



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, January 10, 2024, | 5:30 PM |
STATION #2 | 2114 N GRAND RIVER | LANSING MI

1. Called to Order at 5:30 p.m.
 - 1.1. Present: Barbara Lawrence, Jarrod LaRue, Gina Nelson, Steve Purchase, Rodney Singleton, Charles Willis, and Krishna Singh
 - 1.2. Absent: Kathleen Tobe
2. Additions to Agenda – None.
3. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve by Commissioner Singleton, and seconded by Commissioner LaRue. All voted in favor to approve the minutes as written.
4. Public Comment – Agenda Items (Time Limit: 3 Minutes) – IAFF Local 421 President Brad Jorae introduced himself to the Commissioners. He noted that Local 421 has been happy with the progress that they have been making with not only the Fire Administration, but the City of Lansing as well. Brad expressed his gratitude to Chief Sturdivant for his continued support.
5. Review Communications
 - 5.1. Letter received in the mail from Jeff Ebbert (1730445-HWY-12, Cement, City MI 49233). Alyssa informed the Board that Jeff wanted to thank all Lansing Fire Department (LFD) personnel and to wish everyone at LFD a Happy New Year.
6. Comments from Chair
 - 6.1. Chair Purchase reported that he had setup a digital calendar that will have all the dates and locations for the meetings this year.
 - 6.2. If any of the Commissioners have any topics to discuss, issues, or would like to bring in guest speakers over the next five to six months, please let Chair Purchase know.
 - 6.3. Chair Purchase expressed his condolences to Commissioner Tobe on the passing of her husband. The funeral will occur January 11th at Paradise Funeral Home located at 1107 E Miller Road. The time of the funeral was not known at the beginning of the meeting. Vice-Chair Lawrence provided a sympathy card and was collecting donations to purchase flowers for Commissioner Tobe.
7. Presentations – None.

Fire Commissioners

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

8. Fire Administration Report – Chief Sturdivant

- 8.1. Chief Sturdivant expressed his appreciation for the comments made by IAFF Local 421 President Brad Jorae. He indicated that the current union leadership have been great to work with.
- 8.2. Captains' meetings were held on January 9th, January 10th, and 11th.
- 8.3. The community has done a lot of the heavy lifting fiscally with providing new facilities with the Public Safety Bond. Chief Sturdivant also noted that two new engines were delivered the week of January 8th.
- 8.4. Fire Administration's focus right now is on the members. The staffing model is outdated and is not conducive for today's demand. These concerns have been shared with the Mayor in addition to City Council. For this reason, Chief Sturdivant has received tentative approval from the Mayor to hire four to five new firefighters a year for the next four years. Chief Sturdivant emphasized that we need to right size LFD, and that right now they are not the right size for the number of calls. Chief Sturdivant distributed statistics to the Commissioners with direct regards to call volume for 2022 and 2023. Between 2022 and 2023 calls have increased, with no increase in staff numbers. Chief Sturdivant encouraged the Commissioners to echo the staffing issues when out in meetings, at City Hall, and out in the community. The current staffing and deployment model is simply not sustainable.
- 8.5. The department is currently taking applications now and the paramedic applications are not coming in. LFD is just not competitive with the current market. There are currently 83 applications in the portal, 57 are for firefighter (26 are credentialed), 22 firefighter/EMT, and four are for firefighter/paramedic.
- 8.6. Commissioner Willis expressed that the younger firefighters are indicating that they are burnt out and no one in administration is addressing the issues. Chief Sturdivant indicated that he has an open-door policy, and that it is a matter of perspective. This is a fire service issue, and it is not going to be fixed overnight. Chief Sturdivant encourages members to take care of themselves, and if needed, take a mental health day. Commissioner Willis remarked that having both the IAFF Local 421 President as well as Chief Sturdivant in one room indicating that they are working on the issues, is beneficial. Chair Purchase challenged Commissioners to get out to the stations to get the message out that work is being done. Chief Sturdivant reassured that he is open to having conversations with the members and that everyone is invited to the monthly staff meetings that occur the first Tuesday of every month usually at Station One beginning at 8:30 am.
- 8.7. An offer has been made for an Assistant Chief, with a tentative start date of January 29th, 2024. She is still in the process of onboarding. There were three candidates that were interviewed, and she was selected after a robust selection process. Chief Sturdivant is looking to make the official announcement on Friday, January 12th. Assistant Chief Lay will be moving over to the Operations Chief position, and the new Assistant Chief will be the Administration Chief. Commissioner Willis questioned why the new Assistant Chief will not oversee operations as this was former Assistant Chief Tobin's role. Chief Sturdivant remarked that Assistant Chief Lay is more tactically sound and has already developed relationships with members of the LFD organization, making it more feasible for him to have the operations position.
- 8.8. If any members are having issues, Chief Sturdivant noted that they need to gripe up the chain of command not down.
- 8.9. Commissioner Singh inquired if an email could be sent to the members occasionally noting the things that are happening within the organization. Chief Sturdivant stated that emails are being sent, and that the communication is there. Replacements of chairs, mattresses, and incliners at the stations are on the radar. Chief Sturdivant thanked the Board for their support and to help get the word out about the work being done.
- 8.10. Commissioner Nelson informed the Board that she appreciates Chief Sturdivant's aggression with direct

regards to maintaining personnel. She also noted that it is great to see staff in the stations when the monthly Board meetings are going on, and that the personnel are actively listening. Chief Sturdivant exclaimed that LFD is focused on maintaining their members. Other job opportunities for members to leave are out there.

8.11. Chair Purchase inquired about the upcoming ISO assessment. Chief Sturdivant reported that the Division Chief of Administration, Training Chief, along with the Fire Marshal will be running the committee. LFD will likely be reaching out to ISO early to mid-February to see when they can come out to Lansing to perform the assessment. Chief Sturdivant feels very confident with the water distribution and the communication systems. The concerns arise from the training records, and a lack of an aerial device. For the previous ISO assessment, the department was about half a dozen points short from receiving a rating of a one. Making up these points with a lack of an aerial device in certain situations, may be a challenge. In addition, Chair Purchase questioned the promotion process. A rig was taken out of service on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. This was not as a direct result of a lack of manpower, but rather, there was not a Captain willing to take the overtime. The current acting list is directly tied into the promotion process. There is an interest from some members to go through the training so that they can be an acting Captain, for example, however, they are not necessarily interested in a promotion. Regardless of whether they want to be ultimately promoted, they can still act in the role.

9. Old Business – None.

10. New Business

10.1. Lexipol Policies: 328-330; 400- 401

- Motion to approve policies as written by Commissioner Singh, seconded by Commissioner Singleton.
 - Commissioner LaRue had a question about policy 329 regarding the ride along program, and the frequency at which the Commissioners could ride along. Chief Sturdivant reported that the Board can ride along more frequently than once every six months and it would be taken on a case-by-case basis.
 - Vice-Chair Lawrence questioned if the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) team mentioned in policy 328 was still active. Chief Sturdivant reported that the CERT team are still active. This group has been primarily utilized for large events and was most recently used for storm damage assessment. Chief Sturdivant reported that the intention is to have CERT respond to long term incidents to provide refreshments, and food to fire personnel on scenes. This was a task that Box 23 used to perform prior to them disbanding. Emergency Management Chief Engelter is the CERT Program Administrator. Budgetary funding for CERT is new for the 2024-2025 budget year.
 - Commissioner Purchase questioned where the department was with three-year inspections relevant to Lexipol policy 400. There have been two new inspector positions filled and a newly promoted Fire Marshal in the Fire Prevention Division. Adding new staff will help complete the three-year inspections. The city has also been separated into four quadrants for each inspector, and LFD is working on a pre-fire familiarization plan. Please note that this is not a company level inspection, rather, it will help familiarize personnel with the buildings. The department is also in the process of transitioning from IFC 2018 to IFC 2021, as the 2018 code does not address electrical vehicles, or marijuana grow processes.
 - Commissioner Singh inquired if pre-incident planning was still something that the department was implementing. Chief Sturdivant reported that he is working with Ingham County 911 to get information like hydrant locations, and prefire plans so that they are readily available for

personnel responding to a scene.

- Unanimously adopted Lexipol Policies 328-330; 400-401 as written.

10.2. FY 2024-2025 Proposed Budget

- LFD is still waiting for numbers from IT and fleet.
- Chief Sturdivant reported budget increases for fire prevention/education, and the CERT team.
- IT costs and fuel purchases are likely to increase.
- Commissioner Singh questioned if it is normal to rent fleets from a garage. Chief Sturdivant noted that he has seen it both ways at different fire departments. City of Lansing's fleet manages the vehicles, and it is easier to regulate a replacement plan.
- Chair Purchase inquired if the new firefighter positions will offset some of the overtime expense. Chief Sturdivant noted that these new positions will likely help over the course of several years.
- Unanimously approved FY 2024-2025 budget.

11. Request for Commissioners to be excused –

- 11.1. Kathleen Tobe: Motion to approve by Commissioner Singh, and seconded by Commissioner Nelson. All voted to excuse Commissioner Tobe unanimously.

12. Commissioner Comments

- 12.1. Commissioner Nelson expressed gratitude to station eight. A friend of Commissioner Nelson's had a hemorrhagic stroke, and she is doing well. Chief Sturdivant mentioned the upcoming awards and recognition ceremony and if she can provide any additional information regarding this incident, it would be greatly appreciated.
- 12.2. Vice-Chair Lawrence mentioned that she had been communicating with Kathleen regarding the funeral arrangements for her husband throughout the meeting. His name is George Joe Washington, and the funeral is going to be at noon at Paradise Funeral Homes, followed by a military service at the Forest Lawn Cemetery. Vice-Chair Lawrence also noted that she was simply going to give the card with cash to Kathleen as opposed to buying flowers. Furthermore, Vice-Chair Lawrence has been in contact with the Exchange Club for Firefighter of the Year.
- 12.3. Chair Purchase will draft a letter that will be brought to the next meeting for approval. This letter will highlight the important aspects of this budget request. This letter will ultimately be provided to the Mayor and City Council.

13. Public Comment

- 13.1. Captain and Union Vice President Eric Longoria introduced himself to the Board of Commissioners.
- 13.2. IAFF President 421 Brad Jorae noted that he agrees with the Chief when it comes to the browning out of rigs. The number one priority is safety, and if there are not four on a rig it becomes a safety issue.

14. General Order – None.

15. Meeting adjournment at 6:52 p.m.

Minutes submitted Monday, January 22nd 2024 by Alyssa Hagle

Alyssa Hagle

Administrative Assistant – Fire Prevention Division

Lansing Fire Dept

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