

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

Meeting of September 11, 2014

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Thursday, September 11, 2014 at Wildwood Crest Fire Department Headquarters in Wildwood Crest, NJ.

Commission Members Present: Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman
Mr. Kevin Krushinski, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Stanley Sickels
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood
Mr. Roger Potts
Mr. Michael Postorino
Ms. Kathleen O’Leary
Mr. Kevin Bellew
Mr. Fredrick Collender
Mr. Gerard Naylis

Commission Members Excused: Mr. Armando Roman
Mr. Pasquale Intindola
Mr. Daniel DeTrolino
Mr. Arthur Londensky

DCA Staff Members Present: William Kramer, Acting Director
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS
Rick Farletta, NJDFS
Charles Lavin, NJDFS
Jerry Clark, NJDFS
Craig Augustoni, NJDFS
Rod Meyer, NJDFS
Frank Clark, NJDFS
Robert Lenox, NJDFS
Timothy Weiss, NJDFS
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

Guests: John Garton, NJ Department of Labor
Alden Blackwell, Tenafly FD Ronald McGowan Jr., Wildwood Crest Fire Co.
Edward McDermott, Piscataway #4 Edward Lopizzo, Wildwood Crest Fire Co.
Nick Lombardi, Piscataway Fire John Buchok, Piscataway Dist. #1
John Mocharski, South Plainfield FD Al Beers, Wildwood Crest Fire Co.
Artie Hayducka, Piscataway Fire James Zacone, NJ Building Officials
Vinny Corsaro, Jefferson Twp. Richard Silvia, NJSFPPA
Steve Dyl, Kearny FD Peter F. Smeraldo Jr., West Orange FD

A. Call to Order

Chairman John Wisniewski called the meeting to order at 10:16 AM and began the meeting with the “Pledge of Allegiance” and pointed out the fire exits. Chairman Wisniewski said a few words in memory of the lives lost 13 years ago today. A moment of silence was observed in recognition of September 11, 2001.

B. Approval of Minutes

With no discussion requested or necessary corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of July 16, 2014 were approved.

C. Special Presentation / Correspondence

Chairman Wisniewski and Chief William Kramer made a special presentation in honor of Commissioner Charles Schilling. Chairman Wisniewski read a Joint Resolution from the State Senate and Assembly that paid tribute to Commissioner Schilling for all of his dedication to the fire service in New Jersey and the safety of all New Jersey’s citizens. Chairman Wisniewski described Commissioner Schilling as an irreplaceable part of the Commission.

Chief Kramer made a presentation of a plaque for Commission Schilling from the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety. It also thanked and acknowledged his lifetime of service to his state, and honored him as the last of the original members of the New Jersey Fire Safety Commission. The two presentations received a standing ovation for Commissioner Schilling from all the Commissioners and members of the public in attendance.

Chairman Wisniewski also took the opportunity to recognize Al Beers, who was last year’s honoree at the Wildwood meeting.

Chairman Wisniewski noted that all correspondence for today’s meeting is contained in the Fire Safety Commission packets. Commissioner Lawrence Wood thanked Chief Kramer and the Division of Fire Safety for including the letter with commentary to the Governor on the deputy chief’s bill. He commended Chief Kramer on a job well done.

D. Public Comment I

Chairman Wisniewski opened up the meeting to any members of the public wishing to address the Fire Safety Commission. There being none, the meeting was moved to Division of Fire Safety Activities.

E. Division of Fire Safety Activities

Acting Director William Kramer began his report by talking about some re-organization that has been done at the Division of Fire Safety recently. There is now a newly-formed unit – the Community Risk Reduction Unit – which will be headed up by Charles Lavin. The unit will be responsible for all Public Education programs, Juvenile Firesetter Prevention programs and conference, and the Smoke Alarm Distribution program. All of these programs will be handled by Charles Lavin and Jerry Clark.

Chief Kramer noted that the 2015 New Jersey Fire Safety Calendars have been completed and all Commission members should have a copy in their packets. The calendars were an extremely popular initiative that started last year, and Chief Kramer is happy to report that it has been enhanced for the second installment. Thanks to additional sponsorship via the CVS/Caremark Corporation, the Division took receipt of roughly 10,000 calendars for distribution. This is up from 5,000 last year. The distribution will be done through each county's poster contest coordinator, and will begin today in Cape May County. The distribution will take place over the next few weeks. The calendar also features a new flap at the bottom so that all sponsors' logos can be visible all year round.

The Division of Fire Safety's fall training catalog was posted on the NJDFS website earlier this week. Chief Kramer said is extraordinarily well done and there are several fresh, new courses available. Registration can be done via the Kean Fire Safety and NJDFS websites. Chief Kramer also reminded everyone to remind their fire officials to take their code update course. It is something that everyone needs to take because it highlights the changes from the old code to the new code.

Chief Kramer also announced that "Fire in New Jersey 2013" has been released on the NJDFS website. It is extremely useful and well-done once again, thanks to the leadership of Heather Allen and the entire NFIRS Unit. Chief Kramer urged everyone to take some time to look through it, as it is not at all "fluff", but good hard data.

The Division of Fire Safety recently partnered with Bergen County Fire Academy and New York University's Polytechnic School of Engineering. Together, they will be offering courses online. A firefighter can register using their ID number and any courses taken will be tracked, and those credits will be forwarded to the Division of Fire Safety. When this program is officially launched, more details will be announced. Hopefully this will begin within the next month.

On the issue of Bakken crude and the hazards it presents when being transported throughout the state, the Fire Department Preparedness Unit has been heavily immersed in dealing with plans and preparations. This type of fuel is being moved, in mass quantities, through numerous New Jersey municipalities across 11 counties. This is all across the state with the exception of the shore area. The NJDFS has been working with the Office of Emergency Management to make sure all the county coordinators are abreast of this issue and prepared to deal with potential emergencies in dealing with the

fuel. The Department of Transportation is also currently making its regulations and identification of Bakken crude more specific than it is right now.

Chief Kramer gave a brief update on the RIMS computer system and said that the evolution of the system has been going quite well. There will be a meeting with the NJFPPA County Presidents coming up at the end of October to discuss the system further, as this gives the Division a good perspective on what is going on locally. Chief Kramer did add that a number of other agencies need to be relied upon to maintain RIMS, and there was a problem recently that wound up having the system down for three day. Unfortunately another agency's equipment was not up to speed, causing it to crash. The Division is still in the process of moving the system onto the cloud so that this type of problem can be avoided in the future. Division staff is continuing to work with the developer on a daily basis as well.

Chief Lou Kilmer added to Chief Kramer's report on the RIMS system. He commented that, external forces aside, the process is moving along quite well. Chief Kilmer said it is important to note that the changes being made on RIMS are the direct result of suggestions and concerns that have been voiced on the local level. He urged fire officials to keep providing input on how RIMS is working. Also, the NJDFS stands ready for anyone who needs assistance.

Chief Kilmer reported that the Division of Fire Safety is right on target to complete all inspections for the year 2014. They are right where they need to be for this time of year to have everything done. The Local Assistance Unit has been spending a lot of time with local fire officials working on Annual Reports. Chief Kilmer was pleased to announce that 100% of the Annual Reports are in, and this is no small feat. He thanked the NJDFS staff for this achievement.

Chief Kilmer reported that the NJDFS issued permits for numerous events statewide throughout the summer: concerts, street fairs, fireworks, etc., etc. No major incidents or injuries were reported. The NJDFS will also have staff at the Miss America Pageant coming up next week in Atlantic City. Chief Kramer added his compliments to Chief Kilmer and his staff on a job well done in a very busy year.

With respect to Homeland Security, Chief Kramer reported that the NJDFS has been successful in working with the FBI in identifying at-risk communities when it comes to terrorism. In many cases it is in the bigger cities, and in those places there are fire department personnel with security clearance – as well as NJDFS personnel with security clearance. The Division of Fire Safety has also been actively participating in the Joint Terrorism Task Force meetings and providing the fire service's perspective on homeland security and preparedness. Also, the Division of Fire Safety will be working with the Attorney General's Office to develop training that would allow firefighters and other emergency responders to recognize the signs of human trafficking.

Commissioner Stanley Sickels asked if there had been any movement in the permanent appointment of Chief Bill Kramer as State Fire Marshal. Chief Kramer answered that

there had not been. Commissioner Sickels also asked about the level of the Division of Fire Safety's staffing. Chief Kramer answered that the Division recently lost three inspectors and they are in the process of replacing them. Also, four people have alerted the Division of their impending retirements and Chief Kramer said they are in the process of transitioning to replace them. One of those is Carol Quinn, the RIMS project manager, is a big loss but she is working with someone to replace her and getting them up to speed.

Also, Commissioner Sickels asked about the reports on the Seaside and Delanco fires that took place last September. Chief Kramer said that, as far as he knew, the Delanco report has been completed and is now under review by ATF. Chief Kramer said he was unsure what kind of report, if any, was forthcoming in regards to Seaside.

Commissioner Gerard Naylis asked for an update in regards to the Division of Fire Safety's non-LHU inspection program. Chief Kramer answered that this had been done throughout the shore communities in response to the Point Pleasant Beach motel fire last year. Inspections had then been done beyond the shore communities in similar types of motels, etc. Chief Kilmer reported that the results ran the gamut, some that were in very good shape, and some that were disastrous. He said that, barring any drastic staffing cuts, the program will continue and eventually become routine. Commissioner Naylis commented that he was glad to see the Division going in this direction. Chief Kramer added that the fire departments in these places should be advocating for the inspection of these types of buildings locally because, ultimately, they are the ones who will be dealing directly with the problems in the non-LHUs.

Commissioner Stanley Sickels spoke further on the issue of inspecting non-life hazard use buildings. His contention was that the Division of Fire Safety should be able to charge municipalities for performing these inspections. Chief Kramer said this topic has been broached, but unfortunately circumstances are what they are at this point. Chief Kramer did agree with Commissioner Sickels, but the idea has not gain any traction. Chairman Wisniewski asked Commissioner Sickels to send him a detailed email on this issue and he would look into the possibility of getting something drafted. Commissioner Naylis suggested getting a small committee together to discuss this issue further and come up with some sort of solutions. Chairman Wisniewski agreed and asked that Commissioners Naylis and Sickels examine the issue with Chief Kramer and Chief Kilmer.

Commissioner Lawrence Wood commented that the Training and Education Advisory Council would be interested in getting involved with the recently announced partnership between the Bergen County Fire Academy and New York University's Polytechnic School of Engineering. Chief Kramer answered that this developed quickly and Training Supervisor Kent Neiswender would absolutely be reporting on it at the next Training and Education Advisory Council meeting.

Commissioner Sickels asked if the Division of Fire Safety would be preparing their own report on the Point Pleasant Beach motel fire. Chief Kramer answered that they probably would not be, but the Division is continuing to look into the incident from a code

enforcement standpoint. But as far as a formal report on the fire, Chief Kramer could not foresee that being done.

F. Advisory Council Reports:

1. Codes Advisory Council

Commissioner Stanley Sickels reported that the Codes Advisory Council had not met since the last Fire Safety Commission meeting due to lack of agenda. However, Commissioner Sickels had a handful of items to discuss relevant to the Codes Council. Commissioner Sickels asked if the Division of Fire Safety had prepared a bulletin with respect to CO2 Beverage Storing/Dispensing Systems. Chief Kramer answered that the bulletin, which was worked on in conjunction with Mike Whalen from Codes & Standards, had been completed and is ready for distribution. It should be ready for release shortly.

With regard to the “All Hazards” sign, Commissioner Sickels reported that Codes Council representatives have reached out to members of the Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council to set up a meeting. The meeting has yet to be scheduled, and hopefully he will have a further report on the sign’s progress at November’s Fire Safety Commission meeting.

Commissioner Sickels asked if there had been any movement on adding Surgical Centers for Animals as Life Hazard Uses. Chief Kramer said nothing has been drafted at this point. Commissioner Sickels said the Codes Council was looking for guidance in regards to Inflatable Rides. Chief Kramer said the Division of Fire Safety would take a closer look at the issue, and said he thought the fire official could look to the manufacturer for some sort of guidelines on how these rides should be safely used.

On behalf of the Codes Advisory Council, Commissioner Sickels stressed the importance of getting all the proposed code changes (some dating back to 2006) adopted. He said that fires are taking place again and again around New Jersey that are preventable with these code changes.

The next meeting of the Codes Advisory Council is scheduled for October 16th.

2. Training and Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported the Training and Education Advisory Council met on August 19th at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville, NJ. Commissioner Wood apologized for the minutes not being included in the Commission packets, but they will be distributed electronically as soon as they are available.

Commissioner Wood reported that pilot programs of Fire Officer 3 have been approved by the Training and Education Advisory Council and they will be put in the DCA regulations. The Training and Education Advisory Council is also looking to hold a

Firematic Training & Education Conference, which would include all academies and those who provide firefighter training. They will also be contacting colleges and universities that provide fire science education. The Council feels this would be a great way to mesh all of these agencies and their representatives and get them on the same page. Commissioner Wood asked for the Commission members and the Division of Fire Safety to assist with contacting people to attend.

Commissioner Wood pointed out the problem that Training and Education is having with regulations not being adopted. Similar to the Codes Council, this has gone on for an extended period of time and the problem with not having these regulations adopted is growing.

3. **Statistics and Information Advisory Council**

Commissioner Gerard Naylis reported that the “Fire in New Jersey 2013” statistics report has been completed and is now available on the NJDFS website. He commended Heather Puskar and the NFIRS staff at the Division of Fire Safety for all their diligent work on a great report. He also thanked the Statistics and Information Advisory Council members who continue to make calls and urge their local departments to get reporting done. Everyone involved will continue to strive for 100% reporting, but New Jersey should be glad to know that the number has been over 90% each of the past ten years.

Commissioner Naylis also urged the Commission to look at the National Transportation Safety Board’s report on the train derailment in Paulsboro. He said that it was not flattering towards the fire service, and felt it could be a wake-up call for your fire department to be ready for such an event.

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

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

The resume of Craig Bierbaum was submitted by Commissioner Lightbody to nominate him for membership on the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council. A motion to accept was made by Commissioner Kevin Bellew. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary and passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council is scheduled for October 14th at the Toms River Fire Academy.

5. **Public Education Advisory Council**

In the absence of Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo, no report was given.

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

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

Commissioner Wood referenced something from the minutes from the previous Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council where it claimed that Bakken crude posed just as much of a danger as regular crude. Commissioner Wood stated that the sheer amount of the Bakken is what makes it alarming and felt it was necessary to point that out. Chairman Wisniewski agreed that the product itself is no more dangerous, but the amount and manner in which it is transported is what first responders need to have an understanding of.

7. Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council

Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary reported that the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council met on September 4, 2014 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. The minutes from that meeting are contained within the Commission packets.

Commissioner O’Leary spoke about Charles Lavin taking over the Juvenile Firesetter Programs for the Division of Fire Safety. She thanked Paul Elenio on all his effort while in the position and thanked Charles for hitting the ground running in taking over the new position.

Smoke alarm distribution has essentially been completed. Paul Elenio held several distribution events throughout the summer, and Charles Lavin has a small number of smoke alarms in reserve for those unable to attend those events or who need more. The focus this year is on all departments reporting on where these smoke alarms are going. The Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council has hit some roadblocks in terms of the Parents Legal Liability Pamphlet. Despite numerous tries, there has been no correspondence back from the Attorney General’s Office on this. Chairman Wisniewski asked that Commissioner O’Leary put something in writing to the AG’s Office and copy him so that he may reach out to them as well.

Commissioner O’Leary reported that the 12th Annual New Jersey Juvenile Firesetter Conference is aggressively being planned by Charles Lavin, along with several members of the Advisory Council. Mr. Lavin has implemented a few tweaks to the program and the Advisory Council is confident that he is on track to put a great Conference together as quickly as possible. This year’s keynote speaker will be Dr. Wendy Lader from Ocala, Florida. The full Conference brochure will be available within the week. In addition, the Advisory Council is looking to plan a Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist II class in the spring.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for November 13th at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center.

G. Committee Reports

1. Residential Sprinkler Committee

Commissioner Gerard Naylis said that he is hopefully the Residential Sprinkler Bill will move before it is pocket-vetoed.

H. Old Business

Chief Kramer reported that the Division of Fire Safety had located a copy of the bi-laws (originally drafted in 1984). A committee was established to review the bi-laws and hopefully make the appropriate updates and adjustments as the Fire Safety Commission sees fit. The Committee consists of Commissioners Sickels, Intindola, and Londensky. They were recently provided copies of the bi-laws and will be meeting shortly to review them.

I. New Business

Chief Kramer spoke on the issue of hash oil and the problem it has created – a bulletin on it was issued last year by the Division of Fire Safety. Major Chris Eckert did an interview for CBS-2 in New York on the topic, and now Philadelphia has picked up the story as well. Also, the Division of Fire Safety released a bulletin on the “Fire Challenge” issue taking place on YouTube, and that wound up going nationwide.

J. Public Comment II

Tom Sampson, fire official from Harrington Park, spoke about the issue of massive amounts of Bakken crude being transported by rail through his town. He expressed his concern with the speeds that these trains are reaching while moving through, even with the twists and turns that are present in his town. Mr. Sampson said this is a major problem because they are not equipped to respond to an emergency with these tankers, and the training they have requested won't be delivered for another year. Commissioner Naylis, who is from a nearby town, said that there are massive amounts of oil cars moving through his town at 50-60 miles an hour. They have been pressing CSX for more information and more frequent and thorough training. Chief Kramer said Rick Farletta from the Division of Fire Safety will take this information back to the group that meets regularly on these types of issues. He was not sure if they deal directly with train speeds, but they definitely deal with training and preparedness. Chief Kramer added that, because of the foresight of his predecessor, New Jersey is probably the most prepared state to deal with a Bakken crude related emergency. This is because of the Neptune systems present across the state.

Mr. Sampson requested that the NTSB's report on the Paulsboro derailment be posted on the NJDFS website. Chief Kramer said they are still in the process of reviewing the report themselves, but the Division could certainly post the report.

NJFPPA President Rich Silvia and James Zacone from the New Jersey Building Officials spoke about a coalition they have formed so that all interested parties can get on the same page in regards to electrical, building, and fire officials. Often the two groups are

experiencing the same problems and issues in working with the codes, and this way they can work together to see what is going on with the other and come up with solutions.

Michael Whalen from DCA's Codes & Standards announced that there would be a Code Advisory Board meeting held on September 23rd in Trenton at the DCA Building. At this meeting, they will be pushing through the proposals for the 2015 International Building Codes. Mr. Whalen brought this to the Commission's attention because they are still working off of the 2006 code and there will be significant changes. A lot of work has been done in subcommittees, and the advisory board will be acting on their proposals. Commissioner Sickels added that it is vital to adopt the new codes because it takes time for the codes to reflect new technology. And if the codes are not adopted in due time, we will fall years and years behind. Several others expressed the same sentiment as Commissioner Sickels, along with frustration that New Jersey has fallen behind the past several years.

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 11:57 am.

*** The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 10am. It will be held at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ ***