

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

**Meeting of November 15, 2017**

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ.

**Commission Members Present:** Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman  
Assemblyman Anthony Bucco  
Mr. Richard Blohm  
Mr. Daniel DeTrolio  
Mr. Stanley Sickels  
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood  
Mr. Roger Potts  
Mr. Pasquale Intindola  
Ms. Kathleen O’Leary  
Mr. Steve O’Gorman  
Mr. Arthur Londensky  
Mr. Armando Roman  
Mr. Fred Collender  
Mr. Gerard Naylis  
Mr. Raymond Heck

**Commission Members Excused:** Mr. Kevin Krushinski, Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Kevin Bellew

**DCA Staff Members Present:** Lou Kilmer, NJDFS Acting Director  
Frank Clark, NJDFS  
Tim Weiss, NJDFS  
Peter D’Amore, NJDFS  
Keith Mitchell, NJDFS  
Charles Lavin, NJDFS  
Jerry Clark, NJDFS  
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

**Guests:** Rich Vigliotti, NJFPPA  
John Garton, NJDOL/PEOSH Ronald McGowan Jr, Wildwood Crest Fire  
Conor Fennessy, Mercury David Kurasz, NJFSAB  
Nick Lombardi, Piscataway Dist 1 Rich Silvia, NJFPPA  
Ronald Harwood, Wildwood City Fire Alden Blackwell, Tenafly FD  
Glenn Corbett, Codes Council Angela Morello Lange, Landmark Fire  
Matthew Jones, TNT Vinny Corsaro, Jefferson Twp. Fire Bureau  
Charles Walker, TNT William Smith, Fairfield Fire

Robert G. Schmitt, Parsippany FD	Gary Lewis, City of Summit
K. Mezaros, Quick Response	Josh Lazarus, J Lazarus Training LLC
Gary Greves	Cary Costa, Tinton Falls
Alfred Cirelli	Robert Echavarria, Millburn FD
Dominick McClain, NWFD	Phil Zimm, West Deptford Twp.
Joshua Carter, NWFD	Robert Fiore, Audubon OEM
Mark Ciarlariello, NPF	Pat Calabrese, Parsippany Dist. 5
Michael Hagan, GCFD	John Medina, West Caldwell FD
Edward Mullen, Perth Amboy FD	Robert Lewis, Howell Fire Bureau
Brian Prochnow, Howell Fire Bureau	Charles Well, Highlands Fire Prevention
Cory S. Spillar, Avenel Fire	Dean Manenie, Avenel Fire
Craig Bierbaum, Pleasant Plains FD	Robert King, Mt. Laurel Twp.
Mike Rau, Midland Park FD	Shawn DannenDelsea, Gloucester City FD
Conrad Johnson, Cape May Co. FM	Mark Allen, Wildwood FD
Jenn Heil, Lexipol	Paul Snyder, Piscataway OEM
Jesse T. Kaar, Morris Twp.	Robert Gorr, Piscataway Fire Marshal
Ron Snyder, Evesham Fire	Joseph G. Dooly, Linden FD
Tim Coyle, South Bound Brook FO	Chad DiGiorgio, Hanover FD
Mahmod Suleiman, Passaic FD	Kevin McCarthy, Clifton FD
Charles Sugg, Princeton	Lawrence Lukenda, Winfield FO
Lew Ostrander, North Wildwood	Brett Goldman, DMGS
Joe Frain, Union FD	John Stephan, Rahway FD
Michael Roberts, Rahway FD	Joseph Zauardin, Northvale Fire
Keith Repace, Woodbridge	Timothy Sharpley, Hamilton Fire
Redolphus Davis, Plainfield	Anthony Pineda, Plainfield
David Lelinko, Belleville Fire	Paul Sandrock Jr, Camden Co. Fire Marshal
Stephen Williams, Chatham Borough	Heston Anderson, South Orange

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman John Wisniewski called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM. Chairman Wisniewski led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence, and pointed out the fire exits.

**B. Approval of Minutes**

With no discussion requested or additional corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of September 14, 2017 were approved.

**C. Correspondence**

Chairman Wisniewski took a moment to welcome Commissioner Raymond Heck, newly appointed member of the NJ Fire Safety Commission. Chairman Wisniewski also thanked the New Jersey Fire Prevention & Protection Association, and their President Rich Silvia, for providing the room and refreshments for today's meeting.

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 items, 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. David Kurasz from the New Jersey Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board took this opportunity to present Assemblyman Wisniewski with a plaque in recognition of all his service and dedication to the fire service and fire safety in the State of New Jersey, as well as his strong support for fire and life safety through his work in advocating for residential fire sprinklers. Chairman Wisniewski thanked Mr. Kurasz and the board for the honor. Mr. Kurasz also spoke on behalf of the NJ Fire Sprinkler Coalition in support of the current bill that would expand the ranks of the Fire Safety Commission by adding four seats to be filled by members of the public.

Charles Walker from TNT Fireworks thanked the Codes Council and the NJDFS staff for working with them on the regulations stemming from this past summer's legalization of fireworks in the State of New Jersey. Chairman Wisniewski thanked Mr. Walker for their assistance in the process.

With no additional 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 Louis Kilmer began his report by speaking about the Division of Fire Safety's success in reorganizing their Office of Fire Department Preparedness. With the support of DCA Commissioner Richman, this unit – which had been down a number of staffers – has been approved to add a supervisor and two additional personnel. Once those positions are filled, the unit will be back up to its previous staffing level. Also, the NJDFS has been approved to move forward with assembling a Compliance Unit that will cover a number of different areas.

The Division of Fire Safety is continuing to be a part of the deployment in response to the two hurricanes that hit Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. The NJDFS's Timothy Weiss, specially, had spent a few weeks as Safety Officer for the group that was sent down – providing daily briefings to the first responders there.

Chief Kilmer spoke about the problem of Volunteer Recruitment & Retention, and he has taken steps to address this issue by assigning Jerry Clark to assemble an online toolkit to aid local departments in their recruitment and retention efforts. This will be the first stage of what will hopefully be many future initiatives to bolster the volunteer ranks statewide. The Division of Fire Safety has also begun the process of replacing the arson dogs, who are approaching retirement age, and are working with the DCA administration on this.

At the previous meeting, Chief Kilmer was asked to look at a prior survey of high rise buildings throughout New Jersey and whether they were fully-suppressed, partially suppressed, or not suppressed at all. The NJDFS staff has worked on updating this survey to obtain a current picture of what is going on in the high rises throughout the State. Chairman Wisniewski asked if Chief Kilmer could provide the survey to the Commission members electronically – Chief Kilmer agreed to do so through Commission Secretary Charles Lavin.

Chief Kilmer reported that the Life Hazard Use fee increase has been fully implemented. Bills including this newly increased (by 29%) rate were first sent out on September 2<sup>nd</sup> and the returns will continue to be split with the local agencies at the same 65%/35% rate. Also, the high-level alarm, contractor certification, and residential disability emblems were all readopted without changes. The comment period ended Fire Service Incident Management System and there were only positive comments; the only significant change here being to the timekeeping in regards to a given incident (clock now starts when the call is received, not when the fire department arrives). The solar signage proposal comment period also ended on October 6<sup>th</sup>, and that proposal is on the Governor's desk as well. Also, the Local Enforcement section of the Fire Code was also modified to include electronic record-keeping and the delivery of notices electronically (as an alternative to certified mail).

On October 20<sup>th</sup> the comment period ended on approximately 60 new voluntary certifications of all kinds related to fire service training. This will allow the NJDFS to grant ProBoard and IFSAC certifications once the regulations are promulgated. There were several comments received on the fire investigator portion, but the NJDFS is not doing away with other certifications – these are strictly voluntary. Also, this coming Friday (November 17<sup>th</sup>) ends the comment period on the adoption of the 2015 Fire Code. There have been numerous comments received to date and the Division of Fire Safety has dedicated a lot of time and energy on getting this adoption process completed. Chief Kilmer urged the fire service to comment and get behind this proposal. Chief Kilmer thanked the fire service organizations and individuals who have voiced support already.

Chief Kilmer reported that individual counties have been contacted by NJDFS for appointments as County Fire Coordinators. Responses are now coming back for the positions, which are two-year terms that will start in January 2018. Also, the NJDFS has continued its homeland security initiatives and has been concentrating on preparedness for threats related to the holidays and holiday events. Chief Kilmer also announced the addition of Vince Campagna to the NFIRS Unit; he will be covering the northern part of the state. The “Fire in New Jersey 2016” report is now being reviewed by the Department of Community Affairs and will hopefully be published shortly.

Chief Kilmer reported that the Youth Firesetter Conference and New Jersey Fire Safety Summit are both coming up at the end of the month. The Summit will take place on November 29<sup>th</sup> and the Conference will be November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>. The Community Risk Reduction Unit has also published and distributed the 2018 New Jersey

Fire Safety Calendars, which are put together using the artwork from the statewide Poster Contest. Also, the NJDFS had been scheduled to partner with the American Red Cross on a smoke alarm initiative during Fire Prevention Week, but this has been pushed back to the spring due to their response to the various hurricanes this summer.

Chief Kilmer spoke about the additional funds that have been earmarked for training related to the new Code in 2018. The NJDFS will offer plenty of opportunities to get up to speed on the Code by way of training seminars. NJDFS personnel has been working with Kean University on putting this together.

The Division of Fire Safety has continued to be successful in filling its vacant positions, thanks in large part to the support of DCA Commissioner Richman. This includes inspector positions, the Office of Fire Department Preparedness, and per diem inspectors to allow for the Division to complete 100% of smoke alarm inspections in their towns. Chief Kilmer has also ordered the purchase of new radios for all emergency communications for County Coordinators and Deputy County Coordinators. These radios will be moved to the new frequency, and County Coordinators will also have the option of putting their own radios on this frequency.

Chief Kilmer also spoke about dedicating NJDFS to specifically to the collection of hold mail, bills and outstanding invoices. Through their hard work they have collection around \$750,000 just this fiscal year. Also, the RIMS system is currently stable and operating and there are no major changes or updates going on at this time. The NJDFS Inspections Unit has completed well over 2,000 inspections for 2017 – up from last year – a lot of these being non-LHU buildings in the towns where the Division is the LEA.

The Firefighter Health and Safety Coalition has been busy in recent months and is concentrating on redefining their mission of working towards better safety, nutrition, fitness, and health for firefighters. They will be meeting in the near future and Chief Kilmer will update the Fire Safety Commission on that. Chief Kilmer also reported that the NJDFS is still working with the state courts system to make sure municipal courts are hearing fire code issues.

Commissioner Richard Blohm asked about the online certifications that will be offered through Kean University. Chief Kilmer said that he would like to see some of the recertification classes online by the spring semester. Commissioner Blohm also asked about the 60 voluntary certifications that the Division of Fire Safety will begin offering. Chief Kilmer said that there is already curriculum available on many of these, and the Training and Education Advisory Council will be taking a close look at them. Commissioner Blohm and Chief Kilmer also discussed the ability for the Division of Fire Safety to accept other equivalent training to be valid for certifications – the timeframe on how far back you would be able to go, or the specific kinds of training, has yet to be determined. Chief Kilmer said it would have to adhere to IFSAC and ProBoard requirements.

Commissioner Stanley Sickels asked about the high-rise sprinkler survey and referenced the varying degrees of “partially suppressed” high rises. Commissioner Sickels asked if this category could be broken down further – for example, “all common areas”, etc. Chief Kilmer answered that he would send out the full spreadsheet to the Fire Safety Commission on all 424 buildings. This contains more specified information but Chief Kilmer noted that in many cases this data was obtained by local fire officials, and that the NJDFS did not go to each of these buildings. In reference to the high-rise survey, Commissioner Lawrence Wood asked if there was any information in regards to the exterior of the buildings. Chief Kilmer said that there was not. Starting in January, the NJDFS will begin looking at the buildings where the information is incomplete. Commissioner Sickels also asked about the new Fire Code adoption and if any of the LHU classifications had been expanded. Chief Kilmer said that this new code does not.

## **F. Advisory Council Reports:**

### **1. Codes Advisory Council**

Commissioner Pat Intindola reported that the Codes Advisory Council met on October 18<sup>th</sup> at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville. The minutes of that meeting are contained in the meeting packets. Commissioner Intindola spoke about the Fire Protection Color Tag System, Subchapter 3, and Hot Work Permits – the committees on those respective areas have reported progress. The Codes Council is also working on by-laws and operating guidelines – these would need the approval of the Fire Safety Commission.

Commissioner Intindola called upon Glenn Corbett to discuss the “Significant Fire Code Analysis Proposal” that he had prepared. Mr. Corbett spoke in detail about the issue of having significant fires in New Jersey and the absence of an in-depth building and fire code analysis to identify deficiencies and suggest preventative measures. Mr. Corbett explained the rationale for establishing a Significant Fire Analysis Program in New Jersey. He used the Deitz & Watson fire as an example of an incident that should be examined more closely beyond just an “origin and cause” investigation. This proposal would establish a group of qualified technical volunteers to look at large-loss fires such as this. Mr. Corbett submitted a detailed proposal for the Fire Safety Commission to review. Commissioner Intindola and Commissioner Sickels expressed their support for this program and a lengthy discussion ensues on its potential benefits for the future of New Jersey’s fire service and citizens alike. Commissioner Gerard Naylis added that it was his belief that the Fire Safety Commission has the authority, by statute, to investigate and examine such fires – independent of other investigations that may be taking place.

Commissioner Intindola made a motion that the Fire Safety Commission endorse the formation of a Significant Fire Analysis Program in New Jersey. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sickels and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Pat Intindola continued his Codes Council report by talking about the newly written and edited Consumer Fireworks Proposal. Commissioner Intindola, as

well as Charles Walker from TNT Fireworks, spoke about the proposal – which covers the definition of “fireworks” within the code, their storage, their retail sale in the State of New Jersey, and the possession/usage of the specific types of devices. The proposal was approved by the Codes Advisory Council. Commissioner Intindola made a motion that the NJ Fire Safety Commission approve the Consumer Fireworks Proposal as written and distributed in the meeting packets. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stanley Sickels and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Gerard Naylis spoke about the need for all inspections conducted under the Uniform Fire Code to be done by a certified fire inspector or official. Commissioner Naylis noted that this motion was made and passed at the Codes Advisory Council and made a motion that the NJ Fire Safety Commission endorse this as well. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Stanley Sickels and passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the Codes Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for December 13<sup>th</sup> at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ.

## **2. Training and Education Advisory Council**

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported that the Training and Education Advisory Council had met on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Dempster Fire Training Center in Lawrenceville, NJ. The minutes of that meeting are contained in the meeting packets.

Commissioner Wood reported that the Division of Fire Safety is working with Port Authority to offer training and certifications. Commissioner Wood also reported that the NJ Army National Guard has contracted with the NJ Division of Fire Safety for training, certification, and accreditation in Hazardous Materials: Awareness and Operations for their CHEM Units.

The next meeting of the Training and Education Advisory Council is scheduled for Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at the Dempster Fire Training Center in Lawrenceville, NJ at 10:00 AM.

## **3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council**

Commissioner Gerard Naylis echoed Chief Kilmer’s report in regards to the forthcoming “Fire in New Jersey 2016” statistics report, as well his optimism for the addition of a new NJDFS NFIRS representative in the northern part of the state. Commissioner Naylis also encouraged all fire departments not to wait to submit their NFIRS data, and to do so for 2017 as soon as possible.

## **4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council**

No report.

## 5. **Public Education Advisory Council**

Commissioner Daniel DeTrolgio reported that there had been no official meeting in November, and referred to Charles Lavin to report on the current public education programs that are upcoming for the NJ Division of Fire Safety.

Mr. Lavin reported that the “New Jersey Safety Summit” has far exceeded expectations as far as level of interest and registrations. All 100 seats for the November 29<sup>th</sup> event have been filled. The Summit will feature fire safety educators from across the country presenting on topics ranging from Smoke/CO Alarms, Fire Prevention Strategies, Using Fire Data, etc., etc. It will be a 5-hour seminar (with an hour-long dinner in the middle) on November 29, 2017 (3pm-8pm). It will be taking place at the Raritan Center Sheraton in Edison, NJ.

## 6. **Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council**

Commissioner Richard Blohm reported that the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council has been given permission by the Department of Health to revise their “pink book”, which a subcommittee will be taking a closer look at. Commissioner Blohm explained that the book is basically a guide that addresses the challenges in dealing with firefighter injuries and health issues.

## 7. **Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council**

Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary reported that the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council met on November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Monmouth County Fire Academy in Freehold.

Commissioner O’Leary reported that there were 26 students registered for the Youth Firesetter Program Specialist course scheduled for November 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at the Monmouth County Fire Academy in Freehold. It will be taught by Helge Nordtveit and Joe Ehrhardt. Commissioner O’Leary also mentioned that Mr. Nordtveit and Mr. Ehrhardt would be coordinating with Charles Lavin on the possibility of offering the YFP&I Manager class once again in Spring 2018.

Commissioner O’Leary reported that registration for the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual New Jersey Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference is in full swing and running ahead of schedule. With many groups coming from out of state (Connecticut, Maryland, Pennsylvania, etc.), Mr. Lavin said he was hopeful that they will be able to exceed the total attendees from last year and continue to grow. The Conference program and registration form is available at [www.keanfiresafety.com](http://www.keanfiresafety.com) under the Community Risk Reduction banner. Registration will remain open until November 17<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner O’Leary also reported that the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council had engaged in a very robust and serious discussion about the ramifications of the newly passed fireworks legislation. They spoke about how it will continue to have an extremely negative effect on fire and life safety in the state, not to mention a headache on



the local level on enforcing its limitations. Commissioner O’Leary asked that the Fire Safety Commission continue to discuss their regulations and safety considerations – especially as they pertain to youths.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for January 11<sup>th</sup> at the Monmouth County Fire Academy in Freehold at 10AM.

## **G. Committee Reports**

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

Commissioner Gerard Naylis stated that, unfortunately, he has nothing to report in the area of Residential Sprinklers at this time.

## **H. Old Business**

Commissioner Stanley Sickels inquired about the issue that was raised at the September meeting concerning Class F rooming houses. Commissioner Sickels had asked if local fire officials would have jurisdiction to inspect these facilities and had been waiting for an answer from the Department of Community Affairs on this matter. Chief Kilmer answered that, as far as he knows, if it is not a one- and two-family owner occupied dwelling the fire code applies. Also, if it is a licensed rooming house it would be considered a Life Hazard Use.

## **I. New Business**

Chairman Wisniewski announced that, in order to highlight the risks associated with having live Christmas trees in the home, he will be hosting a demonstration to education homeowners about how to protect themselves. It will be held at the Middlesex County Fire Academy on November 28<sup>th</sup> from 10AM – 11AM.

Chairman Wisniewski also called the Fire Safety Commission’s attention to the submitted “Proposed Meeting Schedule – 2018” that was in the meeting packets. The scheduled designated the meeting dates for 2018 as: January 17<sup>th</sup>, March 21<sup>st</sup>, May 16<sup>th</sup>, July 18<sup>th</sup>, September 13<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup>. The first four meetings would be held at Middlesex County Fire Academy and the last two at Wildwood Crest FD and Atlantic City Convention Center respectively. All meetings would commence at 10:00am. Commissioner Gerard Naylis made a motion to adopt the 2018 meeting schedule as is. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard Blohm and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo inquired as to how the Fire Safety Commission – given the current change over in administration and Assemblyman Wisniewski’s term running out – would process as far as Chairman at the January meeting. After some discussion, it was determined that the Commission would see what would happen in January after the dust settles – with the possibility of Vice-Chairman Kevin Krushinski filling in as Chairman until a new vote could be held.

Commissioner Gerard Naylis spoke a major recall of fire extinguishers that have demonstrated a propensity not to operate. These are typically the ones with plastic handles and Commissioner Naylis suggested putting out a notice to all fire departments for firefighters to be on the lookout for these in peoples' homes. Chairman Wisniewski agreed and encouraged everyone to use whatever means available to get the word out. Chief Kilmer added that a notice was sent out to all local enforcing agencies and fire chiefs regarding this recall. He added that they would work with DCA about putting a press release out as well (it had been included in the Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery release previously).

## **J. Public Comment II**

Gary Lewis from the City of Summit spoke about the previous Chairman of the Fire Safety Commission John Kelly, who was a fierce advocate for fire safety and the fire service community in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Lewis thanked Chairman Wisniewski for upholding that legacy and building on it even further. Chairman Wisniewski thanked Mr. Lewis for his kind words.

Lew Ostrander from North Wildwood spoke about the issue of including smoke alarm requirements in the residential sprinkler bill. Mr. Ostrander provided examples from his local jurisdiction where the smoke alarms and the sprinkler system were not synched even though the sprinkler head did its job. Above all, the smoke alarm is what gets the people out of the building and to safety. He also spoke about the insufficiencies of the 13R sprinkler systems and encouraged advocating for the 13s. Mr. Ostrander also announced that he is retiring and thanked all the Commissioners for their hard work and hearing him out at the meetings all these years.

Craig Bierbaum addressed the Fire Safety Commission to encourage them to keep an open mind about moving the fire service forward in the ever-changing world. He suggested trying to foster new and better relationships with a wide range of agencies and looking into new types of trainings, communications, credentialing systems, etc.

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported that New Jersey would be hosting the 2019 Convention of the International Fire Chiefs. He said that he would be looking for some help and support from the Fire Safety Commissioners in the future regarding this event, which is scheduled for May 16<sup>th</sup> thru 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

## **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 11:56 am.

---

**\* The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be on Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at 10am. It will be held at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ \***