



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
OFFICE OF EDUCATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

MINUTES

FIRE MARSHAL TRAINING COUNCIL

DESPP Room 349 Headquarters, Middletown

Friday, March 17, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 by Chairman Don Harwood

Members present: Don Harwood, William Abbott, Susan Bransfield, Jamie DiPace, David Marcarelli, Victor Mitchell, Jeffrey Morrisette, Tim Tharau, Thomas Wiedl. No members absent. OEDM Staff present: Bonnie Becker, Doug Schanne. Public present: Walt Summers, President of CFMA.

Under Communications, Don Harwood read the agenda which indicated that Tim Tharau had been appointed by Len Fasano, Senate Minority Leader, to the Board of Control.

Bonnie Becker, Director of OEDM, reported that OEDM responsibilities have been reassigned: Doug Schanne is responsible for Career Development and Outside Credit, Jim Quish is the dedicated building trainer and Sheila Taridona the dedicated fire trainer, and Michael Fullerton is responsible for test administration and technical research and migration of online training, testing applications, OEDM webpage and database replacement.

She also reported that OEDM received 40 applications for the two vacant trainer positions, and that the interview process would begin soon.

The current pre-certification modules are full, with 33 students enrolled in Fire Investigation (Feb. 24 – April 5) and 27 students in Fire Code (April 12 – June 28). The fire marshal survey was sent to 195 Marshals, with 77 responses. There are not enough requests for night classes to warrant an evening pre-certification training program.

Bonnie reported that because of technical problems with the receipt printers, and because students can access their credit reports online, OEDM would no longer be issuing paper receipts at trainings. The council agreed with this change in practice.

Bonnie explained the new “special offerings” category of training, which is anything that requires preregistration. Examples include the HVAV and Fire Safety Systems trainings at the Sheet Metal Workers Training Center, which are limited to 30 students each. This program will be revised to include building issues, and be the topic of the CBOA/CFMA conference this November.

Bonnie discussed the high costs for developing online training, and asked the Council’s reaction to having towns pay for the IFSTA books that accompany the free online classes. The Council decided that it would be OK for towns to pay for the IFSTA books, because the actual online training was free of charge.

Bonnie also reported that new audit forms were online, explaining tighter procedures for auditing the pre-certification and pre-licensure training programs. Individuals must be approved to attend.



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Regarding outside credit, Bonnie reported that it is currently a time consuming and cumbersome process, and suggested that OEDM might move to accepting preapproved classes only. The Council suggested that OEDM contact organizations that host outside classes, and preapprove their training 30 days in advance. Also recommended that OEDM list preapproved training classes on the website, including linking to CFMA districts. Council was concerned about the prospect of OEDM recognizing preapproved training only. A motion was made by Susan Bransfield, seconded by Bill Abbott, that OEDM bring any outside credit applications that had been denied (all or partial) to the next meeting. It was also suggested that OEDM prepare a list of applications denied over 60 days.

Bonnie concluded her report with the list of current vacancies on the Fire Marshal Training Council and Board of Control. Don Harwood requested that the OEDM budget be reviewed by the Council to see if the Council can assist OEDM in hiring more trainers, purchasing new computers, and facilitating online training. Tim Tharau requested that OEDM make a list of what the unit really needs. It was reiterated that review of the OEDM budget be added to the quarterly meeting agendas.

Bill Abbott, State Fire Marshal, proposed that OEDM change its policy to make sure that fire officials diversify their continuing education portfolio to include both fire investigation and fire code training. Since OEDM currently does not have the ability to track the content of continuing education credits, Don Harwood suggested that rather than a policy change, OEDM should just send out a reminder to code officials that they need to take both code and investigation classes.

There was no old business to report.

Under new business, Bonnie Becker presented an updated draft of the 2002 FMTC Bylaws which incorporated language from the Codes and Standards Committee Bylaws and the Building Code Training Council Bylaws. The Council reviewed and suggested changes. Bonnie will present revised version at June meeting for review and approval.

A request was made for OEDM to bring information about the FMTC and the decertification process to the June meeting.

The Council agreed to meet four times per year (March, June 8, September and December) on the second Thursday of the month at 9 a.m.

Doug Schanne presented a list of career development topics and asked the Council to prioritize topics for next semester's schedule. Council voted to re-establish an education subcommittee to work with Doug, and unanimously appointed Jamie DiPace, David Marcarelli and Jeff Morrissette to serve on the subcommittee. The subcommittee was charged with reviewing the classes and submitting their list to Bonnie by March 31, 2017.

Walt Summers, President of the Connecticut Fire Marshals Association (CFMA), addressed the Council and presented the following concerns: Walt stressed that CFMA believes there is a need to make the OEDM pre-certification training and national certification one test, he suggested that there is a need for night training classes; Walt expressed concern about the governance of the Code Training and Education Fund, and he stated that there needs to be an improvement in the training that OEDM provides.



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David Marcarelli offered Quinnipiac University as a possible new training facility. It was suggested that OEDM contact Eversource for training space as well.

At 10:56 a.m., Susan Bransfield motioned to adjourn, seconded by Victor Mitchell.

Donald Harwood, Chair
Fire Marshal Training Council