8.17. Chair Purchase inquires about any concerns of the service impact while the new recruits are being trained and amongst so many retirements from LFD.
- 8.18. Chief: LFD does not have mandatory overtime. There is a possibility that trucks will go out of service, or stations will have to go black because lack of staff. It's not ideal but lack of staffing may lead to this.
- 8.19. Chair Purchase inquires if the process with HR has improved, or is there still room for improvement in the hiring process. Specifically, Chair Purchased asks if there is anything that the Board can do so that LFD can have primary hiring authority.
- 8.20. Chief thanks the chair for the offer, and states that the hiring process was messy and that is why LFD is looking to outsource it next time. Chief Sturdivant states that HR has a bit of an unreasonable workload as they are understaffed and serving the whole city. Another reason that hiring is a messy process for LFD is that the salaries are not competitive. At a recent event Chief spoke with counterparts on the east side of the state, and they are hiring at \$80-\$85,000 a year. LFD is hiring at \$65-\$68,000. This means candidates can go where they want, and LFD is not competitive.
- 8.21. Chair Purchase inquires about a preliminary budget for LFD.
- 8.22. Chief and the Board discuss the timeline for providing a budget to the Board for preliminary approval. The Board clarifies that the proposed budget is not the same as the approved budget, simply that having the stamp of approval from the board on a proposed budget may lend authority to the request.

## 9. Old Business

- 9.1. None.

## 10. New Business

### 10.1. Lexipol 1043: Discipline

- Chief gives an overview of the new policy and states that it is more streamlined and less confusing. This

is the policy that will be included in the training of the new supervisors. This policy helps keep discipline at lower levels, and also if it is pushed up to higher levels there is documentation on the issue so that the higher levels understand what is happening and what has happened.

- Chair Purchase inquires of what happens if there is something that requires discipline that is not included on the list.
- Chief states that those likely will be items that will need to get sent to a City attorney to get their opinion.
- Lexipol 1043: Discipline is approved unanimously.

10.2. Chair Purchase reads a resolution Honoring Chief Tobin on his retirement written by Commissioner Lawrence. It is approved unopposed.

11. Request for Commissioners to be Excused.

11.1. Rodney Singleton: LaRue, Tobe, Nelson, Willis, Singh, and Chair Purchase vote to excuse. Vice Chair Lawrence votes nay.

12. Commissioner Comments

12.1. Chair Purchase thanks LFD for the invitation to the Lugnuts game notes a nice conversation with Kenneth Hall.

13. Public Comment

13.1. The Union participated in a Cancer walk, "Walk for the Red." There are pictures on Instagram. The Union representative spoke on that this is a great organization with a great cause.

14. General Order

14.1. None

15. Adjournment 6:39pm

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Minutes submitted Tuesday, September 26, 2023 by Jules Overfelt

**Jules Overfelt** (*they/she*)

Administrative Specialist

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