

# WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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*Thomas M Shank, Executive Director*

130<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Arnold, PA

## **Friday, August 4, 2023**

The 130<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Western PA Firemen's Association was called to order by President Donald Ferrante. An opening prayer was conducted by Chaplain Jim Bowser followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Local welcome was given by Chief Eric Gartley, of Arnold No. 2. Chief Gartley introduced several state and local officials in attendance. Response for the Western was given by Past President Harold Whyel.

State Representative Jill Cooper and Arnold Councilman George Hawdon were introduced and offered remarks.

Appointment of Sergeants at Arms: Martin Wetmore and Wilford Torrence.

President Ferrante opened nominations. The following nominations were made:

Harold Whyel nominated James Eley for President  
Bruce Davis nominated Dennis Remich for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
William Weber nominated Bruce Crivaro for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Harold Whyel nominated Sherri Eley for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
Jim Bowser nominated Amie Shank for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
Harold Whyel nominated Thomas Shank for Executive Director/Secretary

Wayne Harris nominated the following to a two-year term on the Executive Committee: Robert Patterson, James Potlas, F. Christopher O'Leath, Cindy Davis, Amie Shank, and Nick Wuckovich.

Pete Barnhart nominated Somerset for the 2026 convention  
Jerry Brant nominated Patton for the 2026 convention

President Donald Ferrante appointed the following to the election board – Chairman Wilford Torrence, Harold Whyel, Doug Abel, Martin Wetmore, and Richard Grove.

President Donald Ferrante appointed the following Resolution Committee: Sherry Eley, Pete Barnhart, and Tom Foster.

The election will be held in the firemen's club building beginning at 11 a.m.

President Ferrante introduced guest speaker John Tedorski, Deputy State Fire Commissioner.

President Ferrante announced a recess until 6 p.m.

**Friday PM Session, August 4, 2023 at 6 p.m.**

President Ferrante called the evening session to order at 6 p.m. Roll call of officers was taken by Executive Director/Secretary Shank.

Motion by Wilford Torrence and Bruce Davis that we dedicate this convention to the memory of Immediate Past President James Bungard. Motion carried.

Executive Director/Secretary's Report

Executive Director/Secretary Shank read the minutes of the July meeting. The minutes were approved as read.

Executive Director/Secretary's Report

August 5, 2023

Secretary's Report

2023-2024 Dues as of 8-1-20

Companies	275
Members @ \$6	<u>3,647</u>
	3,922

2022-2023 Dues Paid After 8-1-22

Companies	49
Members @ \$6	<u>958</u>
	1,007

Total 2022-2023 Company Membership: 332 Individual Membership: 4,560

Total New Individual Membership: 362

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Shank

Executive Director-Secretary

Motion by Wayne Harris and Jim Bowser to accept the Executive Director/Secretary's report. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Schaeffer explained that there is no monthly report at this time due to being so early in the month and we do not have bank statements yet for July. The July report will be included in the report at the next regular meeting. Motion by Harold Whyel and Bob Paterson that we suspend the reading of the July report until October. Motion carried.

Treasurer Schaeffer reviewed our investment performance for the past fiscal year. Motion by Wayne Harris and Harold Whyel to accept the report and refer it to audit. Motion carried.

Investment Summary

July 31, 2023

Benjamin F. Edwards	
Jennison Utilities Fund	110,033.36
Jennison Natural Resources	83,522.90
Invesco American Franchise	83,100.78
Jennison Value Fund	130,042.29
Franklin Income Fund	107,757.49
Franklin Rising Dividends	219,740.44
Prudential Global Real Estate	20,768.15
Jennison Focused Growth Fund	25,101.11
Aristotle Core Income (Former Pacific Life Income Fund)	66,938.90
Washington Mutual Investor Fund	356,802.25
Jennison Money Market	5,569.09
Money Market	86,304.39
FT-UNIT 10275 – Dow Trust	62,481.24
FT-UNIT 10506 – Dow Trust	70,582.75
FT-UNIT 10485 – Dow Trust	49,060.44
FT-UNIT 10185 – Dow Trust	88,743.55
Total Investments	1,566,549.13
PNC Bank Checking	28,143.71
Total Association Worth	1,594,692.84

#### Investment Withdrawals for Operating Expenses 2022-2023 Fiscal Year

October 13, 2022	25,000.00
December 30, 2022	7,316.20
February 27, 2023	20,000.00
July 17, 2023	20,000.99
Total	72,316.20

#### Year-to-Year Comparison

Total Worth July 31, 2023	1,594,692.84
Total Worth July 31, 2022	1,524,314.77
Net Increase in Worth	+70,378.07
	+4.6 percent

#### President's Report

The President and Vice Presidents each gave reports of their activity since the last meeting.

#### Law and Legislative Report

Harold Whyel reviewed several pieces of legislation pending in Harrisburg. He said that he would defer to the Fire Commissioner for additional comments.

#### Payment of Bills

Executive Director/Secretary Shank presented the following bills. Motion by Harold Whyel and Bruce Davis that the bills be paid. Motion carried.

Office Rent	\$750.00
Election Board Lunch	\$67.54
Copier Service Contract	\$281.16
Secretary's Salary	\$835.00
Extra Office Staff	5,000.00
Total	\$6,933.70

#### Membership Committee

Chairman Tom Foster proposed memberships for 362. Motion by Tom Foster and Pete Barnhart that we make them members of the association. Motion carried.

#### Fire Prevention

Chairman Martin Wetmore encouraged the membership to get into the schools to push the program.

#### Memorial Committee

Leroy Whittlinger, local chairman, advised the membership of the details of this year's memorial service.

#### Scholarship Committee

Tom Shank reported that the scholarships have been selected and are ready to be awarded at the banquet.

#### Sports Committee

Chris O'Leath reported on today's golf outing. Bob Paterson reported on the battle of the barrel which will be held on Saturday.

#### Parade Committee

Chairman Chris O'Leath reported that arrangements for the parade are all set. Judges have been booked and confirmed.

#### Awards Committee

Bruce Davis reported that everything is ready to go for the awards and scholarship banquet and program which will be held this evening beginning with dinner at 6:30 p.m.

#### Guest Speaker

President Ferrante introduced PA State Fire Commissioner Tom Cook who spoke on the status of the state budget, changes in the commissioner's office, and current legislation.

#### Finance and Investment Committee

Executive Director/Secretary Shank presented the proposed budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year. Motion by Tom Foster and Wayne Harris that the budget be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

#### Bylaw Committee

Chairman Harold Whyel said that the Bylaw Committee will meet between now and the October meeting.

#### Report of the Election Committee

Election Committee member, Wilford Torrence, read the results of the annual election.

There was a total of 727 votes cast. Results were as follows:

President – James Eley, 727 votes; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Dennis Remich, 620 votes; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Bruce Crivaro, 691 votes; 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President – Sherry Eley, 218 votes, Amie Shank, 508 votes; Executive Director/Secretary – Thomas Shank, 662 votes; Executive Committee – James Potlas, 708 votes, Bob Paterson, 643 votes, F. Christopher O’Leath, 479 votes, Cindy Davis, 647 votes, Amie Shank, 491 votes, Nick Wuckovich, 484 votes; Place of Convention for 2026 – Somerset, 337 votes, Patton, 307 votes; Place of Convention for 2024 – Fairchance, 305 votes; Place of Convention 2025 – New Kensington, 295 votes.

Motion by Wayne Harris and Jim Bowser that we accept the report of the election board and destroy the ballots. Motion carried.

### New Business

Executive Director/Secretary Shank read a letter from the Western PA Instructor Development Conference lead planner requesting a donation toward their conference scheduled for November 4 and 5 at Westmoreland County Community College. Motion by Harold Whyel and Martin Wetmore that we donate \$1,000 in funds budgeted for the Emergency Services Behavioral Health Alliance and advise that it is being donated to go towards the behavioral health sessions at the conference. Motion carried. J.C. Tedorski, Deputy State Fire Commissioner, abstained from the vote.

### Communications

Executive Director/Secretary Shank read a letter from Fairchance Fire Dept. and a local business in Fairchance offering to host the 2024 convention.

Letter from Unifirst in New Kensington endorsing New Kensington to host the convention in 2025.

President Ferrante recessed the meeting until 6 p.m. Sunday evening.

### **Sunday Evening Session, Sunday, August 6, 2023, 6:00 p.m.**

President Ferrante welcomed everyone and asked Father Kovi to present the invocation.

A delicious meal was served.

President Ferrante introduced Bruce Davis who presented the following awards:

Albert E Wicks Service Award	Quentin Wilson	Washington Twp Westmoreland
Albert E Wicks Service Award	Cassandra Leith	Washington Twp Westmoreland
WPFA Political Award	Jill Cooper	PA State Rep
Harry “Leonard” Lynch Service Award	Edward “Woody” Nicholson	South Brownsville VFC #1
Ruth N Hereda Service Award	Gary E Ganoe	Point Marion VFD
Russell Davis Valor Award	Christina Shaner	
Russell Davis Valor Award	Chief Joseph Paiano Jr, Deputy Chief Cody Paiano, Captain Jonathan Edgar,	Sardis Fire Company
T F Hereda Valor Award	2 <sup>nd</sup> Assit. Chief Kevin Costa	Smithfield VFD
T F Hereda Valor Award	Captain Marco Pantalo	Fairchance VFD
J Edward Saliba Valor Award	Lt Zach Shoop	Lower Burrell VFC #3
J Edward Saliba Valor Award	Police Officer Vince Sekanick	Lower Burrell Police Dept
J Edward Saliba Valor Award	1 <sup>st</sup> LT Richard Barry II	South Brownsville VFC #1

WPFA Valor Award	Richard Watson	Dunbar VFD
WPFA Valor Award	Kristian Clayton Jennifer Colarassi Hunter McKensie Kyle Husar Brayden Epple	
Provident Agency Valor Award	Firefighter Colten Houser Firefighter Brett Steele Patrol Officer Jonathan Murphy Patrol Officer Adam Gagets	Greensburg VFD Greensburg VFD Greensburg Police Dept. Greensburg Police Dept.
Nova Insurance Valor Award	Firefighter J.P. Maroney	Greensburg VFD
	Firefighter Tony Hunter	Southwest Greensburg VFD
	Firefighter Christian Lake	Greensburg VFD
	Firefighter Austin Wetzell	Greensburg VFD
Don "Shorty" McEntire Achievement Award 1 <sup>st</sup> Place		Arnold Fire Dept.
Don "Shorty" McEntire Achievement Award 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place		New Kensington Fire Dept.
Don "Shorty" McEntire Achievement Award 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place		Somerset VFC
WPFA Member Award – Most Active	Captain Bruce Crivaro	New Kensington Fire Dept. No. 1
WPFA Fireperson of the Year	Martin Wetmore	Penn Hills VFD #5
Awards Committee Choice Valor Award	Deputy Chief Wayne Nicholls	Perry Township VFD
	Assistant Chief Barry Shoaf	
	Captain Adam Nicholls	
	Firefighter John A. Clay	
	Firefighter Jesse Ferguson	
	Firefighter Zoe Lynch	
	Firefighter Shane McGavitt	
	Firefighter Allen Neyman	
	Firefighter Dakota Newman	
	Firefighter Chris Wilhelm	
Connie Davis Service Award	Firefighter Abby Ficca Koscianski	Lower Burrell VFC #3
Fire Prevention and Education Award	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	George G. McMurtry Fire Dept. Vandergrift No. 1
Fire Prevention and Education Award	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Oakmont VFD

President Ferrante introduced Tom Shank who presented the following scholarships:

## Western Pennsylvania Firemen's Association 2023 Scholarship Winners

### Four Year Program

Last Name	First Name	City	State	Fire Department	Area of Study	Amount
Ireland	Kayden J	Lower Burrell	PA	Arnold No. 2	Computer Science	\$1,000.00
Lewandowski	Emily K	Brackenridge	PA	NKFD #1	Criminal Justice	\$1,000.00
Lewandowski	Jillian	Brackenridge	PA	NKFD #1	Journalism	\$1,000.00
McHattie	Sage Marie	Monaca	PA	Center Twp. VFD	General Studies	\$1,000.00
Metz	Tyler A	New Kensington	PA	New Kensington No. 2	Safety Health Studies	\$1,000.00
Neighbors	Paytyn	Greensboro	PA	Point Marion VFD	Nursing	\$1,000.00
Price	Taylor J	Johnstown	PA	East Taylor FD	Teaching	\$1,000.00

Rainey	Luke Joseph	Penn Run	PA	Cherryhill Twp. VFC	Political Science	\$1,000.00
Remich	Paige E.	New Kensington	PA	New Kensington No. 3	Business	\$1,000.00
Scanga	Ashley Noel	Vandergrift	PA	Vandergrift No. 1	Architecture	\$1,000.00
Sprumont	Daniel J	Leechburg	PA	New Kensington No. 3	Engineering	\$1,000.00
Seybert	Breanna	Grove City	PA	Grove City VFD	Business	\$1,000.00
Wilson	Quentin	Apollo	PA	Washington Twp #1	Engineering	\$1,000.00

President Ferrante called on the chairman of the Resolution Committee, Sherri Eley, who read the resolution. Motion by Harold Whyel and Ray Burkhart that the resolution be adopted. Motion carried.

President Ferrante gave a short address where he thanked everyone for their help throughout his term as President.

At this time, all newly-elected officers were sworn in by Deputy Fire Commissioner J C Tedorski. President James Eley presented Donald Ferrante with his past-president gifts.

Motion by Harold Whyel and James Bowser that we give Arnold a rising vote of thank for their hospitality. Motion carried.

Closing prayer by Chaplain Tim Gorencic.

Motion by Wilford Torrence and Doug Abel move that we adjourn sine die. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

### **Monday Morning Session, August 7, 2023, Board of Control**

The meeting was called to order by Past President Donald Ferrante with the opening prayer by Chaplain Doug Abel, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Roll call by Executive Director/Secretary Shank.

Bills were read for the convention. The bills were as follows:

NKFD rewrite check #9005	\$500.00
Arnold VFD 1 <sup>st</sup> Place McEntire Award	\$500.00
NKVD 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place McEntire Award	\$250.00
Somerset VFD 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place McEntire Award	\$100.00
Geo McMurtry Fire Prevention Award	\$500.00
Oakmont VFD Fire Prevention Award	\$250.00
Don Ferrante president's Award	\$300.00
Staple Awards Program	\$157.00
USPS Postage	\$83.02
Tees n Tops Presidents Plaque	\$23.00
Utilities	\$139.45
Scot Graham Parade Judges	\$60.00
Tim James Parade Judges	\$60.00
Brad Harbaugh Parade Judges	\$60.00
Cory Hoffman Judges	\$60.00
Wayne Forsyth Parade Judges	\$60.00

James Lang Parade Judges	\$60.00
Eldon Mickel Parade Judges	\$60.00
Nathan Caldwell Parade Judges	\$60.00
Kerri Mickel Parade Judges	\$60.00
Jean Alvin committee food	\$255.53
Arnold Convention Payments	\$12,000.00

Motion by Wilford Torrence and Harold Whyel that the bills be paid as presented. Motion carried.

#### Committee Reports

Chris O’Leath thanked everyone for attending and participating in the convention. He said that there were three musical groups in the parade. There was considerable discussion about the difficulty in getting bands for the parade and what constitutes a band. Motion by Harold Whyel and Pete Barnhart that we pay the full \$4,000 to Arnold for the parade. Motion carried.

Robert Paterson reported on the Battle of the Barrel event was fun and entertaining. He said that there were not a lot of teams that participated this year. He said that the golf outing was a success and well attended.

#### Reorganization

The meeting was then turned over to newly-elected President James Eley who conducted the annual reorganization of committees and other appointments.

The October meeting will at Perryopolis. The December board meeting will be at Point Marion.

There is an opening in the Executive Committee due to Amie Shank becoming 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President. Amie presented a letter of resignation from the Executive Committee. Nominations will be accepted at the next meeting to fill the open seat.

President Eley commented on getting younger members to participate in the association.

Closing prayer by Chaplain Doug Abel. Motion by Harold Whyel and Wilford Torrence that we adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Shank  
Executive Director - Secretary