

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

Meeting minutes

Meeting – April 27, 2006 – 19:00

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:17 with the following members present:

Burrville Fire School – Scott Potter
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Lloyd Niles, Al Hawkins
Fairfield Regional Fire School – Doug Chavenello
Hartford Fire School - Chet Haber, Mike Jepeal, James Baldis
Stamford Fire Department Regional School – Tony Conte
Valley Fire Chief's Regional Fire School – Peter Wols, Jr.
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Rich Nicol
Connecticut State Firefighters Association – Ted Schroll
Guest: Don Ouillette, D.P.W.

There was no one present representing the Middlesex County Fire School, New Haven Regional Fire Academy, Wolcott Regional Fire School, or the Connecticut Fire Academy

The minutes of the March 23, 2006 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved – motion by Haber second by Nicol.

1. Status of properties acquisitions

Willimantic site – Appraisals are due next week on the two properties under consideration

Derby site – Appraisals are needed to evaluate the current market price for the proposed site in Oxford. Don Ouillette advised that the Ct. D.P.W. would intend to purchase the entire 22 acre site and sub-divide the property for re-sale of the unused portion. A motion was made by Haber, second by Nicol to authorize the D.P.W. to contract for appraisal services for the Oxford site under consideration for the Valley Chiefs school. The motion passed unanimously.

Burrville site – Don will ask Richard Winn to approach the local area manager from D.E.P. to discuss possible lease arrangements.

Middlesex site – No new information.

Hartford County site – Don Ouillette asked Chet Haber to prepare the Form # B-100 to request the D.P.W. start of the project. Don offered to assist with preparation of the form, after the state budget vote he will get started on that project.

2. New Haven Renovation – status

Contract for design services has been negotiated. There is a projected escalation of approximately \$221,000 over the initial budget figure from the study. The budgeted amount was \$4.91 million, Don Ouillette expressed that he feels that with value engineering he can complete the project for \$5 million.

A motion was made by Haber, second by Wols to authorize an addition to the budget for the New Haven project from the projected cost contained in the study of \$4,918,518 to \$5 million. This motion passed unanimously.

3. Regional Fire School – property ownership issue

Al Hawkins distributed a two-page summary of a proposal to solicit the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control to ask that they be the owner the property that was to be acquired to construct the schools for the Eastern Connecticut Fire School, Valley Fire Chiefs School, and the Waterbury Fire Chiefs School, and that they be lessee for the property for the Torrington Fire School in addition to the property in Windsor Locks (as already planned).

Don Ouillette observed that the legislation that passed in 2004 for the transfer of the Cheshire property called for that property to be transferred from the Ct. Department of Corrections to the Waterbury Area Fire Chiefs Association. In order for that project to proceed changes to the text of that bill would need to be proposed next legislative session.

Al asked those present to review this ownership/lease issue with their respective organizations for future discussions.

There was some discussion about whether there could be a financial advantage for the regional fire schools to share some maintenance services to help control the costs to individual schools.

4. Legislative Session – status of initiatives

Ted Schroll reported that there was a possibility that the House could vote on the state budget this coming weekend. The Governor and the Appropriations Committee appear to be close to an agreement on the proposed budget.

There was a discussion about the operations budgets for the regional fire schools contained in the current budget document. The numbers have been raised to those numbers requested at the February 3, 2006 meeting with legislators and OFA and Comptrollers representatives. No figures submitted after that date were included in the increases.

There was a discussion about the future budget submittal process. Al Hawkins reported that his understanding of the process was that the governing body of each regional fire school would prepare a budget request in the September/October time frame. One spokesperson would be selected by the group to participate in discussions with O.P.M. during discussion of the budget submission by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control in the February/March time frame.

5. Other items from membership

Rich Nicol reported on the proposed increase in the C.F.P.C. fees for written exams effective September 1, 2006. The fees will increase from \$7.50 to \$15.00 per candidate but will now include the awarding of a national certificate upon successful completion of the exam.

Rich Nicol also reported that several station evaluators for practical skills testing have requested that time limits be established for the practical skills demonstration. One of the suggestions was to develop times based upon times recorded during actual skills testing. Rich reported that he recently observed a certification test and asked the students if they felt that additional pressure would be created by time limits. All said that they felt that it would create added pressure. There are no national standards to follow. There was general feeling that caution should be exercised when imposing time limits and that they should be imposed during training evolutions so that students would be familiar with them.

Anyone with input or suggestions should contact Rich or Jeff Morrissette. The consensus of the group was the establishment of maximum performance times would be desirable.

There was a brief discussion about the adoption of a weather cancellation policy for practical skills evolutions.

Lloyd Niles pointed out that the June school at the C.F.A. had no weekend classes scheduled. He felt that this schedule was not responsive to the needs of volunteers.

Mike Jepeal reported that the Fairfield school had just completed a Firefighter I program. Previously the Fairfield school had made the facility available for Firefighter certification programs but had not offered the programs themselves.

6. Next meeting date

Next meeting date will be May 25, 2006 at 19:00 at Wethersfield Fire Company #3.

The meeting was adjourned at 21:20

Submitted by:

Al Hawkins, chairman