

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

**Meeting of September 12, 2013**

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Thursday, September 12, 2013, at the Wildwood Crest Fire Department in Wildwood Crest, NJ.

**Commission Members Present:** Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman  
Mr. Pasquale Intindola, Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Charles W. Schilling  
Mr. Arthur Londensky  
Mr. John Lightbody  
Mr. Stanley Sickels  
Mr. Kevin Krushinski  
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood  
Mr. Roger Potts  
Mr. Kevin Bellew  
Ms. Kathleen O'Leary  
Mr. Fredrick Collender

**Commission Members Excused:** Mr. Richard Blohm  
Mr. Daniel DeTrollo  
Mr. Steve O'Gorman  
Mr. Armando Roman

**DCA Staff Members Present:** William Kramer, Acting Director  
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS  
Rick Farletta NJDFS  
Frank Clark, NJDFS  
Jerry Clark, NJDFS  
Robert F. Lenox, NJDFS  
James McFadden, NJDFS  
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

**Guests:** David Kurasz, NJFSAB  
William Hopping, Morristown FD  
Dennis Conley, Pitman FD  
Artie Hayduck, Piscataway Dist 1  
John Buchek, Piscataway Dist 1  
Nick Lombardi, Piscataway Dist 1  
Dominick McClain, NWFD  
Paul E. Short Sr., Avalon FD  
Daniel Spekir, Wildwood FD  
Ronald McGowan Jr., Wildwood Crest FD  
Jim Zaconie, NJ Building Off. President  
Alden B. Blackwell, Tenafly FD  
Jim Burleigh, Bellmawr FD  
Stephen DePierri, Barrington Regional Alliance  
John Garton, NJ Department of Labor  
Steve Dyl, Kearny FD  
Richard E. Dean, Avalon Fire Prevention  
Vinny Corsaro, Jefferson Twp. Fire Bureau

Will Morey CMC Freeholders	David C. Thompson, Wildwood Crest FD
Carl Groon, Wildwood Crest	Anthony Lionetti, Wildwood Crest
Gary Stocker, Wildwood Crest	Richard L. Hudon, Wildwood Crest
Francis P. Canning, Wildwood Crest	Mark Gose, Wildwood FD
Ronald Harwood, Wildwood FD	Thomas E. Simpson, Bergen Co. Fire Prevention
Ryan Troiano, Wildwood FD	Bryant Curry, Bradley Beach Fire Marshal
James Grauel, Wildwood FD	Daniel Dunn, Wildwood Crest Fire Prevention
Josh Lazarus, NJDFS (ret.)	David Perry, Lower Twp. Fire Safety
Anthony Robinson, Wildwood FD	Donna Blackley, Lower Twp. Fire Safety
Patrick Bigoss, Camden Co. College	Paul Sandrock, Camden County Fire Marshal
Ryan Pierson, Pitman Fire Safety	Conrad Johnson, Cape May County Fire Marshal
Leroy Pierce, Salem Fire Academy	John Turner, Salem County Fire Marshal
Alice Wood, Carlstadt FD	Albert Beers, Wildwood Crest FD
Chris Pujat, Twp. of Ocean Dist 1	Lewis Ostrander, North Wildwood Fire Official

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman John Wisniewski called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and began the meeting with the “Pledge of Allegiance” and pointed out the fire exits. A moment of silence was observed for the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks, which had taken place the day prior to the meeting.

**B. Approval of Minutes**

With no discussion requested or necessary corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of July 17, 2013 were approved.

**C. Correspondence**

Chairman Wisniewski 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.

**D. Public Comment I**

Chairman Wisniewski opened up the meeting to any members of the public wishing to address the Fire Safety Commission.

With no members of the public wishing to comment at this time, the meeting was moved to Division of Fire Safety Activities.

**E. Division of Fire Safety Activities**

Acting Director William Kramer began his report by talking about the major incident that took place in Delanco over Labor Day weekend. It was a large fire in which a 400,000 square-foot cold storage facility (sprinklered) essentially burned to the ground. The

Division of Fire Safety was there for about four days and was involved with coordination of resources, accessing mutual aid from eight different counties. There was a major problem with water supply and various other issues. The Division of Fire Safety has been working with ATF and State Police on the investigation of the fire. Chief Kramer said he did not have a detailed report of the cause as of yet, but it appears that the fire started on the roof. It was a delayed alarm, and by the time the fire department got there the fire had taken over the roof completely. The roof had approximately 7,000 solar panels on it, and the fire got underneath those making it impossible to stop. The building looks to be about a \$2 million loss. Coincidentally, the Division of Fire Safety has been working with BPU on the funding of extensive fire service training in regards to emergencies involving solar panels.

Chief Kramer said there are a number of issues involved with the Delanco fire and he will be reporting on it at subsequent meetings. Firefighters are actually still responding to rekindles there because the center of the building is not accessible. Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary asked why the Neptune system was unable to be utilized during this incident. Chief Kramer answered that they did attempt to use the system to get a large amount of water onto this fire, but they did not have a good area to deploy Neptune.

Commissioner Wood asked if the fire on the roof had started inside or outside of the solar panels, but Chief Kramer answered that this was still unknown at this time.

Commissioner Wood also commented that the incident boils down to a regulation problem. Chief Kramer said that it more of a policy issue – for the building owners, code development, and with the insurance industry as well. Chief Kramer added that a major challenge going forward is the inability to stop the solar panels from generating electric. Commissioner Stanley Sickels pointed out that years ago a building like this would have been segregated into fire areas with firewalls, thereby containing the fire. But due to changes in technologies and the code, an incident like this has become possible.

Commissioner Sickels asked whether firefighters had come across solar panels that were energized even after the roof had collapse. Chief Kramer said this was not an issue because firefighters were unable to enter the building. This, however, will become an issue when demolition crews are brought in to take the building down – mainly because there are still active panels on the roof in the part of the build that did not collapse. Meetings will be held with the demolition crews on how to deal with these.

Commissioner Kevin Bellew asked if there was a procedure, on the municipality’s end to kill power to a building in cases like the one that took place in Delanco. Chief Kramer answered that pre-planning certainly needs to be done in this respect, and whether the building is equipped with solar panels or not. He was not sure how this particular issue was handled in the Delanco case.

Chief Kramer reported that the Highway Traffic Safety Program has been delivered by the NJDFS for about three years now. He commended Mike Gallagher for a great job on conducting these courses, as well as Tim Weiss. Thousands of first-responders have received this training – including law enforcement, EMTs, firefighters, etc. Chief

Kramer said the Division of Fire Safety will be launching a Highway Traffic Safety Compliance credentialing program. This will allow emergency responders to identify those who are trained in, and have proper tools for, handling of incidents on limited-access highways. The program is voluntary where agencies can apply to be deemed compliant. If they are, they will receive helmet stickers and decals for their apparatus. This program should be launched within the next month. The Division's training program is also being looked at by the Federal Highway Administration, who have commended the NJDFS on their efforts in this area and said it should be used as a model nationally.

Chief Kramer gave an update on the IFSAC and ProBoard accreditations of the Division of Fire Safety's training programs. We are on the ProBoard agenda for October - and will hopefully be approved - and we have not heard back from IFSAC just yet. Also, the Division of Fire Safety is working with the Department of Treasury on the bid process for student manuals. There are currently enough to get through the end of 2014. The specifications for the next bid will be for both hard-copy textbook and electronic.

The Division of Fire Safety has also been working closely with the organizers for several large events - including the Miss America Pageant (this week), the Special Olympics (Mercer County, next year), and the Super Bowl (February at MetLife Stadium). The Division of Fire Safety continues to be extremely busy across the board and Chief Kramer is hoping that this will bode well when it comes to getting up to appropriate levels of staffing.

The Fall 2013 training brochure has been published on the NJDFS website and Kean University website as of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Registration is now open and there are many new training courses available. Chief Kramer said that the training program is full of quality courses and he would compare it favorably to any other in the country.

Governor Christie recently dealt with two bills that have created a bit of confusion within the fire service - the fire extinguisher bill and the command-and-control bill. The bills have been conditionally vetoed pending a review by the Department of Community Affairs and Division of Fire Safety. All in all, fire extinguishers are still required upon resale until further notice. The memo has been sent out on this matter.

Chief Kramer introduced the new "2014 New Jersey Fire Safety Calendar" that the Division of Fire Safety and NJ Fire Prevention & Protection Association have partnered on based on the artwork submitted in the statewide poster contest. The calendars were printed through the sponsorship of Atlantic City Electric who really stepped up their efforts to accomplish this and print more than 5,000 copies. Chief Kramer thanked all of the program's sponsors for their contributions to a project everyone can be very proud of.

Chief Lou Kilmer reported that the new RIMS computer system is moving along with its implementation as expected. There have been bugs and glitches along the way, but Division of Fire Safety staff is dealing with those issues as they arise. There are roughly ten training programs on RIMS scheduled to be held at the county level. There will also

be a booth set up at this week's Wildwood Convention to answer questions on RIMS. All in all, it will greatly enhance the Division's effectiveness once it is fully implemented.

Chief Kilmer regretfully informed the Commission of the untimely death of one of his inspectors, Barry Stires, who passed away over Labor Day Weekend in a tragic accident. The thoughts and prayers of the Division of Fire Safety staff and Fire Safety Commission are with him and his family.

**\*\*\*\*\* Special Presentation \*\*\*\*\***

Assemblyman Wisniewski diverted from the regular agenda to honor Retired Fire Marshal Albert Beers. Mr. Beers, born and raised in Wildwood Crest, recently turned 90-years-old. His accomplishments include 67 years in the fire service, 25 years as Fire Marshal of Cape May County, and 44 missions flown over Germany in World War II – earning him the Air Medal w/Five Clusters.

On behalf of the entire State Legislature, Assemblyman Wisniewski honored Albert Beers with a Joint Legislative Resolution. All 120 legislators unanimously agreed to recognize Mr. Beers for his lifetime of accomplishments in the fire service, service to his country, and dedication to helping his fellow man. The Cape May County Freeholders also made a presentation honoring Mr. Beers, as well as the Mayors of Wildwood and Wildwood Crest. Mr. Beers was lauded for his diligent work and exemplary for the people and visitors of Cape May County and the Wildwoods communities. Mr. Beers expressed his gratitude for all the honors, and thanked all of those who he has worked alongside throughout the years.

**F. Advisory Council Reports:**

**1. Codes Advisory Council**

Commissioner Charles Schilling reported that the Code Advisory Council did not hold a meeting due to the lack of an agenda. There has not been any progress to report on the proposed regulations since the last Commission meeting.

**2. Training and Education Advisory Council**

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported the Training and Education Advisory Council met on August 20<sup>th</sup> and the minutes are contained in the Commission packets. Additionally, the Annual Report of the T&E Advisory Council has been distributed for the Commissioners review.

The Fire Officer III pilot course has been completed and the final report was sent out by the Camden County Fire Marshal. He will be meeting with both Bergen and Ocean Counties concerning their Fire Officer III pilot program, and they are working on setting dates for them. The T&E Advisory Council is continuing to look into On-Line/Distance

Learning, and they held discussions on NJ Learn and Kean University's IT unit. They are looking for a platform for online firefighter training courses. The Council is also researching the College/FESHE process of getting schools and classes approved to be FESHE compliant. This would be very advantageous for New Jersey's fire service to get going.

**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 New Jersey Fire Sprinkler Coalition has nearly been able to double its membership in the recent months, and he stressed the importance of getting the legislation passed. It is his hope that the fire service will forcefully support this across the board.

Commissioner Lightbody commended Chief Kramer, the Division of Fire Safety, and the NJ Fire Prevention and Protection Association on a great job with the "2014 NJ Fire Safety Calendars".

The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council is scheduled for November 4<sup>th</sup> at the Toms River Fire Academy.

**5. Public Education Advisory Council**

In the absence of Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo, no report was given. However, Commissioner Sickels suggested that when the next Fire Safety Calendar is designed, that Patriots Day be added on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Sickels once again thanked the sponsors that really made the calendars happen.

Commissioner Sickels announced that the NJ Fire Prevention & Protection Association would be honoring the Bayonne Fire Department and Bayonne Board of Education for their amazing efforts in the area of fire safety education.

The next meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council is scheduled for Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> 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 the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council met on September 5<sup>th</sup> at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. The minutes from that meeting are in the Commission packets.

Commissioner O’Leary reported that the “Fire Is” website is currently under construction. It can now be found under the St. Barnabas webpage, as well as the NJFMBA webpage. St. Barnabas is now the lead agency on the “Fire Is” initiative and will provide the funding. There will be some tweaks to some of the videos and a burn segment will be added. There will be three training sessions for the fall semester and hopefully one at the Juvenile Firesetter Conference.

Paul Elenio reported that the smoke detectors have been distributed to most of the ABC-7 viewing area. There will be four more distributions this month – in Warren, Sussex, and Mercer Counties, and at Montclair State University. Once these are complete, the detectors will be distributed in South Jersey.

Commissioner Kevin Krushinski reported that he had spoken several times to Deputy Attorney General Norma Evans about getting a representative on the Council. She suggested contacting individual County Prosecutors Offices Juvenile Liaison for Guidance. The Council will be reaching out to several Prosecutors’ offices for assistance.

The National Fire Academy is moving slowly with its new Young Firesetting Prevention and Intervention program. It is hoped that there will be a train-the-trainer sometime in October. Also, Joe Ehrhardt has made some inroads with State Police in regards to Firefighters Background Checks. Commissioner Krushinski had met with legislators about a potential bill, and an amendment to a current bill was presented.

Paul Elenio is finalizing the details for this year’s Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Conference. The theme will be “Utilizing Resources Within Your Community Network” and the brochure will be out shortly.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center.

## **G. Committee Reports**

### **1. Residential Sprinkler Committee**

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

## **H. Old Business**

Commissioner Stanley Sickels brought up the issue from last meeting about the potential conflict of interest of a Commission member testifying against a local fire official. He recommended that the Division of Fire Safety draft a proposal outlining an ethics policy when it comes to the Fire Safety Commission – or even a policy they could fall under. Commissioner Sickels feels this is absolutely necessary and Chairman Wisniewski agreed that it sends a mixed message. Chief Kramer said the Division of Fire Safety would look into this.

## **I. New Business**

Commissioner Lawrence Wood submitted the resume of William Nolze for the review of the Fire Safety Commission and made a motion that he be added to the Training and Education Advisory Council. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stanley Sickels and passed unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Pat Intindola spoke about the International Code Council's hearings will be held in New Jersey next month. It will be at the Atlantic City Convention Center on September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>. The voting will take place on Tuesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. Four people from each municipality are allowed to attend the hearings and vote, and anyone that can attend is encouraged to do so.

Chief Kramer noted that the Division of Fire Safety is working on updating the Fire Safety Commission roster, as many seats have appointees whose terms have expired. The organizations who appoint members have been notified and they are beginning the process of getting the Commission up to date. Chairman Wisniewski asked for the list of organizations and appointments needed. Commissioner Wood asked who maintains the information as far as the Commissioners party affiliation. Chairman Wisniewski answered that it is most likely in the Governor's Appointments Office, but that information may not always match up with what information the Division of Fire Safety has. Chief Kramer said that the appointments and terms of Commissioners are accurate and match the information from the Appointments Office – as far as party affiliations, the Division is not given that information.

## **J. Public Comment II**

North Wildwood Fire Official Lew Ostrander thanked the Fire Safety Commission for allowing the local community and fire service to honor Albert Beers. He also thanked Chairman Wisniewski for providing the refreshments this morning. Mr. Ostrander also commented on the Division of Fire Safety's new RIMS computer system. He asked whether monies were going to be withheld from the locals if the reports from RIMS were not submitted correctly. Chief Kramer commented that this is in reference to the Annual Reports – reports that have been done electronically for the past several years. He said that if the Annual Report was not turned in – or if inspections were not done without a valid reason – then money would be withheld. The same rules apply as far as the new

RIMS system goes. Chief Kramer also commented on the RIMS process in general, where the Division of Fire Safety is continuing to work out the kinks. One problem beyond Division control is that they are using the New Jersey Network as the server. Sometimes it goes down, or will kick you off if you are on too long. Chief Kramer said this is an issue with the State's IT Department, and they are aware of the problems. However, no one will be penalized for issues pertaining to bugs or outages with the system. Chief Kilmer added that a RIMS training session is scheduled for the coming weeks, and he urged anyone with questions to attend and get up to speed.

Michael Whalen from the Division of Codes & Standards commented the issue of solar panels on roofs. There are ICC Codes in the works on the issue of solar panels, but not until 2015. A lot of testing has been done leading up to this proposal, and given the recent fire in Delanco they should have even more data. Mr. Whalen also urged everyone to get to this year's code hearings in Atlantic City on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **K. Adjournment**

Chairman Wisniewski asked if anyone had any additional business they would like to bring before the Commission. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 11:23 am.

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**\* The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be held on Wednesday, November 20, 2013 at 10am. It will be held in Exhibit Hall A of the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ \***