

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

Meeting of January 25, 2017

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ.

Commission Members Present: Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman
Mr. Kevin Krushinski, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Stanley Sickels
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood
Mr. Roger Potts
Mr. Gerard Naylis
Mr. Pasquale Intindola
Mr. Armando Roman
Mr. Kevin Bellew
Mr. Richard Blohm
Mr. Arthur Londensky
Mr. Daniel DeTrolio
Mr. Fred Collender

Commission Members Excused: Assemblyman Anthony Bucco
Ms. Kathleen O’Leary
Mr. John Lightbody

DCA Staff Members Present: Lou Kilmer, NJDFS Acting Director
Rick Farletta, NJDFS
Charles Lavin, NJDFS
Frank Clark, NJDFS
Jerry Clark, NJDFS
Jim McFadden, NJDFS
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards
Mark Ciarlariello, Codes and Standards

Guests: Matt Addeo, NJFSAB
George Borek, PFANJ David Kurasz, NJFSAB
Tony Correia, NFFF/NJFEMSI Charles Tartius, ACFD
Vincent Carleo, ACFD Tom Flanagan, ACFD
Bill DiLorenzo, ACFD Bill Rodgers, ACFD
John Varallo, ACFD Mark Jacoby, ACFD
Brian Adams, ACFD Patrick Shymanski, ACFD
Elwood Faunce III, ACFD Matthew C. Myrtens, ACFD
Tim Gall, PAFD Arielle Bonilla, PAFD

Michael Perez, PAFD	Jack Rush, ACFD
Shannon Stinsman, ACFD	Jeffrey Moran, Woodbridge FD
Elizabeth Sweeney, Union Beach FD	Brian Bonilla, PAFD
Kahlif Thornton, ACFD	Andrew Kyle, ACFD
Mark Maguire, ACFD	Greg Rando, ACFD
Matthew Williams, ACFD	Martin Basso, ACFD
Brian Berrio, ACFD	Albert Mallon, ACFD
William Emmell, ACFD	Tim Kuras, ACFD
Michael Giecyk, ACFD	Jeff Jenkins, ACFD
Robert Wode, ACFD	Andrew McMeekin, ACFD
Kyle Pollock, ACFD	Joseph Welsh, ACFD
Tim Buining, ACFD	Ismail Abdussamad, ACFD
Chris Hemberger, ACFD	Michael Logan, ACFD
Michael Auble, ACFD	Patrick Lynn, ACFD
Brian Wiener, ACFD	Thomas Pacula, ACFD
Adrian Aschmann Jr., ACFD	Tim Costello, Jensen Hughes Inc.
Chad Carrick, Woodbridge Local 290	Joe Eugenio, Woodbridge Local 290
Robert Fizer, Woodbridge Local 290	John Garton, NJDOL/PEOSH
Andrew Doorley, ACFD	Eric Koob, ACFD
Frank Phillips, ACFD	Robert DeMarco, ACFD
Brian Will, ACFD	Christopher Johnson, ACFD
Stephen May, ACFD	Joshua Hoag, ACFD
Joshua Crowley, ACFD	John Slattery, ACFD
Chris Ryan, ACFD	Andrew Lubaczewski, ACFD
David Hizes, Woodbridge Local 290	Michael Balog, Woodbridge Local 290
Mauro Sandoval, ACFD	Patrick McDeritt, ACFD
Casey Roe, ACFD	

A. Call to Order

Chairman John Wisniewski called the meeting to order at 10:04 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 November 16, 2016 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 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.

PFANJ Vice President George Borek and Atlantic City Local President Bill DiLorenzo spoke on behalf of the numerous amount of Atlantic City firefighters present at the meeting. Mr. Borek and Mr. DiLorenzo described a situation that, with the coming State takeover of the City of Atlantic City, the ACFD was looking at extreme cuts that would essentially cut the department in half. They spoke about the potential cuts crippling the department's ability to safely function and provide fire protection and emergency medical services to the residents and visitors of the City of Atlantic City. They asked for the support of the Fire Safety Commission in trying to prevent these cuts from happening, saying the department was already spread too thin and this would make operating safely an impossibility. Due to special circumstances of tourism, geography (being on a barrier island), and mutual aid provided to surrounding towns, Atlantic City in particular can ill-afford to lose this amount of firefighters. It will also put the department below the NFPA standard in terms of manpower.

Chairman Wisniewski spoke about these cuts to the ACFD, which are set to take place as of February 1st, as a life safety issue that could have disastrous consequences. He also brought up the point that many of Atlantic City's firefighters are paid for through federal funds. Commissioner Pat Intindola asked if any fire companies would be closed due to these cuts, and Mr. DiLorenzo said it would most likely be two or three.

Commissioner Richard Blohm spoke out in strong opposition to the cuts to the Atlantic City Fire Department and expressed sympathy to the firefighters involved as he had a similar experience in the past in Hoboken. He described the situation as nothing more than bureaucrats being given marching orders to make cuts, with no considerations to the fire department and the community it is supposed to protect. Commissioner Blohm asked where the audit was that determined these cuts are even feasible. He also cited the seasonal population in Atlantic City and the several high rises (in some cases vacant) that the Atlantic City Fire Department has always had to deal with.

Commissioner Richard Blohm made a motion that a strongly-worded letter be sent on behalf of the Fire Safety Commission to the DCA Commissioner, opposing the proposed cut to the Atlantic City Fire Department and have an audit done so that there is actual data to make these financial decisions upon. Commissioner Stanley Sickels seconded the motion and commented on the extreme importance of manpower in firefighting (a problem statewide). After discussion, it was determined that the letter would be sent to the Governor, Assembly Speaker, and Senate President as well. The motion was voted upon and passed unanimously.

The Fire Safety Commission further discussed the situation in Atlantic City relative to the fire department. Commissioner Gerard Naylis spoke about his own experiences with the ACFD, describing a situation where there are significant fire challenges even in the

areas away from the boardwalk and high rises. Also, there is little to no mutual aid available from surrounding towns and cannot be relied upon to help Atlantic City. Commissioner Naylis said with these cuts to an already whittled-down department, there will only be an illusion of fire protection. He also expressed concern about any government making any such cuts without a complete analysis of the situation. Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo asked if anyone from the State had come into the city to work with the fire department. Mr. DiLorenzo said that, yes, they were given a budget limit to meet and that was done; but this did not prevent the State from making the cuts.

Commissioner Armando Roman brought up the potential bill that would add a \$2 surcharge to Atlantic City hotel rooms to offset the cuts being made to the city, and asked Chairman Wisniewski if it had the potential to be passed. He said it is on the table, but he is unsure if the Governor would sign it. Vice Chairman Kevin Krushinski brought up the fire departments ISO rating, which is what insurance companies use to account for how well-protected the community is from fire. Vice Chairman Krushinski spoke about how this rating will be affected if these cuts are made and cost money in insurance premiums across the board. Commissioner Steve O’Gorman brought to light all the other jobs (EMS, water rescue, etc.) that would be affected negatively by cuts as well.

Jeffrey Moran from the Woodbridge Fire Department spoke about the “real population” of Atlantic City being far beyond the 40,000 residents that live there year-round. When taking into account the amount of people that are in the casinos, sleeping in hotels, at festivals, events, etc., there are a many more people that need to be protected. Tony Correia from the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation spoke about the negative impact of the cuts to Atlantic City Fire Department from a firefighter safety and health standpoint. Having to get more work out of these firefighters will undoubtedly be a detriment to them and their families. ACFD Retired Battalion Chief Paul Schropshire spoke in more detail about all the services the Atlantic City Fire Department provides, including being the only Hazmat Team in Atlantic County. He also pointed out that, when a casino is not operating due to smoke/alarm/etc, the fire department is who gets them back up and running quickly – so the ACFD is able to keep them in business. He described the ACFD as a department that’s done more with less for years, but is now at a point of desperation.

Chairman Wisniewski expressed his support and thanked the members of the Atlantic City Fire Department for coming to today’s meeting with their concerns. A five minute break in the meeting was called before resuming with Division of Fire Safety Activities.

E. Division of Fire Safety Activities

Acting Director Louis Kilmer spoke about the retirement of former NJDFS Acting Director Bill Kramer. Chief Kramer retired in December and Chief Kilmer has been named Acting Director in his place. Chief Kilmer reported that the Division of Fire Safety has gotten the approval from DCA to go forward with the 2015 International Fire Code adoption. This was a job intended for the Code Specialist, but he has since moved on. There is currently a request for proposal on the Department website to have someone

handle the review the Code, and the closing date for that is February 3rd. Chief Kilmer is hopeful that some qualified individuals will apply for that.

Chief Kilmer said there have been some badly-needed technology upgrades done in recently weeks, which has been a huge help in getting staff up with the times. The Division of Fire Safety also continues to work with the RIMS systems, making corrections and adjustments where needed. Chief Kilmer also reported that the smoke detector/CO detector inspections initiative is continuing and is taking place across 92 municipalities.

Chief Kilmer reported that all inspections for 2016 were completed by year's end. There were 17,963 initial inspections completed – and a number of those were part of the non-Life Hazard Use initiative. Additionally, there were 17,331 re-inspections done, 59,569 individual violations issued, and 1,786 special event permits issued. Chief Kilmer recently reassigned four inspectors and one supervisor to work on the ongoing problem of bills not getting delivered, not getting paid, etc. Also, Chief Kilmer has assigned a full-time staff member (Anthony Doyley) to work with Rutgers University on the inspection of their buildings.

Chief Kilmer spoke about the NFIRS Unit being understaffed and enlisting the help of the Local Assistance Unit and Fire Department Preparedness Unit to help get the reporting numbers back up. Also, there is a hard date of February 28th for any data submission for the 2016 Fire in New Jersey report so it can be published in a more timely fashion.

On a daily basis, Chief Kilmer has been working on issues with the Gloucester County and Morris County Neptune Systems. They are working on getting repairs made and the systems located where they need to be. Also, Chief Kilmer recently attended the Operation Save-a-Life Kickoff in New York City – a program that has been hugely successful and seen over 140,000 smoke alarms distributed statewide.

Chief Kilmer reported that the County Coordinators meeting was held last weekend and had a great turnout. Also, New Jersey Weekend has been scheduled at the National Fire Academy on March 18th and 19th. There will be 250 seats available and 9 courses. The Spring Semester brochure will also be available soon – there will be 6,000+ seats will many new courses available, as well as more offerings of the courses that have been the most popular in recent years.

A number of the Division of Fire Safety's regulations expire this September, so staff is in the process of preparing for re-adoption and working with the Commissioner's Office on any changes or adjustments. Also, Chief Kilmer announced the retirements of Jeff Silver (Arson Investigator) and Bob Kozlowski (Principal Inspector) from the NJ Division of Fire Safety as of the end of 2016.

Chief Kilmer gave an update on the CO regulations, which did not see many comments during the comment period – but did have several comments from one individual. Those

comments will be address and then they will be moving forward. Chief Kilmer also commented that DCA Commission Richman has been very supportive in getting vacant positions within the Division of Fire Safety filled, and they are in the process now of filling a handful of them.

Chief Kilmer gave a report on the Health & Safety Coalition, which is working on examining several issues facing firefighters such as mental health, cancer, cardiac health, exercise and nutrition, etc. This group has been meeting and Chief Kilmer encouraged Commission members to get involved in the important work they are doing. Also, Chief Kilmer reported that the Community Risk Reduction has several education programs going throughout the spring – and also encouraged anyone in need of customized printed materials to contact Jerry Clark.

The Homeland Security Conference will be held on June 1st at Kean University and the theme will be “Working Together Against the Future Threats”. The Local Assistance Unit is out working on the Annual Reports, and the Peer Review Board is working on a couple of cases where fire officials have neglected their duties and action needed to be taken.

Chief Kilmer expressed his desire to continue the work done by Chief Kramer and have a close working relationship with the Commission members. He said that any achievements in fire safety are a collaborative effort, and he urged everyone to reach out to him with any issues, concerns, ideas, etc.

Commissioner Richard Blohm asked, in regards to the Deployment Act, about an interpretation that Chief Kramer made on a conference call prior to leaving. Chief Kilmer said that there is pending litigation on this issue, so there is a limit to what he can say publicly about it. Chief Kilmer said that, at this point, there is nothing he has seen to prevent them from moving forward. Rick Farletta and NJDFS staff has been working with the Attorney General’s Office on this issue.

F. Advisory Council Reports:

1. Codes Advisory Council

Commissioner Pat Intindola reported that the Codes Advisory Council had met on December 14, 2016, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville. Commissioner Intindola made a point to thank Chief Kilmer for moving forward with the 2015 International Fire Code, as a lot of work had been done by the Codes Council on this.

Commissioner Intindola noted progress on such topics as Hot Works Permits, Fire Code Analysis, and the Subchapter 4/IFC Chapter 11 Subcommittee. Also, Commissioner Intindola asked if Chief Kilmer had issued a Bulletin in regards to the operator of dark amusement rides. Chief Kilmer said he is still awaiting information from the Codes Council before that can be done.

The Codes Advisory Council provided examples for signage regarding Liquefied Petroleum Gases and there was a robust discussion on the language contained in it. There was a question as to whether the language should read: "...a cylinder indoors **may** be affixed..." or "...a cylinder indoors **shall** be affixed...". Eventually, Commissioner Stanley Sickels made a motion to replace "In lieu of" to "In addition to", and "may" to "shall". Vice-Chairman Kevin Krushinski seconded that motion. Commissioner Naylis expressed opposition to having both the verbiage and pictograph on the sign. A vote was held and the motion passed with 10 in favor and 2 opposed.

Commissioner Intindola also spoke about a presentation at the Codes Council meeting by Dr. Alexi Assmus regarding lightweight construction bills S1632 and A3370. There was a lengthy discussion on the aspects of large loss fires, including Avalon Bay, after her presentation. Ultimately, the Codes Council decided the bills put forward by Chairman Wisniewski to be more complete.

Commissioner Intindola referenced the cuts being made to the Atlantic City Fire Department and said something similar was starting to happen with Codes & Standards. There is a proposal that is out there now that defines ordinary repairs and minor work, and it contains a lot of things that would no longer require permits and could be detrimental to fire and life safety. There was a lengthy discussion on how there are so many things included that should be inspected, and it looks like the proposal will be pushed through. Commissioner Intindola and Commissioner Sickels spoke about the negative effects this will have on the safety of residents, the safety of firefighters, and also the amount of fees that could be collected by a given municipality. Commissioner Arthur Londensky commented that this is something that will not be pushed through, and the Codes Advisory Board of the Uniform Construction Code has met and provided comment.

Commissioner Stanley Sickels made a motion that the Fire Safety Commission approve the Solar Signage proposal that is contained in the meeting packets. Commissioner Intindola seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the Codes Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for February 15, 2017, 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 had met on December 20, 2016, at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville. The minutes of that meeting are contained in the meeting packets.

Commissioner Wood spoke about some of the training regulations may be able to be changed with the adoption of the 2015 Code, and the Council is working on that. The Council is also working on the issue of fire station security, as well as the issue of recruit training and having some sort of physical requirements. Commissioner Richard Blohm

commented that this is something the Firefighter Safety and Health has examined in the past, and ultimately it was determined that the employer shall decide whether or not the employee is fit for duty. There was a time that a “Physical Agility Test” was looked into, but there were a number of issues with this as well. Commissioner Blohm said it should not be up to the academies to decide whether or not a firefighter is fit for service, but the individual department should make that call. Commissioner Wood said this would only be for recruits coming in, not existing firefighters, because firefighting recruits are coming to the academy without a minimum baseline of fitness. Commissioner Naylis said the fire department should deter this during an initial evaluation and PEOSH is good with it, but the problem is that many departments do not do this.

Commissioner Wood referred to Anthony Correia as a member of the committee that is examining this issue for the Training and Education Advisory Council. Mr. Correia said once there was another meeting scheduled, he would be able to provide a report to the Fire Safety Commission on this issue. Mr. Correia also expressed that he had been unable to get representation from the volunteer fire service, and asked for assistance in getting them involved as their input is vital to their mission.

The next meeting of the Training and Education Advisory Council is scheduled for February 21st at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville.

3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council

Commissioner Gerard Naylis encouraged all fire departments to get their 2016 NFIRS data submitted by February 28th, so that it can be included in the “Fire in New Jersey” report that will be put together shortly after. Also, the Statistics and Information Advisory Council has been working on some sample narratives to make it easier for fire service personnel to provide more accurate, complete, and concise reports.

4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council

In the absence of Commissioner John Lightbody, no report was given.

5. Public Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo reported that no meeting was held in January and Chief Kilmer had covered the Operation Save a Life program under his report.

The next meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council is scheduled for March 8, 2017 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville.

6. Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council

Commissioner Richard Blohm made a motion that Gregory A. Laskowski and Michael De Giglio be appointed to the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council, as their resumes had been distributed electronically to all Commission members prior to the

meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stanley Sickels and passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory will be held today, January 25th, at the Atlantic City Convention Center at 1:30 pm.

7. Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council

Vice-Chairman Kevin Krushinski reported that the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council met on January 12th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. The minutes of that meeting are contained in the meeting packets.

Vice-Chairman Krushinski reported that since a Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention Specialist had been offered back in October, they would be looking into the possibility of providing a Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention Manager course as a follow-up in Spring 2017. Also, the 14th Annual NJ Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference was successfully held back in December and planning has already begun on the 15th Annual – which is scheduled for November 30-December 1, 2017. If anyone has any suggestions or input on the Conference, please pass that along to Charles Lavin at the NJDFS. Vice-Chairman Krushinski also spoke about the possibility of Human Trafficking training being offered as part of the next Conference.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for March 2, 2017 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy at 10 AM.

G. Committee Reports

1. Residential Sprinkler Committee

Commissioner Gerard Naylis commented that there was no report to be given at this time.

H. Old Business

With no Old Business to discuss, the meeting was moved to New Business.

I. New Business

With no New Business to discuss, the meeting was moved to Public Comment II.

J. Public Comment II

On behalf of the NJ Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board and Sprinkler Fitters Local 696, David Kurasz thanked Chairman Wisniewski for putting together the side-by-side burn back in December – and well as for the new bills on residential sprinklers.

Michael Whalen from Codes & Standards said that the current wording from the Liquefied Petroleum Gases proposal would require either/or labels and – if the

recommendations today from the Fire Safety Commission today were adopted – it would change to requiring both.

Commissioner Gerard Naylis asked about the logs of regulatory actions which had been done in the past for the Codes Council and Training and Education Council. Commissioner Naylis suggested distributing that so that the items can be reviewed before September. Chief Kilmer said they could put those lists together and provide reports to the Commission going forward, it just may take a meeting or two to get a master list fine-tuned.

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 11:51 am.

*** The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be on Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at 10am. It will be held at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ ***