

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

**Meeting of November 20, 2019**

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ.

**Commission Members Present:** Mr. Kevin Krushinski, Chairman  
Sen. Sam Thompson  
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood  
Mr. Charles Siedenbug  
Mr. Raymond Heck  
Mr. Kevin Bellew  
Ms. Kathleen O’Leary  
Mr. Gerard Naylis  
Mr. Steve O’Gorman  
Mr. Fred Collender  
Mr. Arthur Hayducka  
Mr. Arthur Londensky  
Mr. Armando Roman  
Mr. Daniel DeTrolio

**Commission Members Excused:** Mr. Pasquale Intindola, Vice-Chairman  
Asm. Anthony Bucco  
Mr. Richard Blohm

**DCA Staff Members Present:** Richard Mikutsky, Director, NJDFS  
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS  
Rick Farletta, NJDFS  
Charles Lavin, NJDFS  
Frank Clark, NJDFS  
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

**Guests:** Ronald McGowan Jr, Wildwood Crest Fire  
Bob Gregory, Princeton  
Daniel Dunn, Wildwood FD  
Paul McGrath, City Fire  
Nick Lombardi, Piscataway Twp.  
Keith Repace, Woodbridge FD  
Rich Vigliotti, NJFPPA  
Robert Ordway, NJSFA  
Patrick Kenny, Woodbridge FD  
Dean Manente, Avenel Fire Dept.

Peggy Brookes, Princeton  
Vincent Corsaro, Jefferson Twp.  
William Rose, BCFC #1  
Brian Wahler Jr., Piscataway  
Craig Bierbaum, Toms River FD2  
Rich Heimbach, Master Planning  
Richard Hughes, N. Arlington FD  
Cory Spillar, Avenel Fire Prev.

William Smith, Fairfield Fire Prev.	Robert Schmitt, Parsippany Fire Prev.
Rick Neale, Verona Fire Prev.	Joseph Zavarino, Northvale Fire Prev.
Joseph Frain, Union FD	Steve Spurr, Union FD
Tim Coyle, So. Bound Brook FD	Patrick Shimacca, Franklin Fire Dist 1
Ed Wergryn, NJ Farm Board	Joshua Carter, North Wildwood Fire
Lewis Ostrander, Wildwood	Dominick McClain, North Wildwood Fire
Ronald Harwood, Wildwood Crest	Conrad Johnson, Cape May County
Mark Allen, Wildwood FD	Daniel Spiegel, Wildwood FD
Paul Short Sr., Avalon FD	Alden B. Blackwell, Tenaflly FD
Michael Hagan, Gloucester City FD	Patrick Hagan, Gloucester City FD
Nelson West, NJ Career Fire Chiefs	Alexander Coulter, NJ Career Fire Chiefs
Michael Rau, Midland Park FD	John M. Colucci, NJ Career Fire Chiefs
Alfred J. Cirelli, Hackensack Fire	Michael Christensen, Hackensack Fire
Glenn Werner, Twp. Of Hamilton	Shaun Dannenfelser, Gloucester City FD
Robert Echavaria, Millburn FD	David Krueger, NJFMBA – Hamilton
Jennifer Krushinski	Nicholas Buroczi, NJFMBA - Hamilton
Deron Smith, City of Pleasantville	Eugene Wellington Jr., Pleasantville FD
Michael Famularo, Atlantic City FD	Robert Kinz, Borough of Glassboro
Robert Chace, Borough of Leonia	David A. Haenelt, Leonia Fire Prev.
Frederick Roll, High Bridge	Brian Taylor, Teaneck Fire
Anthony Cirelli, Morristown Fire	Wayne Wolk, Trenton Fire
James O’Connell, Waldwick FD	Paul Cafone, Nutley Fire
Anthony Santoro, Nutley Fire	John Hund, NJFMBA
Brian McDade, Bloomfield FD	Daniel Beirne, Elizabeth FD
Louis Venezia, Bloomfield FD	Rod Bowman, Red Cross
Matthew Teter, Red Cross	Rosie Taranella, Red Cross
Carmella Ditmars, Red Cross NJ	Tommy Ditmars, Red Cross NJ
Kenneth Schulz, Wood-Ridge FD	Paul Dansbach, Rutherford Fire Safety
Mark Sylvester, Bernards Twp.	Michael Pellek, Roxbury Twp.
Bryant Curry, Mt. Laurel Twp.	Kevin Esposito, Toms River Fire
Frederick Fritz, Long Branch Fire	Heidi Michel, Stafford Twp.
Chris Freeman, Stafford Twp.	Cary Costa, Tinton Falls
Robert Lewis, Howell Twp.	Dane Policastro, Ho-Ho-Kus
Scott Oatman, Logan Twp.	Ron Snyder, West Deptford
Cliff Schlosser, Rahway FD	Gerald Walls, Garfield

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman Kevin Krushinski called the meeting to order at 10:09 AM. He 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 meetings of July 17, 2019 and September were approved.

### **C. Correspondence**

Chairman Krushinski 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 submitted, the meeting was moved to Public Comment I.

### **D. Public Comment I**

Chairman Krushinski opened the meeting up to any members of the public wishing to comment before the Fire Safety Commission.

David Kurasz from the NJ Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board spoke about the ongoing statewide survey of educational facilities that are/aren't equipped with fire sprinkler systems. Bureau Chief Lou Kilmer answered that a questionnaire went out to all schools (public and private) and they are awaiting the returns on that. Mr. Kurasz also spoke about third-party inspections being done in certain municipalities, which seems to be coming. NJDFS Director Rich Mikutsky said that this issue is certainly on their radar and a meeting will be held soon with the Lt. Governor on this matter.

New Jersey Fire Prevention & Protection Association President Rich Silvia asked the Fire Safety Commission to take a look into water purveyors charging exorbitant surcharges for fire sprinkler systems. This serves as a deterrent to residents, and Commissioner Raymond Heck added that this could be something to bring before the Board of Public Utilities. Mr. Silvia clarified that this would be for water purveyors outside the jurisdiction of the BPU. The legislative members of the Fire Safety Commission had agreed previously to look into this matter.

Chairman Kevin Krushinski thanked NJFPPA President Rich Silvia for his organization's contribution to today's meeting – which included the room and coffee/refreshments for all attendees.

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

### **E. Division of Fire Safety Activities**

Director Richard Mikutsky began his report by talking about the merger of South Orange and Maplewood Fire Departments, as the NJDFS has been involved in all aspects of this. It is set to become official on January 1, 2020. The NJDFS also continues to be heavily involved in the staffing of the Atlantic City Fire Department as far as hiring and promotions. This is an ongoing process heading into the new year. Director Mikutsky also gave an update on the Junior Firefighter Training legislation, which Chief Kilmer has been heavily involved with. Chief Mikutsky described the bill as being great for the fire service and is hopeful it will move forward.

Chief Mikutsky spoke about the Fire/EMS Crisis Intervention Hotline. Legislation is now out there that would mandate this (the Attorney General's Office has already implemented it for police), and it would be a great step forward for the health and well-being of New Jersey's firefighters and emergency responders.

Chief Mikutsky reported that the NJDFS is in the process of backfilling positions. It is a slow process, but work continues on getting the ranks of the NJDFS brought up to necessary levels. Chief Kilmer added that with the hard work and support of Chief Mikutsky and the DCA administration, there are approvals in place to fill practically every position possible. Chief Mikutsky also spoke about last month's Fire Prevention Week, as the NJDFS was involved in numerous events and programs statewide. The NJDFS also put out numerous media releases to promote fire safety education throughout the month and entire fall season. In addition, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fire Safety Summit and New Jersey Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference are coming up from December 4-6. Registration for both events will be closing/reaching capacity by the end of this week.

The NJ Division of Fire Safety is working with the Department of Environmental Protection in the wake of the firefighting foam survey that was distributed statewide. They will be working with fire departments to dispose of any non-usable foam in January 2020. Chief Mikutsky also spoke about a recent conference he attended that was put on by the first responders from the Parkland shooting in Florida. He described it as a very candid look at what went right and wrong during the response, and there is a lot to be learned about how to prepare for and handle these types of events going forward.

Chief Mikutsky also spoke about the AFNATAL Resiliency Training that is going to be implemented into Firefighter I recruit training starting next year in the Spring. This will also be presented as part of the Mid-Atlantic Fire Safety Summit. Chief Mikutsky also followed up on two memos requested by the Fire Safety Commission at the previous meeting (re: detailed NFIRS narratives & updating training records) which were sent out to the fire service statewide.

Bureau Chief Lou Kilmer reported that the NJDFS has been working with the Department of Community Affairs on moving to the 2015 Fire Code. Since the last meeting, approval has been granted and Chief Kilmer stressed the importance of keeping the code up to date going forward. New processes and new hazards are constantly being introduced, so it is important to try and stay ahead of them. Chief Kilmer also reported that, with the end of the year rapidly approaching, NJDFS staff is working with local enforcing agencies on Annual Reports. Chief Kilmer also spoke about the inspections of farm facilities throughout the state, which are ongoing. Overall, all inspections and smoke alarm inspections are scheduled to be finished for 2019 on time.

Chief Kilmer reported that NJDFS staff has been heavily involved in the opening process of the American Dream facility at the Meadowlands. He also followed up on an issue raised at the last meeting regarding fire hydrant connections, which they are working on

resolving. Chief Kilmer added that the Compliance Unit is continuing to work hard and collecting large amounts of outstanding fees.

Chief Mikutsky gave an update on the Arson Investigation Unit, which is now comprised of four K-9 teams – two of the dogs recently completed training. These additions are a very welcome addition as this unit had been spread particularly thin in recent years.

With no further questions asked in regard to Division of Fire Safety Activities, the meeting was moved to Advisory Council reports.

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

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

In the absence of Vice-Chairman Pat Intindola, Commissioner Arthur Londensky gave a report on the activities of the Codes Advisory Council. A meeting was held in October, but the minutes have not yet been submitted to the Commission Secretary for distribution. It will be distributed following the meeting.

Commissioner Londensky reported that the Council continues to review Subchapter 3 and Subchapter 4. They have also continued to discuss the need for close examinations of large-loss fires from a code perspective. Whether it comes from the NJ Division of Fire Safety, the Codes Council, or another committee – this would be tremendously beneficial in the aftermath of major incidents in trying to prevent them happening again.

Commissioner Gerard Naylis asked whether there was any interest or desire on the part of the State in doing investigations of large-loss fires. Chief Kilmer answered that it is not a matter of not having interest in it, but there are some difficulties in having outside investigation work done (liability issues, insurance issues, etc.) This was expressed at a meeting of interested parties roughly six months ago, and it was determined to try and put some kind of ‘best practices’ together once the official investigation and report runs its course. Commissioner Naylis reiterated that this is something the Fire Safety Commission should be involved with, to be able to take this information back to the state’s fire service at large. A discussion ensued on how that could be done.

The next meeting of the Codes Advisory Council is scheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup> at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville.

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

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported that the Training and Education Advisory Council met on October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville. The minutes of that meeting were included in the Commission meeting packets for review.

Commissioner Wood began his report by thanking Chief Mikutsky and Chief Kilmer for following up on the issues raised at the prior meeting in the form of memos from the

NJDFS. Commissioner Wood gave an update on the Firefighter 1/Hazardous Materials program, and the new contracts on those should be in place by December. This would mean a switch in February/March. The Office of Training and Certification is also starting to work on a spreadsheet for certifying old course completion certificates to new Standards.

Commissioner Wood spoke about the Division of Fire Safety looking at taking existing programs and converting them to online programs. There is progress on having some of Target Solutions programs made available for CEU credit. Commissioner Wood also expressed encouragement at the movement of the Junior Firefighter legislation and spoke about the development of a strategic planning committee for Training and Education.

Commissioner Naylis asked if the Training and Education Advisory Council had discussed the moving of Firefighter I and II training to a primarily online format to reduce the amount of classroom hours. Commissioner Wood reported that the opinions on the Training and Education Advisory Council are very mixed on this, but it would certainly seem logical that certain elements and concept make sense online. Others do not. A discussion was held discussing the pros and cons of this.

The next meeting of the Training and Education Advisory Council is scheduled for December 17<sup>th</sup> at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville.

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

Commissioner Gerard Naylis spoke about the importance of providing more accurate and detailed data when it comes to incident reports from fires. He thanked Chief Mikutsky and the NJDFS for putting out the memo reminding departments of this, and encouraged any and all present to make sure their respective departments are reporting as 2019 comes to a close.

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

Commissioner Raymond Heck spoke about the need for the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council to get meeting minutes from other Advisory Councils, in particular the Training and Education Council. Commissioner Wood answered that Greg Kirkham from the NJDFS handles their minutes and the distribution of them. It was also discussed at a prior meeting to put the meeting minutes on the NJDFS website and email blasting them out.

Commissioner Heck also spoke about the ProBoard certifications and Commissioner Wood commented that these are being worked on for the end of the year/early next year. Kent Neiswender from the NJDFS is working on this.

**5. Public Education Advisory Council**

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo reported that no meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council had been held since the last Commission meeting. He referred to Charles Lavin from the NJDFS to report on any ongoing public education initiatives. Mr. Lavin reiterated Chief Mikutsy's comments from earlier regarding the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fire Safety Summit and the imminent closing of registration for it.

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

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

**7. Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council**

Commissioner Kathleen O'Leary reported that the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council had met informally on November 8<sup>th</sup> at the Monmouth County Fire Academy in Freehold. No Commissioner was present, therefore the meeting was unofficial and no minutes were submitted.

Commissioner O'Leary urged anyone interested to register for the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual New Jersey Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference. Registration is closing on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Commissioner O'Leary spoke about all the great programs being offered over the course of the conference by presenters from around the state and nation.

The next meeting of the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for January 9<sup>th</sup> at the Monmouth County Fire Academy in Freehold.

**G. Committee Reports**

**1. Residential Sprinkler Committee**

Commissioner Gerard Naylis reported that the residential sprinkler legislation seems to be stalled and does not foresee any movement until the next legislative session next year. Senator Sam Thompson asked the Fire Safety Commission to keep him in the loop on this and offered his support when the next legislation session rolls around.

**H. Old Business**

Chairman Krushinski asked if anyone had any Old Business to bring before the Commission. There being none, the meeting was moved to New Business.

**I. New Business**

Chairman Krushinski asked if anyone had any New Business to bring before the Commission. He took this opportunity to welcome newly-appointed Commissioner

Arthur Hayducka from Piscataway Township to the Commission members and welcomed him to the group.

Chairman Krushinski presented the 2020 NJ Fire Safety Commission Meeting Schedule as included in the meeting packets. Commissioner Naylis made a motion to accept the schedule as is. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Heck and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Naylis spoke about the issue of third-party inspections and the problems it could present – namely the increased costs associated with it. Chief Mikutsky stressed that the NJDFS is aware of this oncoming issue and will be examining it closely along with the DCA in the near future.

Commissioner DeTrollo asked about the four new position that have been added to the Fire Safety Commission. Chairman Krushinski said the legislation has passed, but there have yet to be any appointments stemming from it.

## **J. Public Comment II**

Chairman Krushinski once again opened up the meeting to any members of the public wishing to address the Fire Safety Commission. Vincent Corsaro from Jefferson Township Fire Prevention spoke about meetings being held twice a year for the eight northernmost counties and their respective associations. He encouraged all Commissioners to attend if possible and would provide details on those as they are available. Mr. Corsaro also spoke about enhancing the credits that are made available for attending meetings, trainings, and online trainings – as well as enhancing the junior firefighter program. He also asked the Codes Advisory Council to be cognizant of new technologies out there (regarding smoke alarms, CO detectors, etc.) as they are seeing a lot of requests, but they are not included in the code.

Ken Schulz from Bergen County spoke in agreement with Commissioner Naylis's thoughts on having a committee or council to examine large-loss fires in their aftermath. This should not only be from a code perspective, but also to assess what is needed from a firefighting/communication/personnel perspective and how to respond to a given incident.

Lew Ostrander from North Wildwood spoke about hot work permits and the need to be stricter and more vigilant when allowing someone to do these kinds of jobs. Given today's hazards and conditions, it is vital to have anyone working with an open flame have the necessary credentials and knowledge. The fire inspector needs to be involved in the process and certify the person and the equipment.

Michael Whalen from DCA's Codes and Standards spoke about former Commissioner, and NJ Fire Safety Commission founding member, Charles Schilling. Mr. Whalen let the Commissioners know that Mr. Schilling was in poor health and encouraged those he has served on this body with to reach out to him if possible.



## **K. Adjournment**

With no further discussion requested, Chairman Krushinski called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Naylis made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner DeTrollo and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:34 am.

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**\* The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at 10am. It will be held at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ \***