

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

Meeting of January 18, 2012

The NJ Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, January 18, 2012, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ.

Commission Members Present: Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman
Mr. Pasquale Intindola, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Charles W. Schilling
Ms. Kathleen O'Leary
Mr. Roger Potts
Mr. Kevin Bellew
Mr. Arthur Londensky
Mr. John Lightbody
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood
Mr. Armando Roman
Mr. Daniel DeTrolino
Mr. Gerard Naylis
Mr. Stanley Sickels
Mr. Kevin Krushinski
Mr. Richard Blohm

Commission Members Excused: Senator Anthony Bucco
Mr. Arthur Mercurio
Mr. Paul Hartstein
Mr. Frederick Collender
Mr. Steve O'Gorman

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

Guests:
David Matos Jr., NJ Fire/EMS Inst. Vincent Corsaro, Morris Co. Fire Prevention
Nicholas Kikis, NJ Apartment Assn. Marc Kiempisty, Joshua Marcus Group
Rich Silvia, NJFPPA Ronald McGowan Jr., Wildwood Crest Fire Co.
Rich Heimbach, Master Planning Irwin Kreisburg, NJDOL PEOSH
Daniel P. Mulligan, Ocean Co. FM Christopher Weniger, Somerset Co. Fire Marshals
Kelly Reilly, Asm. Rible's Office Mark Ciarlariello, North Plainfield Fire
Bernie Cohan, NJSFCA William Johnson, Middlesex County Fire Marshals

Donald Scher, Somerset Co. FM
Charles Aughenbaugh, NJDFCA

Doris Flatley, Somerset Co. Fire Academy
Craig Babcock, Rockaway Twp. Fire Prevention

A. Call to Order

Chairman John Wisniewski called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM and began the meeting with the “Pledge of Allegiance” and pointed out the fire exits.

Chairman Wisniewski took a moment to welcome two new Fire Safety Commission members – Stanley Sickels and Kevin Krushinski - and thanked them for serving on this body.

B. Approval of Minutes

With no discussion requested or necessary corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of November 16, 2011 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 correspondence at this time, 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. Charles Aughenbaugh from the New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs Association commented on the appointment of new DCA Commissioner Richard Constable. It is his hope that Commissioner Constable will listen to many of the Fire Safety Commission’s ideas and proposals with an open mind, and urged Assemblyman Wisniewski to work with the new Commissioner on getting him up to speed on the several issues that the fire service in New Jersey is facing. Mr. Aughenbaugh also made mention of the use of money from 911 fees. He asked the Fire Safety Commission to urge the Governor to use put those funds back into improving emergency services in the State of New Jersey. As Mr. Aughenbaugh understands it, the Governor is allowed to reallocate these funds wherever he sees fit.

Chief Bernie Cohan thanked Chairman Wisniewski for working so long and hard to fill the vacant seats on the Fire Safety Commission. Chief Cohan has commented in favor of this at several meetings over the past several years, and he said that he is glad to see the seats finally filled by two extremely able and qualified gentlemen.

Seeing no other members of the public wishing to comment at this time, the Chairman moved the meeting to Division of Fire Safety Activities.

E. Division of Fire Safety Activities

Acting Director William Kramer reported that, with the departure of former Commissioner Lori Grifa, the Department of Community Affairs is now headed by Acting Commissioner Richard Constable. Although Commissioner Constable had just started his third week on the job, he chose to come support the Division of Fire Safety at the WABC Operation Save-a-Life Kickoff Breakfast at the Pierre Hotel in Manhattan. Chief Kramer said it has been very rare in the past to have the DCA Commissioner at this event, so the Division was extremely grateful to have Commissioner Constable make his first public appearance on the job at this annual event. Assemblyman Wisniewski asked if there was any mention at the ABC event of moving towards giving away carbon monoxide detectors rather than smoke detectors. Chief Kramer and Charlie Luxton answered that the Division was given an option to add some 10-year lifespan detectors in addition to the regular smoke detectors. However, a big theme of the kickoff breakfast was carbon monoxide awareness, so it seems like a CO detector giveaway could be in the near future. Chief Kramer added that the Division of Fire Safety recently gave away its 100,000th smoke detector through this program.

Chief Kramer mentioned that the DCA administration has been very good of late about distributing fire safety-related press releases to the media. From fuel gels, to holiday safety, to the Operation Save-a-Life program; the communications department has been very active in the area of fire safety and Chief Kramer would like to see this continue.

Chief Kramer gave an update on the large-diameter hose manifold failure issue in Sussex County. The Division of Fire Safety contracted with a metallurgist in Delaware to conduct testing on the device in question. The report from the metallurgist has been received. The Division of Fire Safety's final report on this matter is currently undergoing internal review and the DFS is awaiting Department approval to release the report – which is expected very shortly. Once approved for release, the Fire Safety Commission members will be sent a copy via email for their review. Chief Kramer urged the Commissioners to share the report with as many people as they feel necessary.

Chief Kramer reported that the new computer system for Life Hazard Use registrations and inspections is moving along. The NJDFS has its third demonstration on the system scheduled for later this month, and we are still on target to launch in November 2012. Some hardware for the inspectors is also being looked at. NJDFS staff is committed to putting in the extra time throughout the summer to make sure this system is rolled out and ready on time.

The annual reports from all local officials are due by the end of January. Some extensions have been granted for extenuating circumstances, but the vast majority of the reports are expected by the end of the month. The Division has worked hard to make this process as easy as possible with electronic reporting, etc., and hopefully it will help the local officials get reports in on time.

Chief Kramer said there would be a meeting of the County Fire Coordinators and their Deputies on January 21st at the Regional Operations Center in West Trenton. Three new Coordinators and 18 existing Coordinators will be sworn in. A big emphasis at this meeting will be the using the County Coordinators and NJ Fire Prevention and Protection Association contacts to push the “Fire Is...” program locally. This is the web-based fire safety education video that is being promoted by Dr. Frank Field in conjunction with the NJ FMBA Foundation. Hopefully utilizing people at the county level will more readily get the “Fire Is” program implemented through the schools, giving students and their parents access to the videos and information.

Commissioner Richard Blohm asked if the soon-to-be-released report from the Sussex County manifold failure was from the metallurgist or the Division’s findings. Chief Kramer answered that this would be the Division’s report with the metallurgist report included as part of it. Chief Kramer did say that the report points out significant deficiencies in the casting that can only be picked up by x-ray. This is going to create an issue for fire departments that use these devices. Chief Kramer said they have still not been able to identify a federal agency with jurisdiction, and this case will have nation-wide ramifications. Chief Kramer has been in contact with the National Association of State Fire Marshals and the International Fire Chiefs on this matter as well. Assemblyman Wisniewski asked if this is a manufacturing defect, and Chief Kramer said that, yes, that was the Division’s findings. The challenge now is how to prevent this from happening in the future – not so much from an operational standpoint, but a manufacturing one. As of now there are no federal standards for these types of appliances and no federal agency with authority over the manufacturing. Assemblyman Wisniewski asked about exploring legislation on this issue, and Chief Kramer said any kind of assistance on this issue would be of help once the report is released.

Commissioner Lawrence Wood said there are a lot of other devices that are used with a large-diameter hose. He asked if Chief Kramer knew whether those other devices are made in the same way as the one that failed. Chief Kramer answered that several other devices are cited in the report, but ultimately it is up to the fire departments to ask the manufacturer if other devices are sand-casted in the same way. This is not something that can be seen with the naked eye. Commissioner Gerard Naylis suggested that, once the report is released, it might be appropriate to alert NFPA and propose a technical interim amendment in regards to these devices. Commissioner Stanley Sickels asked if there was a corresponding UL standard for these appliances. Chief Kramer said no, and Commissioner Sickels added that this is something that could be looked into as well.

F. Advisory Council Reports:

1. Codes Advisory Council

Commissioner Charles Schilling reported that the Codes Advisory Council met in December at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville. The two major items that were discussed at the meeting were concerning fire lanes and the solar panel emblems. A committee has been formed to examine the fire lanes issue further. As far as the solar

panel emblems, a design was submitted for review and a subcommittee will be looking into this as well.

Commissioner Schilling called attention to a memorandum contained in the Commission meeting packets. The memo outlines several items that the Codes Council has worked on, the Fire Safety Commission has approved, and yet they lay dormant. Commissioner Schilling expressed some concern about all the work the Codes Council is doing that seems to fall on deaf ears at the Department of Community Affairs. He stressed that the Codes Council is losing good people because of this, and it will continue to happen if all the work continues to be for naught. The majority of the items would have no economic effect and are simply life-safety issues; so it is a mystery why the DCA continues to hold up several years' worth of recommendations. Commissioner Schilling used several examples in the memorandum to illustrate how easy adopting these items should be. He hoped the new Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs would move forward with these, because at the moment the Codes Council is at a stand-still.

Chief Kramer answered that he has a one-on-one meeting with Acting-Commissioner Constable on February 6th. This is the first time Chief Kramer has had the opportunity to speak to a Commissioner one-on-one and this will certainly be an item on the table. Assemblyman Wisniewski added that the ideology of this administration seems to be that the less regulation the better, and whether that changes under the leadership of Acting-Commissioner Constable is yet to be seen. Commissioner Blohm recommended that Assemblyman Wisniewski meet with Acting-Commissioner Constable as well and tell him about all the good work and service that the Fire Safety Commission provides for the State of New Jersey. Chairman Wisniewski said he has already had such a meeting, and he will be reporting on this under 'New Business'.

2. Training and Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Lawrence Wood apologized that the minutes of the Training and Education Advisory Council were not contained in the meeting packets. The Division of Fire Safety's liaison to the Council had a medical emergency in the past week and was unable to get them completed and submitted in time. Once they are prepared, they will be distributed to the Fire Safety Commission via email.

At the November meeting of the Fire Safety Commission, a RIC document was submitted by the Training and Education Advisory Council for the Commission members to review. Since then, there has been another T&E meeting and several questions arose about items in that document – particularly concerning minimum hours of training for Firefighter II. The document is in the process of being amended by the Training and Education Advisory Council, and it will be e-mailed to all Commissioners once it is ready. Commissioner Wood asked that if any Commissioner has questions or feedback to offer on the RIC document, to please forward that along to him as soon as they can.

Commissioner Naylis asked if the training regulations were moving towards being more proficiency-based rather than based on number of hours. Commissioner Wood answered

that, yes, this is the idea and is a better method. Chairman Wisniewski asked if this is what is generally done in other areas and Commissioner Wood said most standards work that way – by determining a person’s competency.

Commissioner Wood also specifically asked that it be entered into the minutes that the Training and Education Advisory Council needs a Commissioner to serve as Vice-Chairman. This was brought up at the November meeting, but no one has expressed interest as of yet. If any Commission member is interested, please contact Commissioner Wood as soon as possible.

Commissioner Wood said he is also asking for new resumes from all the Training and Education Advisory Council members so that the roster can be kept current.

3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council

Commissioner Gerard Naylis reported that this is the general time of year that fire departments should be submitting their data from the previous year. He encouraged all departments to get their data for 2011 submitted to the Division of Fire Safety’s NFIRS Unit by the end of this month. Ideally, they should be submitting data on a monthly basis, as this is the best way to put reports together and get them out in a timely manner. Commissioner Naylis is hoping to see the participation rate stay up in the 95-100% range. The data is extremely important, particularly now when it factors into budgeting decisions, etc.

Commissioner Naylis said the focus for the new year will be data quality – especially in the narrative section of the reports. Law suits and cases where fire reports are looked at seem to be becoming more and more common, and the best way to provide precise information is to have a good narrative. Also, Commissioner Naylis also spoke about fire departments having guidelines for handling certain situations that involve solar panels, power lines, etc. He suggested that departments get together and come up with a uniform plan as to how to deal with these types of incidents. Commissioner Naylis said he would like to work with the Division of Fire Safety on a “best practices” for this. Chairman Wisniewski encouraged Commissioner Naylis to have his Advisory Council work on this – potentially in conjunction with Commissioner Blohm and the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council. Chief Kramer stressed the importance of pre-planning with these types of incidents – fire departments need to know how buildings are powered, where the power is coming from, etc., etc.

4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council

Commissioner John Lightbody reported the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council met on January 9, 2012, at the Toms River Fire Academy. Commissioner Lightbody thanked everyone who testified for and supported the residential sprinkler legislation; in particular Assemblyman Wisniewski for all his work on the bill. There is certainly a degree of disappointment that the bill failed to reach the Senate. Commissioner Lightbody has become aware that the League of Municipalities did not

take a position on this bill. Therefore, the Sprinkler Coalition has drafted an article for the League of Municipalities magazine which has extensive distribution.

A lengthy discussion was held on how to educate the public on the importance and life-saving ability of residential sprinklers. It was suggested that the Coalition get a reporter to put together articles on sprinklers, as well as the possibility of offering a scholarship contest for college and high school students for writing the sprinkler articles. Also, the Coalition is still awaiting updated numbers on various sprinkler installations and their costs.

In the area of Shared Services, Dan Mulligan said he was still unable to meet with Acting Director Bill Kramer about the survey that is to be sent to all fire departments. He stressed that this is not because of unwillingness on Chief Kramer's part, but simply a scheduling issue. A lengthy discussion took place on regionalization. This stemmed from comments made by the Asbury Park Fire Chief in regards to creating a county-wide firefighting entity in Monmouth. Commissioner Lightbody will be inviting the Asbury Park Fire Chief to subsequent meetings to get more detailed information on this.

In the area of Shared Resources, Bob Yaiser spoke about using technology to "do more with less". As staffing numbers drop, and retirees are not replaced, departments are forced to shift more and more responsibilities on their personnel. He described a situation in Toms River where they have used the internet and webpage to disseminate materials that the public can download and print on their own. This saves time and money. Mr. Yaiser said that the process of sharing resources has been slowly going on for several years, and now it is more apparent with belts being tightened more than ever.

Commissioner Lightbody requested that Commissioner Kevin Bellew be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council. Chairman Wisniewski approved the appointment.

The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council is scheduled for March 5, 2012, at the Toms River Fire Academy.

5. Public Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo reported that the Public Education Advisory Council met on January 11, 2012, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville.

Commissioner DeTrollo gave an update on the ongoing "Fire Is..." campaign. The NJ State FMBA recently got additional grant monies to continue promoting the program in New Jersey's schools. They filmed a public service announcement to advertise the "Fire Is" campaign, and the Division of Fire Safety is in the process of obtaining that spot and promoting it on as many networks and cable providers as possible. In addition, the Division of Fire Safety is looking to utilize county coordinators state-wide to serve as ambassadors for the "Fire Is" program. The thinking there is that if each county has a representative, school districts and administrators will have someone to deal with directly while learning about and implementing the program. A meeting of the county

coordinators is scheduled for January 21st in West Trenton and “Fire Is” will be a topic of discussion. Commissioner Kevin Krushinski added that Sayreville Schools have utilized the “Fire Is” program and was very happy with the results. He urged all Commissioners and fire personnel to advocate for the program in their towns.

Commissioner DeTrollo reported that the 2012 FIRE Bowl will be returning all six participating school districts from last year. They are: Bayonne, Belleville, Camden, Carteret, Freehold, and Jersey City. In addition, Woodbridge Township (Middlesex Co.) and Evesham (Burlington Co.) are in the mix to be added to this year’s program. It is the Division’s hope that the details can be ironed out in the coming week, as the kick-off to the 2012 FIRE Bowl is set for February 14, 2012, when source materials are distributed. Assemblyman Wisniewski asked how a town could get involved in the FIRE Bowl and Commissioner DeTrollo referred him to Charles Lavin at the NJDFS.

The 2011-2012 NJ Fire Safety Poster Contest is underway and all information regarding it is posted on the front page of the Division of Fire Safety website. All poster entries are due to the County Coordinators by March 15th, but some entries from around the State are already beginning to trickle in. Commissioner Armando Roman asked if any changes had been made to the program regarding electronically produced posters. Commissioner DeTrollo said that there have been no changes made this year, but it is something worth revisiting.

Commissioner DeTrollo asked Chairman Wisniewski if there had been any movement on the bad bill that was passed requiring fire extinguishers in homes; as this was a topic of conversation at the most recent meeting. Chairman Wisniewski answered that a new bill repealing the original one would be introduced in the upcoming session.

The next meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council is scheduled to take place at 10 A.M. on Wednesday, March 14, 2012 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy.

6. Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council

Commissioner Richard Blohm reported that the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council met on November 16th in Atlantic City. The Department of Labor now has a new Assistant Commissioner, and that position will be held by John Moynahan. In turn, Howard Black will be back to working as a director.

Irwin Kreisburg reported on the SCI bottle issue. He said that variances can be sought after a violation has been cited. They have received many calls from all across the country on this. The Department of Health has said that if the SCI bottles are seen in use, they will be cited as a major violation. Buddy-breathing is not approved by NIOSH, but there is an exception under the OSHA standard. NIOSH has a list of “nasty diseases” that are covered by the Ryan White Act.

The New Jersey Forest Fire Service still has a few people down in Texas assisting with efforts in battling wildfires there. They will be hiring some new personnel next month;

seven will be new, five will be reassigned. There will be more staff added in 2012, but the total number will be kept at 75 for the time being.

The next meeting of the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council will be held today, January 18th, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy.

7. Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council

In the absence of Commissioner Paul Hartstein, Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary gave the report of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council. The Council met on January 12th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. Educational information is now available on the Kean web site, www.keanfiresafety.com. There is a Resource tab in a blue banner on the home page, under the Kean logo and DFS logo. Clicking on that tab will take you to a Resources page. Juvenile Firesetter information will be on the left near the bottom of the page.

The 9th Annual Juvenile Firesetter Awareness Conference was a great success. There were 121 attendees, all of whom seemed to enjoy the event and offered several positive comments regarding the class selections. Judy Okulitch from the Oregon State Fire Marshal’s Office was the keynote speaker on Thursday morning. Rachel Lind and David Utamapu from the New Zealand Fire Service spoke at a morning session on Friday. Donations from Hartz Mountain Industries and City Fire helped with transportation costs for the guests and the Instructor’s Dinner on Wednesday evening. Kean University was also a big help with conference logistics.

The Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is still trying to get a representative from the Attorney General’s Office to attend meetings. Chairman Wisniewski added that he has written the AG’s Office as well to request this.

A Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I program for April 11th and 12th has been scheduled to take place at Middlesex County Fire Academy. Helge Nordtveit and Joe Ehrhardt will be the instructors. The cost for the two-day class is \$60 and will include all necessary texts and materials – as well as breakfast and lunch each day.

Work has begun on the 10th Annual Juvenile Firesetter Awareness Conference. It is currently scheduled for November 29th and 30th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. The Council is hoping to have Dr. Denis O’Neil, Superintendent of the National Fire Academy, as the keynote speaker.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council will be March 8, 2012, at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center.

G. Committee Reports

1. Residential Sprinkler Committee

Commissioner Naylis reported that the Residential Sprinkler bill had failed and asked that it be refiled. Chairman Wisniewski said that it would be and explained that the bill died in the Senate. Senator Bucco, the bill's sponsor, asked that it be held due to an issue that was raised about exempting homes that are served by wells. The bill was subsequently pulled from the committee agenda. It was also Chairman Wisniewski's feeling that the Governor had indicated that the bill would ultimately not be signed. Nevertheless, Chairman Wisniewski will be reintroducing the bill with amendments and try again.

Commissioner Wood added that the Commission should try and work on finding information on the cost of installing fire sprinkler systems with well water. There are numerous variables in terms of costs and an abundance of data out there. Commissioner Lightbody said that the Master Planning Council does have facts and figures on the costs, and a lengthy discussion followed on the topic of which numbers are most accurate as related to houses with well water. Chairman Wisniewski feels that ultimately it comes down to the perception of the legislators and how the economic effects will look to their constituents. However, many times they fail to see the life-saving benefits for a cost that is minimal compared to that of a newly-constructed home.

Vice-Chairman Intindola asked if it would be advantageous to join together the Residential Sprinkler Coalition and Residential Sprinkler Committees. Chairman Wisniewski answered that it is better to keep them separate because the Coalition is allowed to do and say things independent of the Fire Safety Commission umbrella. However, it would certainly be of use to have each body get together, share information and collaborate. Chief Kramer agreed that the two bodies should certainly work together, but the Coalition absolutely has to stay separate in accordance to how the Fire Safety Commission is designed.

H. Old Business

Commissioner Gerard Naylis asked if there had been any new information regarding the wire-down liability incident that was discussed at-length at the November Commission meeting. Chairman Wisniewski answered that he has been in contact with the Office of Legislative Service about this issue, but they have not gotten any information back to him yet. Chairman Wisniewski will check with his office and get back to the Fire Safety Commission when new information is available.

I. New Business

Chairman Wisniewski spoke about a recent meeting he had had with newly-appointed Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs – Richard Constable. The main focus of the meeting was the role of the Fire Safety Commission and positioning of the Division of Fire Safety (which had been an issue back in the fall). Acting-Commissioner

Constable has no preconceived notions about reorganizing or splitting up the Division of Fire Safety – he is neither for it nor against it. Chairman Wisniewski said he spoke to Acting-Commissioner Constable at length about the Division of Fire Safety, its history, and background on the Fire Safety Commission as well. Mr. Constable also said that he would keep the Fire Safety Commission in the loop if any such plans do arise, and he plans on making a Commission meeting as soon as he is settled in. When asked about the appointment of a State Fire Marshal, Mr. Constable replied that it was a work in progress. Chairman Wisniewski recommended to him that Chief Kramer be formally appointed.

Commissioner Naylis suggested that Chairman Wisniewski ask Acting-Commissioner Constable to change the statutes to utilize electronic mailings on a more wide-spread basis. This could save the Department of Community Affairs a lot of money that could be better used elsewhere. Chairman Wisniewski said that Mr. Constable is a very fair man who is open to new ideas, so there is no reason why this cannot be discussed and explored with the new administration at the DCA.

Commissioner Stanley Sickels spoke about the need for Division of Fire Safety staff to be allowed to travel outside the state for conferences. Commissioner Sickels spoke about the wealth of information that is available out there, and New Jersey is missing out on these opportunities because DFS personnel cannot travel. He asked if some kind of exemption could be made or the travel freeze could be lifted. Chairman Wisniewski answered that it has become politically correct to ban this type of travel being it is viewed in the public (often wrongly) as nothing more than a party for the employees. Chairman Wisniewski agreed that it is frustrating, but does not foresee that perception changing.

Commissioner Roger Potts brought up a workman's comp issue. The question arose as to when an emergency response begins because of a firefighter who injured his back when getting out of bed to respond. Several Commissioners compared stories on this issue, and Chairman Wisniewski said that the interpretations of comp judges from county to county vary greatly. The only way you can get consistency in these situations is to get an initial ruling and appeal it.

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

J. Public Comment II

Vincent Corsaro, Vice-President of the Morris County Fire Protection Association, spoke about the need to bring courses on the fire prevention code up to date. Mr. Corsaro reported that there is an extremely high failure rate of fire inspectors in Morris County because they are enforcing the 2006 Code, and now the 2012 one is available. Mr. Corsaro asked that they be brought up to speed on the current code and that the test be reviewed. He added that firefighters are losing their jobs and getting demoted because of this. Michael Whalen commented that they are having no problem with getting inspectors to pass the tests in Middlesex County. Mr. Whalen - as lead instructor at Middlesex - said the training material is provided, it is sufficient, and there is no reason for the failure rate to be so high if it is being taught properly. Commissioner Stanley

Sickels added that the test was examined very closely at a meeting in Jamesburg a few years back, and almost none of the questions were found to have any problem. Plus, the exam is open-book. Commissioner Sickels believes the issue could very well be with quality-control of the instruction. Chief Kramer said that he would work with Mr. Corsaro on helping Morris County out with whatever issues are present there, and get them up to speed.

Craig Babcock, from Rockaway Township Fire Prevention, thanked the Fire Safety Commission for its support of his solar panel emblem and forwarding it to the Codes Advisory Council for further examination. Mr. Babcock spoke about identifying solar (and other) power sources in buildings as being vital to public and firefighter safety – especially moving into the future as these become more and more common.

Ronald McGowan, from Cape May County Fire Prevention, spoke about Senate Bill 2795 and how it would allow inspections of affordable housing to be done by Housing and not the Division of Fire Safety. Mr. McGowan contends that this is dangerous and these buildings and systems need to be inspected on a yearly basis. Mr. McGowan asked that the Fire Safety Commission oppose this bill to ensure these buildings get properly inspected. Chairman Wisniewski answered that this had been brought up in September and Commissioner Stanley Sickels added that the Codes Council had looked at the bill and it has been amended. The bill did not pass in the last session. Chairman Wisniewski said that if the bill exists in the new session as it did last time, it will never be posted.

Rich Silvia, from the Bergen County Fire Prevention Association, asked Chief Kramer if the Division of Fire Safety was considering bringing back the President's Meetings – even if it is annually or semi-annually. Chief Kramer said that he and Chief Kilmer have spoken about this recently and agreed that the President's Meetings are something that needs to be re-instituted. This will be done in the near future.

Charles Aughenbaugh from the New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs Association asked the Fire Safety Commission to support 911 fees going back to regional radio communication centers. Those monies should be put back into bolstering the 911 emergency response capabilities, rather than just put into the general treasury. Mr. Aughenbaugh also expressed his support of Assemblyman Wisniewski working closely with new DCA Commissioner Constable, and he has faith in his ability to educate the new Commissioner on the fire service and get him up to speed on all the pressing issues we are facing.

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 held on Wednesday, March 21, 2012 at 10am. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency Jersey City in Jersey City, NJ ***