



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



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**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2004 MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

Chairman Carozza called the meeting to order at 9:47 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioners' Brammer, Haber, Kowalski, Morris, Milewski, Nicol, Ouellette, Stankye and Wilkinson.

Staff members Lewandowski, Lewis, Morrisette, O'Neil, Piechota and Salafia were present.

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

State Fire Administrator Morrisette welcomed Ralph Scarpino from the DEP Forestry Division to the meeting. He informed the Commission that Mark Lewandowski is here to report on behalf of Director of Training Adam Piskura who is attending the North American Fire Training Directors' Annual Meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Haber and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Kowalski to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2004 meeting. Motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Stankye and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Kowalski to approve the Staff Report for the period of July 15, 2004 through August 14, 2004 and August 15, 2004 through September 14, 2004. Motion carried.

Moving to agenda item 4a.) 2005-2007 Biennium Budget. Mr. Morrisette stated that during the summer months we were required to develop the agency's 2005-2007 Biennium Budget submittal. An overview was previously mailed with the staff report. That has been updated this morning and Peter O'Neil will provide a general overview. The general guidance from Secretary Marc Ryan limits what we can request. In addition, Mr. Morrisette distributed a letter that was received last evening from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) with guidance regarding a mandated reduction option which we are required to submit. That reduction option must total 10 % of our 2004-2005 current services budget. We will be developing that over the coming weeks for submittal to OPM by the first week of November.

Peter O'Neil reported that we received our instruction letter from the Governor's office reinforcing the spending cap issue and discussing the large gap between expenditures and revenues. They basically told us that outside of inflationary guidelines we are somewhat limited to what we can ask for in the new budget request. Most of the requests that we submitted outside of inflation are going to be scrutinized by OPM and we already have had a follow up inquiry from our budget analyst this past week with questions on line items which were referenced in the staff reports section 1a. We also put in our basic equipment request covering IT replacement, facility maintenance for the next couple years and equipment for training support. As far as the Limited Access Highway, we received word that more supplemental money will be coming from the Department of Social Services (DSS). We are already planning to facilitate that and it appears that we will be getting approximately \$72,000 for the next fiscal year through June 30, 2005.

Commissioner Stankye stated that in the September staff report he noticed that in the capital budget request the amount increased in the 4th and 5th year. He asked what comprises that increase. Mr. O'Neil replied that there were some major projects like the paving and resurfacing of the training grounds that we were holding off until the last year. Mr. Morrisette added that he had a breakdown that identifies the items that he would be passing out. He said the major bump is looking at construction of a larger multi-purpose room within this facility that would allow the conduct of large events and eliminate having to use the facilities at the Air Museum or rental of hotel space. Also, the replacement of our CPAT facility in Meriden is a second option that bumps the capital budget significantly.

Commissioner Nicol asked if this capital budget request includes vehicle replacement. Mr. Morrisette replied that it is part of the capital equipment budget although right now there is no long range method to identify this need. While we have been successful in securing funding through the Capital Equipment Purchase Fund (CEPF) this past fiscal year, funding was only provided for replacement equipment, no new equipment. He indicated that long range capital equipment needs, specifically our rolling stock, will be documented in a letter to OPM. Commissioner Nicol asked if that was the Pumper and Aerial and asked if that would take 3 years. Mr. Morrisette responded that his guess would be more like 5-10 years. He said that we have a Pumper that was donated to us 2-3 years ago by the Department of Corrections which is beginning to cost us some money to maintain and repair. This would be the first piece of Academy apparatus that will require replacement long before our KME pumper or ladder truck.

Commissioner Morris asked about the size of the multi-purpose room. Mr. Morrisette remarked that the budget figures requested are ballpark and was provided by our liaison at the Department of Public Works (DPW). He said it would be large enough to accommodate 300-500 people. Chairman Carozza asked if this item needed any action. Mr. Morrisette said we had a required budget submittal date of September 1st which was addressed at that time. He requested the Commission's concurrence on the budget and action.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Nicol and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ouellette to approve the Biennium Budget submittal. Motion carried.

Moving to item 4b.) Staffing Update – Mr. Morrisette reported that as indicated in the staff report we had a personnel change with Robert Christ transferring to the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). The transfer took effect September 3rd although we had a sharing arrangement set-up with OEM, and Mr. Christ was with us off and on throughout last week and for the Recruit Graduation on September 22nd. We have completed the position refill request process which was approved by both DAS and OPM. We have also gone through the typical hurdles of the SEBAC list and we were fortunate in receiving approval to move forward just yesterday. An offer was made at that time and accepted by Bill Auclair, who was on the Trainer list our two most recent hires were selected from. We expect Bill Auclair to be on board as early as this Friday which begins a new pay period.

Moving to item 4c.) Terrorism Training for Entry Level Programs – Mr. Morrisette stated that this is a repeat item from our June meeting in Thomaston. At that time a document was provided to those in attendance and it was included in the overall package this month. It deals with a general topic of terrorism training for Connecticut's Fire Service and whether or not the Commission as a whole would be interested to establish a mandate to require all firefighters have at least a minimum level of training in this area. We've identified a number of possible programs, although we don't necessarily want to tie it to anything specific. He also said no action was required today however; it is incumbent upon Commissioners to go back to their organizations and have discussions on this issue. Potentially it could become controversial. It is our understanding the Police Academy has added 1 week to their recruit program which is entirely terrorism related. Therefore, when their recruits graduate, they leave with Personal Protective Equipment and their Mark I Kits. A discussion period followed.

Moving to item 4d.) Fallen Firefighters' Memorial Update – Mr. Morrisette gave an update on the Memorial Service scheduled for October 17th. He stated that invitations were distributed this morning and the agenda has been finalized. The Governor will be attending and will serve as the keynote speaker at the Service. Also, a representative of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation will be traveling to Connecticut to attend and will make a brief presentation. We expect the ceremony to last between 60 and 90 minutes and six names of fallen firefighters were approved by the Committee for inclusion to the Memorial, two from the past year and four from earlier years. Commissioner Stankye asked if the families were invited. Mr. Morrisette replied yes and stated that we supplied all the contact information to the Chairman who was to write a letter of invitation to each family, as well as the chief of the department. Commissioner Ouellette asked if there was a list of guidelines available for names to be submitted to the Memorial. Mr. Morrisette replied that he believed it is on the website and he could also provide a copy. He also stated that an Explorer Muster is scheduled here at the Academy for the same day of the service. He spoke with the Boys Scout Council who facilitates that program and it is their intention to stop and join the service as a group. In case of

inclement weather we will move the Memorial Service indoors. We made some logistical changes from last year where we now have hard wiring in place from the multi-purpose room to the auditorium so we can do a remote broadcast.

Moving to item 4e.) CSFA Education Committee Update – Commissioner Wilkinson reported that the Education Committee has been meeting regularly and held 3 formal meetings over the course of the summer. The Committee met in July in Wethersfield and that was the first opportunity for representatives of the Stamford Fire Department to join us. As you may recall, Stamford was recently designated through legislation as the 9th Regional Fire School last spring. Most of the discussion surrounded the Class A Burn Building crisis that the state is in. There are just a few facilities available for all the training that needs to take place statewide. Al Hawkins Chairman of the Committee had presented some information for consideration to the Committee with the possibility of trying to provide funding to build 2 pre-fabricated Class A Burn Buildings as a temporary solution. They anticipated that each of the pre-fabricated buildings could be put into place for approximately \$250,000 each. He also said that Donald Ouillette, who will be the project manager, for the revitalization program was at that meeting and gave an in depth overview of how the projects will be administered and some background on the bureaucracy that the Committee will face as things develop. The Committee members strongly supported the priorities and timelines of the original study. In August the Committee met in Stamford, and had a very nice tour of the Stamford facility and there were some additional discussions about pursuing money for the pre-fabricated burn buildings. It was suggested that some of the money that was designated to be appropriated into the bonding package could possibly be used for that purpose. Mr. Ouillette was present and wants to move forward with hiring an Architect for the project as it relates to the New Haven School and when that is started they will go about the process for selecting an Architect to start the preliminary work for the other facilities. Mr. Ouillette believes that shovels would not go into the dirt until after July of 2005 and he needs to have some concrete information to get an item placed on the agenda of the Bond Commission. The first expenditures would go before the Bonding Commission for their approval once they have some of the architectural things in place. Commissioner Wilkinson also reported that the Committee met in September in New Haven. Many of the schools reported progress in their respective areas. The paperwork that New Haven needs to forward to the Department of Public Works (DPW) is nearly complete; they anticipate having that in within a week or two. The Valley School is having good progress in looking for potential sites in their area and the Middlesex School has had some positive discussions with the Mayor of Middletown for possibility of surplus state property that the City of Middletown will receive. There was a meeting that was held a week before the September meeting at the Legislative Office Building that was hosted by Representative Betty Boukus who has been the torch bearer of our goal. There were 4 members of the Committee present Ted Schroll, lobbyist for the fire service organizations, Jeff Morrissette, Representative Boukus, Representative Pawelkiewicz, and Commissioner Fleming from DPW as well as Donald Ouillette. This was a follow up to a meeting that had been held the previous week with Commissioner Fleming and Senator Donald Williams the new President Pro Tempore of the Senate. Their meeting

discussed in length the possibility of the pre-fabricated burn buildings being constructed to help with the shortages we've been experiencing. With all the problems that the State has had these public works projects have been under extreme scrutiny and it is very obvious that although Commissioner Fleming is in our corner, everything has to go absolutely according to the book. Commissioner Fleming fears that because there is no clear ownership of the property as it relates to the Willimantic School and there are very preliminary negotiations being scheduled with the current property owner they don't feel that ethically they can do any construction on that property until the property ownership questions are resolved. They still feel if necessary, the bonding money could be used to provide those pre-fabricated structures but they need to resolve the property questions first and all the participants were in agreement. Additionally, they had a short meeting with Representative Boukus after that meeting ended and inquired as to her opinion as to what we need to do politically to keep the project rolling. Her responses were very upbeat; she mentioned that they had excellent support in a lot of good areas. She advised them that whenever they're having discussions with legislators to always mention the issues and to remain optimistic that there will be support for future funding. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for October 21st in Wethersfield. A brief question and answer period followed.

Commissioner Johnson arrived at 10:13 am.

Moving to item 4f.) OEM Activation of EOC Update – Mr. Morrissette reported that there had been a very lengthy OEM Emergency Operation Center (EOC) activation back in the early summer months due to a regional upgrade in the terror threat level. We were able to sustain staffing although there was some difficulty with the 24-hour coverage required for about 15 days. There was not a lot of activity but there was serious concern. They downgraded the activation where only key agencies were required to be there. We are looking at other areas as part of the overall Statewide Fire Rescue Disaster Response Plan to make some significant improvements and adjustments. Commissioner Nicol asked if the activation was for the Convention in Boston. Mr. Morrissette replied that it was just prior to that when the regional threat level was elevated for New York, northern New Jersey and Washington, DC.

Moving to item 4g.) Service Voucher Update/New Funding – Mr. Morrissette reported that to date only about 20% of the funds have been expended by local fire departments. A letter is being drafted for dissemination as we indicated we would do after the summer months to remind fire departments that they have until the end of the calendar year to expend the funds. The Bookstore manager reported yesterday that she has seen an increase in activity in that particular area over the last week or two and in fact this past month has been the best month for that operation since 2001 or 2002 with just over \$30,000 in sales.

Mr. Morrissette stated, as indicated by Peter O'Neil, there is about \$72,800 remaining in this Patriot Act Grant that the Department of Social Services manages that will be transferred to our agency. The guidance may change as he has received a request from

some legislators to do so if possible. The legislators had asked, if at all possible, to provide the funding as a direct grant to each fire company. He said he spoke with Brian Mattiello who at that time was the Governor's co-chief of staff and asked him what his preference was in regard to the grant. Mr. Mattiello's indication was to go with what the legislators are requesting. There is no more funding remaining after this so unless the fire service does something legislatively with the Limited Access Highway reimbursement program, this will be the end to any more funding. We redrafted an MOU that was provided to DSS for their review and concurrence. We anticipate getting that out within the next week or two as they didn't find anything that was of great concern to them. We plan on starting the new grant sometime after January 1st 2005, more than likely as a direct payment to each of the eligible volunteer fire companies. Also we received an inquiry from Fairfield fire department on behalf of Stratfield and Southport fire companies that they did not receive any notification of the original grant. We had researched this and the Commission only approved funding those fire companies that directly benefited from the Limited Access Highway Program over the past five years. The Business office researched back over the past ten years or so and there has been no activity from either of those fire companies.

Moving to item 5a.) Election of Officers – Chairman Carozza asked Commissioner Nicol to Chair the Elections Committee. Commissioner Nicol called for a motion to nominate a slate of officers.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Milewski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wilkinson to nominate Peter Carozza as Chairman. Commissioner Nicol called for any additional nominations. A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Bramer and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to close nominations for the position of Chairman. Motion carried. As no other nominations were received, nominations were closed and the Secretary cast one ballot for Chairman Carozza.

Commissioner Nicol sought nomination for the position of Vice Chairman.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Ouellette and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Johnson to nominate Kevin Kowalski as Vice Chairman. Commissioner Nicol called for any additional nominations. A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to close nominations for the position of Vice Chairman. Motion carried. As no other nominations were received, nominations were closed and the Secretary cast one ballot for Vice Chairman Kowalski.

Commissioner Nicol sought nomination for the position of Secretary.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to nominate Ed Haber as Secretary. Commissioner Nicol called for any additional nominations. A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Stankye and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brammer to close nominations for the position of

Secretary. Motion carried. As no other nominations were received, nominations were closed and the Chairman cast one ballot for Secretary Haber.

Chairman Carozza thanked the Commission for its support and confidence and said that he is looking forward to the coming year.

Vice Chairman Kowalski also thanked the Commission for its support over the past year in the special committees and meetings and thanked Chairman Carozza for his assistance as well.

Secretary Haber thanked the Commission for their confidence over the year.

Moving to item 5b.) Annual Report FY 2003/2004 – Mr. Morrissette reported that a copy of the agency's Annual Report was enclosed in the packages that were mailed and asked for the Commission's approval. Commissioner Ouellette mentioned that in the Annual Report we showed 140,226 contact hours however in the July 14th staff report that number was 35,499 and asked if there is an error. Mr. Morrissette asked Mark Lewandowski to provide additional information. Mr. Lewandowski explained that what transpired in looking at the numbers from the previous years, we discovered we were way off due to the fact that we've had some staffing crisis over the past 2 years. A lot of the numbers we were doing were not being recorded or reported so we had Marion Lamprecht who is here in a part-time capacity manually go through the records so the numbers reflected in the annual report are very accurate. Mr. Morrissette added that he believes she went back as far as five years but he has not seen those numbers as yet. We may need to amend some of the statistics in previous Annual Reports. Mr. Lewandowski also indicated that we are working with a programmer now and our information will be automated which will reduce the amount of human error. Commissioner Ouellette stated that the numbers are certainly encouraging because it appeared our classes had fallen back. He suggested that we take a look at how we keep our records because there is room for mistake but he doesn't feel there should be that many mistakes. Mr. Morrissette responded that it was just non-reporting by individuals that had that responsibility. He said we are relatively pleased and next month we can provide a better update.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to approve the Annual Report FY 2003/2004. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5c.) Fire Apparatus Licensing – Mr. Morrissette invited Trainer Mark Salafia, who also currently serves as the President of the Connecticut Fire Department Instructor's Association (CFDIA) to provide a general overview of the issue involving fire apparatus licensing. Mr. Salafia said a few months ago we received an email from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Sergeant that administers the 2Q examination. He indicated that two Public Acts effective January 1, 2005 would not allow them to have special licensing such as 2Q. The 2Q licensing never had any legislative backing it was done through DMV at the request of the Connecticut Fire Chiefs. The State Fire Administrator called a meeting of the Joint Council of Fire Service Organizations which

was held at the Legislative Office Building. There were two DMV representatives at the meeting, Division Manager Ciotto and Sergeant Donald Bridge. The Joint Council decided that we certainly need to have some type of endorsement on the licensing that would maintain a level at or above the level we currently have with the 2Q license. A letter was drafted and signed by all members of the Joint Council and sent to Commissioner DeFilippo of DMV requesting that this endorsement take place. Commissioner Kowalski asked where we go from here. Mr. Salafia replied that the letter has been sent and we're awaiting a response. Mr. Morrisette added that just yesterday we received a call from a clerk in DMV's legal inquiring as to the addresses for all the signatories on the letter so we do anticipate a response. He also said the reaction by the two DMV representatives was positive in regard to addressing our needs. He said that when we receive a response we will meet and discuss the issues. A discussion period followed.

A **MOTION** was made by Chairman Carozza and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Kowalski to table any decision on the 2Q licensing issue specifically as it relates to our certification testing prerequisites for Pump and Aerial Operator.

Moving to item 5d.) Certification Examination Reference Discussion – Mr. Piechota reported that until now the reference sources that have been used for all of our certification examinations are published by IFSTA. He said that changed when Delmar Publishing came out with their Firefighter I program and some organizations began using that. In an effort to be user friendly we started writing our Firefighter I and II examinations using questions that are referenced to both IFSTA and Delmar so irrespective of what publisher created the program the question could be answered by both. Now there is a third publisher Jones & Bartlett Publishing. He distributed a comparison chart to show that if we continue the same process for all Firefighter I tests using all 3 references our bank of questions is reduced dramatically. The question bank we currently have contains about 950 questions and 520 are referenced to all three publishers so we lose about 400 questions from the bank. The shaded area on the chart shows the subject areas, that the number of questions per topic area is reduced by 50% and in 2 cases there are none. He stated that he wanted to bring this to the attention of the Commission so that no one is misled. We are going to place a notice inside the Jones & Bartlett books that are being sold in our Bookstore stating that one can purchase the book but the test is not currently referenced to it. It is our understanding that the Burville Regional Fire School has purchased the Jones & Bartlett curriculum and they intend to use it for their Firefighter I. As of now, we don't have a test that's referenced to that book. One option we have is to create a special test just for the Jones & Bartlett users or we could revamp all of the exams we currently have to include all 3 reference materials. Commissioner Kowalski asked if we talked to Jones & Bartlett and would it be appropriate to call them up and explain our quandary. Mr. Piechota replied that we have not done so.

Moving to item 5e.) Live Fire Audit Process – Mr. Piechota stated that as explained to the Commission in the past, we have embarked on a process whereby we are going out to

observe live fire suppression activities that are being conducted for the purposes of certification. As the Commission is aware, we do not evaluate live fire suppression activities because of the lack of resources and specifically the fact that we don't have adequate burn buildings at the present time. Until now, we have been accepting a sign off process that a fire chief or a regional school issues stating that a candidate has gone through the process and has been appropriately evaluated. We are expecting a re-accreditation visit by IFSAC in the next month and the PROBoard down the road and we felt that we need a little more oversight and participation in the process other than just accepting a piece of paper. We have embarked on a process where we find out when a Regional Fire School is conducting their Firefighter I live fire activities for the purposes of certification and we then send a representative of the Commission to observe. We've selected and trained about 6 of our senior proctors and have done 9 live burn audits to date. The problem is that people think we're there to evaluate and we're not. We are only there to observe the process being conducted. We are running into some difficulty because if we show up and see an unsafe act then what are we suppose to do. We've taken NFPA 1403 pulled out it's pertinent parts and we're sending it to the host organization. In some places it has been well received and in other places not so well received but as we gear up and do more of these it will become a fixture and we'll do the best we can until the regional schools are all constructed and the live fire suppression activities can be evaluated. Commissioner Stankye asked if sending the guidelines out to a school came about after we started observing a program. Mr. Piechota replied no that we created it before we began the process. A brief discussion period followed.

Moving to item 5f.) Rescue Truck Ceremony – Mr. Morrissette stated the new Rescue Truck is parked out front and said it is the result of the labor of a number of staff and adjuncts here at the Academy including Mark Lewandowski, Jim Carroll, John Tsokalas, Adam Piskura and a whole host of others. We contacted the Governor's office to request her participation in a christening or wet down ceremony. This had tentatively been scheduled for October, but the Governor's office requested that we push it back to November.

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

Moving to item 7) Matters to be raised by Commissioners and Staff –

Commissioner Johnson asked if we ever looked at possibly conducting the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) year round. Mr. Lewandowski replied we cannot do that due to weather and temperature parameters. We would need to have access to an indoor facility. Commissioner Johnson asked why we can't get a state facility like the state armory. Mr. Lewandowski explained there are some very strict parameters to run the test in addition to the extensive labor involved to move and set-up the equipment. A recent example was it took us 12 hours to move all the equipment and set it up when we conducted a demonstration at the New England Fire Chiefs Conference a couple of years ago. Logistically it is very difficult. Mr. Morrissette added that if we were to move the test indoor, to make it worth the effort, we would need a facility for a period of at least

November through March. Also, licensure issues such as the floor and its coefficient of slippage come into play.

He also said that candidates should understand that they can take the test any time; they don't need to wait until an ad is in the paper. Mr. Lewandowski stated that misunderstanding on the part of fire chiefs and local human resource officials often complicate the process for the candidates and the Academy. We are looking at buying ad space in the major newspapers in an effort to reach prospective CPAT candidates. A discussion period followed.

Fred Piechota reported that the IFSAC Site visit is up coming and invited Commissioners to attend on November 12th if they wished.

Mark Lewandowski reported that last week he attended a Trade Region I meeting in New Hampshire and discussed fee schedules with other New England states. Last year we paid \$658,000 for instructor salaries and an additional \$217,000 for their benefit packages. He said that the Commission needs to find a way to subsidize firefighter training cost. A brief discussion period followed.

Mr. Morrissette reported that the Homeland Security Council continues to meet. A selection committee has been empanelled to conduct a nationwide search and selection of a Commissioner for the newly created Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. He provided three names to the Governor's office to sit on the selection committee representing the fire service. Chief Ron Natrass of Stratford will serve as our representative.

He also reported that the Governor's office indicated that reappointment letters for those Commission members whose terms expired are in the mail.

The Commission's October meeting will be held in one of the classrooms as we are hosting the Command School and the conference room is logistically best for that program. Please look at the monitors when arriving next month for the meeting location.

Two meetings have been scheduled with Adjunct Instructors for October 14 (1:00 p.m.) and October 19th (6:30 p.m.) Commissioners are invited and encouraged to attend.

Bookstore sales for the previous month nearly set a record, reaching \$31,452.

Mr. Morrissette said he was approached by Leonard Guercia, OEMS Director who wished to meet some time in the near future to discuss our possible role in conducting Paramedic testing.

Mr. Morrissette stated he was interested to commission portraits of our past Commission Chairmen be done for display at the Academy. Firefighter/Artist Paul Walsh would be

interested in the project but could only produce an average of one per year. Four portraits in addition to the one we have for the late Maurice McCarthy, Sr. would be required.

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

Chairman Carroza adjourned the meeting at 11:55 AM.

Dated: _____

Edward F. Haber, Secretary
Commission on Fire
Prevention and Control