

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

Meeting of November 17, 2010

The NJ Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, November 17, 2010, at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ.

Commission Members Present: Mr. Pasquale Intindola, Vice-Chairman
Senator Donald Norcross
Senator Anthony Bucco
Assemblyman David Rible
Mr. John Lightbody
Mr. Charles W. Schilling
Mr. Gerard Naylis
Mr. Armando Roman
Ms. Kathleen O’Leary
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood
Mr. Roger Potts
Mr. Paul Hartstein
Mr. Ronald Phillips
Mr. Richard Blohm
Mr. Daniel DeTrollo
Mr. Lewis Candura
Mr. Arthur Londensky
Mr. C. Kenneth Anderson
Mr. Arthur Mercurio
Mr. Frederick Collender

Commission Members Excused: Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman
Mr. Steve O’Gorman

DCA Staff Members Present: William Kramer, NJDFS
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS Charles Luxton, NJDFS
Charles Lavin, NJDFS Jerry Clark, NJDFS
Fred Connin, NJDFS Josh Lazarus, NJDFS
Jason Spiecker, NJDFS Craig Augustoni, NJDFS
Rick Farletta, NJDFS Michael Gallagher, NJDFS
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

Guests: David Kurasz, NJFSAB
Nicolas Kikis, NJ Apartment Assn. Stanley Sickels, NJFPPA
Tony Correia, NJ Career Fire Chiefs William Johnson, E. Brunswick Fire Dist. 2
Cory S. Spillar, Avenel Richard A. Vigliotta, East Brunswick

Cary Costa, Tinton Falls
Kevin Brunell, ACFD
Gordon Pherribo, ACFD
Carnice Lambert, ACFD
John Borczyk, Readington Twp.
Nicola Lepore, OTFD
Dale Gentek, Wildwood FD
Irwin Kreisburg, NJDOL/PEOSH
Tom Pizzano, Millburn FD
Paul McGrath, City Fire Equip.
Kent Mazaros, NJFSAB
Darrell McGee, NJFSAB
Phil Zimm, West Deptford Twp.
Steven Walko, Haddonfield Boro
Paul M. Kormann, Camden Co. FA
Chris Freeman, Stafford Twp.
Beverly Smith, St. Subcode Official
Todd Howell, Woodbridge Dist. 1
Patrick Kenny, Woodbridge FD
Lewis Ostrander, CMCFA
Paul T. Dansbach, Rutherford BFS
Albert S. Beers, Cape May Co. FM
Richard E. Dean Sr., Avalon BFP
George Heflich, NJSFA
John B. Smith, Code Advisory Co.
William Drake, Boro of Princeton
David Matos Jr., NJ Fire EMS Inst.
Bob Duthaler, NJFiresafety.com
James Yates, West Windsor Fire
Robert Moore, Carlstadt FD
Keith Thedinga, Highland Park
Joseph Haney, ACFD
John Ward, Audubon

Richard W. Hogan, Manalapan Twp.
Carole Lightbody, Atlantic Consulting
Vincent Corsaro, Jefferson Fire Bureau
Mark Ciarlariello, North Plainfield Fire
Marshall D. Wood II, ACFD
Broderick Fleming, Plainfield Fire
Conrad Johnson, Wildwood FD
Rich Heimbach, Boro of Lincoln Park
Imelda R. Muench, Montclair FD
Richard Silva, NJFPPA Vice President
Ray Lonabaugh, NFSA
Angela Morello Lange, NJFSAB/NJFPEAC
Michael Maitland, Sen. Norcross's Office
John Medina, Twp. of West Caldwell
Heidi Michel, Stafford Twp.
Daniel P. Mulligan, Ocean Co. Fire Marshal
Keith L. Repace, Woodbridge FD
Carl S. Christensen, Woodbridge Dist. 9
James O'Connell, Waldwick FD
Bryant R. Curry, Bradley Beach
Ronald McGowan Jr., Wildwood Crest FD
Paul Short Sr., Avalon FD
Scott McCormick, Hamilton Twp. Dist. 7
Frank Gunson III, NJSFA
Gary Lewis, City of Summit
Nick Lombardi, Piscataway Dist. 1
Paul C. Sandroock Jr., Camden Co. FM Office
Sharon Colucci, NJFiresafety.com
Steven C. Linz, Franklin Lakes Fire
Jim Dougherty, Ramsey FD
Joseph Rush, Deputy Chiefs Assn.
David A. Maas, Springfield FD

A. Call to Order

In place of Chairman John Wisniewski, Vice Chairman Pasquale Intindola called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and began the meeting with the "Pledge of Allegiance", pointing out the fire exits, and observing a moment of silence for all the firefighters that have lost their lives in the past year.

Vice Chairman Intindola thanked the New Jersey Fire Prevention & Protection Association for arranging the accommodations for today's meeting and Davidson Code Concepts for providing the coffee and refreshments.

B. Approval of Minutes

With no discussion requested or necessary corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of September 15, 2010 were approved.

C. Correspondence

Vice 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.

D. Public Comment I

Vice Chairman Intindola opened the floor to any member of the public wishing to speak.

David Kurasz from the New Jersey Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board spoke about the residential fire sprinkler regulations for one- and two-family homes being turned down by the Department of Community Affairs. Legislation has been introduced for these regulations in both the Senate (Bill 2287) and Assembly (Bill 3278). Both of the bills have been assigned to Committees, chaired by Assemblyman Green and Senator Andrew. Mr. Kurasz asked that any and all members of the Fire Safety Commission send letters to the Committee chairmen outlining the importance of the residential fire sprinkler regulations.

Battalion Chief Joseph Rush read a statement from the New Jersey Deputy Chiefs Association in support of the Rehabilitation Guidelines that were developed by the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council. Mr. Rush thanked Commissioner Richard Blohm and the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council for all their hard work on this document.

New Jersey Fire Prevention and Protection Association President Stanley Sickels spoke to echo the sentiments of Mr. David Kurasz. Mr. Sickels also urged the Commission to support the legislation for residential sprinkler regulations, and thanked Senator Bucco and Assemblyman Wisniewski for introducing the bills. Mr. Sickels invited everyone to this afternoon's NJFPPA meeting in Room 317. Mr. Sickels also announced that the NJFPPA would be honoring James P. Fonzino, John H. Flaherty, the Fair Lawn Fire Prevention Bureau, Michael Maxwell, and State Fire Marshal Lawrence Petrillo at their Annual Awards Dinner. It will be taking place on November 30, 2010, at Baltusrol Country Club in Springfield. Please visit www.njfppa.org for more information.

Gary Lewis from the City of Summit spoke about the issue of advocating for residential sprinklers. He felt that the Division of Fire Safety needs to have representation at International Code Conference hearings. He understands that there are budget constraints and there are certainly more to come, but it is vital that the NJDFS have a presence at these meetings.

With no other 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

Chief William Kramer gave the Division of Fire Safety report on behalf of State Fire Marshal Petrillo who was unable to attend. In response to the comments of Gary Lewis, Chief Kramer agreed that the Division of Fire Safety should absolutely be in attendance at meetings of the International Code Council and will carry that message back to the Department of Community Affairs.

Chief Kramer spoke about the latest “Fire In New Jersey – 2009” statistical report. The full report is available at the Division of Fire Safety’s website and Chief Kramer feels it is the best and most comprehensive report the NFIRS Unit has done to date. He commended Heather Puskar and the NFIRS Unit on all their hard work in turning out a terrific product.

The Division of Fire Safety issued the firefighter fatality report for Elizabeth last month, along with various pieces of information that have been distributed to code enforcement officials and fire chiefs. Also, the Division of Fire Safety is in the process of procuring a metallurgist to continue the investigative report on the large-diameter hose appliance failure that took place in Sussex County.

Chief Kramer reported on the ongoing issue with water companies reporting outages. Division of Fire Safety staff had met with the Board of Public Utilities in regards to a recent incident in the City of Trenton. A BPU representative was supposed to be at today’s Commission meeting to answer questions on this issue, but he is not present at this time.

Bureau Chief Lou Kilmer gave an update on the new computer system that is being developed for the Bureau of Fire Code Enforcement. This project is moving along quite well with a lot of staff time being dedicated to the development of the system. The new computer system, when completed, should be extremely effective for a very long time to come. Also, within the last couple weeks, a proposal appeared in the New Jersey Register to get the fire code in line with the new Department of Education requirements for school fire and evacuation drills. That proposal is currently in the comment period.

Chief Kilmer reported that new updates to the Fire Code have been sent to the printer. These should be coming out within the next couple of months. There is a Peer Review meeting set for December, which will continue to address any issues the Division finds with local fire officials. The Code Enforcement Unit is also getting ready to work on their Annual Report, which is due at the end of January 2011 and will be web-based like last year’s.

Chief Kilmer also stated that the Division of Fire Safety’s partnership with the Division of Revenue has been extremely successful in collecting outstanding fees that are owed to

NJDFS. Commissioner Gerard Naylis asked for a rough estimate as to how much money has been collected. Chief Kilmer answered that the number would be approximately \$1.3 million.

Commissioner Richard Blohm said he has been getting questions from different universities regarding the evacuation of school buildings when fire alarms are activated. Apparently school officials are having a hard time getting the professors to evacuate the buildings. Commissioner Blohm asked if there was anything the local enforcement agency can do to make sure these buildings are appropriately evacuated. Chief Kilmer answered that it would depend if the university is public or private and who local enforcement is. Chief Kilmer said he would look into it and deal with the issue on a case-by-case basis, but it is certainly something that can be resolved.

F. Advisory Council Reports:

1. Codes Advisory Council

Commissioner Charles Schilling began his report by seeking Commission approval of a new appointee to the Codes Advisory Council. Commissioner Schilling made a motion that Nicolas Kikis be added to the Council. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo and passed unanimously. Mr. Kikis' resume has been submitted to the Fire Safety Commission Secretary.

Commissioner Schilling reported that over the past month the Subcommittee on Vacant Buildings has continued to work on ways of identifying and dealing with vacant life hazard uses. Given the economic conditions, this has become more and more of an issue and Commissioner Schilling thanked the Subcommittee for their continued hard work. Commissioner Schilling also spoke about the drafting of regulations for Mobile Enclosed Arcades. The Division of Codes and Standards has put a draft together and it is currently being reviewed. The regulations will be brought before the Commission once they are reviewed and ready.

Vice-Chairman Pat Intindola called attention to the Codes Advisory Council log of action items that had been provided for the Commission. He called particular attention to several items that had been approved by the Fire Safety Commission, yet had not been followed through on by the Department of Community Affairs. Vice-Chairman Intindola requested that NJDFS staff take a look at these items and report back. Commissioner Lawrence Wood suggested that a similar log of action items be put together for the Fire Safety Commission as a whole, so that certain issues will not be forgotten and fall by the wayside. It was agreed that a log of action items would be done for the Fire Safety Commission going forward. Commissioner Arthur Mercurio added that the Fire Safety Commissioners should contact DCA Commissioner Lori Grifa to get answers about the items the Commission forwards to DCA for adoption.

Commissioner Schilling reported that a Subcommittee, chaired by Stanley Sickels, has been meeting to review Subchapter 4. They have been making good progress and once their review is complete the findings will be presented to the Fire Safety Commission.

2. Training and Education Advisory Council

Commissioner C. Kenneth Anderson submitted the following report for the Training and Education Advisory Council:

The Training and Education Advisory Council met on October 19th at the Dempster Training Center at 10:00 am.

Kent Neiswender reported on several projects including:

- * There was some retooling of the registration process. All registration is now web-based and the IT support is provided through Kean University.
- * Registrations are up. Only two of 120 courses were cancelled due to low enrollment.
- * The Division's web page is being updated. Especially the forms which have the old telephone number on them.
- * NJ Learn has had some reduction in staff.
 - There are delays for new members to get passwords; up to five weeks.
 - The IMS information should be updated weekly but that hasn't been happening.
- * The question of Division Haz-mat courses meeting NJSP prerequisite requirements has been resolved.
 - An August 2010 memo of FAQ was issued by NJSP Hazardous Materials Response Unit.

The Driver/Operator proposed course information was considered. The suggestions were presented to the Eligible Organizations at the meeting on October 29th. Feedback from them will help the Council determine how to proceed. What will a program do for insurance costs? If it's positive, that would be a good selling point. VFIS and JIFs have their own programs. Would that be a problem? Should we develop Guidelines (as we are doing for RIC) rather than a certification program?

Our Higher Education Committee is compiling a list of contact information for institutions in the State that offer fire science and/or administration programs. Most likely a summit will be organized for them and any other institutions or organizations interested in post secondary education. One item for discussion would be the FESHE (Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education) model curriculum.

T&E took note of S-1075 which would require all firefighters to obtain Firefighter I certification. Also, A-3182 and S-853 which would require all state certified firefighter training to be accredited.

After the input from the pilot offerings of the Fire Officer courses, review of that information with the Eligible Organizations, and meetings with stakeholders, revisions to the new standards were recommended by T&E. On March 17, 2010, the Fire Safety

Commission endorsed the recommendations for changes to the Fire Officer Certification Standards and recommend to DCA Commissioner for publication in the *New Jersey Register* as a Proposal. The proposal has not been published.

The current standards adopt the second edition of the Delmar *Company Officer – New Jersey Edition* as the text for the curriculum. Delmar is now publishing the third edition. This suggests that the second edition will be phased out. T&E will be considering if the new edition should be adopted, should another text be selected, or should no text be specified.

The law requires that an awareness course for Autism and Developmental Disabilities be added to the Firefighter I curriculum and that it also be completed by all existing firefighters by April 1, 2012. The Division is to adopt a training course based on the curriculum developed by the Departments of Health and Senior Services and Human Services. The Commissioner of DCA is required to adopt rules to effectuate the purposes of the law.

T&E made the following recommendations to the Commission which were adopted at the May 19th meeting. The Eligible Organizations are most firefighters are following these recommendations, but they have not yet been officially adopted.

- That the Division of Fire Safety, with consultation of the fire service representatives from the Fire and Medical Emergency Medical Services Institute who were on the development committee, adopt the NJLearn program “DO NO HARM – Developmental Disabilities Awareness Training for NJ First Responders,” as the required training program for the fire service;
- That the training can be (1) taken online for existing or new firefighters, (2) completed as a company drill under the supervision of a Division of Fire Safety certified Instructor I, or (3) be included in the Firefighter I courses offered by Eligible Organizations;
- That consideration be given to clarifying the requirement for this training for Firefighters certified after the effective date of the Law but before the inclusion of this course in the Firefighter I curriculum;
- That Firefighter I standard be amended to include the awareness program as a requirement for Firefighter I certification;

The next Training and Education Advisory Council meeting will be December 21st at the Dempster Training Center at 10:00 am.

Commissioner Richard Blohm raised a question regarding the RIT (rapid intervention team) guidelines. In the guidelines it talks about establishing a rapid intervention team whenever there is a major emergency. Many fire chiefs in Bergen County feel it should say this would be done during a “confirmed structure fire” rather than a “major

emergency”. They feel the definition of a major emergency is somewhat ambiguous – it is a matter of semantics. Commissioner Anderson agreed that the wording may not be ideal. The RIT Committee will be coming together again and will take a look at this; there are still a few more steps to go before the RIT guidelines would be added to the New Jersey Addendum.

3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council

Commissioner Gerard Naylis reported the Statistics and Information Advisory Council met on September 21st at the Monmouth County Fire Academy.

Commissioner Naylis echoed the sentiments of Chief Kramer in speaking about the new “Fire in New Jersey 2009” statistical report. He described it as a fantastic document and urged all Commission members to have a look at it. Commissioner Naylis complimented Heather Puskar and the NFIRS Unit for their tremendous work on the report.

There are a total 17 federal grants for 16 fire departments – totaling nearly \$2 million – that have not received their money because they have not submitted their NFIRS reports as required under the terms of the program. These are departments that have done all the work, and been awarded the grant, but the money is being withheld until the NFIRS data is submitted. Commissioner Naylis urged these departments to participate in NFIRS lest the federal monies be allocated elsewhere. Commissioner Blohm asked whether the fire department would have had to check off a box on their grant application confirming their participation in NFIRS. Commissioner Naylis said yes.

Currently, for 2010, there are 611 out of 735 fire departments that have submitted their NFIRS data for the year. This is a total of roughly 83% and that number is expected to creep upwards as the end of the year nears. For 2009 we had 694 fire departments submit their NFIRS data for a total of 94%. Commissioner Naylis reminded the Commission that New Jersey is a non-mandatory state when it comes to NFIRS reporting, yet New Jersey’s numbers far surpass most states where reporting is mandatory.

In regards to fire fatalities, there have been a total of 57 civilian deaths – 46 of which took place in residential occupancies. The vast majority of those occurred in one- and two-family homes. Commissioner Naylis feels these numbers once again amplify the extreme need for residential fire sprinklers in one- and two-family homes.

The next meeting of the Statistics and Information Advisory Council will be on November 30, 2010 at the Monmouth County Fire Academy at 10 am.

4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council

Commissioner John Lightbody reported that the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council met in October and November. However, the most up-to-date minutes are not contained in the Commission packet because the secretary has recently retired from the

Division of Fire Safety and had been away. He is back now and will get the Commission up to speed on all the meeting minutes going forward.

The Master Planning and Research Advisory Council had a lengthy discussion about why the State Administration had not adopted the residential sprinkler requirements. The Council as a whole was very surprised that simply trying to adopt the national code – not necessarily inventing something new – was not supported. This was especially surprising after reviewing the report from the Red Tape Committee meeting. In the end, the residential sprinkler regulations were not adopted due to economic factors.

Commissioner Lightbody spoke about the need for firefighters, and the fire service as a whole, to educate the public on the realities of residential fire sprinklers. The benefits they provide in public safety, firefighter safety, and preservation of life far outweigh the economic impacts, which are usually vastly over-estimated. Commissioner Lightbody also mentioned the need for collecting statistics and using tools like the NFIRS “Fire in New Jersey” report to show facts about the benefits of fire sprinklers.

Commissioner Lightbody spoke about the recent Senate and Assembly Bills that would require fire suppression systems in newly-built one- and two-family residences. The Council is very much in support of these Bills and thanked the legislative members of the Fire Safety Commission who have sponsored them.

The Master Planning and Research Advisory Council has Subcommittees working on the issues of Shared Services and Shared Resources throughout New Jersey. They are putting together reports and are well underway in their research. The Council is also working with Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo and the Public Education Advisory Council on the issue of Recruitment & Retention of volunteer firefighters.

The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council will be on January 10, 2011 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy at 10 am.

5. Public Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo reported the Public Education Advisory Council meeting for the month of November was cancelled. Commissioner DeTrollo, for his report, read a letter from Dr. Frank Field to Assemblyman Wisniewski and the Fire Safety Commission regarding the state-wide “Fire Is” education program:

“Assemblyman John Wisniewski
New Jersey Fire Safety Commission

Dear Mr. Wisniewski;

The Seton Hall Fire on January 19th, 2000 drew national attention to a problem, which has existed for years - the need to educate our children to the dangerous nature of fire. I interviewed many of the students who experienced that tragic event and most had little

working knowledge of fire safety, except for the few who vaguely recalled Stop Drop and Roll lessons they had learned in elementary school. In their panic and confusion, students never thought to escape via the nearest exit. Instead, most headed for the main exit even though doing so took them directly toward the smoke and fire.

Thanks to you and the Fire Safety Commission's actions, through the Department of Community Affairs Division of Fire Safety, regulations were promulgated and enforced to prevent this from happening again. Within six months of the Seton Hall fire every public and private school was mandated to install sprinklers in dormitories and New Jersey was leading the way by mandating fire retardant materials in dormitories and a national Campus Fire Safety Act was passed.

There remains, however, a huge gap in teaching fire prevention and safety. Over 80 percent of all fire safety education in New Jersey schools is targeted at children in early elementary classes. While state law mandates fire drills and fire safety education, it is fairly well acknowledged that while drills are uniformly held in all schools, fire safety education takes a back seat. It's a far cry from the 1920's when the law was one hour per month of fire safety education in every school.

We all know there will always be fire emergencies. Most fires occurring in the home are the result of human behavior; the things that people do or do not do. It is how we deal with these fire emergencies, when they occur, that can make the difference between life and death. Our children, in elementary school and on the way through middle school will, like their parents and grandparents, become adults who have never learned how to deal with the real dangers of fire. Considering that seventy seven percent of fire deaths and injuries in New Jersey occur in residential buildings, wouldn't you agree that fire drills at home just make sense? Yet most families have never had a fire drill at home or have an escape plan. We must change this.

A grant from The New Jersey Homeland Security and Preparedness to the FMBA Foundation has enabled us to establish the "Fire Is" program. "Fire Is" was launched during Fire Prevention Week last month. It is the first comprehensive public education tool for the state, which brings reality and lessons of fire safety directly into the home. Parents are asked to sit with their children to learn life saving messages. Every school in the state can assign the lessons and they are available 24 hours a day and seven days a week on the Internet site: njfiresafety.com

There is no cost involved for taxpayers, schools or fire services. It is an entirely new approach, which does not interfere with the schools curriculum and employs tools, which are in every home---Television and Internet. Firefighter educators have a new tool by using "Fire Is" lessons and their local public access stations and an opportunity to work with local schools in a closer relationship.

I call to your attention that in Commission's charter established in the early 80's there was a recommendation that public education in fire safety and prevention be made part of

the school curriculum. This is an opportunity to standardize fire safety teaching throughout the state on a voluntary basis by all local communities.

We have established a coalition of the New Jersey Firefighters Prevention and Protection Association, Safe Kids of New Jersey a non profit child advocacy organization, the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety and The New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA) and The Jersey Access Group (JAG) a consortium of Cable Television Educational and local municipal access channels throughout the state.

The system is in place. We ask for your endorsement and your guidance in making New Jersey THE Fire Safe state.

Dr Frank Field
FMBA Foundation

If anyone would like more information on how their community can become involved, please contact Lt. Stratton and Captain Nordveit. They are co-chairmen of the Fire Safety Education Committee. Lt. Stratton can be reached at 908-265-7670.”

The next meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council will take place on Thursday, January 13, 2011, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy at 10 am.

6. Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council

Commissioner Richard Blohm reported the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council met on September 15th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. One topic of discussion centered around the Department of Health and the fact that they have a new fine schedule that went into effect on August 23rd. The fines have gone up significantly, up to 300% in some cases.

There was a report from the New Jersey Forest Fire Service. They had an extremely busy summer in 2010 with roughly 200 fires (some of which were caused by lightning strikes). They also sent a crew of 20 staff members to Cape Cod to assist with emergency response efforts related to Tropical Storm Earl. The New Jersey Forest Fire Service’s staff is down about 25%, and with retirements upcoming that number is expected to get worse.

Commissioner Blohm made a motion that the New Jersey Fire Safety Commission adopt the Statewide Incident Rehabilitation Guidelines for Emergency Medical Services. The guidelines were presented at the September meeting, as well as distributed electronically to the Commission for comment. Commissioner Naylis commented on the possibility of an on-site firefighter fulfilling the role of EMS personnel. Tony Correia from the NJ Career Fire Chiefs agreed that firefighters could serve that role. He also stressed that the document is simply a guideline, but it has been designed to help save firefighters lives throughout the state. Mr. Correia thanked Commissioner Anderson for all his helpful

comments and input on the guidelines document. Commissioner Blohm's motion was seconded by Commissioner Lightbody and passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council will be today in Atlantic City.

7. Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Council

Commissioner Paul Hartstein reported that the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Council met on November 10th at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center. The tentative schedule for 2011 is also contained in the Commission packet, as well as a magazine article featuring Don Porth – who will be the keynote speaker at the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Seminar in December.

The Curriculum Sub-Committee reported that approval has been granted to put the Juvenile Firesetter Educational Resources material up on the NJ IAAI website. Since the material is already considered to be in the “public domain”, there is no security issue and the information will not require a password to obtain.

In lieu of the traditional “Conference” that usually takes place in early-December, the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Council will partner with IAAI to host a class at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. It is titled “Behavior Change... It's Not In A Video”. There are currently 57 people registered for the program. Information on registering is contained in the Commission packets. In addition, the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Council has discussed providing a “clinic-type” program that would be geared more towards the mental health community. The Council is tentatively shooting for April or May of 2011 for hosting this event. Charlie Luxton is looking into partnering with IAAI on such an event; Joe Ehrhardt and Mike Reed established a committee to pursue this idea.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Council will be held on Wednesday, January 12, 2011 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy at 10 am.

G. Committee Reports

1. Residential Sprinkler Committee

Commissioner Gerard Naylis made a motion that the Commission formally endorse the Senate and Assembly Bills requiring residential fire sprinklers (S2287 and A3278 respectively). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Paul Hartstein and passed unanimously. Commissioner Naylis asked that the legislative members present to carry forth the unanimous sentiment of the Fire Safety Commission to their respective bodies.

Commissioner C. Kenneth Anderson expressed his concern with the legislation for requiring residential fire sprinklers. He said that, given that the regulations were not adopted initially, it is likely that the Governor will veto this new legislation regardless of

the support it garners in the Senate or Assembly. Commissioner Anderson encouraged the Commission members and members of the public present to try and drive up grassroots support of the legislation at the municipal level. Vice-Chairman Intindola suggested Commissioner Lightbody look into drafting a letter to all fire departments, local officials, etc. Commissioner Lightbody added that involving local news media is a key element as well.

H. Old Business

Vice-Chairman Intindola pointed out that the Fire Safety Commission Meeting Schedule for 2011 is contained in everyone's meeting packet. He made note that most of the meetings had been changed to Thursdays as discussed and suggested by Chairman Wisniewski at the September meeting. The 2011 Schedule is as follows:

Thursday	January 20th	10 AM	<u>NJ Dept. of Community Affairs</u> 101 South Broad Street Trenton, NJ
Thursday	March 17th	10 AM	<u>Middlesex Co. Fire Academy</u> 1001 Academy Drive Sayreville, NJ
Thursday	May 19th	10 AM	<u>Monmouth Junction F.D.</u> 573 Ridge Road Monmouth Junction, NJ
Thursday	July 21st	10 AM	<u>Toms River Fire Academy</u> 1780 Church Road Toms River, NJ
Thursday	September 15th	10 AM	<u>Wildwood Convention Ctr.</u> 4501 Boardwalk Wildwood, NJ
Wednesday	November 16th	10 AM	<u>Atlantic City Convention Ctr.</u> 1 Convention Boulevard Atlantic City, NJ

Commissioner Lawrence Wood mentioned the on-going issue with fire departments not being notified of interruptions in water supply. There have been incidents recently in Bergen County and the City of Trenton. Both Commissioners Wood and Phillips had requested a member of the Board of Public Utilities be invited to a meeting to address this issue. Chief Kramer answered that a meeting was held between the Division of Fire Safety and BPU. At that time BPU agreed to have a representative at today's meeting. However, he is not in attendance. Notes from the meeting with BPU will be passed along to Commissioner Wood and the representative will be invited to January's meeting once again.

Commissioner Naylis called attention to the "Activities of the Fire Safety Commission" report that is contained in the Commission packets. Commissioner Naylis thanked

Commission Anderson and Chief Bill Kramer, who were the primary authors, on such a comprehensive and well put-together report. Commissioner DeTrollo made a motion that the Commission officially endorse the report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Roger Potts and passed unanimously.

I. New Business

Commissioner Arthur Mercurio suggested inviting Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Lori Grifa to the January Commission meeting since it will be held in Trenton at the DCA Building.

J. Public Comment II

Irwin Kreisburg from PEOSHA and the Department of Labor stated that they have firefighter standards already in place that are enforced. While in many cases the standards may need some tweaking, it is not necessary for the Fire Safety Commission to completely rewrite the standards and “reinvent the wheel”. Mr. Kreisburg feels it is much easier to work together and revise the standards than to start over from scratch. The standards can be found at the website of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

Fire Official Lewis Ostrander from the City of North Wildwood spoke on the topic of residential fire sprinkler regulations. He wanted to know why the building industry is more powerful than the fire service in keeping those regulations from being adopted. Mr. Ostrander feels that not adopting these regulations puts the citizens and firefighters of New Jersey in danger. A lengthy discussion followed in regards to the residential fire sprinkler regulations. Commissioner Naylis answered that it was his thought that the Governor did not adopt the regulations because he did not want to economically hurt the building industry. Commissioner Naylis said he does not necessarily agree with that, but can understand the Governor’s reasoning. He also felt the door is still open to residential fire sprinkler regulations in the future given an improved economy. Mr. Ostrander feels that economic factors should not come into play when it comes to health and public safety. The Fire Safety Commission wholeheartedly agreed with this sentiment.

Mr. Ostrander addressed the legislative members of the Fire Safety Commission and asked when the Governor might revisit the residential fire sprinkler regulations. Assemblyman David Rible and Senator Donald Norcross asked for more facts regarding residential fire sprinkler regulations. For instance, what other states have adopted them? What are the numbers of fires and fatalities taking place in new construction? What are the costs involved? Etc. Senator Norcross urged the Fire Safety Commission and Division of Fire Safety to provide him with the appropriate facts and statistics so he can go to battle for the regulations armed with the complete picture and necessary information. Commissioner Lewis Candura added that there are currently 13 states that have adopted the residential sprinkler regulations. Commissioner Naylis said the Statistics and Information Council would have to look into adding data elements to the NFIRS system to obtain more information that would answer these questions.

Commissioner Ronald Phillips added that the NFPA publishes statistics on fire injuries and deaths in buildings that are equipped with fire sprinklers.

Commissioner Lawrence Wood spoke about lightweight construction creating a greater fire hazard and necessitating more of a need for fire sprinkler systems. Commissioner Wood feels that this is a fact that most people fail to understand. Commissioner Candura added that this lightweight construction greatly reduces the amount of time people have to escape a burning building. Fire sprinklers go a long way towards extending this window of time.

Commissioner Richard Blohm made a reference to the process that followed the Seton Hall University dormitory fires. Until that tragedy occurred, cost was cited as the reason for not equipping dormitories with fire sprinkler systems. Commissioner Blohm hopes that the State of New Jersey will be proactive in adopting the sprinkler regulations, God forbid there be another tragedy, regardless of how much it costs. Commissioner Blohm added that sprinkler systems greatly enhance firefighter safety and the ability for them to do their jobs safely. Senator Norcross added again that he is in no way opposed to residential sprinkler systems and saving lives; he is just asking for the facts and figures so it can be appropriately advocated for. Commissioner Paul Hartstein spoke about testifying at the Red Tape Panel where the DCA Commissioner and Lieutenant Governor seemed to hear the fire service loud and clear and seemed to support the regulations. Commissioner Arthur Londensky stressed the point that New Jersey needs to be proactive to prevent a major tragedy from happening; rather than reactive, and doing something after the tragedy was already occurred. Commissioner Roger Potts added that it is not accurate to imply all the fire fatalities that take place in a given year would have been prevented with fire sprinkler regulations – because those regulations are only for new construction – but it is an important step for the future.

Bob Duthaler and Sharon Colucci from the Jersey Access Group spoke about the “Fire Is” fire safety education program. They are part of the statewide “Fire Is” coalition, and more information on the program and videos can be found at www.njfiresafety.com. Both Mr. Duthaler and Ms. Colucci urged all members of the Fire Safety Commission to get involved with the program and to be an ambassador for it in their own towns.

Cape May Fire Marshal Al Beers commended the NJ Fire Safety Commission for the tremendous work they do each and every year on behalf of the state’s fire service. Mr. Beers feels as though the message about fire sprinklers should be moreso directed at the firefighters, the actual “troops”, who are battling New Jersey’s fires. In many cases, the firefighters are not well-informed about the benefits and advantages to their own safety that fire sprinkler systems in residential buildings would provide. Mr. Beers asked that the Fire Safety Commission direct this message toward firefighters, in addition to lawmakers and citizens. Mr. Beers also spoke about the need for the Division of Fire Safety to have more staffing and a new Director appointed as soon as possible so they have leadership and are not in a state of limbo.

NJFPPA President Stanley Sickels spoke about the newer, quicker building methods and how these new buildings need to be suppressed. While you can collect data on fires and fire-related fatalities, it is less clear in determining how many lives have been saved by fire sprinklers in other states. Unfortunately with lightweight construction, buildings more readily collapse during fires. Mr. Sickels cited incidents in Jamesburg and Toms River this year where multiple people have perished in residential occupancies. Mr. Sickels feels this will continue to happen until residential fire sprinkler regulations are put in place. Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary added that facts need to be collected in regards to the advanced speed which fires travels in new lightweight construction.

Richard Dean from the Avalon Bureau of Fire Prevention spoke enthusiastically about the “Fire Is” safety education program. He urged the Fire Safety Commission and its members to support and advocate for this program in their cities and towns and throughout the entire state. Mr. Dean also spoke about a comparative study of counties in Maryland where statistics showed the advantages of fire sprinkler systems. He felt this data could be very relevant to the discussion on residential fire sprinkler regulations.

Senator Bucco reported to the Fire Safety Commission that the Assembly and Senate Bills on residential fire sprinkler regulations are currently in Committee and will then be moved to the floor to be voted on. He suggested everyone reaching out to their legislator and Committee Chairman to advocate for the legislation. Senator Norcross reiterated that, with the necessary information, he will be an advocate to the Senate President on the residential fire sprinkler regulation issue.

K. Adjournment

Vice Chairman Intindola asked if anyone had any additional business they would like to bring before the Commission. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 11:36 am.

*** The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be January 19, 2011 at 10am. It will be held at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ**