

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

Meeting of May 18, 2016

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ.

Commission Members Present: Mr. Kevin Krushinski, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Stanley Sickels
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood
Mr. Roger Potts
Mr. Arthur Londensky
Mr. Daniel DeTrollo
Mr. Gerard Naylis
Mr. Kevin Bellew
Mr. Richard Blohm
Mr. Pasquale Intindola
Ms. Kathleen O’Leary
Mr. Armando Roman
Mr. Steve O’Gorman
Mr. Fred Collender

Commission Members Excused: Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman
Assemblyman Anthony Bucco
Mr. John Lightbody

DCA Staff Members Present: William Kramer, NJDFS Acting Director
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS
Rick Farletta, NJDFS
Charles Lavin, NJDFS
Michael Scardino, NJDFS
Chris Michallis, NJDFS
Jerry Clark, NJDFS
Frank Clark, NJDFS
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

Guests: Ronald McGowan Jr., Wildwood Crest Fire Co.
John Garton, NJLWD/PEOSH Rich Silvia, NJSFPPA President
Alden B. Blackwell, Tenafly FD Alexi Assmus
Mike Masta, Bergen County Fire Academy

A. Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Kevin Krushinski called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. Vice-Chairman Krushinski 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 necessary corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of March 16, 2016 were approved.

C. Correspondence

Vice-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, the meeting was moved to Public Comment I.

D. Public Comment I

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

Alexi Assmus spoke on behalf of citizens who are working on the issue of lightweight construction in large-scale housing units. There are now new Senate and Assembly Bills that they are supporting that includes many of the requirements that Assemblyman Wisniewski's bill had. This includes NFPA 13 sprinkler systems and recognizing a pedestal as a story. Alexi and her group are starting a letter writing campaign to support these bills, as well as lobbying legislators and starting Facebook and Twitter accounts. The numbers on the bills are S1632 and A3770.

Mike Masta from the Bergen County Fire Academy expressed concern regarding the Kean University website that is used for course registration, as well as the use of the Jones & Bartlett textbooks for Firefighter training classes. He explained the support from Jones & Bartlett as being almost non-existent and said this has been brought up several times at EO meetings. Commissioner Richard Blohm agreed on these issues and said they are seeing problems on almost a weekly basis. Chief Bill Kramer responded that he has not heard of these problems with any other EO, but will have Division of Fire Safety staff work with Bergen County Fire Academy staff and Jones & Bartlett staff to try and sort things out. Commissioner Stanley Sickels added that Monmouth County Fire Academy has been having problems with Jones & Bartlett as well, mostly concerning the graphics (in the Firefighter I program) being difficult to use. Commissioner Wood expressed surprise that no issues of this magnitude have been brought up at any past meeting of the Training and Education Advisory Council, but would take it up with the members at the next meeting.

E. Division of Fire Safety Activities

Acting Director William Kramer began his report by talking about some upcoming events at the end of this month. On May 25th there will be the 1st Annual Firefighter Health and Safety Summit to examine several issues facing firefighters today. There are many organizations and agencies who have been invited to participate from throughout New Jersey and beyond. The meeting is invite-only, but any Commission members who would like to attend are welcome. The very next day, May 26th, the NJDFS will be hosting a meeting of the New Jersey Fire Prevention & Protection Association County Presidents at Middlesex County Fire Academy.

On June 2nd, the NJ Division of Fire Safety will be hosting its annual Homeland Security Conference at Kean University. The main topic of conversation will be intelligence sharing, and the fire service's role in that process. Anyone can register for the conference using www.keanfiresafety.com

New Jersey Weekend was held at the beginning of April down at the National Fire Academy in Emmetsburg, Maryland. The maximum number of participants from New Jersey was reached and experienced a successful weekend, which included a memorial ceremony that has become a yearly tradition. A weekend and courses have been selected for 2017 and that information will be distributed as soon as possible.

Chief Kramer spoke about an issue with the Annual Reports that local enforcing agencies submit electronically. When an LEA is unable to inspect all Life Hazard Uses, they must provide a reason as to why it couldn't get done. When those reasons are not acceptable, rebate monies are deducted until the difference from those fees are made up. From the 2015 Annual Reports, there was a little more than \$660,000 in forfeited funds. Chief Lou Kilmer has instituted a 5-year monitoring program for every LEA and what the DFS is finding is disturbing in that inspections are not being done. The DFS is working with the DCA Commissioner on this widespread problem, and seeing what can be done to avoid the DFS taking over jurisdiction in these municipalities. Chief Kramer described the problem as being in both the suburbs and cities, and is just a matter of fire officials not doing what they're supposed to do.

Chief Lou Kilmer began his report by talking about Code Enforcements involvement in the political campaign events as New Jersey's June primary date approaches. Also, Chief Kilmer said the Annual Reports process – and it being done via RIMS – went particularly well and saw marked improvement over last year. As a whole, the RIMS system is continuing to be developed and enhanced. The Division of Fire Safety will soon be rolling out a new way of doing the Annual Reports, and several fire officials will be brought in next month to help test it out.

Chief Kilmer spoke about the Division's continuing program to inspect non-Life Hazard use buildings every five years in each of its municipalities – which is going well and has seen generally good cooperation from businesses. The goal here is primarily to make sure the retrofit is enforced. Commissioner Sickels added that another benefit here is to

see if the non-Life Hazard Use has become a Life Hazard Use. Chief Kilmer agreed that this is absolutely the case where changes have been made. Commissioner Londensky added that there needs to be more emphasis placed on inspecting everything, because people might not give non-Life Hazard Uses the proper attention because of its classification. Also, the Division of Fire Safety has gotten approval to hire someone to start up a Compliance Unit. Interviews have been conducted and someone will be offered the position shortly.

Vice-Chairman Kevin Krushinski asked if there were any hard numbers as to how many inspectors are needed for a certain amount of LHUs, etc. Chief Kramer said he could give the numbers of what the Division of Fire Safety staff can do, but that doesn't necessarily reflect the types of inspections needing to be done in each municipality.

Commissioner Gerard Naylis spoke about a plant in Passaic that has been fined by OSHA for an issue with blocked and obstructed exits in the workplace. Apparently this is the second violation of this kind within the past five years, and Commissioner Naylis wanted to know if there was anything could be done to address this – and if there was any cooperation on this between OSHA and the NJDFS. Chief Kramer said there has been cooperation with OSHA on this matter, but there is no formal mechanism in place for them to notify the NJDFS. Commissioner Naylis suggested that mandating this notification in the future so that a follow-up inspection could be carried out and make sure these types of violations are not recurring.

F. Advisory Council Reports:

1. Codes Advisory Council

Commissioner Pat Intindola gave the Codes Advisory Council report. The Council met on April 20, 2016 and the minutes of that meeting are contained in the Commission packets.

A major topic of conversation was the signage for buildings equipped with solar panels. Commissioner Sickels summarized by saying that the Codes Council took into account the specific legislation and the recommendations of Commissioner Blohm and the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council. Commissioner Sickels went over the document outlining the emblem in detail, which is a Maltese cross that identifies the presence of solar systems. Commissioner Blohm responded that there was no verbal communication between himself and the Codes Advisory Council leading up to today's meeting regarding this signage in its current form. While he can speak for himself, he cannot speak for the Health and Safety Council on the symbol in its current form.

Commissioner Pat Intindola made a motion that the solar signage be adopted in its current form and as distributed today by the Codes Advisory Council. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sickels and passed unanimous.

Commissioner Intindola also spoke about the slow progress of the Codes Council Log of Outstanding Proposals. He added that some of these items would actually be cleaned up with the adoption of the 2015 International Fire Code. While the Codes Council has been slow to produce proposed amendments to the IFC, Chief Kilmer requested that Michael Scardino assist Bob Davidson in putting a list of code changes together quickly.

Commissioner Intindola reported that the Codes Council is still awaiting language on the Fire Protection Color Tag System. Also, the Codes Council is still in the process of streamlining their roster to figure out who, of the membership, would still like to remain active. On this note, the Commissioner Intindola drafted By-Laws specific to the Codes Council and distributed them for review.

The Codes Council also held discussions on Assembly Bill 2251 that would require a builder to provide buyers of new homes with the projected cost of installing a fire sprinkler system. Also, Michael Whalen from DCA's Codes & Standards gave a brief update on the International Code Council's hearings that are currently ongoing.

Commissioner Sickels distributed photographs from a recent fire in a lightweight wood truss building and described the situation. The fire occurred because of an illegal splice from a subfeeder to the fourth-floor apartment panel that ran through the truss space – which was also purposely concealed. The fire was actually put out from a rupture in the sprinkler pipe, otherwise the building could have been a total loss.

The next meeting of the Codes Advisory Council is scheduled for June 15, 2016.

2. Training and Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported that the meeting of the Training and Education Advisory Council did not have a quorum at its last meeting, as it needed to be moved because of the FDIC Conference. Commissioner Wood reported progress.

3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council

Commissioner Gerard Naylis reported that the Division of Fire Safety's NFIRS Unit is continuing to put together the data and information for Fire in New Jersey 2015 report.

Commissioner Naylis also spoke about the growing threat of cancer in firefighters, as many departments are seeing more and more diagnoses each year. He said the time has come to take action on preventative measures for firefighters to take to try and lessen these numbers. These measures include washing turnout gear thoroughly after firefighting, washing hands, sanitizing equipment, etc. He added that St. Barnabas is also taking the initiative in pushing for cancer prevention for firefighters. The cancer epidemic seems to be growing due to the carcinogens in the materials burning nowadays, and we need to work to address it. A discussion followed by several Commission members outlining the reasons and preventative measures for cancer in the fire service. Both Chief Kramer and Commissioner Blohm urged the members of the Fire Safety

Commission to attend the upcoming Health and Safety Summit, where this will be a major topic of conversation.

4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council

In the absence of Commissioner John Lightbody, no report was given. There was no meeting held since the last Fire Safety Commission meeting.

The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council is scheduled for June 6th at the Toms River Fire Academy at 10 AM.

5. Public Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo reported that the Public Education Advisory Council had not met since the last Fire Safety Commission meeting, and referred to Charles Lavin to report on the current public education programs taking place.

Charles Lavin reported that this Friday, May 20th, would be the 11th Annual New Jersey FIRE Bowl State Championship. The two competing teams (Eisenhower School of Freehold and Oresko School of Bayonne) are the champions from 2014 and 2015 respectively. The event will begin at 11AM at the University Center's Little Theater and will be hosted by Tony Caputo of News 12 New Jersey. All Commissioners have been invited and are encouraged to attend.

Charles Lavin also reported that the seven Division Winners of the New Jersey Fire Safety Poster Contest were selected in conjunction with the NJ Fire Prevention & Protection Association during the state judging on May 13th. A list of those winners was distributed in the Commission packets and announced by Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo as follows:

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| Division 1 | Narissa Juliano Larchmont Elementary School Mount Laurel, NJ | (Burlington Co.) |
| Division 2 | Navdeep Bhalla Memorial Elementary School Montvale, NJ | (Bergen Co.) |
| Division 3 **Overall Winner | Katie Macalintal Robert L. Craig School Moonachie, NJ | (Bergen Co.) |
| Division 4 | Noelle Zweidinger Raritan High School Hazlet, NJ | (Monmouth Co.) |
| Division 5 | Katherine Figueroa Essex County Vo-Tech High School West Caldwell, NJ | (Essex Co.) |
| Division 6 | Qahri Abdur-Rahman Chelsea Heights School Atlantic City, NJ | (Atlantic Co.) |

The next meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council is scheduled for September 7th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville.

6. Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council

Commissioner Richard Blohm reported that the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council met on May 12, 2016 and submitted the following report:

The Department of Labor indicated that until they have an opportunity to further review the particulars, it is their recommendation that 5500 PSI self-contained breathing apparatus should not be filled by cascade systems that don't specifically indicate that such is acceptable by the manufacturer of the refill station. John Garton was on hand to elaborate on the specifics of this issue.

The Department of Health has been instructed by Fed OSHA that they must cite for failure to abate violations found by them. Fed OSHA has the capability to audit the State OIS entry system at any time. If they see that there has been an extension beyond the abatement date there may be sanctions for them.

The Council also discussed the materials given to them by the Codes Advisory Council regarding the solar signage. It was their belief that the signage should not be extended beyond the intent of the legislation.

The next meeting of the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council is scheduled for July 13, 2016.

7. Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council

Commissioner Kathleen O'Leary reported that the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council met on May 12, 2016 at the Sayreville Municipal Building. The minutes from that meeting are contained in the Commission packets.

Commissioner O'Leary reported that nearly all of the 5,000 10-year sealed battery smoke alarms received through the Save-a-Life program have been distributed. The few remaining smoke alarms from 2015 are now being held in reserve for an emergency situation. Having recently spoken with a Kidde representative, Charles Lavin said that it is now anticipated that the 2016 supply of smoke alarms will be received sometime around June/July. This is a bit later than usual, but distribution will follow the same timeline once the alarms are received. There will again be 5,000 of the 10year sealed battery alarms.

Charles Lavin reported that a Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention 2 course was held on April 28-29 at Middlesex County Fire Academy. There were 22 total participants from various municipalities statewide, including 4 from FDNY. Charles spoke about the possibility of holding a Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention 1 course in September or October.

Commissioner O'Leary reported that the 14th Annual Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference is already booked at Middlesex County Fire Academy for December 1-2, 2016. The Planning Committee will be meeting in early June to discuss all aspects of the Conference.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for September 8, 2016 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy at 10 AM.

G. Committee Reports

1. Residential Sprinkler Committee

Commissioner Naylis said that they are continuing to push for the residential sprinkler bill, which Assemblyman Wisniewski has already re-issued since the last one was conditionally vetoed.

Commissioner Sickels added that he just received an email outlining how to vote for ICC voting members to defend residential sprinklers. Commissioner Sickels forwarded the email to Chief Kramer and Commission Secretary Lavin for further distribution.

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

Alexi Assmus spoke to remark on the International Codes Council meeting that recently took place and she attended on her own dime. She talked about seeing proposals, in response to the Edgewater fire, being rejected by the Multi-Family Housing Council. The proposals that were accepted, she felt, were not of much consequence. Alexi expressed great discouragement in the results of these meetings and the lack of extensive investigations of other similar fires nationwide.

K. Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Krushinski asked if anyone had any additional business they would like to bring before the Commission. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.

*** The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be on Wednesday, July 20, 2016 at 10am. It will be held at the Toms River Fire Academy in Toms River, NJ ***