

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY
NEW JERSEY FIRE SAFETY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

Meeting of July 16, 2014

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, May 21, 2014 at the Toms River Fire Academy in Toms River, NJ.

Commission Members Present:

Mr. Pasquale Intindola, Acting Chairman
Mr. Stanley Sickels
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood
Mr. Roger Potts
Mr. Daniel DeTrolio
Mr. Michael Postorino
Ms. Kathleen O'Leary
Mr. Arthur Londensky
Mr. Kevin Bellew
Mr. John Lightbody
Mr. Armando Roman

Commission Members Excused:

Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman
Mr. Kevin Krushinski, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Fredrick Collender
Mr. Richard Blohm

DCA Staff Members Present:

William Kramer, Acting Director
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS
Rick Farletta, NJDFS
Jason Spiecker, NJDFS
Jerry Clark, NJDFS
James McFadden, NJDFS
Pete D'Amore, NJDFS
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

Guests:

Alden Blackwell, Tenafly FD
Tom Pizzano II, Millburn FD
Peter F. Smeraldo Jr., NJCFCA
Rich Heimbach, Master Planning
Anthony Cruz, Berkeley Twp.

John Garton, NJ Department of Labor
Ronald McGowan Jr., Wildwood Crest Fire Co.
Bob Yaiser, Toms River Fire Prevention
Michael Allora, Clifton FD
Bryant Curry, Bradley Beach

A. Call to Order

In the absence of Chairman John Wisniewski, Acting-Chairman Pat Intindola called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM and began the meeting with the “Pledge of Allegiance” and pointed out the fire exits.

B. Approval of Minutes

With no discussion requested or necessary corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of May 21, 2014 were approved.

C. Correspondence

Acting-Chairman Intindola noted that all correspondence for today’s meeting is contained in the Fire Safety Commission packets. With no discussion requested on any of the correspondence at this time, the meeting was moved to Public Comment I.

Acting-Chairman Intindola took this opportunity to introduce new Commissioner Michael Postorino, Chief of the Paterson Fire Department. All of the Commission members welcomed him.

D. Public Comment I

Acting-Chairman Intindola opened up the meeting to any members of the public wishing to address the Fire Safety Commission. There being none, the meeting was moved to Division of Fire Safety Activities.

E. Division of Fire Safety Activities

Acting Director William Kramer began his report by welcoming Commissioner Michael Postorino to the Fire Safety Commission as well, and said he was looking forward to continue to work with him going forward.

Since the last Commission meeting, the Division of Fire Safety received its accreditation from IFSAC, in addition to the accreditation that had been granted from ProBoard previous. Both bodies have now given accreditation on eight NJDFS training programs. Also, the issue with the five southern counties attempting to operate separately under ProBoard has been resolved. A meeting was held involving all interested parties and it was resolved that the Division of Fire Safety would be the sole entity accreditation in New Jersey.

Chief Kramer thanked the New Jersey Fire Prevention and Protection Association for holding the Annual Poster Contest Luncheon last month. The NJDFS and NJFPPA has had a long standing partnership in running the New Jersey Fire Safety Poster Contest and it has continued to flourish. Also, Chief Kramer and Charles Lavin met yesterday with representative from Atlantic City Electric and the CVS/Caremark Corporation. They

have jointly agreed to print 10,000 calendars featuring the Poster Contest winners' artwork. This commitment will double the number from last year's programs. The calendars will be designed shortly and be ready for distribution in the early fall. The NJDFS will also be utilizing a partnership with CVS on some fire safety promotions, particularly during Fire Prevention Week in October.

Chief Kramer reported on the Homeland Security Conference that was held at Kean University last month. It was extremely well-done and well-attended. The presenters included the emergency response to the Newtown, CT shooting, a recovery mission from Hurricane Sandy/Sandy Hook building playgrounds, and a presentation on the importance of intelligence via FDNY.

The NJDFS is currently working on planning its Fall Training Semester. Also, the "2013 Fire In New Jersey" report is complete. It is currently undergoing the review process and should be made public shortly. Chief Kramer also spoke about an intelligence bulletin that talks about sovereign citizens and how they should be dealt with in regards to emergency services. Chief Kramer said there will be more of these types of bulletins to come and urged that, if you do receive the information, to keep it to official use only.

The Division of Fire Safety is working on a tabletop exercise at the Gloucester County Fire Academy in regards to Bakken Crude-related emergencies. It will take place on August 12th and there are many other state agencies involved, as well as the Coast Guard. If anyone is interested in coming, please let Chief Kramer know ahead of time. Mercer, Burlington, and Camden Counties are involved as well, and regional strike teams have also been put together. There has not been any additional information received regarding the Bakken Crude transport schedules, routes, etc. Apparently there is a confidentiality issue on the federal government's end.

The Highway Traffic Safety Guidelines were updated to comply with the new federal highway standards. They were then reviewed by the Attorney General and it was signed off on about a week ago. The training program will continue to be delivered by the Division of Fire Safety, and the program has been determined to be equivalent by the feds. The Division of Fire Safety was also recently brought on board to the incident management response team for limited access highways. They will be working with the Department of Transportation and State Police on this.

Commissioner Daniel DeTrolio asked Chief Kramer what effect the passing of the budget will have on the Division of Fire Safety. Chief Kramer answered that the Division is authorized at 91 positions, which is down from 185. There are currently around 84 employees with some expected retirements upcoming. Whether they will be able to add people or backfill positions has yet to be determined. From a revenue standpoint, the Division of Fire Safety exceeded its expectation for Fiscal Year 2014.

Commissioner DeTrolio also asked about the potential for a meeting about the Deitz and Watson fire in Delanco. Chief Kramer said that he was told by Chairman Wisniewski conveyed to him that Senator Norcross would still like to hold a special meeting on this.

However, there has not been a report on the incident released yet – ATF will be authoring the report.

Acting-Chairman Intindola asked for an update on the Fire Extinguisher Bill. Chief Kramer answered that the Division of Fire Safety has submitted suggestions on the bill within the required timeframe. What happens from there is up to the Governor and the Legislature. Acting-Chairman Intindola asked if there was any talk of a statewide identification card being issued any time soon. Chief Kramer answered that there is nothing forthcoming on this.

Bureau Chief Lou Kilmer reported that the Division of Fire Safety was heavily involved in the national Special Olympics event that was recently held in Mercer County. Chief Kilmer said all events associated with the Special Olympics went without incident and it was a very rewarding experience for all involved. Chief Kilmer was also pleased to report that the Inspections Unit made it through the 4th of July successfully and with no serious incidents anywhere in the State. This is a testament not only to the Division of Fire Safety's staff and efforts, but those of the local officials as well.

Chief Kilmer gave an update on the RIMS computer system. The developers are continuing to do fixes and tweaks to the system each week to make it more streamlined and user-friendly. Also, another set of rebates was just released and Division of Fire Safety staff is out in the field every day training fire officials on the system as needed. All Annual Reports were received except for one municipality that the Division is still working with. They are also beginning to dedicate resources to cleaning up the data in the system. Carol Quinn is doing exemplary work on improving the RIMS system on a daily basis.

F. Advisory Council Reports:

1. Codes Advisory Council

Commissioner Stanley Sickels reported that the Codes Advisory Council met on June 18th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville. The first issue discussed at that meeting was concerning liquid CO2 beverage storing/dispensing systems. These systems are found at many chain restaurants and have even resulted in the death of an employee. There is concern about proper warnings and signage and the Codes Council has drafted a bulletin on this – only without the word “beverage” included.

There was lengthy discussion on the All Hazards Building Information Sign. It was debated at a prior Commission meeting whether or not the amount of information on the proposed sign was overkill. It was suggested that the Codes Advisory Council meet with the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council on coming up with an ideal sign. That meeting has not yet been held, but the Codes Council has determined that there should not be more than one sign on a given building and it must be uniform.

Under new business, there was a proposal to make a code change that would add Animal Surgical Centers as Life Hazard Uses. It was contended that these facilities are already required to be inspected for licensure annually by State law. The motion passed to include them as Life Hazard Uses.

The Codes Advisory Council talked about the Rule Proposal Log and how many of the items have been sitting dormant since 2006 or 2007. Inaction on one particular proposal, concerning mulch fires, has posed an ongoing problem. It is hoped that Chairman Wisniewski can meet with or correspond with DCA Commissioner Constable to get some of these items moving. It was also determined that a bulletin concerning mulch storage be drafted. The Codes Council also discussed the issue of local enforcing agencies adding permits to those already listed in the code. A motion was passed to provide an exception permitting local enforcing agencies to add additional permits by local regulation to the permits already established in the Code.

The Codes Advisory Council also discussed the issue of Inflatable Rides, and the fact that they are going airborne and/or resulting in injuries more and more frequently. The Codes Council is looking for some guidance on how this should be dealt with as it relates to the fire official, since these are considered temporary structures.

The next meeting of the Codes Advisory Council is scheduled for August 20th at Middlesex County Fire Academy at 10 am.

2. Training and Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported the Training and Education Advisory Council met on June 17th at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville. The minutes of that meeting are contained in the Commission packets.

Commissioner Wood referred to the list of proposed standards that is included in the Commission packets. It outlines the title, current edition and the priority of it in the adoption process.

3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council

In the absence of Commissioner Gerard Naylis, no report was given.

4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council

Commissioner John Lightbody reported that the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council met on June 2nd at the Toms River Fire Academy. He submitted the following report:

Commissioner Lightbody reviewed the minutes of the last meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council, held on March 10, 2014. Dan Mulligan made

a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Rich Silvia and passed unanimously.

A discussion took place on the need for shared services because the fire service cannot afford redundancies in this day and economy. They need to find a way to explain to fire companies that this is the best way to get the most out of what resources you have. In the long run, it makes departments better. Mr. Mulligan spoke about highlighting the benefits for both merging sides and keeping the historical aspects of both intact.

Rich Silvia added that the fire service needs to come up with their own plan before the government comes in with their own plan and tells the fire service how to do it. Don Huber agreed and added that it is already happening in a way with fire districts – and this type of change is coming sooner than later in places like Hamilton and Jackson.

Ray Lonabaugh gave an example of a merger in Pennsylvania, where facilitators are used and grants are available to get it done – but it does take a number of years.

Commissioner Lightbody stressed the importance of having someone that can come in and guide the fire chiefs that are merging through the process. He used an example in Ocean County where it was done smoothly and the fire service only benefitted from it.

Commissioner Lightbody spoke about lightweight construction and said that a disc has been put together on the issue, as well as a couple articles that have been put out there. The fire service needs to keep working to educate the public on the dangers, even despite the fact that some within the fire service are speaking out with misinformation.

Commissioner Lightbody commented on recruitment and retention, and the fact that the fire service is struggling to staff its volunteer departments. It has mostly to do with the dynamics of the local population today.

Commissioner Lightbody also gave a report on the Residential Sprinkler Coalition meeting that took place on June 2nd.

Dave Kurasz led discussion of the following pieces of legislation of interest to the Coalition. This included Assembly and Senate bills pertaining to schools, residential sprinklers, and a lengthy discussion was held on the recent school fire that took place in Edison, NJ.

The ICC Code Committee reported on several issues that took place in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. This included local officials being denied access to certain areas because of lack of identification, building and fire officials posting buildings after the storm, and the need for certain departments/entities to merge and better utilize their resources. Also, Rich Silvia has been nominated by the Commissioner to the NJ Fire Code Advisory Council and is awaiting approval. The New Jersey Construction and Fire Code Advisory Council will begin discussing adoption of the 2015 ICC codes soon.

Ray Lonabaugh from the NFSA spoke about the new ICC voting process that allows electronic voting that can be conducted and/or changed up to 2 weeks after the ICC

meetings. He also reported that in Virginia the IAFF may be seeking legal action in any line of duty death or injuries that occur there as a result of sub-standard homes built after the adoption of the 2009 IRC.

The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council is scheduled for August 4th at the Toms River Fire Academy.

5. Public Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Daniel DeTrolio reported that no meeting had been held since the last Commission meeting and Chief Kramer brought everyone up to speed on the Poster Contest/Calendars during Division of Fire Safety Activities.

Chief Kramer reported that, in June, Charles Lavin went to the National NFPA Conference to present the New Jersey FIRE Bowl to a body of public educators from around the US and Canada. It was extremely well received and there has been some follow up with states looking to partner and/or start their own FIRE Bowl-like programs.

Also, Chief Kramer reported that the smoke detectors from the Operation 7 Save-a-Life program are just about all distributed, and some will be publicly given out after today's meeting here at the academy. All of the detectors are the 10-year sealed battery type. Chief Kramer also stressed that anyone taking smoke detectors this year NEEDS to provide data on their distribution. This will be reported back to Kidde and determine how many detectors will be donated going forward. He stressed that if you are taking detectors, they need to be given out.

The next meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council is scheduled for Wednesday, September 3rd at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville.

6. Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council

In the absence of Commissioner Richard Blohm no report was given.

7. Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council

Commissioner Kathleen O'Leary reported that there was no meeting since the last Commission meeting in May. The Council is still working on several items, including the "Fire Is" website and bolstering the attendance at Council meetings to include more (if not all) counties.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for September 4th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy.

G. Committee Reports

1. Residential Sprinkler Committee

In the absence of Commissioner Gerard Naylis, no report was given.

H. Old Business

Chief Kramer reported on a grant that was received from BPU to use to develop training for emergencies involving solar panels. The Division recently signed a contract with Underwriters Laboratories and will be using their online training program. It will be tied to NJLearn so the Division can track who all is completing this training. Chief Kramer also reported that all but one county has completed a review of their county-wide mutual aid plans. It is something that the County Fire Coordinators are required to do every two years. The Coordinators have recently changed in Morris and Cumberland Counties.

In regards to training, Chief Kramer reported that the Division of Fire Safety will be delivering its Highway Traffic Safety course for the State Police in Sea Girt. Also, the firefighter training manuals that had gone out to bid have been awarded and are just about ready to go to print. The switch over to the new manuals will take place in January of 2015.

I. New Business

Commissioner Stanley Sickels made a motion that Rich Silvia be appointed to the Codes Advisory Council. Mr. Silvia's resume was submitted for the review of the Fire Safety Commission prior to the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Daniel DeTolio and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Lawrence Wood presented a comprehensive list of NFPA training standards and proposed that the Fire Safety Commission support adopting the complete package. This was proposed and supported by the Training and Certification Advisory Council. Commissioner Wood made a motion that the Fire Safety Commission formally support this proposal. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stanley Sickels and passed unanimously.

Chief Kramer spoke about the issue of locating the most recent version of the bi-laws of the Fire Safety Commission. Once found, the bi-laws were extremely outdated and Chief Kramer suggested that the Commission might want to appoint a Committee to review and/or rewrite them. It was determined that Commissioners Pat Intindola, Stanley Sickels, and Arthur Londensky will make up this Committee. Chief Kramer agreed to forward the old copy of the bi-laws to each of them.

J. Public Comment II

Peter F. Smeraldo Jr. from the NJ Career Chiefs spoke to publicly support the work of the Fire Safety Commission and specifically thank Charles Schilling for his many years of exemplary service. He also expressed his confidence in new Commissioner Michael Postorino and looks forward to working with him and the Commission going forward.

K. Adjournment

Acting-Chairman Intindola asked if anyone had any additional business they would like to bring before the Commission. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.

*** The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be held on Thursday, September 11, 2014 at 10am. It will be held at the Wildwood Crest Fire Department in Wildwood Crest, NJ ***