



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



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Jeffrey J. Morrissette
State Fire Administrator

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 27, 2010 MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Vice Chairman Kowalski called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioners Brady, Dagon, Hilbert, Mitchell, Murphy, Nicol, Stankye and Walsh.

Staff members McGowan, Morrissette and Lewis, were present.

Attendees took a moment to pledge allegiance to the flag.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for a moment of silence in memory of Commission staff member Ed Bycenski and his family.

Commissioner Kowalski called on guest for self introductions.

Guests to the meeting were identified as Felix Rodriguez, DCF; Greg and Heidi Webster, CFPA, Michael Egan, CFPA; Carl Catalanotto, CFPA; Scott Yeomans, Town of South Windsor Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program; Ann Adams, DCF and John Alexander, Enfield Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program.

Moving to item 2) Approval of the Minutes of the July 27, 2010 meeting

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Brady and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2010 meeting. Motion carried.

Moving to item 3) Staff Report August 15, 2010 – September 14, 2010 and Staff report for July 15, 2010 – August 14, 2010.

Commissioner Mitchell asked about item 3 “Green” initiative under the Certification Division report as to whether customers could contact us and sign up for programs online now.

Director of Certification McGowan said that is our ultimately direction.

Commissioner Mitchell said so this is not sending out certification or lack thereof online.

Director of Certification McGowan said that’s correct. We are however posting examination results on our website, typically within one week of taking an examination.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Nicol and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ross to approve the staff report for the period of August 15 through September 14, 2010. Motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Brady and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ross to approve the staff report for the period of July 15 through August 14, 2010. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kowalski said if there is no objection we would move to New Business Item 5d.

Moving to item 5d.) Juvenile Firesetter Statewide Initiative– Mr. Morrisette reported that we have a number of representatives attending today from the DCF as well as local Juvenile Firesetter Intervention programs who have been meeting on and off over the past year. He said they are looking at a comprehensive approach to the Juvenile Firesetter problem here in Connecticut and as such requested an opportunity to make a brief presentation to the Commission in terms of what they are seeing and what they are looking to do in the future. He asked Ann Adams to make introductions and provide the presentation.

Ms. Adams thanked the Commission for allowing her to present today. She said many people asked how DCF got involved with this issue. She said in 2008 she was responsible for all the children that were being placed out of state in residential programs, many of which had firesetting behaviors. She said she became interested in the issue and wanting to know why we weren't treating these children in state. She attended a conference in NJ and found that there's a program across the nation that connects a number of different entities to deal with the firesetting problem. DCF and the CT JFS program coordinators facilitated meetings to explore programs and resources leading to a formation of a statewide Ad hoc committee consisting of the State Fire Administrator, Local JFS program administrators, Deputy State Fire Marshal, Clinical evaluators, States Attorney's Office, Juvenile Justice and Youth Service Bureau. Ms. Adams and Mr. Yeomans gave a PowerPoint presentation of Juvenile Firesetting a Local Issue and a Global Problem (copy available). They outlined the challenges; percentage of juvenile arrests in CT, current status of the Ad hoc committee, statistics collected from 2000-2006; defined firestarting and firesetting. She also reviewed the JFS program objectives; a model JFS program and program goals. The next step is to create a formal statewide JFS Commission and provide training and education to towns/cities, clinicians, firefighters; provide education to parents, school teachers and day care centers. She also stressed that there is a need to collect and maintain comprehensive data.

Commissioner Brady asked as point of information what would define the difference between a firestarter and a firesetter.

Mr. Yeomans said firestarter is the kid that is very curious about fires; starts a small fire in the woods not understanding the dangers of fire and not being able to control those fires. On the flip side the more serious is the firesetters and those are the kids that have a pathological interest in fires with some type of disturbance in their life where they intend to do harm or damage. He further stated that if we can pull this whole program together at some point the key would be to provide that juvenile firesetter and the family with education and possible treatment where necessary. He said it's key that the fire service and mental health work together because education alone in most cases is not going to work to stop that behavior.

Commissioner Kowalski said the CT Fire Marshals Association would be interested in working with the group and maybe they could attend one of their meetings and conduct a presentation and also do some of the county outreach groups. He said there may not be a lot of people there but it will be a core group that would be responsive to it and they could bring it back to their

Board of Directors. He said it's not just the Fire Marshal community that is affected in this it's the fire service in general, police departments and social services.

Ms. Adams said they've actually taken the time to reach out to a lot of the Fire Marshals just phone calling and it was interesting to hear the responses. She said everyone was interested some didn't think they had a problem and would proceed to tell her about the six cases of children they had but it was everyone from the firestarter to the firesetter.

Mr. Alexander stated that on the training they are not offering the JFS I which is offered here at the Academy it's an overview of JFS. He said he just recently presented this out in Willimantic to a FF II class just for the firefighter to get an understanding that if they see a child lit fire not to brush it off, but take it to the next step by contacting someone in the town like himself or Mr. Yeomans to get the child the help they need. He said they are trying to build awareness at the firefighter level.

Mr. Morrissette made a statement for the Commission that there was a slide in the presentation that stated what's next in terms of an oversight board or advisory board/commission. He said he did extend an offer on behalf of the Commission to serve in that capacity and participate as part of a larger process. He said we'll continue to work on the issue and provide whatever support we can.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if the age group for juvenile is under 16 or 17.

Ms. Adams replied for DCF purposes it's less than 18 years, however, they are serving some kids 19 and 20 years old.

Commissioner Kowalski also asked if she's classifying data as far as fireworks connected or standard firesetting.

Ms. Adams said no they don't. She said how the fire is set is one of those things the firefighters help to educate the Clinician and it's very diagnostic for them so they include all of it but it's not singled out.

He asked if that data will be available once it's collected.

Ms. Adams said yes.

Commissioner Ross commented that as things progress this would be beneficial to share with both the fire and police chief's organizations so they can bring the message full circle.

Mr. Yeomans stated that the fire service is well represented here but they would be willing to come out and do this presentation to any of the fire and police organizations because it's very important that everyone have an understanding of what's going on.

Ms. Adams thanked the Commission for allowing her to make today's presentation.

Mr. Morrissette asked Ms. Adams to provide her email contact information to the group.

Ms. Adams stated her email address as follows: ann.adams@ct.gov. She also provided business cards to members of the Commission.

Moving to item 4a.) Budget/Staffing Update – Mr. Morrissette reported regarding the current FY Budget. He said we will be entering the 2nd quarter at the end of this week. He said we do have some challenges with the passing of staff member Ed Bycenski to ensure we have a transition of some sort with the dual role of the SmART providing support for the Business side of the operations. He said we're lucky to have the continuation of Ron Vietts assisting us on an as available basis. He stated he had been advising DAS for about a year now, since Mr. Bycenski took ill, that plans would need to be in place for a transition. He said he doesn't think there is any plan out there. The priorities as it relates to the 2nd quarter is ensuring that we process the quarterly allotments in a timely manner to the Regional Fire Schools as well as our backlog currently with claims for both the Supplemental Grant program as well as Entry Level Training Reimbursement program. Mr. Morrissette said as it relates to Supplemental Grant we did communicate to most of those who requested a check as their method of payment that we would not process those until the 2nd quarter, primarily because there was not enough funding in the 1st quarter to take care of everyone so our plan all along was to begin making those payouts after October 1st. He said that may be delayed a bit but we hope not too long. We had a good response to our initial mailings for fire companies to designate their selection. He said that does not impact those that requested a voucher which could have been used from the beginning. He also said as Commissioners are aware we have submitted our initial Biennium Budget proposal for FY 12 and FY 13 to the DAS Budget office who then passes it on to Office of Policy and Management (OPM). He said Commissioners should have a copy of both the Operating Budget as well as the Capital Budgets which he prepared on the Commission's behalf. He said we were working within some restrictions and he noted that if you look at the individual account Budget requests from the Regional Schools the formatting looks messed up. He said we basically took the information provided from each of the Regional Schools and passed it on to the Budget person at DAS who did his best to format it within the State Budget document template. Mr. Morrissette said in the future we will have to come up with a standardized way for each of the Schools to request their Budget. He said the numbers are fine it's the narratives and the details which looks strange when viewing the individual requests. Mr. Morrissette asked for approval on the Budget proposal. He said as Commissioners may be aware we also received a request to submit a 15% Budget Reduction Option which we are mandated to provide by the Governor's orders. He said that was due on Friday but he had asked for a few extra days due to the shakeup within our Business office. He knew he wouldn't make the deadline. Mr. Morrissette said he solicited input from the Regional Schools because they do affect our Budget bottom-line. He said he had checked as to the outcome of their meeting and there was some discussion at the meeting as it relates to Budget Reductions. Although there was no vote taken, the ultimate decision as was communicated to him is that they cannot take a cut. Mr. Morrissette said this puts him in a predicament and he's appealing to the Commission for direction. The Regional Schools represent a significant part of our Budget and we as an agency cannot absorb their reduction percentage to our Budget. He said he understands their position and he doesn't disagree but he's in the same position as well. He said as most Commissioners are aware this is an annual exercise; there is going to be a change of Administrations and the Governor is required to present a transition document and present a Budget and this is one of the documents that will be presented. He said he's under tight deadlines to submit a Budget Reduction Option and he needs cooperation and assistance in this endeavor. He said to that end we can discuss under New Business what the best route to

achieve our reduction goal. When presenting reduction options we have an opportunity to articulate the impact of the reduction thereby justifying services and lobby for a zero reduction.

Commissioner Nicol asked for the last Biennium whether they did line item reductions or was it a total of 10%.

Mr. Morrisette said the proposal that we had presented specifically as it impacted the Regional Fire Schools was only 5%. He said it was not itemized by school it was essentially the total grant to all nine schools and a 5% reduction. The way we were able to do that is we actually reduced more significantly the Entry Level Training as well as the Supplemental Grant programs to hopefully save both the agency's Operational Budget as well as the Regional Fire Schools. Mr. Morrisette said the problem here is because of the reductions in those accounts; we don't have as much room to put up those two particular programs as sacrificial lambs.

Mr. Morrisette reported regarding staffing. The current status of the Secretary I position which is a vacancy was approved for re-fill by the Governor. He said it's going through the process and was advertised and has long been closed. He said we haven't received the applications as yet although we were promised we would have them last Monday. There were approximately 60 applicants which she's narrowed down to around 30 which we'll have further ability to narrow down. Thus, hopefully within the next 30 days we can conduct interviews and begin that process. He also said Commissioners were made aware the part-time Fire Service Instructor positions were also approved should have been advertised months ago but we'll find out tomorrow what the status is for advertising. He said basically we're telling people who have expressed an interest to begin filling out their state application form (PLD-1) and when the appropriate time comes and there is a position number they can fill in those details. Additionally, Mr. Morrisette reported that we did receive approval to re-fill Ed Bycenski's position as of yesterday through the Governor's office and he passed on that information to DAS to begin that long process. He said legally he has Mr. Vietts' services through end of the calendar year on an as available basis so hopefully we can expedite the process as best we can. He said the Governor's office has been very gracious and kind throughout Ed's illness and he's been keeping them apprised. He said he wanted to also mention the staff of the DAS SmART stepped up when Ed's health took a turn for the worse and expedited paperwork for a disability retirement which will ensure benefits for Ed's family. A thank you has been extended to the Director of the SmART.

Moving to item 4b.) CSFA Education Committee Update – Commissioner Nicol reported that since the last Commission meeting the Education Committee met on August 26th and September 23, 2010 in Wethersfield at Co. No.3. Project Manager Don Ouillette reported that the State was scheduled to close on the Beacon Falls property on September 24th. Mr. Ouillette recommended that due to local town officials concerns regarding the proposed school, the Valley Chiefs School Committee should plan on meeting with the Beacon Falls town officials. Also, he recommended that the Willimantic School Committee schedule an informational meeting with their town officials. Mr. Ouillette indicated that the memorandum of understanding for the Burrville and Fairfield sites should be sent out soon. The M.O.U. document should be finalized by late October or early November. Department of Public Works (DPW) project managers have been assigned for each of the schools. The Hartford Regional School project bids were extended three weeks to allow time for additional bidders. Mr. Ouillette thought that the next bond meeting would occur in October. Mr. Ouillette indicated that the New Haven School reconstruction was going well. He suggested the Education

Committee should plan to hold their next meeting at the New Haven School site. There was a general discussion regarding the Haz-Mat training. The Haz-Mat training subcommittee is scheduled to meet on October 28th. Next meeting to be held on October 28th at the New Haven Fire School.

Moving to item 4c.) FY 11 Supplemental Grant Program Update – Mr. Morrisette said for items 4c and 4d we will need to bypass today as we don't have an update and will need to get access to that information which is in Ed Bycenski's computer. He said while he feels everything is up to date in terms of claims submitted or pre-approval application forms we need to access that information to track where we are and what we need to pay out.

Moving to item 4e) Mid-Atlantic Association of State Fire Commissions Conference – Commissioner Nicol reported that seven member states had representation at the conference and there were approximately 30 attendees. MD, KY, NJ, NC, WV, VA and CT were present. Absent were SC, DE, TN and PA. Welcoming remarks were provided by Senator Andrea Stillman, Co-Chair of the General Assembly's Public Safety and Security Committee; Skip Thomas, Commissioner of Public Safety; Peter Boynton, Commissioner of DEMHS and Chairman Carozza. He said state delegates presented reports Friday and Saturday morning and a brief 9/11 memorial service was conducted. There were field trips Friday and Saturday afternoon to the Travelers Claim University, ESPN Sports Headquarters, Hartford Circus Fire Memorial site, New England Disaster Training Center and the Connecticut Fire Academy. The Business meeting was held Saturday morning with general discussion and Motion adopted to support residential sprinklers. A subcommittee was appointed to review the organization's operating regulations. Next year's conference will be held in NC. Commissioner Nicol thanked the Commission staff members especially State Fire Administrator Jeff Morrisette and his Executive Secretary Yvonne Lewis for their help in making the conference such a great success. He also thanked the following sponsors: Connecticut Fire Academy Bookstore, Connecticut Fire Department Instructor's Association, Uniformed Professional Firefighter's Association of Connecticut and International Fire Service Training Association.

Commissioner Kowalski said he also wanted to thank the staff for an outstanding job supporting the conference which really puts us on the map. He said there was a lot of good feedback. He also thanked Commissioner Nicol for all his outstanding work on the conference.

Moving to item 5a.) Election of Officers - Commissioner Kowalski called on Commissioner Nicol to chair the Nominations Committee.

Commissioner Nicol opened nominations for the election of officers. He began with the nomination for the office of Chairman and stated that although the Chairman is not present today he indicated his interest to continue as Chair.

Commissioner Nicol called for a motion to nominate a Chairman.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady to nominate Peter Carozza as Chairman. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nicol called for any additional nominations. As no other nominations were received Commissioner Nicol called for a motion to close nominations and to direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for Chairman Carozza.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Stankye and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady to close nominations for the position of Chairman. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nicol called for a motion to open nominations for the position of Vice Chairman.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Brady and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy to nominate Kevin Kowalski as Vice Chairman. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nicol called for any additional nominations. As no other nominations were received Commissioner Nicol called for a motion to close nominations and to direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for Vice Chairman Kowalski

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Stankye and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady to close nominations for the position of Vice Chairman. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nicol called for a motion to open nominations for the position of Secretary.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Hilbert and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy to nominate Charles Stankye as Secretary. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nicol called for any additional nominations. As no other nominations were received Commissioner Nicol called for a motion to close nominations and to direct the Vice Chairman to cast one ballot for Secretary Stankye.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Brady and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy to close nominations for the position of Secretary. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nicol congratulated the newly elected officers and turned the meeting back to the Vice Chairman.

Commissioner Kowalski thanked Commissioner Nicol and everyone for the support and confidence in the Commission operations.

Moving to item 5b.) Approval of Annual Report FY 2009/2010 – Mr. Morrissette stated we had previously transmitted a copy of the agency’s Annual Report for FY 10. He said he wanted to note for those who attended the CSFA Convention that there are some minor changes from the report that appeared in the Convention Book and the document that was transmitted to Commissioners and sent to the Governor’s office. He said because of the CSFA printing schedule we had an initial report for them and then we made updates so if Commissioners compare the two they are not identical.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Mitchell and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady approved the agency’s FY 09/10 Annual Report. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5c.) FY 12 & FY 13 Biennium Budget – Mr. Morrissette said we had some discussions earlier in the meeting regarding the Budget document. He asked if there are any individual questions. He said most of what is in the document is predicated upon very strict

guidance that we received from OPM and he did have a conference call with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to discuss how we wanted to approach some of the grant related issues and whether we were going to sustain the cuts from last FY or whether we wanted to request restored funding. He said they did agree to request funding levels from the beginning of FY 10 for FY 12 and FY 13. He said the only other adjustment that is not shown here, which will be submitted with the Budget Reduction Option is we have an opportunity to submit what is termed a Reallocation Option. Basically this transfers funding between accounts. He said we did offer a couple of Reallocation Options last Biennium but none were accepted. We are going to resubmit as it relates to custodial services here at the agency. He said we've been using the state set-aside custodial contract since we've been here and we pay a lot of money. He said we are under some restrictions from state Statutes that we have to continue using them and while we keep cutting back on requested services pricing keeps going up because of new prevailing wages, etc. He said we are proposing as we did the last Biennium to hire a Custodian position and a half and there will be a savings as a result of that. Mr. Morrisette asked if there are any questions on the document before the Commission. He said he's seeking approval and then further a discussion on the Reduction Options that he has to contend with currently.

Commissioner Kowalski said as Mr. Morrisette mentioned there was conversation between the Chairman and himself and essentially they suggested that we stand as strong as we can for the maximum allowable and let them take it away at that point in time and we can re-justify it with some options Mr. Morrisette is coming up with. He said we're going into a new Administration so we really don't know what's going to happen after this.

Mr. Morrisette said about a week after the elections the Governor has to present a Budget to the Governor Elect so that's why everything is moving at such a fast pace as compared to previous years.

Commissioner Nicol said looking at the Capital Budget he doesn't see any monies in there for replacement of the fire apparatus on the Training grounds unless he missed it.

Mr. Morrisette said it is in there. He said there are two Capital Budgets one is the capital facility related issues and the other deals with capital equipment. He said he can assure the Commission that apparatus replacement is in there. He said he doesn't have that section of the Budget here today but he can forward an electronic copy to Commissioners. Basically we have a replacement schedule which was identified before last Biennium so this dates back several years and most of the apparatus was put in there as place holders two years ago because they were more than five years out from needing funding. Now we're beginning to see that one or two pieces of apparatus are scheduled for replacement this next Biennium so they were on the early end of that five year schedule. He said we have all the apparatus identified for replacement through 2016.

Commissioner Nicol also mentioned if it's a big ticket item we may want to discuss a lease/purchase option.

Mr. Morrisette replied that we've already explored that option and the state will not allow it. No financing company will sign a contract that the state of Connecticut presents to them because of some of the legal language they must include. He also said we had some informal discussions with some apparatus manufacturers who deal with leasing companies. He said that was something we actually presented as an option to save some money and upon further

exploration we dealt with head of state Procurement and other people but it doesn't look feasible. He said while it appears like a logical direction and improves cash flow it really isn't feasible in our system. We can continue to have discussions on this option, possibly the position may change.

Commissioner Nicol inquired if we have any obligation financially with the Hartford School facility.

Mr. Morrisette replied that it's actually not in the Budget documents as he was directed to hold off and present it as a Mid-Term Budget Adjustment. The idea is that it would probably come on-line following construction at the beginning of FY 12.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Nicol and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ross to approve the Biennium Budget plan as presented. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kowalski said the next item for discussion would be the 15% Reduction Option.

Mr. Morrisette said Commissioners have to understand in looking at the Budget document that was submitted basically the 15% is off of the requested amounts so from that perspective there is inflationary increases in certain areas for the operating Budget. Also some of the Regional Fire Schools requested very minimal inflationary increases as directed by OPM, others requested more significant increases to include Capital facility items and Capital Equipment. Mr. Morrisette said we really couldn't split their capital items out separately because it's a grant and there's no real mechanism. He said the best way to include those is in the Operating Budget. He said it's the Requested Budget numbers we have to take the cuts from, not from the baseline of the current FY's budget. He said in some areas we requested increases in the Entry Level Training and Supplemental Grant programs to bring them back up to FY 10 levels. He said as we've done in past years he suggest we use those grant programs as sacrificial lambs, obviously they are grants to locals but when you're looking at sustaining the overall system and ensuring a statewide strategy that's been in place for 30+ years it keeps us all moving forward rather than back.

Mr. Morrisette gave a breakdown of the Budget proposal for FY 12 as follows: General Fund Budget is \$5,382, 969, 32.7% of that is Personal Services, paying people both full-time and part-time, Operating Expenses is about 13.7%, Equipment is 22.7%, Entry Level Training is 9.4% and the Grants to the Regional Fire Schools accounts for about 21.5%. He said obviously the Regional Schools do make up a little over 20% of the Budget as does Equipment and Entry Level training accounts for 9.4%. He said his suggestions would be to look closely at the Entry Level and Supplemental grant programs. He said he doesn't have exact numbers today but we would start with that and then look at smaller reductions to the Regional Schools as well as to the agency from an operational perspective. He said he has the Budget person at DAS on hold but he's ready to begin crunching numbers but we really were not sure how to deal with the Schools stance that they cannot take any reductions.

Commissioner Nicol said that subject was briefly mentioned at the meeting and there was no vote taken from the membership.

Commissioner Kowalski said he suggests a compromise and Mr. Morrisette already has some figures in reference to the Entry level Training and the Supplemental Grant programs. He said

maybe extract as much as we can by reducing the Supplemental grant program to save and then whatever is left do an across the board cut to both the Regional Schools and the Commission.

Mr. Morrissette said last Biennium we offered a few options for Commissioners to look at and that's what he proposes. He said he can provide the Commission with several options later today via email. He said it's not for the current FY and he sees it as an opportunity to further defend to anyone looking at this information what the collective needs of both the Commission and Regional Schools are; what our position is and what the impact will be.

Commissioner Nicol asked if we have a general idea of what the cut will be to the Regional Schools.

Mr. Morrissette said he hasn't applied any specific percentages to them but if you look at a 15% cut directly to their bottom line it's a reduction of \$173,596. He said some of the Schools may have requested an increase to their operating percentages by 5% or 10%.

There was discussion on the reduction options.

Commissioner Kowalski suggested that we take away the entire balance of the Supplemental Grant program; reduce the Entry Level Training account by \$50,000 to \$60,000 and then apply a reduction across the board to the Regional Fire Schools and the agency.

Mr. Morrissette stated that the other big part of the Budget is equipment which accounts for 22.7% of the total request. He said last Biennium no state agency received capital equipment money and he wasn't aware and even our Budget Analyst was not aware until a few weeks ago when he questioned it. He said it does show up in each agency's Budget equipment for FY 10 and FY 11 but in the back of the Budget book it shows zero. He said as Commissioners are aware we always operate in arrears as it relates to capital equipment money. The last allocation we received was last September which was for FY 08. He said we had items in there that should have been replaced this year and last year which aren't even on the books so we'll have to request those again as well as project out into the future.

Commissioner Kowalski asked what the feeling of the Commission is.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Hilbert and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy that with the Commission's guidance have the State Fire Administrator propose Budget Reduction options that would minimize the impact to the Regional Fire Schools. These would be transmitted electronically for debate. Motion carried.

Mr. Morrissette added that along with the reduction numbers we have to present a justification and he will present Chairman Hawkins' justification language which articulates they cannot support any reduction.

Commissioner Kowalski said we are under time constraints and suggested that when the proposals are sent electronically Commissioners should try to respond back ASAP.

A discussion period followed on the impact of the reductions to the various schools.

Commissioner Kowalski remarked that he doesn't think it's in the Commission's position to use the knife for the Regional Fire Schools. He said they need to meet and decide and work it out.

Commissioner Dagon added that the Regional Fire Schools should engage in this exercise and be responsible enough to present their own plan rather than having it imposed upon them by the Commission. He said it makes more sense to him and if he knows a cut is coming he would rather identify the areas where he would advance a plan for the reduction and try to defend not doing it than just having it imposed upon him. He said it's really irresponsible for them to take the position of no they can't take any cuts because it doesn't serve the end as they need to be prepared to justify the no at the very least by the impact the 15% reduction would have.

Commissioner Stankye added that this is for the next FY so if there comes about a reduction regardless of what percentage it is all the entities have adequate time to decide what they are going to do and all the Regional Schools are saying is they can't live with a cut but they have a year to plan.

Commissioner Hilbert added that there are two members of the Education Committee present that can bring this message back to the Committee or any Commissioner can.

Commissioner Kowalski asked for a reading of the Motion on the floor.

The **MOTION** was **AMENDED** by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady to exploit the Supplemental Grant and Entry Level Training programs. Motion carried.

Commissioner Hilbert said for discussion purposes we may have to zero out one or both of those programs but he likes the plan from last year where it was a 50% reduction rather than reducing the amounts completely from them.

Commissioner Kowalski said that will be included in the options.

Moving to item 5e.) DOD/DOD Contractor Certification – Mr. McGowan reported that not too long ago Program Manager Trisler received a phone call from a couple of folks who were coming back from Iraq. They happen to be DOD Contract Firefighter working with Wackenhut. He said they were looking to pick up their FS II and FS III and they are from GA and FL respectively. Neither one of those states offers those certification opportunities so they looked on the internet and saw that Connecticut offers that as part of our certification process. He said they are willing to go through the training and then through the certification process if it worked out on their schedules when they were back home. He said they wouldn't go home rather; they would travel to Connecticut to participate in this training. Mr. McGowan said he's looking for the Commission's direction not only for DOD although they have many more certifications to offer than even CT does. He said he's concerned for the DOD contractors who don't have a direct pipeline into DOD to get certifications through them they would have to go back to their own states. He said he's looking for the Commission's wisdom to possibly recognize a policy that would allow DOD but also include DOD contractors, non-residents of Connecticut to participate in our programs.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if they don't have access to IFSAC.

Mr. McGowan said he doesn't think they have a direct line is what they were telling us because they are a contractor and not a DOD employee but more a government employee. He said the Commission voted in 1996 or looked at a situation that occurred in Rye Brook, NY with the privatization of that fire department. He said it's a similar situation in terms of looking at a private employer whose employees are seeking certification through the Commission.

Commissioner Kowalski asked what we do with the folks at Hamilton if we certify them. He also asked if they are a private entity within a private organization in CT.

Mr. Morrissette said by state Regulations we can train and certify municipal and private fire department members within Connecticut.

Commissioner Kowalski said if Wackenhut sets up an office in CT then they could be certified but right now they don't.

Mr. McGowan said these folks weren't aware of that.

Commissioner Kowalski said his opinion is we would continue that way and by changing anything will create a slippery slope that we ran into in 1996 which he recalls.

Commissioner Ross said because these folks are so far away and timelines are so narrow and regardless of the corporation issue will there be any cause for the Commission to have to waive prerequisite for them.

Mr. McGowan said no they have to also meet the prerequisites which in this case would be FSI I because they would have met the prerequisites leading into FSI I anyways.

Mr. Morrissette said from the agency's mission we are here to serve CT firefighters and or departments and or those providing mutual aid. He said he can scan the AG's opinion because they were involved originally because it was very controversial but he believes Rye Brook was a mutual aid fire company to Greenwich and vice versa and they left it up to the Commission to decide. He said it's really the out of state issue that is the problem.

A brief discussion followed on fire service training and certification services to out of state privately owned corporations.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if we should leave this on the agenda for next month's meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Brady and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Hilbert to table this item for the staff to provide a copy of the Attorney General's ruling from 1996 and consider this at the next meeting. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5f.) Defining Qualified Instructor – Mr. McGowan said one of the outcomes of the recent T-t-T for Haz Mat WMD was a concern on the back of the application form which says anyone signing off on it has to be a FSI I state certified Instructor. He said there were several agencies not related to the fire service who have taken the opportunity to participate in this training. He said there were some law enforcement folks who were in the room and some EMS folks. When it was told to them that they may not be able to sign off on the back part

they were concerned. He said the quick fix at this point was to find someone in the community who is related to the fire service who is a state certified FSI I and sign off that way. He said he wanted to seek the Commission's input but this led to a little more conversation in his mind and with a couple of other folks and it goes directly to what's a qualified entity coming into the state and doing some training on their own as well. He said he took a broader look at it recognizing that we are kind of reaching outside the box. He said he specified in the second paragraph specialized training where we might have these instances where a particular entity, or qualified Instructor or course or even some qualified students may need to be defined which are not currently defined in our policies other than to say we're really close knit inside this fire service organization as a whole. He distributed a sheet outlining qualifying aspects for specialty certification levels. Specialty level training courses and certification opportunities offered through the Commission and the CFA include Awareness and Operations level Haz Mat WMD, Haz Mat Technician, JFS Intervention Specialist, Public Fire and Life Safety Educator I, Fire Investigator and Fire Inspector I and Rescue Technician – Structural Collapse I/II. programs. He said he's looking for the Commission's guidance to see if we want to put this into a policy to recognize and perhaps change the back of the application to reflect the qualified Instructor versus a certified Instructor. He said they would still have to go through the Certification office to be recognized as a qualified Instructor and show their resume. He said one of the things that have come forward recently is if you're already an Instructor with a particular entity say OEMS or law enforcement and you're recognized through experience and training and certifications through those entities that person would be qualified as an Instructor on our side.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if this would include the situation where the individual is actually a certified teacher but not a certified fire Instructor to be able to teach a class and certify that individual.

Mr. McGowan said there are two ways to answer. First if the person is already in the fire service they can challenge the FSI exam by not taking the course if they can show a current teaching certificate. All they have to do is challenge the practical and written exam and that would be taken care of. He said if we looked at the DHS recognition for 1st Responders the categories of 10 government officials, DPW and EMS he would probably limit it to those entities because they are recognized by the federal government under DHS as responders so teachers not necessarily.

Commissioner Kowalski remarked that the proposal presented today is very widespread such as Inspector I and Rescue Tech which wouldn't include those ten levels. He said you may have someone from the state Fire Marshal's office and not a FSI certified teaching an FSI I class.

Mr. McGowan said that could be a possibility.

Commissioner Kowalski said he's just looking at the entire scope and if it's an exception for one individual he doesn't want to water down the certification requirement.

Commissioner Hilbert suggests making a simple change to say qualified/certified Instructor on the back of the application vetted by the Certification office and that wouldn't require a policy change.

Mr. Morrisette said the immediate request is an example of a police department that attended the T-t-T programs that was offered for the Haz Mat Awareness/Operations. They want to go back and teach and have their personnel certified. He said historically what we probably would have told them is work with a local certified fire service Instructor and if they are comfortable and they vetted you let them sign off for the students that it was done under their direction and it meets the minimum expectations and standards.

Commissioner Hilbert asked if that still works now.

Mr. Morrisette said it does occur where someone with specialized skills is not a certified FSI but conduct the training under the direction of a certified FSI.

Commissioner Brady added that Mr. McGowan's issue only applies to certification and this came up last month and it's been bugging him the fact of what do we consider certified Instructors where we're giving out programs from the Commission to non certified Instructors. He said there are several guests here today that had that issue last month and he thinks it's something we have to address and not sweep under the rug. He said we've got to address the issue of what we are giving out as far as programs to non certified Instructors and we need to gain consensus across the board on how we're going to handle this issue.

Mr. Morrisette said years ago this was easy because everyone had a silo; police, EMS and fire each had one. Today with the road that's been forged over the last five or more years has been to do away with the silos and all entities working together toward a common goal under the public safety banner. He said he agrees with Commissioner Brady that we need to look at it and how best to move forward and embrace the new approach because that's the only way we're going to survive is by working together but you also have to ensure the quality and methods of delivery meet our expectations and standards.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if these are levels that we're looking at to open up for specialty training.

Mr. McGowan replied that these are the ones where the opportunities are probably more likely. He said the others are more solidified and he doesn't mean to diminish the FO IV or FSI III but we seem to be able to handle that internally, it's going outside our realm or folks wanting these because they feel it's a professional development issue for them not just as Instructors but as students.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if there's a vetting process developed yet.

Mr. McGowan said no.

Commissioner Kowalski said that's something we should do before we address this issue and keep it generic.

Mr. McGowan said he can put something together for next month's meeting.

Mr. Morrisette offered that each month we seem to have these little issues that creep up and maybe it would be worthwhile if there was a subcommittee formed with members of the Commission and staff to brainstorm these unique issues.

Commissioner Kowalski thanked Mr. Morrissette for an excellent idea and asked if any Commissioners would be interested in participating by helping Commissioner Brady with this.

Commissioners Mitchell, Brady and Kowalski offered to serve on the subcommittee.

Moving to item 6- Comments from the public – Mr. Egan with the CFPA said last month they brought up this issue about their certified Instructors not being able to deliver the Traffic Control for Emergency Responders program and another item is the program itself. He said they've received some preliminary examples of the modules that would be included in it and a lot of the material in there does not apply to fire police in CT and they would like to see at minimum one of the modules addressing the fire police duties in CT. He said they have a brochure that they developed and he'd like to distribute it to Commissioners. He said one of their Vice Presidents is here and would like to add something.

Mr. Webster 2nd Vice President of CFPA said they are always looking to the future to provide better training for their fire police members. He said a number of them have taught as T-t-T for the CFPA over the last seven or eight years and they all agree that the program fundamentally is not a bad program but needs to be updated. He said there's certainly a lot more information out there that they would like included in the new curriculum to better train their members like traffic control etc. He said the CFPA is looking to be included in developing the new curriculum as they have a lot of years of experience out there doing things the hard way and they would like to pass that information and experience on to new members. He said it appears they've gotten a lukewarm response to this point and he's looking towards the future to do this better and more efficiently and get better training out there. He said the second part is what Mr. Egan just mentioned and certainly what Mr. McGowan discussed is the proposal for the new curriculum as proposed thus far would eliminate the fire police members as what he calls field Instructors or not certified CFA Instructors but the T-t-T Instructors. He said he would really hate to lose that capability out there when the new curriculum is developed. He said this is a direct take off from what Mr. McGowan was stating maybe just apply it to the fire police. He said if they rely on a small handful of CFA certified Instructors it's not going to be enough to get the new training out with the demand out there so maybe they could be maintained as field Instructors or grandfather them in. He said as things has been proposed thus far that is not one of the provisions so they would certainly like to pursue and address that so they would be able to not only be part of developing the new curriculum with their experience but also present it as they've been doing for the last decade.

Commissioner Brady said one of the things he had brought up at the last meeting was the fact that the CFPA was against non certified people presenting that program but now they are offering to do it. He said he's trying to figure out what the CFPA's position is.

Mr. Webster replied that they would like to be certified obviously however that would equate from what Mr. McGowan presented but they would like to be certified to go out in the field and teach the course as well as be a part of developing the new curriculum.

Mr. Egan added that they do have a limited number of certified Instructors that would not be permitted to teach the new curriculum.

Commissioner Brady asked if we know how many certified Instructors are in the state.

Mr. Morrisette said we have about 4,000 FSI.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if there are certified FSI within the CFPA and has it been told to them that those individuals could teach the course.

Mr. Egan said they were told that their certified Instructors would not be allowed to teach the course.

Mr. Morrisette added that it's his understanding that once the curriculum is available the fire police can teach the course but the CFA is not going to present a CFA certificate and if they want a CFA certificate then we will make arrangements to deliver that program. He said if the CFPA as an organization wants to sponsor a program or offer delivery of the training they can develop their own CFPA certificate as many organizations do as recognition of course completion.

Mr. Catalanotto, President of the CFPA remarked that what Mr. Morrisette said is true and they have about 10 to 15 certified Instructors not only for fire police but for FFI and FFII throughout the state. He said when the T-t-T on this course came out a couple years ago he was totally against it because they were getting people that weren't really certified to teach the course. On the other hand Mr. Trisler said that the only certification would come from the CFA but these Instructors got their certification from the CFA but he said they would not be grandfathered in. He said when Mr. Trisler had the course in June 2008 at the CFA they had 35 people from CFPA. He said Mr. Trisler wrote the course then claimed the course wasn't any good and came out with another and that was no good too. He referenced petitions that were signed asking for removal of Mr. Trisler as the Program Manager for the course. He said every time they ask Mr. Trisler to involve the CFPA in the new program he throws them into the garbage pail. He said in order for Mr. Trisler to get more knowledge he should consult with the CFPA because they do it and have been doing it for years. He said the CFPA has been in existence for 23 years and they would like to be involved in the new program. He said although he hates to give out this petition he's doing it anyway and they have different departments sign it and some didn't want to sign it but they didn't want to put a bullet in the foot before things happen. He said not all the members signed it as they have about 400-500 members and there are a lot of fire police members out there without certification. He said he's asking the Commission to take action on the presentation that the CFPA made at the last meeting as well as what was presented today.

Mr. Webster said that they are not looking to create their own program to certify their fire police they would like to work with the CFA to get the certification for Traffic Control for Emergency Responders. He said they are not looking to go off on their own they would like to be involve with their training and experience to help develop the new curriculum for the state of Connecticut and the state issued certificate.

Commissioner Kowalski said the petition will be submitted to the Secretary for file and we'll put this on the agenda for next month.

Mr. Morrisette said for clarification we don't teach fire police anymore it's Traffic Control for Emergency Responders which incorporates everyone fire, EMS and at this time it's a certificate

of attendance that is issued, not a level of certification. When the NFPA standard is completed it may be adopted for certification.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if the CFPA has any members on the NFPA Committee looking at this. He suggests strongly that the CFPA get someone on that Committee to put forth their ideas that they've gained over the last 20 years.

Mr. Egan asked if they would be able to get funding from the Commission to attend because individually they can't afford it.

Commissioner Kowalski said there is no funding available to his knowledge.

Mr. Morrisette said he believes the NFPA is using electronic means for participation on their committees which is very positive.

Moving to item 7 – Matters to be raised by Commissioners or staff – Mr. Morrisette stated that the Governor is requiring us to put together a transition document for the new Administration. This document is due in approximately two weeks. He said coincidentally the Education Committee representatives did meet with our OPM Budget Analyst about two weeks ago in Hartford. The Budget Analyst provided him with a sample document from DPS from the last Administration change which was back in the nineties. He said he did share that with the Regional Fire School representatives and requested they provide input to the transition document.

Mr. Morrisette also reported that the Kids Fire Safety House was damaged this weekend in Newtown. He said he's not sure how much damage but it went under a low bridge which took the air conditioning unit off the roof. He said the unit has been in poor shape so it should have been scrapped years ago but he doesn't know if it will take us through the end of the season as there are about five more dates for the fall. He said we will have to make a decision regarding the usage of some of our capital equipment monies to replace it. He said there weren't many of these units available when we originated the program and the idea was to model the behavior but now these units are throughout the state so he would be interested in the Commission's feedback if it's a program that we should continue to support and fund. He said we've tried in the past for federal Fire Prevention Grants funds but it hasn't been funded so we will have to make a decision sooner than later. He said if Commissioners have any thoughts he'd like to hear it as he's leaning towards supporting it as it's a significant part of our mission.

Commissioner Kowalski said he thinks we should continue to support the program and maybe look at a different concept, a more advanced unit.

Mr. Morrisette said we were looking at an all hazards approach and we were working with DEMHS to get some federal funding but we haven't been successful thus far.

Commissioner Hilbert asked if we've continued to seek a grant for it.

Mr. Morrisette replied that we haven't submitted one in over a year and he doesn't know if anyone has had the time to actually work on the Fire Prevention Grant. He said he doesn't understand because it seems like FEMA supports all sorts of trailers for local departments and then they start getting in the business of training with the mobile burn buildings and towers. He

said he feels that as the state, we should have a mobile driving simulator and burn building but unfortunately FEMA supports the locals not the state.

Commissioner Mitchell said he was approached by some members of his own department and he has talked to Mr. Piskura and Mr. McGowan and subsequent to that he's had other Instructors call him and approached other fire departments and he's not here to lead that charge maybe a small bit. He said part of the problem involves getting the certification pass/fail information. He is concerned with the very prolonged delay and we've spoken about this. He said he doesn't know if there needs to be some kind of modification or review because at it stands currently if a person fails FF I or Haz Mat they have a year to take the test and if they don't they have to take the entire course over again which now becomes another financial burden on that individual the first time but if the information is not getting out fast enough there's issues with this. He said the reality is a person may only have one or two chances within that year to take the test and part of this is a result of not getting out the information out quick enough. He said he doesn't mean what's posted online because that is not the official information or what is told to an Instructor is not official. He said he doesn't know if there is some short term modification to catch on some of these guys but it is an issue out there.

Commissioner Kowalski said he's brought this up maybe six months ago or more. He said he thinks there have been some inroads made with the posting of the scores on line and the notification to the Instructor of the failure. He said just because a person doesn't have that piece of paper in their hand that said they failed he believes they'll still be able to go to the class and retake the exam.

Commissioner Mitchell said no they must have the paperwork to do the retake.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if that takes six to eight weeks.

Commissioner Mitchell said it could be more than eight weeks.

Commissioner Kowalski said then that's an issue.

Mr. McGowan added that the more longer part went away last week because the staff member is now back in place.

Commissioner Mitchell asked what happens to the folks who falls under this for the last six months to a year who didn't get some of their results within those six or eight weeks. He said this causes hardship for the students.

Mr. McGowan said for that particular timeframe where the staff member was out of the office he's blocked that out so if someone approached him and said they didn't get the third chance that they probably could have had he said he's set that in motion where we'll give them the extension and the opportunity to take it a third time.

Commissioner Mitchell asked if he can have those folks contact Mr. McGowan then.

Mr. McGowan replied yes and we are looking at other long term fixes that will shorten that six to eight weeks but it's going to take more time and we'll need assistance from DOIT to help that process through.

Commissioner Hilbert asked why they need the piece of paper to retest if they have proof that they've failed.

Mr. Morrissette said it's something we've talked about and it maybe something to modify for the short run. He said it's an issue where you could have confusion and things crossing in the mail but the database is stable so there's no question about the records. It's really the same person does input as well as output and that person has had serious medical issues over the past six plus months with surgeries so that's exacerbated the delay situation.

Commissioner Mitchell added that he discovered something which ties to the whole certification stuff. He asked if the Regional Fire Schools provide their own certification below what the CFA offers so if a FF came out of a fire school with FFI the school is giving him a certificate not the CFA.

Commissioner Brady said no.

Commissioner Mitchell said we need to check into that because it maybe happening some places.

Mr. Morrissette asked if he means a certificate of training.

Commissioner Mitchell said yes.

Mr. Morrissette said oh he's sure the schools offer certificates of training but it's not state certification.

Commissioner Mitchell replied that's the problem and he just discovered that last night which was news to him.

Commissioner Hilbert said that's the distinction between training and certification.

Commissioner Brady said while we're on the subject he knows Commissioner Mitchell has volunteered for the subcommittee for defining qualified Instructors and asked if any other Commissioner wants to participate.

Commissioner Kowalski said he will work with the subcommittee.

Commissioner Kowalski said he has one other item he'd like to get support on from the Commission. He said whether Commissioners know it or not the Codes and Standards in the state of Connecticut was seeking input for the purposes of the one and two family residential code. He said the stance right now is to look at the requirements for sprinklers in residential one and two family homes. He said currently on the table there is five options that they are looking at and one of them is to put them in as the national code says and then there is other variations of changing the code to making them an option in one section and another one is to not have it at all, take the residential sprinklers out completely and he believes the latest is to do a study to see if they are needed. He said in a nutshell that's what the committee is working on right now and they are actually getting information in from a lot of folks including the Home Builders Association, and Building Officials. He said last year the ICC did put it into the code

which passed on a national vote. He said he's seeking a resolution from the Commission to support residential sprinkler installations in all new one and two family homes be included in the model building code.

He asked if there's any discussion.

Commissioner Nicol asked if we're talking just new construction and not renovation of existing one and two family homes.

Commissioner Kowalski said he'll have to look at that to define major because if it is all gutted out its very possible it would be included.

A brief discussion took place.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** BY Commissioner Brady to that the Commission draft a resolution supporting residential sprinklers in one and two family homes. Motion carried.

He asked Mr. Morrissette to draft the resolution and send it to the Codes and Standard Committee.

Commissioner Nicol reminded members that the CFDA annual dinner is scheduled for October 6 and it should be a very good program. He said the Governor has indicated she will be in attendance and she will be receiving an award for her assistance to the fire service during her tenure as Governor and also the Chief from Middletown will present a program on the power plant explosion. He said it's at the Aqua Turf and cost is \$30.

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

Vice Chairman Kowalski adjourned the meeting at 12:01 pm.

Dated:

Charles M. Stankye, Jr., Secretary