

**Floral Park Fire Department Chiefs Swearing-In Ceremony**  
**April 19, 2022**

On April 19, 2022, the Floral Park Mayor and Board of Trustees held its annual Fire Department Chiefs Swearing-In ceremony. The Village Board heard outgoing Fire Chief Michael Saville's annual final report as follows:

'Mayor Fitzgerald, Deputy Mayor Dr. Pombonyo, Trustee Chiara, Trustee Stewart, Trustee Longobardi, members of the village administration, members of the department, fellow residents, friends & family:

I stand before you tonight in what I describe as a bittersweet moment. The bitter part is that I am truly going to miss leading an amazing group of individuals who live to serve others over themselves. The sweet part is that I am looking forward to hopefully regaining normal sleep patterns.

Before I read my final report I want to say that it has been an absolute honor & privilege to serve as Chief of the Floral Park Fire Department. The last five years have been a humbling experience. It went extremely fast but I am confident that we made great strides in many areas. Radio communications, firefighter health & safety, training & technology just to name a few.

Several years ago we were faced with a challenge that no one had ever experienced before and which tested the will of all of us. But due to the dedication and courage of our members we persevered. Yes, we lost some very good people as a result of this dreaded virus and we will never forget their sacrifice. I will forever be grateful to each and every member of this department for your professionalism and dedication to serving the residents of this great village.

This is the status of the department:

**MEMBERSHIP:**

The department membership consists of the following: 94 Active firefighters & ems members, 27 Ex-Chiefs, 1 Honorary Chief, 11 probationary members, 26 associate members & 3 chaplains. This year we swore in 5 new members and had 5 resignations.

**ALARMS:**

The department responded to the following alarms: EMS calls: 1,037; Fire calls: 194; Auto Accidents: 37; Hazmat Related Calls: 10; Carbon Monoxide Incidents: 35; Mutual Aid Calls: 89. Total Calls: 1,402.

The department also battled 3 working house fires this past year. I'm happy to report there were no injuries to firefighters or civilians at any of these fires. Total estimated fire loss/damage is \$200,000.00

**TRAINING:**

The department prides itself on having a very aggressive training program. Our training program is broken into 2 parts. Probationary Training and the Department Drill Committee.

The department has totaled over 2500 man hours this year conducting various types of training. Some of the training taken by our members this past year is as follows: Department Operations, Hazardous Materials, LIRR safety, Elevator Emergencies, Thermal Imaging, Engine Company Operations, Mayday training, Officers Training, Building Construction, Radio Communications, Command & Control, FAST team training, Vehicle Extrication, Stroke recognition, and Cardiac Arrest Management. Thank you to the department drill chairman Ex-Captain Eric O'Connor and his committee for all their hard work and dedication.

The department Probationary Training Committee led by Ex-Captain Pat Conway trained 14 new members this past year. Not only are these members required to attend the Fire Service Academy for Primary Training they have to go through our comprehensive in-house training. These members receive training on engine & ladder company operations, SCBA, FF removal, vehicle extrication, extinguishers, tools and radio communication. Thank you to Ex-Captain Conway and his committee for all the time and effort put in throughout the year training our new firefighters.

**PURCHASING:**

There were 46 purchase orders and 102 vouchers processed this year. I would like to thank Village Administrator/Treasurer Gerry Bambrick & Deputy Treasurer Steve Arnone for their time & efforts in the purchasing process.

**MEDICALS & FIT TESTING:**

Every year all active members are required to take an OSHA physical. In addition to the physical, every interior firefighter is required to take an SCBA mask fit test. EMS members are required to fit test on N95 masks as well. Thank you to Chief Dodson for his hard work and time overseeing this important committee. A big thank you to FF Dave Sparrow & Ex-Captain Carol Ragona for all their time and efforts in administering these tests.

**RADIOS:**

The department's radio communications have significantly been improved since the installation of a new high wattage UHF antenna last May. With technology rapidly changing it can be challenging keeping up with the latest equipment. We have been informed that by the end of 2023 Nassau County Fire Communications (FireComm) plans on switching over to a strictly high band radio dispatch platform. This will mean further equipment changes for the department and the radio committee led by Chief Dan Bennett that is already making plans for this switch.

**EQUIPMENT:**

The departments fleet of vehicles consists of the following: 2019 Ferrara Igniter Pumper; 2002 Spartan Saulsbury Pumper; 1998 Spartan Saulsbury Pumper; 2004 Pierce 95' mid mount tower ladder; 1984 Mack Heavy Rescue Truck; 2015 Ford F450 Ambulance; 2021 Chevy Tahoe chiefs vehicle; 2019 Chevy Tahoe chiefs vehicle; 2019 Chevy Tahoe chiefs vehicle; 2017 Chevy Tahoe chiefs vehicle; 2016 Chevy Tahoe chiefs vehicle; 2018 Ford Transit passenger van; 2003 Chevy Express safety van and 1931 American LaFrance Antique.

**WORK ORDERS:**

It goes without saying our vehicle fleet needs to be in top shape at all times. A total of 44 vehicle work orders and 23 house work orders were submitted over the past year. I would like to extend a huge thank you to DPW Superintendent Kevin Ginnane and his hard working staff for all their help in keeping the fleet and our buildings in top shape. Whatever the time of day it was or the problem it was Kevin who was always a phone call away and he would get us the help & assistance we needed. The hard work & dedication of our mechanics and building maintenance staff does not go unnoticed and I thank them again for all their help.

**PUMP/LADDER/HOSE TESTING:**

Each year every length of hose in the department is tested & certified as is every portable ladder. Any defective or damaged piece of equipment is immediately removed from service and replaced. In addition to this our three engine companies must pass a pump test every year as well at the Fire Service Academy. I would like to thank Chief Luger for all his efforts in scheduling and overseeing these tests.

**FIRE EXPLORERS:**

Our Fire Explorer Program continues to thrive thanks to the dedication of Post Chairman Ex-Chief John Florio & Co-Chairman Ex-Captain Larry Goerke. The post now has 9 members and 6 advisors. This past year all members were certified in CPR and received additional medical training thanks to our Rescue Company. Explorers regularly train throughout the year in engine company and truck company operations. The post is comprised of a group of eager young men & women who want to learn fire & ems skills. If you know someone between the ages of 14-17 who might be interested in learning about the fire service, have them reach out to us. They are always looking for new members.

**FIRE PREVENTION:**

The topic of fire prevention is traditionally discussed in the month of October. The Floral Park Fire Department has a dedicated Fire Prevention Committee which promotes fire safety year round. The department is often called upon to speak to various schools & civic groups within the village in regards to fire safety topics. In addition the department hosts numerous tours of our firehouses through the year. This year the department conducted 10 fire house tours & fire safety lectures for school children and scout groups. And it is our goal each and every time that the children learn something and take home with them the message of fire safety to their families. Thank you to Chief Luger and his committee for all their hard work through the year.

**FIRE INSPECTIONS:**

The department boasts a very thorough and active fire inspection program under the leadership of Chief Bennett and Ex-Chief John Florio. This past year over 340 inspections were conducted of commercial establishments and the public areas of multiple dwellings. I would like to extend a big thank you to Building Superintendent Renee Marcus for all her assistance in this area. There has been a lot of building construction in the village over the last few years and the fire department always has a vested interest in learning how these buildings are designed, constructed and laid out. This is to keep all our members safe in the event we are called to operate in one of these structures.

At this time I would like to take a moment to thank and recognize individuals who have helped the fire department through the year making my job a lot easier....

To Mayor Fitzgerald and the board of trustees, thank you for always supporting the department and allowing us the time to sit down with you to discuss any ideas or proposals we had. You always helped us accomplish our goals. The chief's staff is extremely appreciative for your continued hard work and dedication to making this village a "great place to live". I would like to congratulate newly elected trustees Jen Stewart and our very own Ex-Chief Mike Longobardi. We wish you the very best as you begin a new venture and please know the fire department will always support you.

To the members of the Village Administration, Administrator/Treasurer Gerry Bambrick, Village Clerk Susan Walsh, Deputy Village Clerk Rosaleen Shea and Deputy Treasurer Steve Arnone, thank you for all your help and support throughout the year. It has been a pleasure working with you.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention the help that Darlene Lanza, Kourtney Dolan, Terry Paterno & Evelyn Schultz have provided to the department throughout the year. I definitely had Darlene's number on speed dial but I usually preferred to show up at her desk unexpectedly and annoy her until she got me the answer I was looking for! In all seriousness these ladies were always a huge help to me and the staff and we appreciate all their support.

To Village Attorney John Ryan I can't thank you enough for all of your help and guidance throughout the years especially this year. Your support of the department will not be forgotten.

To my boss, Commissioner McAllister and my fellow coworkers at the police department, thank you for all the support you have given me and the entire department over the years. The relationship that the police department and fire department has in this village is truly special and at the end of the day we always work as one unified team to protect and serve the residents of the village. Be safe and continue to look out for one another.

To my department secretaries Ex-Chief Joe O'Grady and Ex-Chief Frank Wakely Jr. thank you for all the time and effort you put in throughout the year. It is truly a thankless job and your hard work does not go unnoticed. To my department Treasurer Ex-Captain Paul Pinto thank you for all your time and effort throughout the year. Your hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed. To Ex-Chief Mike Longobardi the entire staff thanks you for all your help and guidance in the office throughout the year.

To the staff I started in the chief's office with 5 years ago, Ex-Chiefs Longobardi, Maickels, Arrigo & McAllister. Thank you for your guidance and showing me the ropes.

Now to my staff. Jep, Brian, Danny & Gil I couldn't have done it without you. I can't express my appreciation enough for all the hard work and dedication you guys put into making this department run every single day. We faced a lot of difficult times over the years but you all hung in there realizing we had a job to do. Each one of you has gone above and beyond and you should all be commended. In between answering at times non-stop calls you were at your desks scheduling pump tests, registering members for FSA classes, looking over fire inspections, entering work orders or keeping track of medicals and always on top of your game. Thank you again for your dedication.

Thank you to my company, Hook & Ladder Co. 2, the best truck company in Nassau County. I appreciate all the support over the years. Congratulations to Eric O'Connor, the newly elected 4th Assistant Chief. Best of luck Eric. You have a great staff.

And now to the people in my life who made this dream and passion of mine possible. My beautiful family. My wife Ann and my children Michael & Kate. I would not have been able to do this without your unwavering support and understanding. I have honestly lost track of the amount of dinners, family parties and sporting events that I have had to run out on to answer a call. But I always knew that you understood when the pager went off that someone was having a very bad day and needed the help of the fire department. Kate, I will miss you being my chief's aid on calls and complaining sometimes that I didn't park close enough to the action so you could see what was going on. I love you all and I will always be grateful to you guys for allowing me to fulfill my dream. We have a lot of catching up to do! And it will be a lot easier since I don't have a car now.

There are a few other special people I want to recognize. To my parents who are present here tonight thank you for all your encouragement and support over the years. And I want to wish my brother Rob good luck and continued success in his duties as a chief in the Plandome Fire Department. Who knows maybe one day he will pay us back for the mutual aid to Floral Park.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you again to the men and women of this great department for your dedication and service. You truly are professionals and I am proud to have served as your chief.

Mayor Fitzgerald and board of trustees, I am certain that the department is being left in great hands and now it is my true honor to introduce to you a group of talented and hard-working individuals - the newly elected chiefs staff of the Floral Park Fire Department for the year 2022-2023:

4th Assistant Chief Eric O'Connor from the Hook & Ladder Company,  
3rd Assistant Chief Gil Luger from the Active Engine Company,  
2nd Assistant Chief Dan Bennett from the Rescue Company,  
1st Assistant Chief Brian Hamerman from the Reliance Engine Company, and  
Your new Chief of Department from the Alert Engine Company, James Dodson.

Mayor Fitzgerald, I now respectfully request to be relieved of my duties as Chief of the Floral Park Fire Department.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Saville  
Chief of Department

Mayor Fitzgerald invited the Trustees to offer their remarks to Chief Saville and the Fire Department.

**Fire Commissioner Lynn Pombonyo**

Chief Saville, tonight we salute and applaud you for your extraordinary life of service in our Village, Fire Department, Police Department, and in so many other ways. At last Monday's Fire Council, attended by your fellow Chiefs, officers, firefighters and emergency medical staff, you received two long standing ovations. They were heartfelt, meaningful and filled with admiration and gratitude.

Your colleagues in the Fire Department agree on many things when they praise your leadership. Your strong values, ethics and integrity encompass all you do. It comes from your mind, your heart and your soul. It's always present and it's always genuine. Whether you are leading our Fire Department full of leaders into a fire or other emergency situation, fully engaging in training, or collaborating with your colleagues at meetings, all say that they can count on you to lead with others in making the right decisions, for the right reasons, always with the care and safety of our citizens, firefighters, rescue staff, police, and other first responders as your utmost priority.

In speaking with your colleagues and others whom you know well, the word "respect" is repeated time and time again. That constant show of your respect for all, no matter what the situation, whether it be calm, enjoyable, stressful or frightening, makes those around you feel and appreciate the respect you show them. That respect is returned in kind, and makes you one of the most highly respected professionals in our Village. And it's that mutual respect and love that inspired those two standing ovations, and so many other well-deserved accolades that you receive.

Chief Saville has served our Fire Department since 1995. A proud member of the Hook & Ladder Company, he has been a Second and First Lieutenant, a Captain, an Assistant Chief for four years, and the Chief of Department, but always first and foremost, a firefighter dedicated to the Fire Service tradition. We all see Chief Saville "walk the talk," and no one does it better than Chief Michael Saville in both the Fire Department and throughout his twenty-six years in the Police Department.

Tonight, Mayor Fitzgerald will administer the Oaths of Office to our incoming Chief of Department James Dodson, and Assistant Chiefs Brian Hamerman, Daniel Bennett, Gil Luger and Eric O'Connor. We congratulate our Chief staff. May God protect you and our Fire Department, and keep you all safe.

And, to Chief Saville, Ann, Michael, Kate, Mr. and Mrs. Saville and your family, thank you all for the service that you have given to our Village and all of us who live here. May God bless you always.

**Trustee Frank Chiara**

Chief Saville – Mike: Thank you very much for your years of service to our Fire Department and for the years of service that you gave to our community. Mike, your leadership skills show a calm, confident person and we were always reassured that everything was going well when you were on any scene or at any incident that occurred. You led the department in a very positive manner with very positive outcomes. We want to thank you very much for all of your years of service.

It takes a very special individual to volunteer to serve others and at times place their own safety at risk. Mike, I know you have done that number of times to service our community. I want to thank you and I want to thank all of the volunteer members of the fire department for all of the service that you did for our community. We are so truly blessed to have everybody, all of you guys, volunteering for us here. Thank you very much.

**Trustee Jennifer Stewart**

Mike, even when we were kids, you were a born leader. Thank you for your continued dedication to the community and for helping us on our worst days.

To our new chief and chief's staff, thank you for your service and stay safe.

**Trustee Michael Longobardi**

Chief, I do not think I can top everything that was said here or add to it; they covered it all. I, however, had the honor of being on staff with you for part of that time. It was an honor and pleasure working with you. Your humble leadership, unselfish dedication and fire skills are second to none. Like I said to you earlier today, you should stand very tall and proud; you did a great job. Thank you.

**Mayor Kevin Fitzgerald**

Chief, thank you for everything that you've done. When we get elected, we represent 16,000 people. So on behalf of 16,000 people, and that is a big number, thank you for all that you have done. I know that you have stepped into the Chief's office for five (5) years and that probably looked like a long period of time and I'm sure that it went really fast. We get the pleasure and honor of seeing things from the inside and it always truly amazes me to see everything you were challenged with; you met every challenge and you exceed every challenge. So thank you and to Ann, Michael and Katie thank you for your time. So now, Chief, you now can go back to your family.