



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



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MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 25, 2001 MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m. by Vice Chairman Kowalski with the following members present: Commissioners Brammer, Haber, Maheu, Milewski, Mullen, Nicol, Stankye and Wilkinson. Commissioner Vendetta arrived at 9:55 a.m. Commissioners Carozza, Gomeau, Johnson, and Massey were excused. Staff members Morrissette, Emons, O'Neil, Ouellette, Piechota and Piskura were present.

Guests to the meeting were identified as Chief Thomas Weber and Deputy Fire Marshal Bob Barker from the Manchester Fire Department; Bill Stanton, Joe Duffy, Glenn Greenberg, Mitch Kovacs and Jim Masterson from Liberty Mutual.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for a moment of silence for our fallen brothers and sisters from New York.

Moving to item 1 b.) Vice Chairman Kowalski called for Russ Emons and guests from Liberty Mutual to make their presentation.

Mr. Emons stated that a few months ago Mr. Joe Duffy from Liberty Mutual contacted him to inquire if there was something his company could do to promote fire safety and injury prevention in the State of Connecticut. He stated that he had several conversations with Mr. Duffy that resulted in Liberty Mutual's interest to make a donation to the Commission to be used for the Kids Fire Safety House. Mr. Duffy stated that it was an extreme pleasure and honor to come before the Commission to make a presentation to support fire safety especially for the Kids Fire Safety House. He stated that after a recent tour of this state-of-the-art facility they left here very proud and energized with what they saw.

Mr. Masterson gave an overview of Liberty Mutual. He named numerous organizations and programs that Liberty Mutual provides support to in Connecticut. In looking for an organization to donate to, Liberty Mutual looks for an organization that has a similar mission to Liberty Mutual. He stated that he believes that the Kids Fire Safety House is a great education tool.

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Vice Chairman Kowalski thanked the guests from Liberty Mutual for entering into a partnership with the Commission and for supporting the Kids Fire Safety House.

Mr. Masterson introduced Messrs. Stanton, Greenberg and Kovacs from Liberty Mutual also in attendance at the Commission meeting.

Mr. Duffy presented a check in the amount of \$2,000 on behalf of Liberty Mutual to Vice Chairman Kowalski.

Vice Chairman Kowalski asked the guests from the Manchester Fire Department to introduce themselves.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for approval of the minutes of the June 26, 2001 meeting.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2001 meeting. Motion carried.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for approval of the Staff Report for the period of June 15, 2001 - July 14, 2001, July 15, 2001 – August 14, 2001 and August 15, 2001 – September 14, 2001.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Stankye and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to approve the Staff Reports for the period of June 15, 2001 - July 14, 2001, July 15, 2001 – August 14, 2001 and August 15, 2001 – September 14, 2001. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 d.) Vice Chairman Kowalski asked Mr. Emons to give an overview of NFPA's Risk Watch Program.

Mr. Emons stated that Risk Watch is a comprehensive injury prevention curriculum for children in preschool through grade eight. Risk Watch helps kids beat the odds. With proper education, children can learn to be much safer and prevent injuries. Risk Watch activities combine teaching and imagination to help children learn to promote their own personal safety, as well as that of their families and communities. Risk Watch modules are grade specific to make teaching easy and require as little as nine hours per school year.

Mr. Morrissette asked Mr. Emons to give an overview of the Risk Watch – Champion Award 2002 Program.

Mr. Emons stated that NFPA is committed to helping states reduce unintentional childhood injuries. In the year 2002, NFPA will select up to 15 states to receive an NFPA Champion Award. NFPA will provide Champion Management Teams free training, educational materials, and technical support to plan, evaluate, and manage the implementation of NFPA's Risk Watch curriculum in local communities. Each Champion Award is valued at more than \$15,000 in training, education materials and support. He recommended that the Commission take the lead by submitting an application so that Connecticut can become a 2002 Champion Award state. The deadline for the application is November 15.

A discussion period followed.

Chief Weber stated that the Risk Watch Program is a trend for the fire service looking into preventive measures. It addresses the at-risk categories FEMA looked at in the Fire Act Grant. It has its shortcomings; we don't disagree with that at all, it's in its birthing stage. We being participants here so close, especially to NFPA, can help to make this a better program by participating in it. He asked for the Commission's support to go in that direction and to give the fire service in the state a chance to get out in the lead with this program.

Deputy Fire Marshal Barker stated that he hopes that the Commission will endorse this program and vote positively for the Risk Watch - Champion Award Program for the State of Connecticut.

A discussion period followed.

Vice Chairman Kowalski inquired about the amount of funding the Commission would receive if it were a recipient of the Champion Award.

Mr. Emons replied that the Commission would receive a \$5,000 stipend (U.S. funds) to help fund a two-day Risk Watch training workshop for five communities. An additional \$10,000 in in-kind training, educational materials and support will be provided.

Vice Chairman Kowalski inquired if the Commission would have to promise/contract to put 5,000 units out in the state.

Mr. Emons stated that the Commission would have to develop a plan to promote the program in the state.

Vice Chairman Kowalski inquired whether the Commission would have to promote 5,000 units and if the Commission does not reach the 5,000-person pinnacle what would happen.

Mr. Emons stated that he did not believe so, the main responsibility is to develop a plan to grow the program statewide.

Vice Chairman Kowalski inquired what Mr. Emons envisioned as the cost of developing the plan.

Mr. Emons stated that he could not give a cost estimate at this time.

Commissioner Nicol stated if the Commission votes to adopt this program, is the Commission adopting the program as it's been presented?

Vice Chairman Kowalski stated that his understanding is that the Commission is not endorsing anything, what we are doing is looking for a vote today whether to fill out the application to become a Risk Watch Champion Partner.

Commissioner Maheu inquired if the Commission is awarded the grant does that allow us to set its own policy as to how we envision this program being implemented in the state.

Mr. Emons stated that he did not believe so but thinks the Commission will have to operate under NFPA's guidelines.

Commissioner Milewski stated that he thinks the program is terrific but his only questions are regarding the required number of units and the cost to the Commission.

Mr. Emons stated that the Commission only has to develop a plan to promote this program, it does not say we have to buy 5,000 units. If the plan doesn't work we have met the guideline by developing the plan. There will be some commitment of staff and manpower to promote the program in the state.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Vendetta and SECONDED by Commissioner Nicol to authorize the agency to initiate the application process for the Risk Watch – Champion Award Program and to further discuss with NFPA the Commission's concerns about potential changes and their master plan for updating the program. Motion carried.

Commissioner Maheu abstained.

A discussion period followed.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Vendetta and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski directing the agency to submit in writing the Commission's questions along with the application for the Risk Watch – Champion Award Program.

A discussion period followed.

Vice Chairman Kowalski directed Mr. Emons or Mr. Morrisette to report on the status of the Commission's questions at the October meeting.

Mr. Emons stated that he would contact Meri K. Appy from NFPA to schedule a meeting with her.

Commissioner Vendetta suggested that a member of the Commission attend the meeting with NFPA.

Motion carried.

Moving to item 4 a.) Mr. Morrisette gave an update on the Fallen Firefighters Memorial project. He stated that he attended a meeting on September 18 at which time the Committee met with the Engineer as well as two representatives from the stone company. The stone company presented for review a full size drawing of what will be etched on the memorial. The drawing was approved with some recommended changes. Final plans for the site work are expected to be complete within the next few weeks. A meeting will be scheduled with three or four of the large construction firms within the state to initiate the construction phase. Rather than bidding the project, the Chairman wants to negotiate directly with some firms.

It does appear that the monies that have been raised and appropriated through the state will meet the expected cost for the project. On September 20, Governor Rowland signed-off appropriating \$100,000

from the special session to the Commission for pass through to the Memorial Committee. The committee has agreed to look at this project in two phases. The first phase would be the site work and erection of the memorial. The second phase probably one year from now will be the actual placement of names on the memorial. The committee feels that a lot more research has to be done to gather and verify all the names to be placed on the monument.

Commissioner Nicol stated that a comment was made at a recent meeting he attended that some consideration should be given in developing a hall of fame for individuals who have made a significant contribution to the fire service and who may not have died in the line of duty. He stated that he feels that this is an inappropriate use of the memorial. He asked Mr. Morrisette to pass his matter on to the Memorial Committee.

Mr. Morrisette stated that as of today no discussion on developing a hall of fame has ever been brought up for discussion within the Memorial Committee. He indicated Neil Burrows has discussed this issue with him but not within the context of the memorial project.

Moving to item 4 b.) Commissioner Wilkinson reported on the CSFA Education Committee's meeting of September 6, 2001 at the Eastern Connecticut Fire School in Willimantic (see attached report).

Moving to item 4 c.) Mr. Piskura reported about the review of the Recruit Training Program. He stated that a visit was made to the Connecticut Police Academy in order to research their operating procedures. A comparison of the Fire Academy's program was performed. There are pluses and minuses in both programs and the Training Division is in the process of now choosing which to implement. Further a communication has been received from the Career Chiefs' Association regarding their five points which were discussed previously. We believe four of the five points have already been implemented. What is needed now is clarification of the mandatory lodging policy. Other than that, the Academy has tightened down on discipline. We will continue to monitor the program and to implement new procedures or recommendations from the Career Chiefs' Association.

Moving to item 4 d.) Mr. Piskura reported on the Cable Training Initiative Pilot. He stated the two pilot programs were run the evening of September 10 and 11. Calls were made to the fire departments in the service area of the cable franchise to ask them to watch and evaluate the broadcasts. To date he stated that he was only aware of one response. Due to the nature of the national situation he did not think anyone saw the second broadcast and the third broadcast was cancelled. We do know that we need to do an actual broadcast of a more traditional teaching environment. No additional broadcasts have been scheduled as of this date.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for a motion to take a recess.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Vendetta and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to take a recess. Motion carried.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called the meeting to order at 11:17 a.m.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for a motion to nominate the current slate of officers.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Milewski and SECONDED by Commissioner Vendetta to nominate the current slate of officers. The motion was unanimously approved.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Stankye and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to close the nominations and to direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for the current slate of officers as follows:

*Peter S. Carozza, Jr. Chairman
Kevin J. Kowalski, Vice Chairman
Edward F. Haber, Secretary*

The motion was unanimously approved.

Moving to item 5 b.) Mr. Morrissette asked for approval of the FY 2000/2001 Annual Report.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the FY 2000/2001 Annual Report. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 c.) Mr. Piechota presented an overview of the Certification Regulation Amendments.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Vendetta and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to accept the Certification Regulation Amendments as presented. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5 e.) Mr. Morrissette gave an overview of the Domestic Preparedness Senior Steering Task Force. He stated that to date he and Chairman Carozza attended two meetings of this Task Force. Chiefs Ed Richards and Lou LaVecchia representing the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association and Career Fire Chiefs Association respectively also sit on the Senior Steering Task Force. Additional meetings are planned in an effort to complete final recommendations and the state's application for the Department of Justice grant funding for both planning and equipment. The Adjutant General has set as a goal the end of the calendar year to have a final state plan in place in respect to our grant application.

Chief Weber stated that he was involved with Congressman Larson last week to help him draft legislation to obtain more money for local preparedness to first responders on a regional level.

Vice Chairman Kowalski asked the State Fire Administrator to get clarification from Governor Rowland's Office on the issue of maintaining flags at half-staff status for a 30-day mourning period as requested by the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Mr. Morrissette reported on a number of ongoing events. He stated that a notice was put out regarding the Office of State Fire Marshal 100th Anniversary on October 9 at the Aqua Turf. A table has been reserved for the Commission and if anyone wishes to attend, please let him know as soon as possible.

The Fire Service as a group is looking to conduct a statewide fundraising effort for the September 11th World Trade Center terrorist event. A notice was sent out recommending that fire departments throughout Connecticut participate in a Fill-the-Boot campaign to be conducted September 28-30, 2001. Lt. Governor Rell will do a press conference this afternoon in Wethersfield to announce this

effort. A consortium of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations would like to consolidate all the fundraising efforts into a single large check to be presented to a representative from New York on October 13, at the Connecticut State Firefighters Association Convention. Also, the Department of Public Safety, Division of State Police has announced a fundraising event scheduled for November 6 at the Aqua Turf.

As mentioned in the Staff Report the State's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated on September 11 following the terrorist event in New York City. For the first time fire service representation was seated within the EOC. Commission personnel staffed the EOC over a period of 72 hours the first six days immediately following the incident. Agency staff served a great support role in handling the volume of phone calls during the period from the September 11th through the September 16th. A significant amount of assistance was received from both the Connecticut Fire Chiefs' Association and the Career Chiefs' Association in identifying local resources for possible mobilization in order to develop a statewide mobilization plan.

Chief Weber stated that a draft is in the works for a statewide mobilization plan with information taken from a couple different states. A meeting is schedule for Friday for a work session on the plan and hopefully a first draft will go out through the Technical Advisory Committee and the Connecticut Fire Chiefs' Association. Communications is the other issue. The Technical Advisory Committee has been broken into two groups, one working on mobilization and the other working on communications.

Mr. Morrisette stated that back in July he and Commissioner Vendetta traveled to New York City to visit the FIRE ZONE and met with representatives from the FDNY's Fire Safety Education unit. We had some internal discussion in regards to the Adriaen's Landing project in Hartford and an interest to have a fire and life safety education presence at the planned Science Museum. They hope to be able to meet with the Mayor in Hartford in an effort to try and sell the concept.

Mr. Morrisette referenced a letter distributed before the meeting from Mr. Richard Waselik who has some concerns. Staff will be responding to that letter and wanted to give Commissioners an opportunity to comment on this matter. The agency staff feels pretty comfortable that we have legitimate reasons why we did what we did and will respond as such. This addresses some broader issues in terms of handing off curriculum and who is qualified to teach it.

Mr. Morrisette gave an update on the thermal imaging camera (TIC) initiative. Governor Rowland held a press conference at the Academy yesterday to announce that a TIC would be made available to every fire department statewide. Final decisions have not been made as to what agency (i.e. OPM or CFPC) will be involved in the actual procurement and distribution of the cameras.

A discussion period followed.

Mr. Morrisette stated that he had received notice this morning that the Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI) was hit by a tornado yesterday. It hit and destroyed their temporary office facilities in College Park. One of MFRI's lead instructor's, two daughters, who had just visited him were killed.

Mr. Piskura recommended that the Commission send an acknowledgement to offer the resources of the Connecticut Fire Academy.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Vendetta and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilkinson to send a letter on behalf of the Commission to the Maryland Fire Rescue Institute to offer assistance. Motion carried.

Commissioner Mullen stated that this would probably be his last meeting and that he wanted everybody to know that it has been both an honor and a pleasure working with all the Commissioners.

Vice Chairman Kowalski thanked Commissioner Mullen for all the services he provided the Commission for many years.

Commissioner Brammer inquired if all the money donated to the CT Fire Fighters 9-11 Fund would go directly to the families.

Mr. Morrissette stated that the fund was established specifically for that purpose and was endorsed by some of the major fire service organizations as legitimate and this is an appropriate means to insure that the money goes to the families and survivors.

Mr. Piskura stated that the compact disc distributed was developed as a result of a legislative appropriation to develop a Thermal Imaging Camera training program.

Mr. Piskura stated that he was making plans to bring Gordon Graham as a guest speaker into the state for an event scheduled for October 18 and 19, 2002.

Mr. Piskura stated that the Academy has a class on line-of-duty deaths that is taught by Mike Couture from the Waterbury Fire Department. As a personal service Mr. Couture will assist fire departments if he is requested. He briefly explained the various handouts distributed at the meeting.

Commissioner Nicol stated that as a result of the current events and fund raising efforts in the state for the New York incident the Connecticut Fire Department Instructors Association has postponed the Annual Rodeo until Spring ' 2002.

Commissioner Nicol expressed concern on the need to take the recruit class off-site to do firefighter training to expose them to a class A type fire. He asked if it would be possible to look into modifying the Academy's burn building to combine propane and class A type burns. He stated that this issue should be brought to the attention of Hartford County who uses the Academy as their training site He asked if this issue could be given consideration and included in the discussions and study of the regional fire schools in the state.

A discussion period followed.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Haber and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Vice Chairman Kowalski adjourned the meeting at 12:14 p.m.