



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



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MINUTES OF THE JULY 27, 2010 MEETING OF  
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

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

Staff members McGowan, Morrissette, Lewis, Piskura and Trisler were present.

Attendees took a moment to pledge allegiance to the flag.

Vice Chairman Kowalski called for a moment of silence for Lt. Steven Velasquez and FF Michel Baik who both died in the line of duty on July 24, 2010 in the city of Bridgeport.

Commissioner Kowalski called on State Fire Administrator Morrissette for an introduction of guests.

Guests to the meeting were identified as D/C Robert Petruzelli, Bridgeport Fire Dept.; Theodore Bartkowski and Mark Gentile; Certified Ambulance Group; Chief Michael Grant, City of New Haven; Rick Fontana, City of New Haven Emergency Management Operations; Carl Catalanotto and Michael Egan; CT Fire Police Association.

Moving to item 2) Approval of the Minutes of the May 25, 2010 meeting

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Nicol and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2010 meeting. Motion carried.

Moving to item 3) Staff Report May 15, 2010 – June 14, 2010.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Nicol and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Hilbert to approve the staff report for the period of May 15 through June 14, 2010. Motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Nicol and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Dagon to approve the staff report for the period of June 15 through July 14, 2010. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kowalski said if there is no objection we would move to New Business Item 5e.

Moving to item 5e.) Fire Rescue and Haz Mat Revenue Sources – Mr. Morrissette reported that approximately three years ago the Commission had representatives from Certified Ambulance Group attend and provide a presentation on revenue resources for fire departments. At that time the issue wasn't new here in Connecticut but since then a large number of fire departments statewide have begun expressing interest so we thought it would be a good opportunity to receive an update. He said Mr. Gentile is here to provide an update for the Commission and he also invited several of their customers who are present today.

Mr. Gentile thanked Mr. Morrissette and the Commission for allowing him the opportunity to speak this morning. Mr. Gentile gave an overview of Fire Rescue billing and distributed a document on program status for the state of Connecticut. He said it is nothing new and the program began in 1996 with a small department in Ohio. The program was implemented on the southwest coast of the US with San Diego which was the first known department that started rescue billing. It slowly moved across the country until eventually the Philadelphia fire department began charging for water. He said about four years ago when they first made a report to the Commission they were only billing for approximately 1,500 calls in the state. At that time Certified Ambulance Group in addition to two other billing companies were operating in the state. Today that number is closer to 5,000 billed calls and it could be more depending on how many departments are doing it internally without the use of a billing company. He said the numbers are growing with cities like New Haven, Bridgeport, Hartford, West Haven, Enfield and Waterbury all working with these programs so it's vital to many cities and towns in Connecticut. Mr. Gentile said we must ensure these departments are viable to the communities they serve. Local ordinances are not enough and action at the state level is needed. Fire Rescue billing is a growing trend. We need to work with the Insurance industry and the state to build reasonable programs and charges to succeed. He said state legislative support is fundamental to accomplishing their mission. He asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Brady arrived at 9:45 am.

Mr. Morrissette added that when we discussed this issue several years back it was placed on the table that in the future, we as the fire service may need to look at some enabling legislation. He said we took a wait and see attitude so we felt the timing maybe right to look at this for the next legislative session.

Commissioner Hilbert asked if there is an ordinance in place in the city of New Haven.

Mr. Fontana remarked yes they developed a local ordinance that allows them to bill for the services rendered.

Commissioner Mitchell asked when revenue comes in where does it go.

D/C Petruzelli and Chief Grant both said it goes into the city's General Fund.

Commissioner Nicol asked if billing is for EMS or fire services.

D/C Petruzelli said just fire services. He said the city of Bridgeport serves as First Responders for medical calls but American Medical Response (AMR) does the transport.

Commissioner Nicol asked if New Haven bills for EMS.

Chief Grant replied that New Haven bills for paramedic services. He said anytime they provide paramedic services in one of AMR's transports they charge for those services.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if there are other companies that provide the service in the state of Connecticut.

Mr. Gentile replied there is one other company in the state that he is aware of currently. There was a third but they recently got out of the business.

Commissioner Kowalski said the only issue he foresees is if we propose legislation it's very difficult to do so for one specific company and it's not a good thing to do.

Mr. Gentile said he's certainly not asking for that on behalf of his company. He said there are other companies in state and nationwide. The benefit would be for the fire departments.

A brief discussion on the issue followed.

Commissioner Kowalski said certainly we could take a vote today if need be to take it to the next level or bring it to the Joint Council for an idea for the next legislative session. He said we could also ask the Commission to consider endorsing it but that would be a group decision and he's not sure if that's going to be helpful but we could see what happens. He also said maybe there could be some broad language to expand on the EMS portion of it as well as the fire service and Haz Mat. He said we'll wait for some language to be drafted by the Joint Council and then come back to have the Commission review it and render a decision for support or not.

Mr. Gentile remarked any assistance they can provide to just give him a call.

Commissioner Kowalski asked D/C Petruzelli if he wanted to make any remarks now would be a good time.

D/C Petruzelli gave a brief description of the incident that occurred at 41 Elmwood Ave. in Bridgeport on July 24<sup>th</sup> and an update on the arrangements for funeral services for FF Michel Baik and LT Steven Velasquez. The wake services will be held on Thursday, July 29 and Burial on Friday, July 30<sup>th</sup> one will be held in the morning and one in the afternoon. It will be a coalition service for all the visiting fire departments at the arena at Harbor Yard with refreshments catered.

Commissioner Kowalski said if there is no objection and in consideration of our guests today we will move to New Business item 5f.

Moving to item 5f.) Traffic Control for Emergency Responders Curriculum – Mr. Morrisette said we wanted to provide an update on the Traffic Control for Emergency Responders curriculum. He said there are some issues so we have representatives from the Connecticut Fire Police Association (CFPA) present today and they have some concerns over how we're looking to deploy the changes. He asked Director of Training Piskura to provide an overview.

Mr. Piskura said we have a series of curriculum starting with Fire Police Traffic Control for Emergency Responders and the next significant change is that the NFPA is going to make a formal standard. He said that is what started our conversation with Bill Trisler who is the Program Manager responsible for that program. He asked Mr. Trisler to comment on what we plan on doing.

Mr. Trisler stated that when he took over the program the title had been changed from Fire Police to Traffic Control for Emergency Responders. The curriculum was out there being used and in his opinion was lacking in some areas. There was a curriculum developed by Steve

Coulon one of our Adjunct Instructors that borrowed heavily from a presentation from Chief McKinney from TX which seems to hit the targets for what we wanted to provide our clients better than what we had in the field at the time. He said he adopted that as an interim step until he could further review the program in-depth. He said while he was doing that the rumor began circulating that the NFPA maybe considering developing a standard for traffic control. He said in his efforts to develop a curriculum that meets the needs of every emergency responder that we deal with and to use a little foresight and try to make what we develop coincide with NFPA as closely as he can; he contacted Jones & Bartlett as they used the term Pro Qual Standard so he's unsure at this time if it's going to be a professional qualification standard or not. He said he knows at the present time whether it's taught by us or in our hand-off program that there is no testing that goes along with it developed by the CFA. He said in keeping with state Regulations and AHJ on how they train their traffic control personnel he would like to institute, even if it doesn't go to a Pro Qual Standard, some sort of practical exam so we can sign off that people have demonstrated the skills that we would like them to take back to their department and then be trained by their Chief or whomever the Chief designates along with some sort of a written exam to test their knowledge. He said if it does go to a Pro Qual Standard then there will be a practical and a written exam which would be administered by our Certification division. He said he's spoken with the Deputy Director of Training and when the new program comes on line he'd like to keep it in house or maybe hand it off to the Regional Schools so they can provide the service to their region with their vetted instructors. He said he would like to keep it in house so he can maintain reliability, the viability and security of any testing programs that we put in place so that's where we are heading. Additionally, when the LMS program comes online this could be a program where portions of it could be an online study. Folks would do their online course work and then apply to come in and do their practical exam and take the written exam.

Commissioner Stankye asked if we're planning on possibly handing-off the program to the Regional Schools and providing a TtT course.

Mr. Trisler replied yes and the Regional Schools vet their instructors just like we do and they are certified fire instructors. He said if it does not become a Pro Qual Standard then the testing will be a Training division test and we would arrange for some sort of security for the exam through the heads of those Regional Schools.

Mr. Catalanotto said he's been a member of CT CFPA for 17 years and CFPA has been in existence since 1987. He said his rebuttal on this issue in 2006 or 2007 he, Jim Belote and Michael Egan met with Mr. Piskura to talk about getting more training for fire police. CFPA currently has approximately 800 members and at one time it was 1,200. He said they were always told they would be involved in any of the training changes as far as classes were concerned but they were never contacted from the time different presidents of CFPA were involved. He said when he became president he wanted to make the CFA aware that they are active and they do train. He said in the discussion with Mr. Piskura he told him that the CFPA could have 15 to 25 state approved certified instructors conduct the class so they thought they could have several classes. When Mr. Trisler took over the course he started a program with TtT which to a certain extent is good but what you have is people taking the course who are not state certified instructors training fire police. He said some of them don't even know what the program is about. He said the two programs that CFPA is concerned with that came up failed. He said Mr. Trisler back in June of 2009 or 2008 had a class at the CFA with 35 instructors that took the course and now Mr. Trisler is saying that anyone who had the course before is not

going to be grandfathered. Mr. Catalanotto said he's sure the CFA does not have the availability of Instructors in order to teach around the state. He said this is one of the issues he has with how the CFA operates and it doesn't seem like the CFA is going to have that many people to train. He said the two courses that Mr. Trisler started have fallen along the wayside and they are not good anymore but Mr. Trisler is the one that wrote them. He said the CFPA offered to give help and he never accepted it but he always has a negative answer. He said he hates to bring down Mr. Trisler but that's where the ball lies and that's the way he and most of his Executive Board feels. He said if you're going to put people out there with very little training to direct traffic you're going to end up with more accidents.

Mr. Egan added that fire police training has been eliminated in the state and it's strictly a Traffic Control training program. He said he believes there are a number of other duties that the fire police are involved in that just aren't covered in training and they do need training in those areas. This has been brought to the attention of the CFA staff in the past. He said they were told when the last revision was done to the Traffic Control training that they would be able to review it and have some input. This was never accomplished and the program was just dumped on the state. Mr. Egan said at their July meeting after a conference call with the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control staff they were informed of the changes and their Executive Board decided to take up a petition and send it to this Commission for review to see if something could be done. He said they do not have it signed to present today but in summary the members of CFPA urges the Commission to act now and remove the individual designing the new curriculum who also created the present program that he now states is not adequate and conduct a needs analysis that would actually address the training needs of those that are assigned this task by someone with knowledge in this area. The CFA staff should not create policy but create a reasonable training program that will consider NFPA standards when it is an issue. He said they thought they would be presenting the petition at the Commission's September meeting however as it worked out they attended the July meeting so Commissioners can expect to receive the petitions in the mail. He said he hopes the Commission will consider the needs of the people that are out there doing the fire police duties on roadways. He said there are over 93 fire departments, municipalities and towns with fire police members in the state of Connecticut and their needs should be addressed.

Commissioner Brady said it was mentioned that there are duties not being addressed and asked what kind of duties.

Mr. Egan replied scene security is the main one, crowd control and in various towns there are different duties that are given to different fire police such as public information or it maybe safety officers.

Commissioner Brady said that's something that would really be under the jurisdiction of the local authority.

Mr. Piskura added that Mr. Trisler is academically capable of doing what he does and if we have any deficiencies it may be not soliciting a draft copy for review. Furthermore he is not necessarily the personal author, we use our adjuncts to develop our curriculum and each iteration hasn't been the same adjunct or adjuncts working together. He said Mr. Trisler is the person responsible for making sure it is educationally sound; that it's going to meet a standard if there's a standard published. He said he feels there is a fundamental lack of knowledge about the difference between certification and training and education. The term certified is thrown

about everywhere in all kinds of venues. One of the complicating factors is when the NFPA publishes a standard whether it be a Pro Qual standard or deployment standard; if we're going to try to model that as we should because we are the models for the state that can only be taught by certified fire service instructors and not just CFA instructors. He said they have to be certified fire service instructors to meet the requirements ultimately of certification. Any organization can certify their own people as they are the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Our curriculums are not necessarily in the public domain but we do share them so an organization such as the CFPA could take the curriculum and use it as they see fit using their own instructors. The only difference is if you're submitting for certification then you're going to the Certification division with a different avenue of approach and it becomes a separate process.

Commissioner Brady asked if the TtT offerings by the CFA even though there's no certification attached to it if those are only for qualified certified instructors.

Mr. Piskura replied no. He said we're trying to empower these people so they can go out there and teach the course.

Mr. Trisler added that we ran a TtT when we brought on the new program developed by Steve Coulon. He said he limited the list of people who could submit rosters so they could have a CFA certificate of training to those people. He said as we move forward and the new curriculum comes online they can continue to teach as AHJ. There are still fire departments that train their own. He said the way it is right now the program takes the student hopefully to a point then they go back to their Chief and then they are taught the SOP, SOG's and brought online to operate as a Traffic Control person in that department. He said the Traffic Control course is centered on a basic Flagger course and that's what the national consensus is which is they want everyone doing the same thing. He said everyone working on roadways have accidents. He said fire police is kind of unique to New England and some other states. He said some states don't have them but all of us in the fire service one time or another worked in the roadway so nationally we recognize that everybody who works in the roadways need those skills for traffic safety and most of the curriculum coming out from different states is looking at training those individuals for working in roadways for traffic safety.

Mr. Eagan said one thing he heard being said that he would like to correct is the CFPA has certified instructors by the CFA and the CFPA does not certify any instructors, they come from the state. He said now they are going to be eliminated from doing this training and as far as cost effectiveness for the towns and cities it's much more cost effective to have local people doing the training if they are certified. He said the CFA is the one that started the TtT without requiring any certification in their background and the CFPA did not agree with it at the time but they had to accept it and they've done that.

Mr. Morrisette added that the CFPA is correct in that whenever the curriculum was changed several years back he believes an offer was made that we would vet a draft through them and it's his understanding that hadn't been done. He said the primary reason we had contacted them and set up a conference call with the leadership of their association was to shake out the thought process moving forward. He said as far as that goes we did offer this next iteration to certainly share it with them and it's our intent to do that. He said we all know certification or the standard development process may not happen for a minimum of 24 months or more before something actually is developed. He said we have a good idea based upon our national

contacts who proposed this as a particular standard and others who were involved on a federal level developing the federal program published by Fire Protection Publication (FPP). He said we have a good sense of where this is going and we want to try to address as many of those levels before hand from a training perspective and as part of any training we should be evaluating the students in terms of their competency and achieving the objectives of the program. He said moving forward it will still be our intent to vet the draft through the CFPA.

Commissioner Kowalski said as a Commissioner for the CFPC he wants to support our staff and the work they do but at this point in time there is a communication issue that we need to resolve here and get that forth but he has a high level of confidence in our staff what they do and the services they provide. He said he feels the staff has the entire state positive interest in mind and going forward after this point we look forward to working with the CFPA as well as what the appropriate needs are going to be in the future to accommodate the certification standards as well. He said we have certain things we have to do within the statute that allows us to certify to certain levels within our charter of this organization. He said he agrees that some modular work could be done on this program where it would include scene control, crowd control but frankly some of that may have to come in from the police entity and it may not be a trainable effect from the CFPC. He said he encourages the staff to work a bit closer with the CFPA to see what the needs are of the constituents out there. From this point forward the intent is to communicate and get the information out.

Mr. Catalanotta said thanks and the CFPA is open to it.

Moving to item 4a.) Budget/Staffing Update – Mr. Morrisette reported regarding budget and staffing. He said as noted we did receive refill authorization for the Secretary I position due to the retirement of Elaine Mancino. He said it was approved at the top and now has to go through several levels below the Governor both at DAS and OPM. He said it's gone through the DAS process and it's in OPM currently. He said we're aware there is one individual on a rehire list that we would have to clear first and if she is interested we would have to make her the offer. If not interested, based upon the potential pool we would probably only advertise the position for about one week. In addition to that we have made some headway with trying to revise the classification for our adjunct fire service instructors; the three levels. We were surprised when a new interpretation of that job classification would not allow us to move people from the level I instructor up to level II essentially from \$18 to \$20 an hour. He said we have a lot of people who have met their obligations and are deserving of a raise, but the new interpretation would not allow us to do that. He said that classification change was finally approved after better than a year. He said we are happy that we have a few small wins and hopefully those will continue moving forward.

Mr. Morrisette reported regarding the budget and funding lapsed this past fiscal year. For the Entry Level training program we lapsed, as predicted \$266,000. He said there is a couple of issues with that and we'll discuss it more when we get to agenda item 4e but essentially when we had the situation two years ago when we took a reduction to that account there was no way we could pay all the claims in that fiscal year. We were unable to carryover claims because it would have put us into the hole last fiscal year. We began last FY fresh as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, we began paying claims again for any one certified after July 1<sup>st</sup>. He said we just don't have the physical capability to process the dozens of examinations conducted specifically during the busy months. Thus, we will carry over claims from last FY into the New Year. Unfortunately though, we had to lapse that money. He said we will be paying old claims out of the new

year's money and our current policy states that we will pay a claim up to one year from date of certification. He said we'll do the best we can with what we have and continue to educate and share that information. He said we have not sent a letter out as yet to departments as it relates to that program. Mr. Morrisette said he would report on the Supplemental Grant Program later. He said unfortunately we also lapsed \$50,000 in our Personal Services expense which seemed to be a surprise to our Business Officer who felt he had paid out everything from the available commitment funds in that account.

Mr. Morrisette also reported that we lapse monies in our Supplemental Grant program which was expected as we normally lapse a small amount of money. People do not use their entire vouchers and there were approximately a dozen fire companies that never responded after multiple attempts to contact them. He said aside from that we certainly made our significant contribution to the deficit and he's not sure we'll be rewarded for it. He said we shared a copy of our allotment of appropriation for the current FY with Commissioners back in June which outlines the Budget and quarterly allotments. He asked if there were any questions regarding budget or staffing.

Mr. Morrisette also said one other report to make is we did receive authorization to hire some additional adjuncts. We receive authorization for 20 new positions which will be split between Training and Certification. He said we're also still investigating the DMV Q licensing issue as some of those bodies would be used on a regional basis to conduct Q testing. DMV appears to be fulfilling testing requests on a local level.

Commissioner Nicol asked when the agencies audit for last year's budget is.

Mr. Morrisette replied that we still haven't received the audit that was completed about a year ago. He said he speaks to the Auditor on occasion as typically when he has an audit related questions you go to the Auditor who last conducted your agency's review. He said he's had to speak with her several times over the past year and every time he talks to her she indicates that she's trying to finish up our report although she's working on other audits for larger agencies. He said the last audit was for FY 07/08 thus we should be due some time this year for the next Biennium review period. There are certainly deficiencies most due to limited staffing.

Commissioner Kowalski asked what's the backlog now on the testing schedule.

Mr. McGowan said it has decreased a bit as we're right at about eight weeks and we were out about ten. He said we're going to make every effort by the end of the week to put the scores online.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if departments can then file for reimbursement based upon that.

Mr. Morrisette said they don't even need to wait we do it automatically as soon as we know they are certified.

Commissioner Kowalski said but it's been eight weeks.

Mr. Morrisette said sometimes we haven't caught up internally but that's not a Certification issue it's a Business office issue. He said as soon as certification alerts us someone is certified then we begin to move forward with the reimbursement process.



Commissioner Kowalski asked how much money is expected to carry over into the new year.

Mr. Morrisette replied that he has the detailed sheets with him but he hasn't gone through to calculate the numbers.

Commissioner Kowalski asked for an approximate amount.

Mr. Morrisette said if he had to guess it would be probably in the range of \$15,000 to \$30,000.

Commissioner Murphy asked if when the scores go online will that allow a candidate that sees they've failed the certification exam to then re-register or do they still need to wait the eight weeks.

Mr. McGowan replied that he hasn't worked out that part as yet but at this point the way the policy is written candidates have to wait the term.

Moving to item 4b.) CSFA Education Committee Update – Commissioner Nicol reported that since the last Commission meeting the Education Committee met on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, June 24<sup>th</sup> and July 22, 2010 in Wethersfield. There has been much activity with the Regional Fire School Projects. At the July 13<sup>th</sup> Bond Commission meeting funding was approved for \$450,000 to purchase the existing Willimantic Fire School property for a new Eastern Connecticut Regional Fire School as well as funding to purchase land in Beacon Falls for the Valley Fire Chiefs. Also Bond funds were approved for \$250,000 for the design of Regional Schools in Fairfield, Burrville, Beacon Falls and Willimantic. At the July 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, Project Manager Don Ouillette reported that the New Haven Fire School reconstruction project was going well. The Committee is planning to hold their September meeting at the New Haven Fire School. Mr. Ouillette reported that due to bidding complications, the Hartford Fire School project will need to be re-bid however, the next Bond Commission meeting would include a “place holder” for 5 million dollars for the Hartford Fire School project due to the rebidding. It is anticipated that the Hartford Project construction will begin in April of 2011. Mr. Morrisette announced that some U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Haz Mat Safety Administration federal funding for Haz Mat training for entry level firefighters was available for each of the Regional Fire Schools. The grant funding amounted to \$2,250 for each school. Mr. Morrisette reminded all Regional Fire School representatives to let him know if any Regional School was interested in hosting a calendar program this coming year. The next meeting scheduled to be held on August 26<sup>th</sup> 2010.

Moving to item 4c.) FY 10 & FY 11 Supplemental Grant Program Update – Mr. Morrisette said the appropriation was reduced this year from \$195,000 to \$105,000 which will proportionally reduce the eligible grant funding down to \$652 per eligible fire company. Letters were mailed to all those eligible companies last week stating the details of the program. He said we also moved up the selection deadline date to September 1<sup>st</sup> and we're encouraging people to utilize their funding as soon as possible because we never know when the funds could be swept.

Commissioner Nicol asked what the grant amount is again.

Mr. Morrisette replied \$652. He said in addition to that Commissioners may see a legislative attempt as it relates to Commissioners may recall we've reviewed and ask for assistance from the Attorney General office to review a request by the Cos Cob Fire Police Patrol for inclusion in the program. He said Cos Cob asked Attorney General Blumenthal for his review and initially his reaction was they are eligible and vetted that through our Attorney who was animatedly opposed to it and felt like he was undermining him. Finally the Attorney General issued a letter to Cos Cob Fire Police Patrol that our decision initially was accurate but he would be happy to work with them to change the legislation to make them eligible as well as other potential fire police groups. He said basically the \$652 grant would probably be cut to a third so no one will be happy and maybe more people are going to get money but it's going to be significantly less money unless the appropriation increases. He said Cos Cob did send him a note alerting him that they are working with their legislative delegation to possibly propose something for the next legislative session. He said we may need to have further discussion to see how we want to approach the proposal.

Moving to item 4d.) FY 10 & FY 11 Entry Level Training Reimbursement Update – Mr. Morrisette said we've pretty much provided an update on what the status of that currently is and the lapse of last year's funding and trying to move forward with this year's funding. He said we will be drafting a letter just reminding everyone of the eligibility and what the process is.

Moving to item 4e) Entry Level Training Reimbursement Policy Issue - Mr. Morrisette said there was a minor discussion at the Education Committee as it related to this and we said because of some of the problems possibly they may want to look at a legislative change so instead of sending the money to the fire companies it be directed to the Regional Fire Schools and the CFA to allow the provision of free training. He said in the bigger picture that would probably cause problems for municipalities like Hartford and Bridgeport that don't have a Regional Fire School although there could be additional consideration for those. This would eliminate any workload processing reimbursement claims and all the funding would be spent.

Commissioner Nicol asked if that would require legislative action.

Mr. Morrisette replied yes. He said he's not sure where the Committee wanted to go with that concept, but he just threw it out there because everyone is concerned with how much money we lapsed.

Moving to item 4g.) Mid-Atlantic Association of State Fire Commissions Meeting – Commissioner Nicol gave an update on the planning for this year's conference. He said conference information was sent in the mail to states and a packet with the agenda was distributed to Commissioners this morning. He said conference date is September 9-12 and he and Mr. Morrisette worked a few weeks ago trying to put everything together. He said they still have some loose ends but they are all set to go. The conference hotel is the Marriott Downtown Hartford and guests can make their reservations online. A field trip is planned for Travelers Claims University, the NEDTC and CFA on Friday and ESPN and Harford Circus Fire Memorial on Saturday. He said we received a commitment from the CFDIA to participate financially to help fund the hospitality room and Chairman Carozza also planned to provide some funds through his organization.

Mr. Morrissette said we wanted to lay it on the table today if any organization that Commissioners represent can provide any support for some of the off line activities we would appreciate it.

Commissioner Nicol said he also requested support from the VFIS. Additionally he said there will be a New England Lobsterbake Friday night at the Hartford Jaycees Boathouse on the water which should be a nice affair and the Banquet will be held at The Hartford Club.

Mr. Morrissette said if Commissioners have an interest to participate in any of the activities including the two dinner events please let us know.

Commissioner Nicol said the conference will cover the cost of dinner for Commissioners and Commissioners may be responsible for their guests. As far as the hotel is concerned if any Commissioner is going to stay at the hotel for the conference they would be responsible for the cost of the room which is a government rate of \$112 per night.

Moving to item 5a.) IFSAC Accreditation Award - Mr. McGowan said he was pleased to announce we have formally been accredited by IFSAC and displayed the documents that show that for the next five years the Commission is able to nationally certify to 42 levels of certification. He said this goes back now almost two years when he and the dedicated folks in his office were charged with moving forward from eight accreditations from IFSAC to the 40 so that we are now in sync with our Pro Board accreditation. As a consequence as of April 16<sup>th</sup> of this year every certification that now goes through our office now has dual certification on it.

Vice Chairman Kowalski said on behalf of the Commission it was an outstanding job achieving the goals that were set forth.

Moving to item 5b.) Burn Audit Procedures- Mr. McGowan distributed a document titled Live Fire Audit Checklist. He said as Commissioners are aware for FFI and FFII we have three stipulations before you achieve certification; one is a Live Burn Audit which is what he wants to talk about and then the Practical Skills as well as the Written Examination. He said in this state we do things a bit different when it comes to the Burn Audit form and this was an economic choice on our part. In many instances other states comply differently. One is that as an example Massachusetts has a specific day for live burns that every firefighter goes up to either the MA Fire Academy in Stowe, Springfield, New Bedford or Barnstable on designated days where every single Firefighter I candidate is put through the evolution of going into the Burn Building and being physically audited by a representative of the certification group. He said that is a lot of money and that's not his intent to look at it from strictly a financial standpoint. He said Bucks County does it a little bit differently when they do their live burn audit. To use our words they actually have it as a random selection choice on their skill sheet day so you go there in anticipation that you may not necessarily have to go through their burn audit that day. In the state of Connecticut we set it aside as a separate day and its run by the local group or agency, Regional Fire School or through the CFA and we send one adjunct to witness the day's activities. He said he's very loose about this and that's basically his concern for our Burn Audit process. He said the front of the form he distributed is exactly what the burn auditor looks at and verifies that the process is in place and whether the organization followed the stipulations contained in NFPA 1403 for burn so that hopefully no firefighter goes in and gets burn. He said our representative does not physically go into the Burn Building during these sessions so they are basically an outsider and act as a Safety Officer for the

moment. He said the Burn Auditors only witness activities for maybe one or two burns just to see that the rotation has begun to take effect as is stipulated for what we set up for Burn Audit requirements. He said over the course of the last three years since he's been in office they've maintained documentation and he asked Mr. O'Hurley just yesterday if there has been any repercussions or instances where the Burn Audit session has not gone well or we've had to shut down. He said it was a local department that was running an operation up at the CFA on a weekend and there were not enough placeholders for safety concerns for them to operate so the examiner shut down the operation until they could better suit the needs of all the command functions as required by 1403. He said that is the only time and it's the better part of 50 or 60 audits conducted annually that are done throughout the state. Mr. McGowan proposed to the Commission that we take our examiner out of the process and hand it off to the Regional Fire School or to the CFA or the agency that's running the certification training process using the same Audit checklist. Essentially having them sign off for us that their candidates have accomplished the burn audit component.

Commissioner Stankye asked if we're not going to have a CFA audit person present anymore.

Mr. McGowan said that was his proposal we would have the person responsible or the designee sign off on this form and submit it for us.

Commissioner Brady said he has to push back at that idea. He said he feels having someone from the state is important. It's a very important skill and regardless of the level of interaction that's been taking place and we can't stress enough to the students how important this is and the value of it. He said having someone from the state there verifies that to him, the importance of this skill and the dangers that are inherent. He said he seriously pushes back at the idea of the state walking away from it. He said it's a small cost involved which he assumes is being picked up by the department running the class.

Commissioner Stankye said he concurs that it's important that someone from the Commission is there to ensure that it's done the right way. He said you push it off to the locals and they may tend to slide a bit after a while.

Commissioner Mitchell asked what the purpose of removing the Auditor now is.

Mr. McGowan said his initial reaction was that we are not able to physically go into the burn building and see the skills set that is suppose to be performed under the guidelines of 1403. The responsibility lies with the instructors who are actually demonstrating for the candidates under the 1403 circumstances.

Mr. Morrissette added that over the years we've turned into the 1403 police indirectly. He said while it was our goal to verify certain skills were being trained and tested on a local level. It was not our intent to verify 1403 compliance. As the locals only pay a small fee to the Commission for certification, this only covers in part our payment to the accrediting bodies. Thus, we absorb the entire cost of the burn day audits. Historically we have not seen any significant issues. He said the other proposal he has was whether the Commission may entertain a pilot program where we conduct random visits. Mr. Morrissette said while money cannot be a substitute for safety we're certainly looking at economies where possible and that's something he's charged Mr. McGowan with. He said we haven't raised any certification fees probably in 20 years other than to cover the national certificates so we've absorbed the entire

expense for all of those activities. When we go out and conduct Practical Exams the locals or Regional Fire School is providing the station evaluators while we may bring one, two three or four Chiefs Evaluators or Rotation personnel depending on the size of the group being tested. This has turned out to be a significant expense to the agency. He said maybe there needs to be more training on a local level for people doing these live burn activities. The ISFSI recently completed a training and certification program for live burn instructors. Possibly this should be mandated in our state to truly increase the level of safety during live burns.

Commissioner Brady said he's all for that if it were in place and he'd feel more comfortable but we don't have that and he thinks we do have to be the 1403 police. He said the safety of these firefighters must be the ultimate concern.

Vice Chairman Kowalski asked if this has been vetted through the Regional Fire Schools and the Education Committee.

Mr. McGowan replied no.

Commissioner Kowalski said that might be something to do before facilitating the change.

A discussion period followed.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Brady and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Mitchell to table this item for another meeting. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5c.) Summer Meeting Schedule – Commissioner Kowalski said he wanted to thank Commissioners for coming to a July meeting. Mr. Morrisette said we plan not to meet next month unless the need arises.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Dagon and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Murphy that the Commission not hold a meeting in August unless a call of the Chairman. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5d.) FY 10 Annual Report – Mr. Morrisette reported the submittal date for the agency's FY10 annual report precede our next meeting date in September so as in past years he is seeking the Commission's authorization to draft and submit the report to all of the appropriate agencies by the September 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Mitchell and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Brady to allow the staff to prepare the FY10 annual report for submittal to appropriate agencies. Motion carried.

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

Moving to item 7 – Matters to be raised by Commissioners or staff – Mr. Morrisette stated as noted in the staff report the Exchange Server project has begun with DOIT to transition the agency over to DOIT's email server. He said there are some minor issues but they are working on those and everyone should be done by early next month.

Mr. Morrissette said he wanted to thank Mr. Piskura for supporting his employee and he can assure the Commission that safety is paramount in all of our minds. He said he realizes anyone of us could be out in the street as an Emergency Responder directing traffic. He said basically we want to ensure that we have a product that's going to meet the needs of everyone.

Mr. Morrissette said he also wanted to recognize Program Manager Bill Trisler who is responsible for the Introduction to the Fire Service program. He said he had the opportunity to attend the graduation ceremony for this year's second summer program and there were many happy parents and Fire Chiefs at the event. He said Mr. Trisler and all of the adjuncts did a fabulous job.

Mr. Trisler said he hasn't brought this to Mr. Piskura as yet but they are flushing out a new program, possibly a Friday evening to Sunday afternoon timeframe to bring back some of the more stellar candidates in the 16-17 year old group. This would be some type of leadership course modeled after a basic FOI course to give them some more information and encourage them to move forward in the fire service.

Commissioner Brady asked if we have a precedent for handing off TtT to non-certified instructors for a non-certification program like the fire police.

Mr. Piskura replied yes and as an example the Haz Mat Awareness and Operations. He said we provide curriculum and support materials periodically and we do it for every fire department in the state. He said we try to empower people to help themselves and it's not a certification course.

Commissioner Brady said he wonders if we're going down a slippery road handing off information like that to non-certified people.

Mr. Trisler said that touches on some of his thought process and that happened before he got involved with the program and he's tried to be accommodating. He said he doesn't evaluate them as he would a CFA instructor so he doesn't know if they are really teaching from the disk we provide them or not nor what's being said in the classroom. He said personally and professionally he has some issue with putting CFPC/CFA stamp on what they are teaching. He said they were told they could continue to teach as the AHJ as long as they maintain revisions but he would not recognize their rosters for a CFA issued certificate.

Mr. Morrissette said currently when they conduct training locally they submit a roster and then we process and ship the certificates to present to their students.

Commissioner Brady asked if we know how many certificates we've issued for that program.

Mr. Trisler said he just ran the numbers and it's less than 500 this year.

Commissioner Kowalski asked why are we sending out paperwork of attendance with the CFPC/CFA letterhead and whether it's a service we provided.

Mr. Piskura replied that the motivation is to promote training and to capture numbers.

Commissioner Kowalski said that's a problem for him. He said if we want to send out lesson plans or material is fine but we shouldn't be involved with any of the attendance.

Mr. Morrissette said one thing he's talked to Mr. Trisler about is that we could hand off the program with out providing certificates.

Commissioner Dagon added that there is an evolution occurring within this area and as the standard continues to be developed we need to be involved in it and provide support as much as possible as long as they're going to maintain the direction of following the standards. He said they do perform a valuable service to his department protecting his firefighters.

A brief discussion took place on the fire police duties and training.

Mr. McGowan reminded the Commission that Elaine Mancino's retirement party is tomorrow evening if any Commissioner wishes to attend they can contact Mark Lewandowski by this afternoon.

Mr. Piskura reported that we are working with the NFPA research foundation as they are revisiting the NFPA standard on fire hose, specifically the coefficients of friction loss has not been recalculated in over 30 years. They have employed a contractor to work with various venues around the U.S. and we're going to be one of those venues where fire hose manufacturers will donate lengths of hose and we will run friction loss tests. They will then republish the more accurate figures. Fire hose construction hasn't changed much over the years but the materials they use have.

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

Vice Chairman Kowalski adjourned the meeting at 11:52 am.

Dated:

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Charles M. Stankye, Jr., Secretary