

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

Meeting minutes

September 23, 2010

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:08 with the following representatives present:

Burrville Regional Fire School - Rich Winn
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Al Hawkins, Les Shull
Fairfield Regional Fire School - Chris Tracy
Hartford County Regional Fire School – Chet Haber, Jim Baldis
Middlesex County Fire School - Fred Dudek
New Haven Fire Academy - Matt Marcarelli
Valley Fire Chiefs' Regional Fire School - Charles Stankye, Jr.,
Wolcott State Fire School - Steve Veneziano
Connecticut Fire Academy - Adam Piskura
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Rich Nicol
Connecticut State Firefighters Association - President, Thomas J. Murphy, Ted Schroll
Guests: D.P.W. - Donald Ouillette
Danbury Fire Department – Mark Omasta, T.J. Wiedl

No one was present representing the Stamford Regional Fire School,

Minutes of the August meeting were distributed for review.

Motion was made by Chet Haber second by Rich Winn to accept the July minutes. Motion carried.

1. Status of properties acquisitions

Don Ouillette reported that the Department of Public Works will be closing on the property in Beacon Falls tomorrow. He also advised that the Beacon Falls First Selectman has been quite vocal in opposition to taking the property off of the tax rolls and using it for a fire school. She has been actively attacking members of the Connecticut General Assembly for supporting the move.

Don recommends that the directors of the Eastern Connecticut Fire School be pro-active in reaching out to local politicians to make sure that there are no similar issues with the Willimantic site. It would probably be advisable to include members of the General Assembly so that a discussion on PILOT funds could take place.

Burrville - A draft memorandum of understanding has been circulating between the Department of Public Works and the Department of Environmental Protection that would allow the construction of a fire school on the D.E.P. property. Hopes are that the M.O.U. will be executed in the October - November time frame.

A draft memorandum of understanding has also been circulating between the Department of Public Works and the City of Fairfield in order to allow for the construction of the Fairfield school. Now that environmental remediation is complete, that agreement should be executed in the October - November time frame.

There have been Project Managers assigned by D.P.W. to the Burrville, Fairfield and the Willimantic projects.

Fred Dudek reported that the Department of the Army has still not transferred the promised real estate parcel to the City of Middletown.

2. Other projects status

There have been complaints raised by some contractors interested on bidding on the Hartford County project. Those contractors feel that the bidder qualifications stipulations are too restrictive. Don circulated copies of a document that

revised the bidder qualifications slightly in order to address those complaints. Because of the change the due date for the bids will be extended by three weeks.

New Haven - The burn building third floor has been framed and concrete poured. Modifications to the trench collapse prop have been designed.

3. Hazardous Materials training

The sub-committee will meet on October 28th at the New Haven Regional Fire Academy at 18:00, just before the Education Committee meeting.

4. Regional Schools operations budgets

The Governor and her staff are developing a proposed budget to pass on to the successor governor. There was a brief discussion about a meeting between members of the Education Committee and two budget analysts that took place on September 14th, at the Office of Policy and Management in Hartford. At that meeting committee representatives tried to communicate the issues surrounding the fact that the regional fire schools and the Connecticut Fire Academy have been losing funds since 2006. The issues relating to the huge cost savings of providing for the continuation of volunteer fire departments in contrast with the miniscule savings afforded by cutting firefighter training funds was discussed. The O.P.M. staffers offered that they could include information provide by us that relates to the importance of restoring this funding to appropriate levels. Al Hawkins advised that he will work up a draft document and circulate it to committee members for input.

There was a discussion about the request from the Office of Policy and Management to provide a proposed budget reduction of 15% of current funding levels. The general feeling was that this figure would shut down the five independent regional schools and cause the Fairfield, New Haven and Stamford facilities to discontinue all regional programs. The general feeling was that this was a counterproductive exercise. Members felt that time would be better spent lobbying for additional funding so that operations could be sustained.

5. Other items from membership

The Commission on Fire Prevention and Control is scheduled to meet next Tuesday. Staff will distribute proposed budget figures for the biennial budget at that time.

Adam Piskura reported that Ed Bysinski from the C.F.A. is extremely poor health and battling with cancer. He will probably not be returning to work.

Adam also announced that funding for Hazardous Materials training opportunities will close on Friday of this week. Rosters and course descriptions need to be submitted by that date.

Rich Winn reported that the annual dinner meeting for the Connecticut Fire Department Instructors' Association will be on October 6th at the Aqua Turf in Southington. Governor Rell is planning to attend.

Fred Dudek reported that the Middlesex Fire School has just completed a Firefighter 101 class to bring awareness to local politicians.

6. Next meeting date

The next meeting will be on October 28, 2010 at the New Haven Regional Fire Academy, at 19:00.
NOTE: The sub-committee on Hazardous Materials Training will meet at the same location at 18:00.

Motion by Chris Tracy second by Ted Schroll to adjourn, motion carried at 20:31.

Submitted by Al Hawkins