



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL  
OFFICE OF STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATION



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MINUTES OF THE APRIL 29, 2008 MEETING OF  
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Chairman Carozza called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioners Dagon, Kowalski, Mitchell, Nicol, Stankye, Walsh and Wilkinson.

Staff members Lewis, McGowan, Morrisette and Piskura were present.

Attendees took a moment to pledge allegiance to the American flag.

Moving to item 2) Approval of the Minutes of the March 25, 2008 meeting.

Commissioner Stankye stated he was in attendance at the last meeting and asked that the Minutes be corrected to reflect that.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to approve the Minutes of the March 25, 2008 meeting as amended. Motion carried.

Moving to item 3) Staff Report March 15, 2008 - April 14, 2008.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wilkinson to approve the Staff Report for the period of March 15, 2008 – April 14, 2008. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza said if there were no objections he'd like to move to item 4e.

He introduced guests to the meeting as Ted Schroll, Legislative Representative for the Connecticut State Firefighters Association (CSFA) and Paul Rapanault, Legislative Representative for the Uniformed Professional Firefighters Association (UPFFA) and asked them to provide an update to the Commission.

Moving to item 4e.) 2008 Legislative Session Update – Mr. Schroll referenced a Legislative Bill Tracking chart that was distributed today. He said there are quite a few fire service related bills he's been tracking. On the first page and probably one of the more important bills is H.B. 5021 an act making adjustments to the budget for the biennium ending June 30, 2009. He said as of yesterday morning there were three scenarios on the budget so in the next week that's left hopefully something will come out of it. He said as Commissioners may already know the Governor proposed the budget

back in February and then the Appropriations Committee came back with their answer. He said last Thursday or Friday the Democratic Caucus mentioned that because of the economic situation of the state, they may not put a budget together at all and just go along with what the biennium budget was that they passed last year. The one thing that comes out of it if they happen to do that is the \$1 million that's been put into the firefighter training fund would not be there. He said as a result of the Democratic announcement yesterday the Republicans came back with their own proposal which as a taxpayer sounds good to him but he's not certain if all the numbers will do what they say because there would be no tax increase and no deficit in the next two years however if they come back with the papers they've put together the \$1 million for the training fund would not be in there. He said there was talk that they wanted to have a budget done by April 28<sup>th</sup> and they haven't done that yet. He also reported that the next two bills are public safety related; H.B. 5039 an act concerning an enhanced 911 service database and reversing the E-911 system and H.B. 5040 an act establishing a Connecticut public safety data network where they would be increasing the E911 surcharge up to a maximum of sixty cents compared to the fifty cents now. Mr. Schroll also reported that H.B. 5646 an act concerning volunteer service by paid emergency personnel or paid firefighters and H. B. 5802 an act concerning the state fire prevention code has passed the House and is now on the Senate calendar. He said the following bills are on the Senate calendar; S.B. 27 an act authorizing bonds of the state for capital improvements and other purposes and S.B. 175 an act requiring crisis response drills. He said he had mentioned before about S.B. 180 the original bill for appropriating funds for firefighter training. This bill has language that the state fire administrator and the career chiefs had worked on with the Speaker's office. He said it originally started out having the \$1 million in the language but they took the money out and placed it into the budget so this is basically a language bill and if they get the proper amendment on the floor they would eliminate the word one half of paying for firefighter training and insert paying the full price of FFI, FFII, Recruit, FOI, FSI-I.

Commissioner Brady arrived at 9:43 a.m.

Mr. Rapanault reported that he's tracking a number of bills but most if not all of them are dead including the one where the Governor had propose a 3% spending cap for municipalities in addition to S.B. 500 an act concerning highway work zone safety. He said they were approached by CEUI which is the public employees' union saying they were looking to enhance legislation that would protect workers and work zones and they also included police and fire in that. He said that bill is pretty much dead as it stands now but there are some provisions of the bill in particular they are looking to fund a group to advance the whole idea of ways to protect workers and work zones. He said they've been very supportive of that throughout the session and he thinks it will have a line item in the budget and they've been promised by legislators that this is something that will be revisited next year and get very specific on how they will protect people and work zones. He also reported that H.B. 5629 an act concerning workers compensation coverage for firefighters, police officers and emergency rescue workers is one that they've been pursuing a number of years but last year they took the tact of rolling in all of the issues in particular cardiac, contagious diseases into one bill. He said they had a lot of problems with the bill last year but he believes it was the right tact to take and they did it again this

year however they did something very different this year than in past and that is they thought it would be a good idea to open some dialogue with CCM on this since CCM was their biggest opponent. He said through the Speaker's office they've had several meetings with the CCM and they were able to work out a deal basically saying they accept the cardiac portion of the bill so that's the portion of the bill that is on the tracking chart today. He also said part of the negotiations was an agreement to continue to discuss the infectious disease portion which they have been doing. He said these discussions will not produce a bill this year but they are very hopeful it will produce one next year. He said the fact that CCM accepted presumption for cardiac they believe is extremely significant in that they accepted presumption for the first time in 35 years. He said the last time was when they had presumption for heart and hypertension. He said to his recollection they've ever had a presumption bill since then so this is the first and it's going to show Legislators that this is not any use unfunded mandate that they've been led to believe by people like CCM and it's going to give them a whole new opportunity to look at what we're talking about. He said they've had some great breakthroughs between last year and this year about getting legislators to understand just what the exposures are and there aren't many at all and they don't anticipate any huge increase in worker's compensation claims and the costs is there anyways. He said all they're looking to accomplish is presumption and protecting people with obvious cases from being strung along for a number of years. He said the Bill passed the House 135 to 16 and it is on the Senate calendar and he anticipates they will raise it tomorrow. Their goal is to have it go on the consent calendar and if that's the case we'll reach and talk to the Governor about it.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if H.B 5802 is on the Senate calendar

Mr. Schroll said it's on the calendar since Monday and ready to go.

Commissioner Kowalski also asked if any agreement was made to discuss the cancer portion of H.B. 5629 next year.

Mr. Rapanault replied no that it was not part of the discussions with CCM. He said by the time they got to discussing the issues with CCM the bill had been cut down to cardiac and infectious diseases. He said it's certainly something they plan to bring back next year and Legislators know that. He said his feeling along with comments from legislators is we have a lot of work to do on the cancer and documenting the claims and exposures. He said it's going to take a lot more work but we're almost there.

Commissioner Kowalski said he was asked by several fire marshals and they are very much interested in pursuing the cancer maybe next year or after because of the issues regarding fire marshals investigations of doing the fires typically, digging through the rubble etc and there is a higher frequency of cancer. He said they are going to try to find out the actual figures involved but they would very much like to work the group to get more data.

Mr. Rapanault said there is a lot of data available but cancer is one of those emotional issues that almost everyone has some kind of family member who has some type of a

cancer and it's difficult to get them to see that we're not talking about all types of cancer we're talking about very specific cancers that firefighters are very prone to get at a much higher average than the average person.

Mr. Morrisette gave an update on S.B. 180 that the substitute language had been worked on by him, Chief LaVecchia and Commissioner Brady. He said they have a meeting with the Speaker this afternoon tentatively scheduled for 4pm to get an update. He said his thought is if we're going to loose any additional funding that possibly they consider keeping the substitute language which would allow some flexibility for the administration of the current funding stream. He said later on in the agenda he'll show the Commission that we're still a bit slow in terms of expending the funding which is currently available so any flexibility that allows the Commission to essentially set a policy to make it easier or broaden the scope of the originally ruling would probably be beneficial.

Moving to item 4a.) Budget/Staffing Update – Mr. Morrisette reported as noted in the staff report we brought on board over the past month two new staff employees Karen Junguzza in the Bookstore and Robert Myjak as a Storekeeper for the agency. He said those two positions will surely provide additional support to the current staff. He said he wanted the Commission to be aware that we received an arbitration ruling for the termination of one of our full-time Trainers which came to us just a week and a half ago. He said the arbitrator ruled that the agency rescind the termination and there is a six month suspension unpaid. Since the person had been out of the position for close to two years now there is a back pay other than the six months and that would be minus any earnings in the interim that we would have to pay the individual. We have copies of the arbitration ruling if any Commissioner is interested. He said he has not shared the information with the staff but he intends to do that in the next couple of days we're just awaiting some final information from our Human Resources personnel who are finalizing the arrangements for bringing the individual back. He said in some ways it's somewhat an uncomfortable position but those who read the arbitration ruling will fully understand the situation we were facing. He said we feel very strongly that the actions taken upon the part of our staff members in association with DAS was right. He said we'll expect the individual back probably in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Morrisette also reported regarding the budget. He said as Mr. Schroll had indicated we're waiting for the final budget to be approved by the Governor. The proposed mid-term adjustments were minimal as it relates to our agency. He said one of the significant items is the capital budget and he's not sure with all the last minute negotiations ongoing what the impact will be upon the capital budget specifically the \$250,000 earmarked for the Commission. He said Commissioners may recall last fiscal year within the budget we were earmarked for \$500,000 because of a clerical error on the part of someone within the Legislature and the information being on two separate pieces of paper we never were awarded the half million dollars so this year they came back with half of that because of the fiscal climate. He said he's hopeful we can at least hang on to the Capital budget may actually pass with the increases for the various agencies whereas the operating or general fund budgets may remain stagnant. He asked Commissioners if there were any questions.

Moving to item 4b.) CSFA Education Committee Update – Commissioner Wilkinson reported on behalf of the Education Committee. He said the Committee met twice since the last Commission meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup> and on April 24<sup>th</sup>. They have formed a subcommittee of Committee to meet regarding some curriculum standardization. That subcommittee will meet for the first time this Friday. He said at their meeting last week our own staff member Director of Certification Tom McGowan gave an excellent overview of how the Certification division anticipates handling the changes in the NFPA 1001 and 472 standards and advise the committee members that the Certification division will be prepared to certify to the new revisions beginning with the fall 2008 term. There has been a request placed by the DPW in the amount of \$150,000 for the April Bond Commission agenda to begin the design build process for the Fairfield and Burrville projects. Unfortunately the state decided to cancel the April Bond Commission meeting so that request will be resubmitted in the near future. He said as a follow up to the last Commission meeting he made some inquiries of the group regarding their feelings to the new NFPA standard requirements for CPR and AED to qualify an individual for certification. Currently the Hartford Regional School is the only one that includes this in their curriculum and they said they do that as a service to their customer base. He said the consensus of the others was to leave it as a responsibility of the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) but they would also be open to including it as an option to add on to their firefighter I training courses if the customers express the interest in doing so. As far as the various acquisitions and projects the property that is under consideration for the New Eastern Connecticut School all of the environmental issues have been resolved and there is a meeting with the current owners on May 6<sup>th</sup> to work out the final purchase details. Once that's worked out the purchase will go through the property review board, OPM, Attorney General and the Bond Commission. They hope to be on the Bond Commission agenda for purchase monies by September. He said the Middlesex School had reported in March that the city of Middletown and the Army were in discussions on site acquisition but nothing further has been heard since then regarding that initiative. Two appraisals have been ordered for the site in Beacon Falls for the Valley School and the state will then make a purchase offer to the property owner. A meeting was held last week between New Haven fire department, the project manager and the engineering firm for the New Haven School. He said their budget is holding well at approximately \$4 million and they hope to be out for a construction bid in November of this year. He said there has been no real progress to report for the Hartford renovation project predominantly because the DPW project manager was taken ill so Don Ouillette is trying to pick up the slack and keep the project moving forward. He reported that the Wolcott site in Cheshire, DPW will formalize the property transfer with the DOC when it's appropriate for the overall timeline of the project. The next meeting will be May 22<sup>nd</sup> in Wethersfield.

Moving to item 4c.) FY08 Supplemental Grant Program Update – Mr. Morrissette reported regarding the Supplemental Grant program. He said there are just 7 fire companies remaining that we have not heard from. We have an outstanding balance including those seven of \$53,268 so we're in relatively good shape in comparison to last year regarding unspent funds. He said it will be our effort over the next couple of months to encourage those especially with vouchers to expend their full value prior to the close

of the fiscal year and we'll try to reach to out to the seven that have not yet made a selection. He asked Commissioner if the have any questions.

Commissioner Brady asked if the language for the voucher and direct payments is in regulations as yet.

Mr. Morrissette said he believes it's in statute. He said he doesn't have the exact breakdown but the direct payments exceeded 50 percent last year. Prior to that the majority of eligible fire companies preferred the voucher because of their financial relationship with whoever would receive the check.

Moving to item 4d.) Entry-Level Training Reimbursement Update – Mr. Morrissette gave an update on the Entry-Level Training Reimbursements. He said we've only paid out or encumbered \$400,000 of the funding thus far so we're still \$350,000 short of what was appropriated. He said if no additional funding is appropriated for the program next fiscal year consideration of amending the language would provide some flexibility to us to maybe include other levels of training. He said the appropriation will increase next fiscal year to just under \$800,000. He also said there are a number of large programs which are beginning and he's aware that Hartford fire department has a fairly substantial recruit class starting in a week and a couple of other large programs which are starting in the spring but won't conclude until next fiscal year so the numbers are probably t here for courses beginning but we won't spend all the money this fiscal year.

Moving to item 4f.) Compensation Subcommittee Update – Mr. Morrissette said he had mentioned last month that we had a Compensation Subcommittee was established which had met including Commissioners and staff for implementation of an approximate six percent increase for our part time instructional staff. He said there are a bunch of other issues which we've passed on to DAS Human Resources personnel which deals with other areas of compensation as well as our utilization of adjunct instructors for other than instructional duties. He said that is currently in their hands and he's stressed to them that we would like to finalize this for implementation on or around July 1<sup>st</sup> for next fiscal year. He said hopefully for the May or June meeting we will have an update in terms of recommendations that DAS has in addition to possibly revising the classification to be a bit more broad.

Moving to item 4g.) FFI CPR and AED Communication – Mr. Morrissette said Commissioner Wilkinson had mentioned the discussion at the Education Committee meeting regarding the request that the Commission had received in terms of mandating CPR/AED training as part of FFI. He said we've also passed on the request to the Career chiefs and the Connecticut chiefs for discussion. He said it was discussed at Career chiefs but he was not in attendance. He said Director of Training Piskura was in attendance and he's not sure if he has anything to add but as it relates to the Connecticut chiefs it will probably be discussed at their next meeting because as the information was passed on the president's father was ill and eventually passed away. He said he did have a discussion with him after the meeting last week that we needed to have that discussion take place within their Board of Directors and bring it to the floor for discussion. He said

he'll bring that back to the Commission hopefully in May. He asked Mr. Piskura if he had any updates from the Career chiefs' discussion.

Mr. Piskura remarked that the conversation was mainly information that he passed on to them. He said they have a training subcommittee that is going to meet with us at the conclusion of the recruit program to look at the syllabus in general. He said he thinks their intent is to discuss the insertion of CPR/AED or not. He said he views them as our primary customer base for the recruit program.

Moving to item 4h.) Mr. Morrissette said he's going to turn over this item for comment to Director of Certification McGowan but he wanted to mention that we had this discussion with the Education Subcommittee last week. He said he apologizes that because of scheduling the discussions took place there prior to our meeting with Commissioners and it was not our intent but we felt it was necessary to keep the dialogue moving. He asked Mr. McGowan to provide the Commission with an update.

Mr. McGowan said at the Education Subcommittee meeting there was a great deal of concern and discussion about what is going to happen as far as the certification viewpoint is on the NFPA 1001 and 472. He said it was realized by the group that they're pretty well squared away with understanding what's going on with NFPA 1001 and with a couple of minor modification and revisions at each one of the levels that they are going to be constant with delivery of that particular program. He said the concern came up under the NFPA 472 in terms of how that was going to be considered for the training purposes for the recruits especially at the regional level. He said he doesn't believe there were any actual votes cast at the meeting. He said because of the way NFPA 472 is laid out where there is the core competencies plus the chapter five or six with regards to product control. He said we're looking at this as a step back from what we now have as an opportunity if we were to certify today under the operations level for both Pro Board as well as IFSAC. He said the general feeling from what he heard in the room was that they would prefer not to take that step back. He said he reflected on that and drafted a letter which is now in the State Fire Administrator's office to perhaps put a small committee together if that's necessary or more importantly begin to move forward in his office with the full compliance for operations level training. He said part of the operations level training would also include the awareness level program so in essence from the regional level aspect the potential for FFI certification as well as awareness and operations three or four certificates depending upon whether you go to FFII could be granted to the candidate as they complete their training.

Mr. Morrissette added that there would be separate examinations administered so Haz Mat questions would not be part of the FFI or combined FFI and FFII for recruit examinations it would be a stand alone test.

Mr. McGowan remarked that the reason for that is both our national entities are looking for statistics on the success rate and generally speaking that 70% seems to be the average that they would be looking for. He said this is not the end of the discussions and as we begin to get our items out on the table he will get back to the Commission and provide regular updates.

Moving to item 5a.) Technical Rescue Pre-Hospital Care Issues – Mr. Morrissette said he believed Commissioner Kowalski brought this issue up last month regarding the Technical rescue and the core program. He said the Commission in the last year had voted to approve the requirement that individuals in attendance at that program hold an EMT certificate and that's based upon the objectives which are required within the technical rescue standard. He said we had a discussion with OEMS and he asked Mr. McGowan to comment.

Mr. McGowan said he, Mr. Morrissette, Mr. O'Hurley, Mrs. Murphy-Tenney and Mr. Piskura met with Mr. Wiemokly on April 4<sup>th</sup> and had good discussions. He said Mr. Wiemokly took off and began some dialogue with his folks and they also are open to looking at these from a training standpoint and not from a certification standpoint. He said it's obvious they don't want to put their folks in harms way if they haven't been trained and likewise they want to make sure that patient care is prominent to the whole rescue operations or recovery operations. He said they have a meeting scheduled through a letter of conversation that we had and he believes it is May 6 or 8<sup>th</sup> with their Commission and at that point it would be placed on the agenda for discussion. He said he'll get back to the Commission with any information as a result of that meeting.

Mr. Morrissette added that although they are the ones who originally indicated that it would be appropriate that people undergoing technical rescue training be EMTs because of the back boarding, etc they are willing to bring it back to some committee of doctors for consideration from a training perspective to allow it to be done at the MRT level. He said he's not sure how that goes in terms of operating out in the field but they would probably be told once you're trained don't do it out in the field. He said he hopes to have some positive news by next month on that particular issue.

Moving to item 5b.) Rescind Two Year Training Requirement for Technical Rescue – Mr. McGowan stated that the Commission a number of years ago when we met to solidify the rescue technician level training put in place at the request of former Certification Director Fred Piechota a two year stipulation for training requirements between the core requirements for technical rescue and then all of the subsequent specific missions underneath that particular standard. He said that meeting took place on March 29, 2005 and the Commission voted on a proposal for a two year period for candidates and if they exceed that two year limitation for training between the core and any specialty items they would have to go back into the training mode and then pick up their next standard. He said over the past couple of years as a direct result of some feedback we've been receiving from potential candidates and some logistical issues he asked the Commission to rescind the two year stipulation and allow for an open ended opportunity for candidates once they complete the core to continue on with any specialty items they wish to. He said in talking with Director of Training Piskura and his group they go over some of the core competencies just to make sure that students have a baseline as they enter into any one of the new technical opportunities. He said he's satisfied by that from a Director of Certification standpoint that the students would then become candidates for the certification process would still be competent in their training.



A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady that the Commission rescind the two year requirement for technical rescue. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5c.) Facility Site Survey for Practical Skills Examination – Mr. McGowan said part of his goal setting for last year was to review the feasibility of the practical examination sites across the state that we utilize for certification process. He said most recently he's been able to convene a subcommittee consisting of Mike Jepeal, Ed O'Hurley, Fred Arnold and Cathy Goetz to have them review the findings of the institutions or local fire departments that we use for certification process. He said his original concern came from when he was first brought on board and visited a couple of sites and saw that some of the certification practical examinations were not being completed to their fullest extent and some modifications were made to those particular skill sets. He distributed copies of a practical exam site summary and stated that the goal for certification practical exams is to make sure that we are fair and objective and consistent in our assessment and that the exams reflect what the NFPA standards for the levels being certified should be and that the examinations meet the accrediting entities criteria. He said our current practice is that examinations are scheduled as they are required and where they are required and as a consequence a wide variety of physical plant locations that we use. He said there are inconsistencies as a consequence with the conditions. Some of the furnishings that we come across include concern for apparatus as well as equipment and in some instances our local instructors who are certified to a set level of training are allowed to be evaluators. He said he tasked the subcommittee with doing a site review study and the purpose for doing that is to review and recall from their perspective all the regional school sites as well as recalling the local departments that hosts the practical skills in the last years and then recall any additional fire departments that might come to mind as well as identifying the sites where practical evolutions need to be conducted. He said our biggest concern here without modifying any of the random selections for the stations individually or as part of the JPRs. The criteria are to make sure there is sufficient water supply, that the specific roof type is available and has the capability for both flat roof as well as for pitched roof. There has to be a secure staging area that has to also accommodate the particular skill sets as well as the JPRs for both FFI and FFII without modifications. He said one other thing that needs to be considered is sanitary facilities and this actually comes from both the Pro Board and IFSAC. He said we were able to look at 62 sites across the state and collected data for 46 of them. We found that 12 sites meet the FFI examinations without any modifications and 35 sites can accommodate FFII skills stations. He said 31 sites can also accommodate Haz Mat technician skills station if necessary. He said what he's trying to communicate to the Commission is that from his office there is a concern for modifying programs and then being called into question down the road. He said he's also aware that this works in well with the Commission's overall plan to sure up the responsibilities and sure the physical natures of the regional schools themselves so he offers this as a document to aid in that particular endeavor. He asked if Commissioners had any questions.

Commissioner Kowalski stated that he believes that a while ago and maybe even before Mr. McGowan's time with the certification division that random selection was an extremely important aspect of the certification program and is actually the basis of the

certification that we have to the Pro Board and IFSAC. He asked how are we able to qualify our programs when you don't have the ability to do random selection and is it considered a substantial hardship to fire departments to upfront before the class begins to acknowledge the fact that you have to provide what is necessary to do the practical skills. He asked if it is an extreme hardship to either sponsor the event at a regional school or at the CFA.

Mr. McGowan replied that those are good questions and they serve as the Commission's attempt to bolster the regional schools and he doesn't want to take away from those entities that have worked hard to meet the criteria on randomness. He said it's one of those issues he's still working through because he's cognizant of serving the customer. He also said although it wasn't an issue at the Pro Board during their recent re-accreditation of the Commission they are coming up with their re-credentialing process and he's sure that's going to be one of those questions how significant is our random selection process. He said we'll have to be quite honest with them that it is not as random as we'd like it to be and that would be a point against us.

Commissioner Kowalski said it really has to come from the Chiefs association or training entities to see if this is something we can change and be a little more stringent on the requirements of the end practical skills evaluation. He said he understands the concept of customer service but is it a service to the customer to not create an open testing situation.

Mr. Morrissette added that this isn't necessarily a new issue for the Commission. He said we've had these discussions not quite in as much detail over the past many years. It's been the Commission's point of view that we have a five year plan for the regional fire schools and when they are built we'll designate those entities as well as maybe some of the municipal departments that are capable of hosting full examinations. He said we're in year six or seven of the five year plan and we still don't have anything. He said he's getting a bit uncomfortable with it and so should the Commission. He said the Commission as a group should go back and think about it more and maybe it's time that the Commission begins enforcing or mandating with a little advance notice that we have 12 or 20 sites available and these are the only sites that may be utilized. He said he's not sure what kind of hardship that places on those 12 that are capable of performing but it is something we need to look at more closely. He said as Mr. McGowan indicated if we can't replicate it in testing is it really being done in training.

Mr. McGowan added that he's not pushing the Commission at all but it might be timely in terms of the fact that we're changing and upgrading to the new edition and at the same time we begin to put the mandates in place in looking for those sites that offer that complete randomness that we're looking for.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if it would be worthwhile to send a letter out to departments so they can get prepared that if they want to host a practical skills evaluation these are the things they need. He said it's possible that departments don't know what is required and he thinks something should be done over the next year or two.

Mr. McGowan asked if the Commission prefers the letter to come from the Commission.

Mr. Morrisette remarked that he would ask Commissioners to go back over the next 30 days and come back with some more dialogue and thoughts on this. He said he's supportive of the letter but we need to be careful how we state things and disseminate information as we want people to be aware before they get a letter.

Moving to item 6- Comments from the public – There were none.

Moving to item 7 – Matters to be raised by Commissioners and staff – Commissioner Wilkinson read correspondence that was received from the Executive Chambers Office of Governor Rell to state agency Commissioners and Executive Directors dated April 28, 2008 regarding the American Red Cross and the Norwich fire.

Mr. Morrisette said he wanted to bring to the attention of the Commission that we had three individuals who had failed their FFI/FFII (recruit) examination administered at the Fairfield Regional fire school on behalf of the Bridgeport fire department. The three individuals have been placed on administrative leave pending termination. He said the three individuals have as per our Regulations allow are appealing their failure of the practical skills examination. He said it is a three step process of which the first step is a review of their failure and any paperwork associated with that; the second step is for the State Fire Administrator to establish an appeals panel which he did last week. He said the panel met and found in favor of one of the three individuals in terms of overturning the failure. He said step three allows the next step of the appeals process to come before the Commission at their next scheduled meeting. He said we're finalizing the communication to all three individuals with the office of the Attorney General and they should get those letters by the end of the week so he anticipates more than likely there will be further appeal of probably two individuals at the next Commission meeting. He said it's imperative that we have a quorum and that the appeals be heard per the time limits set in Regulations.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if the appeals would be held in executive session.

Mr. Morrisette replied it would be held in an open public session and they are able to bring counsel if they elect to do so or bring witnesses and present evidence. He said we in turn would provide witnesses who would be either the local station evaluators or the proctors that were provided by our agency. He also said this was somewhat of a unique situation in that Bridgeport was not able to fulfill all of the station evaluator positions so they contracted with us for some of the evaluators who participated the day of the regional examination. He said we also had our Associate Attorney General present to assist with the appeal process when we met last week.

Commissioner Stankye asked without going into detail if it was our evaluators that failed their stations.

Mr. McGowan said we met with all three of them at the same time and we did have some evaluators present at the appeals and there were times when we did not have the evaluators present but we received written documentation from them for the hearing.

Chairman Carozza suggested that the Commission should remain neutral and not receive any documentation until the day of the hearing.

Mr. Morrissette said he would verify anything we do.

Commissioner Nicol asked if there's a procedure in place on the conduct of the appeal process.

Mr. Morrissette said that the process can be laid out for the Commission. He said he doesn't have the information with him but essentially it's very similar to any administrative appeals process and either side can call witnesses and people are sworn under oath.

Commissioner Nicol asked if it has to be a unanimous decision of the Commission or a majority.

Mr. Morrissette said no it's a majority.

Commissioner Wilkinson recommended that the Letter from Governor Rell on the Norwich fire be sent via the Listserv.

Mr. Morrissette remarked that he noticed the Fire Marshals' office sent it earlier this morning and he would be happy to send it.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wilkinson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza adjourned the meeting at 10:52 am.

Dated:

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James P. Wilkinson, Secretary  
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control