



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL
OFFICE OF STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATION



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**MINUTES OF THE JUNE 24, 2008 MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

Chairman Carozza called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioners Brady, Dagon, Mitchell, Murphy, Nelson, Nicol, Stankye, Walsh and Wilkinson.

Staff members Lewis and Morrissette were present.

Attendees took a moment to pledge allegiance to the American flag.

Mr. Morrissette introduced Jeffrey Bond as a guest to the meeting. Mr. Bond is here to speak on the issue of CPR/EAD training being incorporated into FFI entry level training.

Mr. Morrissette asked for the Commission's indulgence as we recognize a member of the staff for 10 years of service. He said as most know Mr. Piskura was an employee of the Commission long before his return to Connecticut 10 years ago. He said he would like to formally recognize him for his 10 years of service as Director of Training for the Connecticut Fire Academy and Commission on Fire Prevention and Control.

Chairman Carozza extended congratulations on behalf of the Commission and presented Mr. Piskura with a certificate of appreciation for his 10 years of service.

Moving to item 2) Approval of the Minutes of the May 27, 2008 meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Stankye and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady to approve the Minutes of the May 27, 2008 meeting. Motion carried.

Moving to item 3) Staff Report May 15, 2008 - June 14, 2008.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy to approve the Staff Report for the period of May 15, 2008 – June 14, 2008. Motion carried.

Moving to item 4a.) Budget/Staffing Update – Mr. Morrissette gave a brief update regarding staffing. He said as most Commissioners are aware there is a hiring freeze in effect which impacts the addition of approximately 20 part time adjunct examiner positions. We have completed interviews and have identified those who successfully passed the process however we've had to resubmit updated justifications for that action. He said there is no fiscal impact as part of this, it is absorbed within the agency budget but it will clean the lines between the training and certification divisions and avoid

potential or perceived conflicts. He also said the vacancy for our General Trades' Worker position in the facility division still exists and we are still operating over the past two months with one individual responsible for overall facility management and maintenance. This position also had to be re-justified and submitted. He said he's hopeful that there won't be any delays based upon the fiscal impact of the examiners position and also the need for maintaining a facility.

Mr. Morrissette also reported regarding the budget. He said there are frequent memos being received from the Governor's office essentially locking spending down for the close of the fiscal year. He said today is the actual date when the CORE CT systems shuts down and we cannot make any new expenditures. We'll be moving into the new fiscal year. He said he'll report later on in terms of the entry level training reimbursement update. We'll expect to lapse a significant sum of money. This will be our contribution to the projected state deficit. He said he'll give a more detailed report later. He asked Commissioners if they had any questions.

Moving to item 4b.) CSFA Education Committee Update – Commissioner Wilkinson stated he had a brief report because the Education Committee has not met since the last Commission meeting. He said the Committee will be meeting this Thursday evening in Wethersfield. He said they've been advised that the Department of Public Works (DPW) has once again submitted the request for \$150,000 for consideration of the Bond Commission meeting to facilitate the start of work towards the design build process for the Fairfield and Burrville Schools. As of last evening he hadn't receive any indication if there was in fact going to be a Bond Commission meeting held this week or if we would be on the agenda. He also reported that DPW has forwarded the recommendation to the board of directors for the Valley Regional School to consider approval for the site that has been identified in Beacon Falls.

Moving to item 4c.) FY08 Supplemental Grant Program Update – Mr. Morrissette reported regarding the Supplemental Grant program. He said last evening as part of our listserv distribution we disseminated a reminder to all the eligible fire companies that we're coming to the close of the fiscal year for the LAH funding. He said we have made all of the direct payment payouts so the only outstanding items are those departments that selected vouchers. He said he has a list from about four weeks ago as an update on which departments still have outstanding balances and at that time there was about \$45,540 remaining. He said he anticipates it's probably now \$10,000 below that and we have the potential of lapsing some money in that particular account. We've actually contacted all of the outstanding fire companies that never contacted us and we've either made direct payment in the form of a check or provided a voucher account number to them. He asked Commissioners throughout their travels to encourage departments to expend the funding or potentially loose it.

Moving to item 4d.) Entry-Level Training Reimbursement Update – Mr. Morrissette gave an update on the Entry-Level Training Reimbursements. He said because of scheduling, we've closed out the program log for the current fiscal year. He said the one individual in our business office who handles the program is going to be on vacation for the remainder of the week so we've been given authorization to carry over any pending

claims to the new fiscal year. At the present time it appears \$482,000 has been either encumbered or expended which would leave a balance of \$267,000 unspent. He said those numbers were solid as of this morning at which time we did receive an email from our DAS budget people which indicated that they've also added on the fringe benefit factor to this which would be returned to the agency which we don't necessarily think is appropriate and would total another \$52,000. He said we're checking into the legality of that. He said that amount also includes transfer for the arbitration award for the return of the full time trainer position.

Commissioner Nicol asked if that's what Mr. Morrissette was referring to in the Administration staff report where he mentioned it appears OPM will now utilize funds from the Entry Level Training account.

Mr. Morrissette said yes that's the award for the arbitration.

Mr. Jeffrey Bond of Burlington has been involved in the fire service in Connecticut since 1986. He said he's been an EMS professional since 1981 including keeping his national registry paramedic since that time. He said he's here before the Commission to speak on an issue that is very passionate to him and it was quite surprising that he came across it. He said Burlington has been very active with the fire commission through various regional training programs. In the last two years they were very fortunate to get five or six per year through the regional fire school programs. He said upon completion it became very apparent that none of those people had AED or CPR training and it became his focus to be able to address this Commission to be able to evaluate adding CPR and AED training in the FFI program. He said hopefully all are aware that heart disease unfortunately is the number one killer of firefighters and is also the number one cause of death in the United States. If you added all the other causes of death that occurs in the population cardiac disease and heart disease is still the number one by far. Unfortunately it is also the leading cause of death for firefighters. He said literature supports that anywhere from 43-65% of all firefighter deaths are attributed to heart disease and that is not a small number. It's the most important life safety issue that's been identified on through multiple different agencies including the NFPA. The *New England Journal of Medicine* in March 2007 reported that "a firefighter's risk of dying from coronary heart disease is about 90% greater when responding to emergency calls compared to regular population. He said that includes unfortunately deaths of driving to the firehouse as a volunteer, during an emergency and also following the incident. There are approximately 1.1 million volunteer and career firefighters in the U.S. It is estimated that 70% are volunteers and those volunteers don't have access to the programs initiated through the NFPA and other various organizations on lifestyle changes; eating healthy; firefighter programs that have been established across the country to be able to assist firefighters in preventing some of these deaths. He said the NFPA 1001 Standards which were recently adopted noted in Chapter 4.3 requires the Agency Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to develop and validate infection control, CPR, bleeding control and shock management procedures for entry level firefighters. These 2008 standards establish the responsibility for the Connecticut Commission on Fire Prevention and Control to mandate CPR and AED training certifications for FFI programs. The American Red Cross and the American Heart Association have established programs that can be adopted for the purposes that

require CPR and AED training. He said each of these programs is less than five hours, or less than one percent of the FFI curriculum. He said it is clear that this body has the expertise and knowledge to mandate CPR and AED training in the FFI program. He encouraged the Commission to look at the literature out there and support adding or requiring FFI certification to include AED and CPR training. He said he would be happy to answer any questions Commissioners may have.

Chairman Carozza thanked Mr. Bond for his presentation.

Commissioner Brady asked on the AED training if the protocols from sponsor hospitals throughout the state are consistent or do they vary.

Mr. Bond replied that those protocols are established by the American Heart Association and its clinical research which is updated every six years. He said the protocols are clear they are not subjective they are very objective and they come from a nationally recognized organization.

Mr. Morrisette stated he would like to provide the Commission with an update in terms of this issue. He said we've had this on the agenda for a couple of months and what we've reported on to date is that we've shared Mr. Bond's original letter of request with the CT Chiefs, the Career Chiefs and also with the CSFA Education committee. He said he's not sure if we've shared it with the Instructors Association. He said it is his understanding there have been discussions by all three groups. He said he's aware the CT Chiefs have not taken up the issue as yet because of timing and the death of the president's father. He said he believes the Career Chiefs did discuss the issue but they are also in the process of reviewing the present curriculum for the recruit class as presented by the CFA. He asked Mr. Piskura to provide the Commission with an update. He also said the discussions by the Education Committee was that some of the Regional Fire Schools, for example Hartford County Regional Fire School, does provide the training as part of their FFI curriculum and they may be one of only two that actually provides it as part of their training. Most of them delegated it back to what they deemed and what the Commission has previously deemed as the AHJ (fire chief) or department that sponsors the class so we're kind of in limbo in terms of getting feedback from some of the organizations. He said the minimum feedback we had received from the Education Committee was to leave it to the AHJ, that being the fire chief so that's where we are at the present time. There has been no action by this body in terms of the original request.

Commissioner Brady added that he spoke to Chief DiPace and the Board of Directors of the Chiefs Association did discuss the issue and did not come to a consensus either for or against it. He said some people had opinions both ways but there was no consensus and he believes they plan to bring before the full association in July.

Mr. Piskura added that there are 53 career fire chiefs in the state and he met with the education component during the last Commission meeting. He said NFPA 1001, Chapter 4 the cited piece is something that the appointing authority the AHJ is suppose to ensure that the candidate has before they even enter our training program. He said nothing has been decided yet but what we're recommending is if you're in for a penny in for a pound

the candidate has to complete MRT which is a 50 hour course and that's just to be efficient because there is no point in doing control bleeding and CPR/AED then you might as well do the MRT. He said that's his logic and he's not sure they will see things that way. He said the Career Chiefs are going to do an internal survey hopefully before September because if there are any adjustments to the curriculum he's got to have it by September to be included in the 2009 CFA training calendar. He said there were some surprising conversations in that when they went through our 14 week recruit program one department then put their people into an MRT program. He said that doesn't meet the letter of certification it actually has to come before the recruit program so we're probably going to move to accommodate that and perhaps we'll schedule an MRT program prior to the recruit program so there is no timing problems with becoming certified. He said all these things are conversation items right now but they are looking to ensure that the minimum is met and hopefully they go with full MRT but it's not his decision to make.

Mr. Morrissette added that although the survey will probably bear some of this it appears the vast majority of people that come to the recruit training already hold either MRT, EMT or Paramedic credentials even before arriving here so it's probably a minimum number of individuals who aren't part of any recruit class that would require that pre-training. He also said he believes Hartford as part of their entry level training is doing MRT and New Haven as well is doing EMT. He said he's not sure what EMS component Bridgeport includes in their program but from the career side we're in relatively good shape. It's really the volunteer side in terms of the FFI programs that this really impacts.

Mr. Bond remarked that he appreciates the feedback and direction that the Commission is willing to take to look at the issue. He said the literature is very clear that cardiac deaths are killing firefighters and training for is less than half percent of all the FFI requirements in order to complete the program. He also said with all due respect to the uniformed professionals both in this room and many of the organizations that we represent 70% of the members that are firefighters are volunteer firefighters and they don't have access to the health programs that are typically awarded to those in the uniformed services or those working for municipalities. He said this is something he as a volunteer and being in the age group is most likely to die from this cardiac disease. He said this is an important issue and he appreciates the courtesy the Commission and Mr. Morrissette has offered but as the leading agency for fire prevention, training and fire administration in the state of Connecticut it is this body that needs to be able to step up and make the decision that this is an important issue for us whether we are volunteers or a uniformed firefighter.

Chairman Carozza thanked Mr. Bond again for being here and said it is certainly an issue that affects the fire service here in Connecticut and we just recently in the Legislature worked very hard in conjunction with all the fire service organizations on getting some legislation passed so it's a very important issue.

Moving to item 4f.) NFPA 1001 and 472 Updates – Mr. Morrissette asked Mr. Piskura to provide the Commission with an update in terms of some internal discussions related to the implementation of the updated 1001 standard including changes to the NFPA 472 standard.

Mr. Piskura said that within the Recruit program FFI/FFII is Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Awareness and operations and when NFPA 472 which is a HazMat standard went through its revision they significantly added specific target responses that have to be addressed in addition to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). He said by adding specific responses into that you have to actually approach the technician level and that's not the intent of the standard but that's what the standard says to do. He said Certification has done the most work in this area where they've dissected the standard, looked at the job performance requirements or the skills that are required and link them up to come up with about six different scenarios that would incorporate each of the performance skills that would have to be demonstrated according to the standard. He said they are currently looking at adding an eight hour day just in testing for the Operations level. He said the current game plan is to combine Awareness and Operations and test for those together. He said as Director of Certification McGowan had discussed, there would be approximately 30 questions devoted to Awareness and 70 questions devoted to Operations for the written component. He said the main conversation internally is how to do the practical skills and demonstrate them appropriately. It's an extremely time consuming event to construct scenarios job performance skills around specific responses. He said we're going to try to satisfy the standard and its intent but it creates a lot of conversation.

Mr. Morrissette distributed copies of a flow chart designed by Mr. McGowan and said this is the framework for one of the scenarios we can look at in terms of implementing the change and to accomplish the testing aspects of it. He said this impacts anyone that delivers entry level training, be it FFI or Recruit. He also said we had some previous discussion at the Education Committee, two months ago, and Mr. McGowan was in attendance. The general feeling of the Regional Schools was they were going to implement this as part of their summer classes which are ongoing right now so we're still weighing our options as it relates to this.

Mr. Piskura added that we're probably looking at adding eight hours of instruction to accomplish the Haz Mat Operations level. He also said he's not expanding the recruit program they are going to gain the eight hours within the program elsewhere. He said we are going to change the way we do some things and accommodate that in the existing 14 weeks. He said in talking to fire chiefs they want to see this incorporated into the FFI. He said there is not much value in sending a firefighter to become FFI and then having to come back and then send them out again for the Awareness and Operations so it's good that it's incorporated into the standards.

Mr. Morrissette said from this point forward we will continue to communicate with as many of our constituents as possible to obtain feedback.

Moving to item 4g.) Technical Rescue EMS Requirements Update – Mr. Morrissette reported that we continue to receive good feedback on our request of the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) and their advisory board as it relates to the request to modify the EMS requirements for the Technical Rescue CORE training. He said we're still awaiting the revised wording as it relates to them allowing MRT's to perform certain

EMT level skills as part of their Technical Rescue certification process and scope of practice out in the field. It's currently passed two bodies and there is one more hurdle to cross but the Doctors are in full support of it. He said he was told after the fact that there were a lot of rumors within the EMS community that here comes the fire service trying to change everything they do in EMS. He said that's certainly not true and we're trying to work within the system and the framework. He said he's not sure of the timing of the next board meeting but it appears to be moving forward and will be approved.

Moving to item 5a.) Summer Meeting Schedule – Mr. Morrisette said while there are significant pending issues he doesn't anticipate any resolution on any of them during the month of July. He said it's possible that we may have additional information as it relates to the CPR/AED issue as well as the implementation of the changes for the NFPA 1001 including the 472 standard components in August but it's possible we may not. He said his concern is everyone is kicking off their training schedules for September and we still may be lagging behind a little bit. On one hand that's not a bad thing. Typically it takes us around 18 months to implement any major changes in an NFPA standard as part of our certification based training programs and certification testing so we're actually a head of the curve in that regard but people in the field are eager to get moving to adopt the changes. He said the Education Committee will be discussing curriculum standardization on Thursday evening so there is a lot of concurrent activity which will eventually impact what everybody does from an entry level training standpoint. He said he anticipates no meeting in July or August and the next regular meeting would be in September.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye that the Commission suspend the regular scheduled meetings for the months of July and August subject to the call of the Chairman. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5b.) FY 08 Annual Report – Mr. Morrisette stated that we still have not yet received guidance from the Department of Administrative Services for putting together the FY 08 annual report to the Governor and Legislature. He said we will begin to solicit statistics and information accomplishments, etc. from the staff. He asked for the Commission's permission to put the report together with the anticipation that the submittal date will be prior to our next scheduled meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Brady and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Dagon authorizing the State Fire Administrator to proceed with the preparation of the FY 08 annual report. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5c.) PA 08-131 Model Guidelines – Mr. Morrisette said last month we had a brief discussion regarding the legislation which was passed regarding the volunteer career issue. He said at that time he had inquired what the general feeling of the Commission was and whether or not we needed to take another look at the model guidelines to make any revisions. He said we sent out a copy of the guidelines to Commissioners for their review so we are open to any discussion or questions.

Chairman Carozza said he noticed in the Minutes that Mr. Morrisette was going to meet with Representative Nafis and asked if that had been accomplished.

Mr. Morrissette replied that originally he was scheduled to meet with her following the Bill signing ceremony but because of a scheduling conflict he was not able to attend the ceremony and did not meet with her. He said she was suppose to get back to him with some new dates for a meeting. He said that meeting was to respond to specific questions that he's beginning to receive from constituents in terms of how it applies to specific scenarios.

Chairman Carozza suggested that maybe that meeting should take place first and get some feedback from Representative Nafis since she was very involved in the legislation and then the Commission can make a decision on how we want to act further.

Mr. Morrissette asked if any Commissioner had received any question or whether there were any issues Commissioner are aware of that we need to bring forward.

Commissioner Nelson said its clear there are going to be questions from people that are already on contracts and from those on new contracts and how the legislation applies. He said the Governor when she signed the Bill said that her clear intent and the Legislature's intent is that career firefighters will be allowed to volunteer in their communities.

Chairman Carozza said there was a lot of discussion on the floor of the House on the intent of the legislation so before the Commission takes any action we should meet with Representative Nafis first to make sure we are all on the same page.

Commissioner Brady asked if it would be appropriate to invite Representative Nafis to attend a Commission meeting.

Chairman Carozza said it may be a good idea to meet with her separately first and then invite her to a meeting.

Commissioner Nicol suggested that after the meeting takes place we should consider drafting a document of frequently asked questions.

Mr. Morrissette said that would be helpful.

Commissioner Nicol said if that could be done and put it out to the fire service via the listserv that would clear up or answer a lot of concerns people may have.

Moving to item 5d.) Entry Level Training Reimbursement Program Procedure Revision - Mr. Morrissette said in follow up to the earlier discussion regarding the funding that's going to lapse as part of the entry level training reimbursement program we've had some internal discussions with Ed Bycenski in our Business office. He said while it was the Commission and the Subcommittee that originally was put together to develop the policy to manage the entry level training reimbursement program we would be looking at some possible changes. He said we're going to be moving into the new fiscal year in another week or so but one of the issues we think we can accomplish which will eliminate some of the double duty internally in terms of pushing paper is to move from a pre-

authorization environment to pure reimbursement. He said the reason we opted for the pre-authorization was the fear that we would be running out of funding. He said that obviously did not occur and the lead and lags that go along with training and testing will give you a good example. He said there is a significant amount of testing that takes place during the month of late April, May and June. He said our ability and staffing does not allow for the processing of results in a timeframe which will allow for reimbursement of everybody during that fiscal year so we're going to be carrying over a number of claims from the current fiscal year to the new fiscal year. He said because of the inherent time involved in training and testing this will alleviate some of the internal processes in terms of reviewing and signing off on the pre-authorization form and sending it back. He said essentially we were encumbering funding in the name of an individual to be reimbursed to a department so that would eliminate that process. When someone becomes certified at that time the department or municipality would submit a request for reimbursement and we would process it then. He said we're pushing a lot of paper but in the environment of a 100% reimbursement things would be a little clearer. Mr. Morrissette also said we probably need to ask the question at the Education Committee meeting on Thursday as to whether or not there is a feeling that there needs to be any adjustment to the reimbursement cap that was imposed as part of the procedures and the same question will probably need to be asked once the Subcommittee for the career chiefs meets and comes to a decision in terms of changes to the recruit program because there is a potential that another week could be added. He said he's not sure if that's accurate but some of the early discussions that's where some of the career chiefs were headed so that cap would need to change. He said if we do the reimbursement at the end any training taking place between July 1st and by the time the Commission adopts any changes we would probably all be on the same page. He said he doesn't feel the need to do anything today but we'll enter the information gathering phase over the next few months or so and be able to come back to the Commission with any anticipated proposed changes. He said he doesn't feel they would be significant because we're only reimbursing 50% so he doesn't think the Regional Schools would be looking at a significant increase in their tuition. He also said there are other factors that would come into play such as if there is a mandate that CPR/AED training be included, that would be incorporated into the program and half of that cost would be reimbursable. He said he wanted to bring this to the Commission and get some of the Commission's feelings in terms of whether we should consider moving from a pre-authorization to just a pure reimbursement program. He said the other question which Commissioner Nelson had brought up recently and he's heard it from other departments is that when we reimburse their fire department it really doesn't benefit them directly it goes back to the community's general fund.

Commissioner Dagon asked as the program currently operates if someone sign up for a spring recruit class does the department have to pay up front the entire amount.

Mr. Morrissette said the department issues a purchase order for the full amount of the program and we invoice them for 50%. This was a general agreement amongst 99% of the career chiefs when we first put together this program. He also said it's not necessarily spelled out in the policy or procedure that the Subcommittee established but that's how it's operating so they would pay 100% up front and we would reimburse them 50%.

A brief discussion on the issue followed.

Moving to item 6- Comments from the public – There were none.

Moving to item 7 – Commissioner Nicol mentioned that the Mid-Atlantic Association of Fire Commissioners Conference is coming up in the fall. He said we'll have a meeting of the Subcommittee following the Commission meeting to begin planning for the conference that we will be hosting in 2010.

Chairman Carozza said he's aware that there was some discussion at the last meeting about checking with other organizations about scheduling. He said the State Firefighters Association convention is that weekend and also the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Fallen Firefighters Memorial is that same weekend in Colorado for this year.

Mr. Morrissette gave an update on the Bridgeport firefighter appeals. He said subsequent to our last meeting we had the three individuals who had failed the practical skill examination administered down in Fairfield file an appeal. This was turned back where Bridgeport did finally allow them to go through some retraining. He said they had contracted with us to provide the training which we did. The individuals did retest and all three with some effort did pass the practical skills and then subsequently took the written test. He said two out of the three passed the written test on the first try and the third was given a second attempt at the written test and has failed. He said he believes today Bridgeport has a termination hearing for that individual and that individual has already initiated the appeals process of his failure of the Commission's written examination of which he came in last week for the first step which is to review his answer sheet to make sure no one here changed any answers etc. Mr. Morrissette said he has requested to retest which we would allow. However, originally contacting Bridgeport they indicate that he's not a member of the fire department and that they are not going to sign off on the required form for counseling. He said he's not sure what's going to happen but we are waiting to see if we receive a retest form, with an appropriate signature. He also said the fire department brought up the point that an individual is not a member of the fire department until they are pinned which is at the conclusion of the training which brings up some issues for us because our requirement is that individuals must be a member of a fire department to participate in training. He said at some point we may need to look at our agency regulations to modify that to include trainees.

Mr. Morrissette also reported that he asked Mr. Piskura to provide the Commission with information regarding the Greater Hartford Public Safety Academy which is moving along.

Mr. Piskura stated that the Greater Hartford Public Safety Academy will hold a summer school program from July 31st to August 1. He said it's a public safety magnet school and the plan is to bring the students around to the fire academy, police academy and state police academy for this period and expose the children to the various disciplines. He said then they anticipate that will roll into the start in September of the actual incubator space

for the Magnet School which will be located in Enfield. He said as of last Thursday they have 75 students enrolled in the summer school and they are looking for another 75 students specifically from the suburbs. He said the summer school will be held in Bloomfield and the students will spend most of the time being bused around to the various disciplines to see how folks work. He said this went from a typical meeting of great ideas to becoming a reality and they've already hired a principal and are moving rapidly to populate their ranks and gear up for the school.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Stankye and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Vice Chairman Kowalski adjourned the meeting at 10:42 am.

Dated:

James P. Wilkinson, Secretary
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control