

# Connecticut State Firefighters Association

## Education Committee

Meeting minutes

September 27, 2012

Wethersfield Fire Company #3

Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:07 with the following representatives present:

Connecticut State Firefighters' Association - F.C. Hilbert,, Thomas Murphy  
Burrville Regional Fire School - Rich Winn  
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Al Hawkins, Les Shull, Art Heon  
Fairfield Regional Fire School - Chris Tracy  
Hartford County Regional Fire School – Chet Haber, Mike Jepeal  
Middlesex County Fire School - Fred Dudek  
New Haven Regional Fire Academy - Matt Marcarelli  
Stamford Regional Fire School – Tony Conte  
Valley Fire Chiefs' Regional Fire School - Charles Stankye, Jr.  
Wolcott State Fire School – Steve Veneziano, Dave Hardt  
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Bill Trisler, Jeff Morrissette, Rich Nicol

Guests:

Danbury Fire School – T. J. Wiedl

The draft minutes of the August 23, 2012 meeting were distributed.

Motion was made to accept the minutes as presented. Motion by Winn, seconded by Haber, Motion carried.

### **1. Projects status**

Hartford County – Meeting last week on punch list items. Door frames and re-working protection around window openings.

Chris Tracy observed that the work items in Hartford are delaying progress on other school sites.

Willimantic – No additional work has taken place at this site.

Rich Winn reported on his trip to Albany to view training props by Bullex. Rich gathered information on a Bullex Metering Package and a Hazardous Materials simulator. Rich reported that he had acquired approximately 16 pages of information on the Bullex simulators. Rich also reported that although many simulators utilize propane, many can also be fed with natural gas. There was a brief discussion on the benefits of natural gas for props.

### **2. Certification Director**

Bill Trisler was introduced as the recently appointed Director of Certification. Bill said that an early decision that he had made was to delay the reaccreditation process. This process is normally conducted every five years. Due to the backlog of work in his position, Bill has decided to postpone the process.

Bill also reported that he has decided to utilize the 2012 edition of the Emergency Response Guidebook for Hazardous Materials certification testing.

Chris Tracy announced that he had digital copies of the NFPA standards 472, 473, 475, and 1075.

Steve Veneziano asked about the logistics of the Firefighter I / Hazardous Materials practical skills testing and the number of students that could be tested in a single day. Jeff Morrissette offered that Connecticut is one of only three states that have moved to Haz-Mat testing to the NFPA 472 standard as part of the

NFPA 1001 “Firefighter Professional Qualification Standard”. The other states are New Mexico and Washington, D.C..

Chris reported that the next mission specific Hazardous Materials testing would be for the “Bomb Technician” certification.

A brief discussion was conducted about the addition of various accrediting agencies that have become involved in the Firefighter Certification process at elevated levels of training. Examples were cited as the Fire Officer - I which is accredited by Charter Oak Community College. Jeff noted that much of the determination regarding accreditation organizations came out of the program review process.

There was also a brief discussion about determining appropriateness of various facilities that would be able to support practical skills testing for certification testing. The general feeling was that there should be a close correlation to the number of firefighting skills that could potentially be tested at a site in determining the appropriateness of that site. Regional school directors cited suitcase classes of Firefighter I where the facility used did not allow for testing on a sufficient number of skills to allow for a true “random sample” test.

Going forward Bill stated that the accrediting agencies such as IFSAC, will audit to determine how many times each set of practical skills is utilized for testing.

Mike Jepeal stated that currently the chief evaluators from the Certification Office are instructed that if there is insufficient equipment and appropriate accommodations available at the test site that they can withdraw from the testing at the subject facility. He also stated that in the current rules, if significant equipment breakage occurs, the tested scenarios may be changed.

Jeff also offered that currently the Director of Certification may make a decision on particular stations that may need to be changed to afford more fair testing.

Rich Nicol felt that it was important that through the regional fire school rebuilding process that each school should consider being able to effectively administer the various practical testing at each site. It was generally felt that testing security should be a major issue.

Other testing issues discussed were the possibility of some testing to be computer generated. NFPA has contracted with independent contractors in order to facilitate some of their testing. Jeff stated that he has applied for funds in order to acquire I-Pads or tablet type devices for testing.

Tony Conte asked about testing for the Fire Instructor I program as provided by J & B.

Other training issues:

Shaker Pines is getting state D.O.C. property provided to them for firefighter training.

Darien has acquired Federal funding for fire training.

The C.F.A. is going on-line for C.P.A.T. registration.

### **3. Other Items from the Membership**

There was a discussion about correspondence from this committee requesting support from Fire Chiefs for the Regional Fire School rebuilding effort.

One concern voiced was that if there are unlimited training facilities set up as “regional fire training facilities” that this effort could dilute the available fiscal resources in order to support them.

Other issues that continue with some various for-profit training vendors are liability, workers compensation and payroll withholding requirements of regulators.

Fritz Hilbert said that he feels that part of the problem has been created by a void created because of the protracted process of getting the regional fire school rehabilitated.

Chris Tracy feels that we should also reach out to Municipal C.E.O.s and elected officials. Avenues discussed included the Council of Small Towns and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

Initial distribution of the letter will be through the C.F.P.C. Listserve, the C.S.F.A. website and various county fire service leaders. Chris offered that we distribute the letter as efficiently as possible.

The Hartford County Regional Fire School has set a date for a ribbon cutting ceremony. The date is October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012 as 18:30 at their new firehouse.

Chet Haber is still waiting for Joe Aresimowicz to schedule a date for a January "Update Meeting" to review progress of the various regional fire school projects.

Rich Winn reported that the C.F.D.I.A. will be presenting an award to Representative Boukus at their annual meeting.

Mike Jepeal urged that all of the regional fire schools standardize a live fire policy. He also cautioned that we need to be sensitive in establishing pricing for facility usage that we don't want to make it too expensive for departments to utilize the new training facilities.

Jeff offered that the State has invested significantly in these facilities and that they should also fund necessary repairs as these buildings are used and require maintenance and repair.

Matt Marcarelli reported that the city of New Haven is charging \$150 plus instructors for use of their burn building.

Mike Jepeal suggested that the regional school directors develop a training program for outside instructors that wish to utilize these facilities for training.

Matt Marcarelli indicated that HTL lining systems has developed a burn loading plan for use with their lining system.

Fred Dudek spoke about the Leadership Conference that is being offered by the National Volunteer Fire Council.

#### **4. Next meeting date**

The next meeting will be held on October 25, 2012 at Wethersfield Fire Company #3, Kelleher Court.

Motion by Haber, second by Tracy to adjourn, motion carried.

Submitted by Al Hawkins