

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 29, 1999 MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Chairman Carozza with the following members present: Commissioners Chatfield, Haber, Johnson, Kowalski, Milewski, Mullen, Munkenbeck, Nicol and Wilkinson. Commissioners Gomeau, Maheu, Stankye and Vendetta were excused. Staff members Morrissette and Ouellette were present. Staff members Lewandowski, O'Neil and Piskura arrived later.

Guests to the meeting were identified as Richard Pearson, Consultant for Strategic Planning, Red McKeon, Connecticut State Firefighters' Association, Chief Larry Black, Watertown Fire Department, Chief Chuck Marsella, Wolcott Fire Department and Chief Jack Casner, Cheshire Fire Department.

Chairman Carozza welcomed all the guests to the meeting.

Chairman Carozza introduced Battalion Chief James P. Wilkinson from the Milford Fire Department and welcomed him as a newly appointed Commissioner to represent the Connecticut State Firefighters' Association.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Chatfield and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the minutes of the June 29, 1999 meeting. Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the Staff Report for the periods of June 15, 1999 – July 14, 1999, July 15, 1999 - August 14, 1999 and August 15, 1999 – September 14, 1999. Motion carried.

Moving to unfinished business Mr. Morrissette invited Mr. Pearson to give an update of the Strategic Planning process.

Mr. Pearson reported that the turnout at the six public forums held was modest. At the public forums, responses generally fell into the following broad categories:

- Training and Certification Standards
- Effective Communication
- Concerns of the Volunteer Services
- Delivery Methods for Training Services
- Access to Training and Certification Services
- Advocacy for Fire Services Priorities
- Adequate Resources
- Prevention Service and Public Education
- Linkages with Emergency Medical Services
- Organizational Models
- Miscellaneous

He stated that a summary of comments from the public forums has been prepared and distributed. A working session with Commission staff was held yesterday to review and discuss comments from the forums and to launch an internal discussion about strategic priorities. A similar session needs to occur with Commission members so that all of these insights can be incorporated into a summary of strategic priorities, which can then frame a detailed strategic/business planning effort. He invited the Commissioners to select a date when they could meet to discuss the comments from the public forums.

Moving to item 4 b.) Commissioner Johnson reported on the findings of the Sub-Committee established to review the Litchfield County request for entry level training. The sub-committee met several times and consulted with Conn-OSHA regarding entry level training. The sub-committee recommends that the Commission while recognizing the recruitment/retention issues facing the volunteer ranks reaffirm its recognition of the NFPA 1001 as its entry level training standard. The Commission staff is cognizant of and will promulgate a guidance document to aid volunteer fire companies in meeting OSHA Standards through the IFSTA Essentials curriculum. The Commission staff will meet, advise and assist any fire department as it relates to training.

Chief Casner stated that they are not looking for a lower standard rather how do we get prospective applicants in the door and get them interested. He stated that he would not lower his department's standards to anything less than FF-I.

Chief Black stated that he agreed with Chief Casner who was pretty much saying what he stated here before and at several area meetings. He indicated he felt his words have gotten twisted as it traveled around the state. Never once did he or Litchfield County Chiefs ask for lowering of the standard. The Litchfield County Chiefs' letter, which he had direct input into, was not clear enough to the Commission. There was mention of specific number of course contact hours that probably should not have been in the letter and he apologized for that confusion. Litchfield County Chiefs never wanted to lower the standard, but they are looking for a different way to meet the standard. If the state is going to provide a general outline of what OSHA is requiring,

then maybe that's the way training can be done. Chief Black thanked the Commission for spending the time to look into this issue.

Commissioner Johnson asked Chief Black whether he was satisfied with the results of the sub-committee and the Commission's offer of assistance.

Chief Black replied affirmatively if the option from the Commission's staff identifies what within the curriculum is needed to satisfy OSHA.

Chief Casner stated that recruitment/retention is a big issue in the volunteer service right now. As chiefs, we want to get a member, train them and keep them. If the member is 18 years old he/she may not have a problem training on Saturdays and Sundays for a whole year, but an older member, a home owner/parent may not be able to commit that much up front time for training. What we are looking for is a longer period of time from the start of the class where a "Module 1" would cover what is required by OSHA giving a new member the necessary training so that he/she can be an active member quickly and be safe.

We don't want anybody hurt and we don't want to lower standards for anyone. In the next year, a second Module of training could be completed to meet the certification requirements. Lowering our standard is not what we are looking for, we want our people certified.

Commissioner Kowalski inquired if the one-year time frame for certification is an accreditation issue.

Mr. Morrisette stated the Commission establishes the one-year time frame by means of its Regulations.

Commissioner Munkenbeck stated when a program is delivered by the Commission the schedule can be adjusted any way you want, but when the training is delivered by a local department or regional school, the Commission has no jurisdiction or oversight over the regional school's or local scheduling.

Mr. McKeon stated that the regional schools are of the understanding that once you start the training program it has to continue to the end. He indicated he believed other scheduling options could be worked out.

Mr. Morrisette stated as a clarification, testing must be completed within one year from the date of the final Certified Instructor's sign-off.

A discussion period followed on the subject of entry level training.

Chairman Carozza asked Commissioner Johnson to once again summarize the recommendation of the sub-committee.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Johnson and SECONDED by Commissioner Kowalski stating that it is the recommendation of the sub-committee that the Commission while recognizing the recruitment/retention issues facing the volunteer ranks reaffirm its recognition of NFPA 1001 as its entry level training standard. The Commission staff is cognizant of and will promulgate a guidance document outlining the minimum OSHA Standards and how they can be attained through the current IFSTA-Essentials curriculum. The Commission staff will meet, advise and assist any fire department as it relates to training.

Commissioner Chatfield inquired if a communication will be sent to fire departments outlining what part of the training is required by OSHA, what has to be done first and what has to be completed after to complete the FF-I program.

Commissioner Nicol stated he was concerned that he was being asked to approve something he had not seen until this morning.

Commissioner Johnson recommended that the staff communicate minimum training requirements required to meet OSHA compliance in addition to training options to all concerned.

Commissioner Kowalski recommended that the word promulgate in the motion be change to disseminate.

Mr. Morrissette stated that in addition, the Commission could offer some regional workshops to further communicate training options available to departments.

A rough draft outlining the FF-I lesson plan identifying OSHA minimum requirements for entry-level firefighters was distributed to Commissioners while Mr. Lewandowski gave an overview of the draft document.

Commissioner Chatfield inquired if Commissioners would have an opportunity to review the final product before it is communicated to fire departments and asked that this item be put on the next agenda.

Mr. Morrissette indicated the final draft document would be distributed for discussion prior to disseminating to fire departments.

Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza thanked the sub-committee for their efforts.

Moving to item 4 c.) Mr. Morrissette gave an update on the IFSAC Accreditation. He stated that the site visit went well and was supported by the entire Certification Division staff. The site visit team left a list of non-compliance issues which we have an opportunity to address. From our standpoint we have complied with all of IFSAC's requirements. There were two areas

that are philosophical issues in which the Commission handles a particular requirement in a certain fashion. The IFSAC Accrediting Board should make a final decision on our request for accreditation at their fall meeting scheduled for October 1-3, 1999.

Moving to item 4 d.) Mr. Morrisette gave an update on the request from the American Red Cross to utilize the Academy as their Southern New England Hurricane Watch Center. Discussions have been taking place over the summer and all issues of concern to our staff and the Red Cross have been addressed. We are waiting for a final written agreement, once that is received we will pass it on to the Attorney General's Office for review. The Red Cross will be responsible to install at their expense, about ten phone lines into one of our double size classrooms. The Red Cross will also be responsible for applicable room rental rates and cleanup. This will be a very good, important partnership.

Moving to item 4 e.) Mr. Morrisette gave an update on the EMS Examination Proposal bid process. He reported that he contacted the State Health Department yesterday to obtain a status report on the Commission's bid to operate their Paramedic and EMT examination program. As of yesterday, the indication was that no decision had been made and that it is still being reviewed.

Commissioner Kowalski inquired if the funds received for this process would go into auxiliary account.

Mr. Morrisette replied affirmatively.

Moving to item 4 f.) Mr. Morrisette gave a facility update. He reported that a sidewalk had been installed to the rear of the facility per the recommendation of Commission Haber. A revised CFA Facility Fee Policy was distributed to the Commissioners for their review, discussion and/or action.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Chatfield and SECONDED by Commissioner Munkenbeck to table this item for the next meeting. Motion carried.

Moving to item 4 g.) Mr. Morrisette reported on the adjunct instructor salary increases and the Agency's efforts to establish a Bookstore position. He indicated that the staff has finalized all necessary paper work. The Agency has communicated with the Regional Fire Schools what is planned in terms of a salary increase.

Mr. Morrisette provided an overview regarding the need to establish a full time Bookstore Position. What we are proposing is establishing a revolving fund position, this means the person in this position would have to generate enough revenue to maintain their position as well as cover all the expenses associated with that operation. To manage this operation we would bring in someone who has experience in managing a retail operation. Some of the particulars of this bookstore position are identified in the specification before you.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Haber to approve the Bookstore position.

Commissioner Nicol recommended that the agency inform the regional schools about the adjunct instructor upcoming salary increases.

Motion carried.

Moving to New Business, Chairman Carozza called on Commissioner Nicol to open the nominations for the election of Officers.

Commissioner Nicol called for nominations for the election of CHAIRMAN to the Commission

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Milewski and SECONDED by Commissioner Munkenbeck to place Peter Carozza's name in nomination for the position of Chairman. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Chatfield and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to close the nomination for the position of Chairman and to direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for Peter Carozza. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

Commissioner Nicol called for nominations for the election of VICE CHAIRMAN to the Commission.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Haber and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to place Kevin Kowalski's name in nomination for the position of Vice Chairman. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and SECONDED by Commissioner Chatfield to close the nomination for the position of Vice Chairman and to direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for Kevin Kowalski. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

Commissioner Nicol called for nominations for the election of SECRETARY to the Commission.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Chatfield to place Edward Haber's name in nomination for the position of Secretary. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Chatfield and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to close the nomination for the position of Secretary and to direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for Edward Haber. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

Chairman Carozza and Commissioner Haber thanked the Commissioners for all their support.

Moving to item 5 b.) Mr. Morrissette inquired whether Commissioners had questions on the FY 1998/99 Annual Report and asked for approval.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to approve the FY 1998/99 Annual Report. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 c.) Mr. Morrissette gave a brief overview of the mid-term budget reduction order and FY 2001 allotment reduction request from the Office of Policy and Management. He recommended and asked for authorization to move forward and offer a portion of the Limited Access Highway fund as the agency's FY 2001 reduction option.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Munkenbeck approving the offer of a porting of the Limited Access Highway fund as the FY 2001 allotment reduction. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 d.) Mr. Morrissette reported on the Facility Management proposal. Keeping in line with the bookstore operation and our need to enhance that service to our customers, we've had the need to place a moratorium on facility reservations for dormitory use. We permitted those people involved in the recruit program the option to lodge here over the summer months, but that was the only exception. We have met with a facility management company who offered a proposal. In addition, the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Works (DPW), who was scheduled to be here today has offered their facility management services. One option is for DPW to take care and custody of this facility and contract with a private firm to provide management services. He recommended that the agency contract out for facility management services and utilize DPW as the intermediary to assist with the contract.

A question and answer period followed.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the Facility Management Proposal. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 e.) Mr. Morrissette gave an overview of the Electrical Safety Alert Notice. He stated following the electrocution death of Firefighter Craig Arnone in Somers, a task force was established by CL&P to respond to fire department concerns. The task force published a final report that offered a number of recommendations. As a result of this effort, CL&P offers an electrical-safety program as do other utilities. What they have learned is that local fire departments increasingly use and rely upon voltage detectors to identify whether or not a scene is safe. CL&P's contention is that without proper training and in many cases depending on what type of incident you respond to these devices may not always work especially with shielded cable and as such may give a false sense of security. CL&P asked the Commission to consider disseminating an alert notice to the fire service.

Commissioner Nicol recommended the notice be reviewed by the Attorney General's office.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Nicol and SECONDED by Commissioner Kowalski authorizing the State Fire Administrator to go forward with the Electrical Safety Alert Notice upon approval by the Office of the Attorney General. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 f.) Mr. Morrissette stated that an offer has been made by Chairman Carozza to move the October meeting to coincide with the UPFFA Convention in Bridgeport.

Chairman Carozza stated that he had invited Messrs. Morrissette and Piskura to speak at the Convention and thought it would be a good opportunity to give the Commission some exposure.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Nicol and SECONDED by Commissioner Johnson to relocate the October 26, 1999 Commission Meeting to Bridgeport. Motion carried.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he strongly recommended that Commissioners attend the Wednesday, October 27 workshop on Ultra-Violence, "The Columbine High School Event."

Chairman Carozza stated that the UPFFA was able to secure the Incident Commander from the Columbine High School incident to speak at the Convention. He stated that the first idea was to make him part of their convention but then thought it would be a good opportunity to open it up to the entire fire service. He asked the Commission for its co-sponsorship.

Moving to item 5 g.) Mr. Morrissette stated that the Commission had to file a Y2K Staffing Contingency Plan to the Governor's Office. The Commission was directed to have staff on standby for the day before and after the first of the year. A plan was developed and submitted to the Governor's Office and to the Department of Information Technology.

Moving to item 5 h.) Mr. Morrissette inquired if the Commission would like to plan anything as a thank you to the outgoing Commissioners.

Commissioner Kowalski stated that he felt that it is important to recognize the outgoing Commissioners in some fashion because they served the Commission for a number of years. He suggested that the Commission plan some sort of ceremony to recognize their efforts.

Commissioner Munkenbeck stated that in the past a ceremony was held at the Legislative Office Building with the Lieutenant Governor presenting plaques to the outgoing Commissioners.

Chairman Carozza recommended that the Commission plan to present plaques to honor and thank the past Commissioners for their support and invite them to attend a Commission meeting when it is appropriate.

Chief Marsella reported about a discussion on the consolidation of the regional schools at a recent meeting of the Waterbury area Fire Chiefs' Association. He stated that the chiefs are totally in favor of consolidating resources, lesson plans and everything else, but they are not in favor of

eliminating any of the existing regional schools. He stated that their school is very well versed in the area's needs. It serves their communities to the fullest and they would be totally opposed to any plans to close the school.

Mr. Morrissette asked Mr. Piskura to report on this matter.

Mr. Piskura gave an overview of some activity in the regional fire schools. First he heard about Middlesex looking to move their facility to another location where they could burn Class A combustibles, which they can't currently do. Then he heard that the City of Danbury was looking to build a regional fire school and lastly that the Willimantic School will be losing its lease on their property and that they were actively looking for new property to relocate to. As these three things evolved he said he drafted up a plan and submitted it to the Regional Directors involved. Over one month ago he met with the regional school directors and threw it out for their consumption. He indicated that it has since been fed back to him that this is the "State's Plan." He stated that this is nothing more than some doodling given to them for their consumption and to do what they please. He also stated that recently he heard from Red McKeon regarding some independent operations going on within that area. Again he stated that he did not want anything washing back on the Commission. It's strictly something that would have to be coming from the fire service community and the regional schools to foster an initiative. He told the regional directors when he met with them that the Commission would stand by them in whatever they decide to do collectively.

Mr. McKeon stated that Willimantic's lease does not run out until the year 2005. The current issue is due in part to a few individuals who are having a problem with the property owner.

Commissioner Nicol asked for an update of the Firefighters' Memorial Fund. He stated he would like this item to be added as a regular agenda item on all future agendas.

Mr. Morrissette stated that he has no financial report to give the Commission at this time. At the recent Connecticut State Firefighters' Association convention Ernie Herrick made a plea to those in attendance for support.

Mr. Lewandowski stated that recently he and Mr. Piskura attended a conference at the Vermont Fire Academy and noted that they are in the same process as Connecticut. In the lobby of the Vermont Fire Academy they saw a small granite model of the proposed memorial and thought this might be an expense, but a good idea to model in Connecticut to generate donations for the memorial.

A discussion period followed.

Chairman Carozza stated that he noted that several months ago at a meeting with the Governor it was noted that he had nothing from the fire service on his walls in his office. It was suggested that a presentation be made to the Governor from the fire service. Chairman Carozza thanked

Mr. Lewandowski for securing a fire chief helmet on behalf of the Commission to present to the Governor.

Mr. Morrissette stated that legislative proposals are due to Office of Policy and Management no later than October 15. He stated that his staff has no proposals. There may be some need to modify our Regulations. Chief Verda from the Norwalk Fire Department may attend our next meeting to ask the Commission to review and make a change to the Regulation that relates to certification of non-fire service personnel.

Mr. Morrissette reported that the Commission's Escape Trailer was damaged once again this past week. With fire prevention week coming up very rapidly we're trying to get that repaired and back out on the road. We've had more problems in the last several months with this program and a lot of disappointed customers.

Mr. Morrissette reported that the Safety Committee would be meeting next on December 15 at 10:00 a.m. All Commissioners are invited to attend those meetings. He inquired whether Commissioners would like to volunteer to be the Commission's designee on the Safety Committee.

Mr. Morrissette stated that one more recruitment/retention meeting was scheduled for October 21 at the East Great Plain's Fire Station in Norwich at 7:00 p.m. All are invited.

Mr. Morrissette inquired whether the Commissioners wanted to schedule a date for a meeting with Consultant Richard Pearson to discuss strategic plan strategies.

A discussion period followed with Commissioners unanimously agreeing to schedule a meeting for the afternoon of October 26, following the Commission meeting.

Mr. Morrissette stated that the agency was in the process of establishing an 800 phone line for toll free access to the Academy.

Mr. McKeon suggested that the agency look into utilizing the 800 FIRE LINE for the agency's toll free access.

Mr. Morrissette stated that the Public Education Sub-Committee had met several times over the last year to discuss a number of issues regarding the Commission's future direction and mission as it relates to Public Fire & Life Safety Education.

Commissioner Johnson recommended that this item be tabled until the next meeting.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Dated: _____

Edward F. Haber, Secretary
Commission on Fire
Prevention and Control

MOTIONS

Commission Meeting – September 29, 1999

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A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the Staff Report for the periods of June 15, 1999 – July 14, 1999, July 15, 1999 - August 14, 1999 and August 15, 1999 – September 14, 1999. Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Johnson and SECONDED by Commissioner Kowalski stating that it is the recommendation of the sub-committee that the Commission while recognizing the recruitment/retention issues facing the volunteer ranks reaffirm its recognition of NFPA 1001 as its entry level training standard. The Commission staff is cognizant of and will promulgate a guidance document outlining the minimum OSHA Standards and how they can be attained through the current IFSTA-Essentials curriculum. The Commission staff will meet, advise and assist any fire department as it relates to training.

Commissioner Kowalski recommended that the word promulgate in the motion be change to disseminate.

Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Chatfield and SECONDED by Commissioner Munkenbeck to table this item for the next meeting. Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Haber to approve the Bookstore position.

Motion carried.

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A MOTION was made by Commissioner Chatfield and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to close the nomination for the position of Chairman and to direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for Peter Carozza. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

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A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the Facility Management Proposal. Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Nicol and SECONDED by Commissioner Kowalski authorizing the State Fire Administrator to go forward with the Electrical Safety Alert Notice upon approval by the Office of the Attorney General. Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Nicol and SECONDED by Commissioner Johnson to relocate the October 26, 1999 Commission Meeting to Bridgeport. Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kowalski and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

STAFF FOLLOW-UP REQUIRED

Entry Level Training

Chief Black replied affirmatively if the option from the Commission's staff identifies what within the curriculum is needed to satisfy OSHA.

Commissioner Chatfield inquired if a communication will be sent to fire departments outlining what part of the training is required by OSHA, what has to be done first and what has to be completed after to complete the FF-I program.

Commissioner Johnson recommended that the staff communicate minimum training requirements required to meet OSHA compliance in addition to training options to all concerned.

Mr. Morrissette stated that in addition, the Commission could offer some regional workshops to further communicate training options available to departments.

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Mr. Morrissette indicated the final draft document would be distributed for discussion prior to disseminating to fire departments.

Commissioner Nicol recommended that the agency inform the regional schools about the adjunct instructor upcoming salary increases.

Electrical Safety Alert Notice

Commissioner Nicol recommended the notice be reviewed by the Attorney General's office.

Schedule event for outgoing Commissioners

Mr. Morrissette inquired if the Commission would like to plan anything as a thank you to the outgoing Commissioners.

Commissioner Kowalski stated that he felt that it is important to recognize the outgoing Commissioners in some fashion because they served the Commission for a number of years. He suggested that the Commission plan some sort of ceremony to recognize their efforts.

Commissioner Munkenbeck stated that in the past a ceremony was held at the Legislative Office Building with the Lieutenant Governor presenting plaques to the outgoing Commissioners.

Chairman Carozza recommended that the Commission plan to present plaques to honor and thank the past Commissioners for their support and invite them to attend a Commission meeting when it is appropriate.

Firefighters' Memorial

Commissioner Nicol asked for an update of the Firefighters' Memorial Fund. He stated he would like this item to be added as a regular agenda item on all future agendas.

Mr. Morrissette stated that he has no financial report to give the Commission at this time. At the recent Connecticut State Firefighters' Association convention Ernie Herrick made a plea to those in attendance for support.

Mr. Lewandowski stated that recently he and Mr. Piskura attended a conference at the Vermont Fire Academy and noted that they are in the same process as Connecticut. In the lobby of the Vermont Fire Academy they saw a small granite model of the proposed memorial and thought this might be an expense, but a good idea to model in Connecticut to generate donations for the memorial.

800 Phone Line

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Mr. McKeon suggested that the agency look into utilizing the 800 FIRE LINE for the agency's toll free access.

Mr. Morrissette stated that the Public Education Sub-Committee had met several times over the last year to discuss a number of issues regarding the Commission's future direction and mission as it relates to Public Fire & Life Safety Education.

Commissioner Johnson recommended that this item be tabled until the next meeting.