

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

Meeting minutes

March 27, 2008 – 19:00

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:06 with the following representatives present:

Connecticut State Firefighters Association – Ted Schroll
Burrville Fire School – Richard Winn, Robert Norton, Jr.
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Al Hawkins
Fairfield Regional Fire School - Chris Tracy
Hartford Fire School - Chet Haber, Mike Jepeal, Jim Baldis
Middlesex County Fire School – Fred Dudek
New Haven Regional Fire Academy - Michael Grant
Stamford Regional Fire School - Tony Conte
Valley Fire Chief's Regional Fire School - Charles Stankye, Jr.
Wolcott State Fire School – Jim Trzaski, Paul Perrotti
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Jim Wilkinson, Rich Nicol
Connecticut Fire Academy - Jeff Morrissette
Guest: Ct. Department of Public Works - Don Ouillette

The minutes of the February meeting were presented. Motion made by Haber, second by Tracy to accept as presented. Motion carried.

1. Status of properties acquisitions

Eastern Connecticut Fire School - Don Ouillette reported that the property acquisitions manager was out of work for surgery. The state intends to pull the two 10,000 gallon heating oil tanks on the property. Don expects action on the agreement by next week.

Middlesex Fire School - A meeting is scheduled between the mayor for the city of Middletown and the Army acquisitions person. The city has hired an engineer to perform an environmental assessment. The property is a former Nike site on Mile Lane off of Newfield Street. Don will forward the MOU developed for Fairfield as soon as Middletown is ready to act.

Valley Fire Chiefs Regional Fire School - Don reported on a field trip with representatives of the Valley Fire Chiefs to review conditions at several potential sites. The most promising site appeared to be in Beacon Falls in an industrial park. Don has sent emails to Stankye and Wols with no response.

Wolcott State Fire School - There was a brief discussion about emails being sent out from the Wolcott area to D.E.P. to inquire about the site status.

2. New Haven Renovation - Design

Chief Grant reported that the M.O.U. had finally been approved at an alderman meeting on March 17, 2008. The document is on the mayor's desk for signature. Don reported that the design documents will be ready for review/approval by the middle of April. He hopes that ground breaking can take place in spring of 2009.

3. Hartford County – Design

Don anticipates that pre-design meeting will take place before the end of April. The Property Review Board should meet to consider the property on the second week of April. At that point the matter would be forwarded to the Attorney General's office for review.

4. Standardization / Curriculum Committee

Al Hawkins asked if there were any additional instructors at the regional schools that have expressed an interest in the Curriculum Standardization sub-committee. He indicated that he intends to appoint the committee and get them started on the publications review.

5. Legislative Appropriations Committee budget

There was a discussion about the status of the Training Bill. Jeff pointed out that his initial figures on training costs were based upon a higher delivery cost than the current \$450. He had prepared his figures based on \$600 for the program. Al Hawkins suggested that if the additional funds were included in the bill during this session that the regional fire schools should be actively involved in making sure that there were no impediments to the funding process.

6. Letter from Valley Fire Chiefs to legislators

Ted Schroll started a discussion about correspondence sent to various legislators by the board of directors of the Valley Fire Chiefs. This letter was directed to Representatives Linda Orange and James Amann among others. Ted pointed out that both of these representatives had been very good to the fire service. Amann is also supporting the infection, cancer and occupational disease legislation for the fire service.

Ted expressed appreciation to President Wilkinson for helping to minimize the impact of these letters. President Wilkinson explained his involvement with Representative Amann's staff member Chris Bowen.

Ted also pointed out that the information contained in the subject letter was not factual. Ted also expressed that he felt that the letter should have been reviewed with this committee.

Don Ouillette pointed out that the letter has caused reverberations throughout the offices of the Department of Public Works, including the office of the Commissioner.

Charles Stankye, Jr. reported that eleven or twelve letters were sent to area legislators but only three replies were received.

There was a brief discussion about the need for regional meetings to provide outreach to local legislators to educate them on current fire service issues. Some previous attempts have been ceased because of poor attendance.

A motion was made by Jepeal, seconded by Winn that the committee send a letter to the Valley Fire Chiefs. The letter will be the draft letter submitted for review with a few changes suggested by the membership. An offer will be included from the co-chairs to attend a future Valley Fire Chiefs Board of Directors meeting to discuss the capital project and the current status. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Other items from membership

President Wilkinson described the meeting held with Chief Grant and his staff about the New Haven renovation project. The meeting was attended by President Wilkinson, Al Hawkins, Don Ouillette, Chief Grant, Assistant Chiefs Dumas and Black. Chief Grant has offered assurances that he and his staff will provide a timely review of preliminary design drawings in order to keep the project moving forward.

President Wilkinson also reported on discussions by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control related to Fire Service Instructor I and II deliveries. Currently the staff at the Connecticut Fire Academy is able to deliver twelve or thirteen instructor classes each year. Since the class size is limited to sixteen there is a continual backlog for the programs.

There was a discussion about the lack of CPR and AED in the Firefighter I curriculum. Hartford county offers CPR for students that do not already have it. Suggestion was also made to include the skill as part of the skills for local sign-offs.

Rich Nicol reported that the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control has empanelled a sub-committee to review wage structure. Early indications are that they will be seeking a 6% increase in the instructor pay scale.

Mike Jepeal reported that the new Rescue Technician standard requires Emergency Medical Technician as a prerequisite for certification. Many fire departments are currently operating at M.R.T. level or less.

Rich Nicol reported on DEMHS training of NIMS. DEMHS wants to get out of training for 200, 300 and 700.

8. Next meeting date

The next meeting will be held on April 24, 2008 at 19:00 at the Wethersfield Fire Company #3.

Meeting was adjourned at 21:33 (motion by Tracy, second by Haber)

Submitted by:
Al Hawkins, chairman