

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee Meeting

December 19, 2007

Held at Wethersfield Fire Department, Company 3

The Meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by Vice-Chairman Jim Wilkinson.

Committee Members Present included Ted Schroll, CSFA; Jim Wilkinson CSFA/CFPC; Rich Nicol, CFPC; Jeff Morrissette CFPC/CFA/State Fire Administrator; Peter Wols, VFCRTS; Chester Haber, HCRFS; Jim Baldis, HCRFS; Chris Tracy, FRFS; Jay Woron, MCFS; Tony Conte, SFRD; Rich Winn, BFTS; Don Ouillette, CT DPW; Robert Norton, Jr., BFTS and Scott Potter, BFTS.

There were no minutes from the previous meeting available, on which to vote.

Don Ouillette gave his report from DPW:

DPW had been ready to go out and re-advertise for new properties for the Valley School, however, before tonight's meeting, Pete Wols provided him with some leads for possible sites. They will follow through on these before going out to advertise.

The Rogers site for the Eastern CT School is still bogged down with the attorneys from the seller. Environmental issues are still a concern and it has been reported that the utilities to the site have been shut off and that pipes have been stripped out. Don is not very optimistic on this site, right now.

Burrville – attempts will be made, ASAP, to institute dialogue with the DEP. Jeff Morrissette offered the possibility of setting up a meeting with the DEP Commissioner, if needed.

New Haven - the revised MOU is back into the hands of the City Council, awaiting their action. The first Design submission was received and rejected as being inadequate. The revised version is due back tomorrow.

Middlesex – the owner of the preferred site rejected the offer. They are now moving one to two alternate sites; one on the property of their new high school and the other is a former NIKE site. Don asked that DEP be allowed to look at them, before any further action is taken.

Hartford – DPW will be including \$508,000 for design and engineering in their request for the next Bond Commission Meeting. Now would be the time to start lobbying the Governor and other key officials, for inclusion. The design process for Hartford should take around 9 to 12 months.

Waterbury Area – Nothing can be done with the Cheshire site until Dept. of Corrections declares it as surplus and executes a MOU.

Don mentioned that his Department has cleansed Design/Build Provisions in place and can go to the RFP/RFQ process, after properties are identified.

Ted Schroll asked Don Ouillette about his feelings regarding DPW's Commissioner's commitment to the project. Don replied that she is supportive, in concept, but the DPW is driven by orders from OPM.

As a follow-up to Don's comments about being able to potentially proceed with a Design/Build project, a lengthy discussion was held regarding the possibilities of re-prioritizing the projects, so that we can get at least one of them going – most importantly to serve as an example of the overall project and to help foster the cause of promoting the remaining schools, as they come along. Don made it clear that his allegiance is to the priorities, as originally established by the committee and any changes would need to be authorized by this body. All of the projects were discussed and it kept coming back to Fairfield as being the only property being available and clear to build on, at this point. A Discussion between Don and Chris Tracy led to the conclusion that Fairfield could continue to operate as construction was undertaken on the new facilities.

On a motion made by Chet Haber, seconded by Pete Wols, it was unanimously voted to authorize Fairfield and DPW to explore the possibility of doing the Fairfield project, while simultaneously allowing continuing its operations. If this concept is workable, then the Fairfield project will be authorized to move forward.

Jim Baldis inquired as to when it may be time to step up political awareness and pressure for the projects. Jim Wilkinson asked Jim Baldis to “dust off” his previous campaign plan and bring it to the next meeting for discussion and consideration.

Jim Wilkinson showed pictures and discussed the Milford Fire Department's recent rental and use of Enfield's new Live Fire Training Trailer. He mentioned that Milford's feelings were that this tool is extremely useful for entry level and FF-I Level Live Fire Training Evolutions. Chairman Al Hawkins was interested in hearing if the committee might want to pursue requesting a purchase of a number of these units, through the legislative Appropriations Process, to facilitate training while the projects are proceeding. It was emphasized that this concept would be through Appropriations and not Bonding. A discussion ensued and the consensus was that the committee liked this idea, but would prefer to see the unit before committing. It was suggested that we set up an appointment to go and look at this unit. The possibility was brought forward that we attempt to do this in conjunction with our January Meeting. It was noted that the CFA Publishers' Seminar is being held on the morning of Saturday, January 26th. The members suggested the possibility of contacting the Enfield Fire Department and seeing if it would be possible to go there on the afternoon of the 26th, check out the trailer, and then hold our monthly meeting there. Jim Wilkinson said that he would look into the feasibility of this.

Jeff Morrissette mentioned that DEMHS has issued the contract for the Recalibration of the Fit Testing Machines and would like to get this going, ASAP. Holders of these units should contact Jeff for the particulars.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

James P. Wilkinson