

Springs Fire Department

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The spirit that is Springs Fire Department first manifested itself early in 1965 when a small group of men decided it was time for the people of Springs to have their own Fire Department.

At the urging of Ed Hults, Bob Dordelman formed a committee to explore the possibilities for a new department.

Pete Reichart and Bob Dordelman spoke with Ray Smith, a local attorney, who informed them that they would have to obtain signatures from a large percentage of property owners of the Springs area in order to comply with New York State Regulations. Thus began the arduous task of canvassing Springs in a door-to-door effort to obtain the needed signatures.

The committee members, namely: Sebastian Arnold, Erwin Beckwith, Bob Dordelman, Ernie Greene, Elwin Harris, Frank Harris, Ed Hults, Angelo Liberti, Ned Miller, Pete Reichart, Dick Talmage, Ray Tilley, and John Wood went door-to-door every night between the hours of six and eight (as those were the days when people were in bed by 8:00 p.m.) and returned to Bob Dordelman's basement for a nightly tally.

Once the quota of signatures was established, the committee went to the Town Board to obtain permission to separate from East Hampton Fire Department. After two meetings with the Town Board, permission was granted and the first Commissioners of the District, Russell Cullum, Bob Dordelman, George Sid Miller, Jr., Ronald Rioux, and Raymond Tilley were appointed. Nelson Smith became the first Secretary- Treasurer of the District. The first Commissioners' meeting was held at the Springs School on March 31, 1965.

By mid-1965, progress began happening in a rapid succession of events. The first badges were ordered on April 26th, Dr. Francis Cooper conducted medical examinations for the new members in May, and the first officers' elections were held on August 18th, with the following results: Chief Peter Reichart, First Assistant Chief Erwin Beckwith, Second Assistant Chief Ernie Greene, Captain John Davis, Assistant Captain John Wood, Department Secretary-Treasurer Bruce Baldwin. The Commissioners then turned the meeting over to the newly elected officers of the Springs Fire Department.

The latter part of 1965 showed further progress, with the vote to spend \$2,000.00 for property on Fort Pond Boulevard taking place on September 17, 1965. Through the efforts of Tom Lyden of Clearwater Beach, a donation of helmets and raincoats was received from the Franklin Square Fire Department in October. In November, the Commissioners reported that a Diamond T Pumper had been purchased from the Jamesport Fire Department for \$1.00, and would be stored in Dick Talmage's Barn.

Source: The Springs Fire Department 1985 Journal