

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

Meeting minutes

May 27, 2010

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:06 with the following representatives present:

Burrville Regional Fire School - Rich Winn

Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Al Hawkins, Les Shull, Eric Deschamps

Fairfield Regional Fire School - Chris Tracy

Hartford County Regional Fire School – Chet Haber, Mike Jepeal, Jim Baldis

Stamford Regional Fire School – Tony Conte

Valley Fire Chiefs' Regional Fire School - James Gies, James Vincent

Wolcott State Fire School - Steve Veneziano

Connecticut Fire Academy - Jeff Morrissette

Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Rich Nicol

Connecticut State Firefighters Association - Ted Schroll, Charles Stankye, Jr., Thomas Murphy

Guests: D.P.W. - Donald Ouillette

Danbury Fire Department – Geoff Herald, Mark Omasta

No one was present representing the Middlesex County Fire School or the New Haven Fire Academy.

Minutes of the April meeting were distributed for review.

Amendments were proposed to the draft minutes on page 2, the section dealing with Haz Mat training.

Motion was made by Chet Haber second by Charles Stankye to accept the April minutes as amended. Motion carried, Jeff Morrissette abstained.

1. Status of properties acquisitions

Eastern Connecticut Fire School - Don Ouillette reported that during the environmental review of the property a carbon based product was found on the property in the area of the former Macha home. The full report is due to be submitted to D.P.W. next week. After review of the final report Jack Farrell will negotiate with Attorney Schrager to set a sales price and conditions of sale. The sales agreement will need to go through the property review process, the Attorney General and the Office of Policy and Management. Brenda Cisco is acting Secretary of O.P.M. The process should start by the end of June. Don also reported that Commissioner Curtis wants to keep the process moving forward.

Burrville Regional Fire School - Don recommended an Environmental Contractor to remediate contamination found on the property. Rich Winn reported that United Industrial Services was cleaning up waste from the site. After the cleanup is complete D.P.W. staff will attempt to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Environmental Protection.

2. Other projects status

New Haven Regional Fire Academy - Don reported that a significant quantity of construction debris was found while excavating for the support building in front of the main administration building. The debris is currently stockpiled on site. Excavation in the area of the burn building revealed old oil filters and buried apparatus frames. The M.O.U. with the City of New Haven states that the contaminated materials are the responsibility of the City of New Haven. The project continues to move forward.

Hartford County Regional Fire School - There are fifteen bidders that participated in the bidding for the construction contract. The low bidder is barred from working in Massachusetts. Don wants to disqualify that

bidder and to select the second successful bidder. Don reported that the process will take approximately one month.

Don also reported that the third successful bidder is the contractor that is constructing the New Haven Regional Fire Academy. They are also constructing other projects for D.P.W.

Don reported that all new M.O.U.s will be more clearly worded to make clear that any site contamination will not be dealt with by the Department of Public Works.

Don reported that the June meeting of the State Bond Commission will probably be canceled. There may be a meeting in July.

Chris Tracy asked for the projected time frame for the projects. Don reported that the process should take approximately six months. Commissioner Curtis also intends to ask the State Bond Commission to release \$250,000 for the template design that will be the design for Burrville and Fairfield and the remainder of the regional fire school projects (Wolcott, Middlesex, Valley). The construction costs for the Hartford Regional Fire School and the property acquisition for the Eastern Connecticut Fire School may also be in the bond request.

There was also a discussion about the difference between authorization and allocation of funding. Both the Connecticut State University system and the University of Connecticut both have established a record of having funds allocated for capital projects. We may want to investigate the possibility of requesting that future bond funding be allocated rather than authorized.

3. Legislative update

The state deficit mitigation plan continues to take funding away from firefighter training. The fund authorized by the legislative session of 2007 in the amount of \$750,000 is reduced in 2011 to \$295,000. The Supplemental Grant funding has been reduced to \$105,000. There was a discussion about firefighter training reimbursement history. Ted Schroll continued the discussion about allocating funds. Ted thinks that we should talk with legislators about trying to have funds allocated for the regional fire school project.

Senate bill #195 on designation of regional fire schools. This is an agency bill from the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control. The Governor offered an amendment to the bill. The amendment tacked on to designate the Danbury school as a regional fire school and further to add another step to the designation of a regional fire schools with review from the Governor. Representative Godfrey blocked the amendment. Senator McLaughlin drafted an amendment which he did not discuss with Representative Godfrey who spearheaded the original effort to recognize the Danbury school as a regional fire school.

Legislators that have regional fire schools in their districts are concerned that the addition of the Danbury school as a regional fire school will adversely impact the existing regional fire schools.

Ted Schroll offered that this upcoming election year will be unique in that all constitutional officers, with the exception of the Treasurer will be turned to new candidates.

4. Lobbying Direction

There was a discussion about the proposed letter to the Governor. Ted Schroll submitted recommended substitute language. Chris Tracy recommended that the letter be sent to candidates for Governor. Charlie Stankye also felt that the candidates should receive a copy of the letter. There was also an opinion that the letter should conclude with a request that the Governor meet with members of this committee.

5. Other items from membership

Chester Haber brought construction documents for the Hartford County Regional Fire School for review.

Jim Gies wants all regional fire school directors to evaluate the amount of course content included in the Hazardous Materials Awareness/Operational program. Jim was concerned with the amount of material included in the curriculum package recently released by C.F.A. staff. One concern is the impact that the Hazardous Materials program is having on basic Firefighter I skills. Jim is also concerned that the only reference to the doffing procedure outlined in the new training package is on an internet blog.

Steve Veneziano wants to see students tested to core competencies and product control. The program provided is designed to teach to the NFPA 472 Technician level only leaving out the chemistry of hazardous materials section.

Chris Tracy reported that he felt that there was a disconnect between the NFPA 1001 committee and the NFPA 472 committee. Chris also feels that the ERG should be provided as reference during the written testing and that we should not be testing on memorization of the book's content.

A sub-committee was established to review the hazardous materials program content and to make recommendation back to the committee on how best to proceed with the delivery of hazardous materials content at the Firefighter I level.

The following volunteered to participate on the sub-committee. Steve Veneziano will chair the committee. Jeff Morrissette will attempt to provide a staff member from the C.F.A. to work on this committee. The name of Eric Munsell was mentioned as a possible participant.

Steve Veneziano	vnzrescue@aol.com
Jim Gies	fmfourjg@att.net
Mark Omasta	m.omasta@ci.danbury.ct.us
Les Shull	lshull9160@aol.com
Rich Winn	Richard.t.winn@snet.net
Mike Jepeal	SVFD24@aol.com
Chris Tracy	ctracy@town.fairfield.ct.us

There was a brief discussion about the number of Firefighter I and II classes being offered around the state by various instructors and groups of instructors. Concerns were expressed that these classes have no oversight and that the buyer needs to beware of what they are getting for their dollar.

Jeff Morrissette said that there was some funding available for hazardous materials training that he may be able to direct to the regional fire schools to help offset costs associated with the hazardous materials portion of the Firefighter I programs. More information will follow.

6. Next meeting date

The next meeting will be on June 24, 2010 at Wethersfield Company #3 at 19:00.

Motion by Chris Tracy second by Rich Winn to adjourn at 21:53.

Submitted by Al Hawkins