

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Educational Committee

Meeting minutes

June 17, 2004 - 19:00

Wethersfield Fire Company #3

The meeting was called to order with the following members present:

Burrville Fire School – Richard Winn
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Lloyd Niles, Al Hawkins
Hartford Fire School – Chet Haber, Michael Jepeal, Jim Baldis
Middlesex County Fire School – Fred Dudek
Valley Fire Chief's Regional Fire School – Charles Stankye, Jr.
Connecticut State Firefighters Association – Scott Potter
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Jim Wilkinson
Connecticut Fire Academy – State Fire Administrator, Jeff Morrissette
Guest – Donald Ouillette, DPW

There were no representatives present from:

Fairfield Regional Fire School
New Haven Regional Fire Academy
Wolcott State Fire School

1. Anticipated release of bond funding

Don Ouillette pointed out that there would probably be nothing built during the current fiscal year. Funding would probably be exhausted on property acquisition and design. Lead time for permits, design, and contractor selection could be excessive.

2. Action plan discussion

Property has been given by the Department of Corrections in Cheshire for construction of a new fire school to replace the Wolcott State Fire School. This was accomplished with a separate Public Act introduced by State Representative Mary Fritz from Wallingford.

The City of Middletown is taking surplus property at the Connecticut Valley Hospital facility. Fred Dudek will check to see if a regional fire school could be incorporated into plans for that property. Fred pointed out that the Middlesex School Committee has had discussions about use of some of this land for a regional fire school since 1999.

Don Ouillette also reported that:

OPM has no surplus property on the books.

DOT has their own property agents, release of the property for the Hartford County burn building could take a long time.

DEP doesn't usually surplus property.

The New Haven improvements will require DPW to hire an architect. This process could take as long as six months.

Don wants all of the facilities, except New Haven, to utilize the same design. Don also expressed that DuBose Associates, who completed the regional fire school facility study, had projected solid cost estimates that should remain substantially valid for the term of the capital project.

Other land issues:

E.C.F.S. in Willimantic should start working with the land owner to see if a purchase is possible. Don pointed out that frequently client organizations initiate negotiations, OPM would help if property owner expresses and interest in making a sale.

C. Stankye is scheduled to meet with the First Selectman of Seymour tomorrow to discuss available property. Derby is looking at three or four potential parcels of land including land adjacent to the Oxford Airport.

Proposed changes in the Bond Commission membership did not happen. Commissioner Fleming remains a member. Commissioner Fleming (DPW) compiles monthly lists of bond money requirements for consideration of the Governor for inclusion on the Bond Commission agendas.

3. Priority of capital funding projects

Don Ouillette needs a prioritized list of capital projects for each of the regional fire schools.

Don will need to start working on a budget for an architect for the New Haven improvements, an architect to begin the programming for the standard regional fire school design, and estimated funding and timing for property acquisition.

4. Other items from membership

There was a discussion about attempting to get funding for one or more temporary burn facilities to help cover the training requirements for the period until the capital project can be completed. The members present indicated that two such facilities should be sought, one in Willimantic and one in Burrville. Don recommended that we consider manufactured structures. The flashover simulator at Windsor Locks has an estimated cost of \$45,000. It was decided that we work up a budget for the two burn buildings and work with state lawmakers to seek funding. Representative Pawelkiewicz has already sent out an email to members of the Northeast Legislative Caucus to advise them of the shut-down of the burn building in Willimantic.

There was discussion about this committee working with federal lawmakers to devise a plan for directing federal grant money toward regional fire schools.

There was discussion, and general consensus that newsletters should be developed periodically as this project proceeds for distribution to state legislators.

Jeff Morrissette pointed out that a listserv notice went out today to announce that the C.F.P.C. will begin adding additional levels of firefighter certification.

Don Ouillette suggested that the committee may want to consider taking some field trips to tour other recently constructed training facilities before we get too far along with a design. New facilities have been constructed in New York and Maine. Don also urged that all school design come back to this committee for formal action and sign-off prior to construction.

The next meeting was set for Thursday, July 15, 2004 at 19:00, in Wethersfield.

submitted by:
Al Hawkins, chairman