



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



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**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 25, 2008 MEETING OF  
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

Chairman Carozza called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioners Brady, Blaschik, Dagon, Kowalski, Nelson, Nicol, Schenck, Stankye, Walsh and Wilkinson.

Staff members Lewis, McGowan, Morrisette and Piskura were present.

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

Moving to item 2) Approval of the Minutes of the February 26, 2008 meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Walsh to approve the Minutes of the February 26, 2008 meeting. Motion carried.

Moving to item 3) Staff Report February 15, 2008 - March 14, 2008.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Stankye to approve the Staff Report for the period of February 15, 2008 – March 14, 2008. Motion carried.

Moving to item 4a.) Budget/Staffing Update – Mr. Morrisette reported there was no update regarding the budget. He said we're still early into the legislative session and that there hasn't been any action by the Appropriations or Finance Revenue and Bonding Committees. Mr. Morrisette also reported regarding staffing. He said he's pleased to announce that an offer has been made to Karen Junguzza for the Assistant Bookstore Manager position. She will begin work with the agency as of Friday of this week. She lives in Litchfield and has extensive Bookstore operations experience which will be a big plus. This added support will allow us to increase customer service in that area of the agency. He also said we have completed interviews and made a selection for the Storekeeper position. The reference checks have been complete and everything looks good however Human Resources is still awaiting approval from the Affirmative Action liaison and a final verification of the SEBAC Layoff list. Once this is complete we expect to make an offer to the individual. He said we were getting concerned in the last week or two because we had completed our work several weeks ago and it appeared there might have been some artificial delays in executing the hiring. He noted some of the economic woes both nationally and within the state of Connecticut we felt that everything was possibly grinding to a halt and there could be a hiring freeze. We certainly hope the Storekeeper position will get under any wire that is set.

Commissioner Nicol asked whether any of the two individuals are current state employees.

Mr. Morrissette replied that the individual we made an offer to for the Storekeeper position is a current state employee and the other individual for the Bookstore position is not.

Commissioner Nicol also asked how many years of service the Storekeeper individual has.

Mr. Morrissette remarked that he believed approximately four years.

Moving to item 4b.) CSFA Education Committee Update – Commissioner Wilkinson reported that the Committee last met on February 28<sup>th</sup> with excellent attendance from all participants. Following the meeting several members of the committee went to New Haven and met with Chief Grant and his staff to discuss the future of their project; the transition with the retirement of Captain Bill Seward and to facilitate the execution of the MOU. He said it was a very successful meeting. The report on the Hartford County project is that the design work contract should begin very soon. As far as the Willimantic property acquisition, a meeting was scheduled the next day with the property owner and DPW to clear up final environmental issues. A possible site has been located for the Valley School. As far as the Wolcott location in Cheshire, a property transfer with the Department of Corrections (DOC) will be done when the time is right in respect to the overall project. The Middlesex School has identified a possible site and the city is doing some environmental work on that piece of property. DPW has been authorized to proceed with preparations for design build projects for the Fairfield and Burrville Schools and there is a subcommittee that's going to be meeting to look at a standardized system-wide curriculum. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for this Thursday night in Wethersfield.

Commissioner Nicol added that he was at that meeting and there was a discussion on the standards for the new curriculum for Firefighter I and II. In addition there was also a discussion regarding when the Commission is going to begin testing to the new standard. He said he noticed it was mentioned in the Certification division staff report and he asked Director of Certification McGowan if he plans to give more information to the Commission later on in the meeting.

Mr. McGowan replied that he plans to discuss the issue under new business.

Moving to item 4c.) FY08 Supplemental Grant Program Update – Mr. Morrissette reported regarding the Supplemental Grant program. He said there are just 12 fire companies that we have not heard from, however there is almost \$70,000 that is still unspent. He said we need to begin encouraging people to spend the funding especially those that elected vouchers. All those who have elected direct payments have received a check as of this date. He said the \$70,000 represented those companies we haven't heard from in addition to the ones that have selected vouchers.

Commissioner Nelson asked when d the funding expires.

Mr. Morrissette replied it will lapse at the end of the state fiscal year or June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Moving to item 4d.) Entry-Level Training Reimbursement Update – Mr. Morrissette gave an update on the Entry-Level Training Reimbursements. He said we still continue to receive daily calls from communities interested in finding out about the process to request reimbursement however to date we've only paid out or encumbered \$400,000 of the \$750,000 in funding. He said he thought we would be a little further ahead by now because of spring classes although he's hopeful that a lot of the spring classes that are in play currently may not have submitted a pre-authorization request form. He said the main thing is to get the word out that the funding exists. He also said he's run into a few situations recently where individuals have paid for training as individuals. He said just yesterday he had to follow up on a Recruit from the last CFA Recruit Class who was a volunteer from a community in New Haven County. This individual paid the tuition out of pocket for recruit training. He was doing so to try and position himself for a future career position. Unfortunately there is no mechanism to reimburse an individual for 50% of the training. When he contact the Chief of the combination department he is a volunteer member within, the Chief also indicated there is no internal mechanism for the department or town to receive the money and reimburse the individual. He said the recruit's mother was requesting assistance to try to secure the 50% reimbursement but unfortunately we are not able to assist. He said the mother was a little bit upset but he suggested she contact her local legislators to see if they may be able to assist with an amendment to the enabling legislation.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if we get to the end of the fiscal year and find that we have \$300,000 left whether we can re-adjust the regulation or policy to include FFII.

Mr. Morrissette replied that to his understanding we could not because the current language is pretty specific in that it speaks specifically to recruit and FFI. He said the Commissioners recommendation is something we're trying to do with SB 180, to provide some flexibility in the future.

Moving to item 4e.) 2008 Legislative Session Update – Mr. Morrissette said we distributed this morning the latest Legislative Bill tracking chart. He said we're still at a point where there is not a lot of heavy action on specific bills. He said particular organizations may want to report on the status of bills that they may have.

Commissioner Brady arrived at 9:53 am.

Commissioner Kowalski gave a brief report on two code related bills; H.B.5802 An Act concerning the State Fire Prevention Code and H.B 5669 An Act Shielding Fire Departments that Install Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors from Liability. He said they are processing H.B. 5802 and this is the first of many statutory changes but the focal point is basically they are granting an appeals process with the fire prevention code. One of the major points of the bill is the citation part where you would theoretically be able to cite as an alternative to compliance. He said they would cite directly the violation and then receive 90% of the fine proceeds back to the community. He said they are pushing it and it seems to be moving along okay. The second bill is H.B. 5669 that the Chiefs had

submitted. He said there was some language floating around last week from the Trial Lawyers Association who is opposing the bill because it's the slippery slope theory they are using. He said the information he was told is they've been battling the AED situation for the last five years trying to get the liability eased up in places that install AED's such as health clubs. He said right now they won't install them because the liability is there. He said they had sent them some laws that pertain to liability and anything that a Fire Officer does under errors or omission and it seems to answer the question. He said one of the problems he saw is they posted an amendment to H.B. 5669 that essentially would make it a nightmare because you would have to track everything, revisit the people within a certain period of time and have a name and all the information like the cost of the detector. All this would have to be made available and published to the public on an annual basis. He said he sent back a note to them saying that it would be unacceptable in his estimation and he doesn't know what the outcome of the amendment is but they are paying close attention to H.B. 5669.

Commissioner Wilkinson stated that we had Fire Service Day since our last meeting at the Capitol. He said it was an extremely successful day. There was an extraordinary turn out of fire service representatives throughout the day. He said the exhibits in the Concourse area were very well thought out and all were busy throughout the day. He said he wanted to thank State Fire Administrator Morrissette and his Executive Secretary for all their assistance in coordinating the event.

Commissioner Nicol asked for the status of the Training Bill.

Mr. Morrissette remarked that it was moved from the Public Safety and Security Committee to the Appropriations Committee. He said all indications are that the bill may actually go away and they'll deal with it through the budget so he thinks as we approach the end of the legislative session, the Speaker will have to decide if he's going to make any adjustments in terms of the number of dollars provided to that specific issue. He said it's hard to tell right now but any technical adjustments would be made in the implementer bill to actually apply any changes in the money

There was a brief question and answer period related to the Training Bill funding.

Moving to item 4f.) Compensation Subcommittee Update – Mr. Morrissette said we had a meeting of the Compensation Subcommittee back on March 7 for contemplating the implementation of raises for our adjunct instructors. He said we had two Commissioners present out of the three that were on the Subcommittee. Commissioners Nicol and Mitchell were present and Commissioner Brady had a previous obligation. He said we did meet with several staff members to review possible implementation of a salary or hourly rate increase for fire service instructor classification which is comprised of three separate levels I, II and III which are currently compensated at \$18, \$20 and \$23 an hour. He said we were successful to secure a 6% increase in our part-time salaries account. He said we are getting close to the end of the current fiscal year and we're looking to implement the change by July 1<sup>st</sup> or shortly thereafter however there were several areas of compensation or benefits requiring further discussion. Several of these areas have been raised by our Deputy Director of Training which is valid including compensation for preparatory time, mileage reimbursement, breaks and lunch, etc. Also, as part of findings

in the past audit we need to look at how we utilize the fire service instructor classification for other areas of support services. He said a HR representative from DAS was also present and at the conclusion of the meeting this individual was going to move forward with conducting a more comprehensive salary review for the classification. He also said Director of Training Piskura had done a review of our peer organizations throughout the 50 states and we had about 20 respond to date. This will provide DAS with some benchmarking data to aid them in their review. The bottom line is the adjuncts have not received an increase in a number of years and we would like to move forward with an increase as they are deserving. We are waiting for a report from the HR representative at which time we will meet again and look to make any adjustments and move forward with implementing a 6% salary or hourly rate increase for the adjuncts. He said at that time they would look to address any issues of compensation and those other areas he mentioned. He asked commissioners if they had any questions.

Moving to item 5a.) FFI CPR and AED Communication - Mr. Morrissette stated that this relates to communication we had received and asked if Commissioners had received a copy. Mr. Morrissette said the letter is from Jeffrey Bond dated February 25, 2008 to Chairman Carozza. He said he had extended Mr. Bond an invitation to attend today's meeting to present his recommendation but his schedule would not permit him to attend. He said he had conversations with Mr. Bond and he is very passionate regarding his proposal that Firefighter I training mandate that CPR/AED training be included. He asked Director of Certification McGowan to relay to the Commission what the NFPA 1001 standards states and how we currently apply it. He said if we're going to consider moving in this direction, which he feels merits serious review and consideration the primary beneficiaries are both the public and from the "Saving our Own" perspectives.

Mr. McGowan distributed a copy of NFPA 1001, 2002 edition. He stated because we're in transition with the NFPA 1001 standard he's incorporated both the 2002 as well as the 2008 edition. Essentially there has been no change to this particular part of the standard. He said specifically he's highlighted by circling on the first page marked 1001-6 under 4.3\* which says Emergency Medical Care and cites the minimum emergency medical care performance capabilities for entry-level person shall be developed and validated by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) including infectious disease, CPR, bleeding control and shock management. He said this requirement falls under Chapter Four Entrance Requirements for the firefighter. He said depending upon how the AHJ (local Fire Chief) interprets this, the firefighter may have to come to the table with these credentials before becoming certified as a firefighter or we may choose to incorporate that as part of our training. He said from the Recruit standpoint we don't necessarily discuss that issue and he's not sure how the Regional Schools interpret that let alone at the local level.

Mr. Morrissette added that as an entrance requirement we actually delegate this back to the local Authority Having Jurisdiction. He said once we get into the actual JPR's that's what we train, test and certify to. He also indicated that Mr. Bond's letter has a small error from the standpoint that the firefighters from his department, Burlington, did not attend training delivered by the Connecticut Fire Academy. Rather, it was received from one of the Regional Fire Schools possibly Burrville as Hartford County provides CPR/AED Training to its Firefighter I candidates.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if these personnel were trained through the Recruit program or a Regional Fire School.

Mr. Morrisette replied it was through a Regional Fire School.

Commissioner Kowalski asked what the customer wants from the agency or whether it would go back to the Regional Fire School group or whether he is looking for an expansion of the Commission's authority to require this from all the Regional Schools.

Mr. Morrisette replied he's looking for the Commission through its authority to require this from all the Regional Schools and deliverers of entry level training. He also said he doesn't think Mr. Bond has approached the Regional Fire School that delivers their training but his position is in this day and age we as the Commission needs to begin setting a higher bar. He said any action on the Commission's part should include the Regional Fire Schools and Fire Chiefs in the discussion.

Commissioner Kowalski said we should be referring this to the Education Committee for discussion.

Mr. Morrisette said that is appropriate at this time but at some point it may need to come back if the Commission deems it appropriate to establish this as an entry-level requirement so at the time of testing or certification an individual will also need to possess a CPR/AED card.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if the practical skills exam has components of CPR in it.

Mr. McGowan replied he doesn't believe we do.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Schenck that we refer this issue to the Regional Fire Schools and the Education Committee for discussion.

Mr. McGowan added that the Commission needs to keep in mind that this particular Committee voted most recently to upgrade the minimum entrance requirements (prerequisites) to become certified in the areas of technical rescue from MRT to EMT status. This was required due to the requirement in the standard related to EMS and patient packaging. Collaring and back boarding are not components of MRT.

Commissioner Kowalski remarked that he's received a few calls related to this issue and the question came up whether one has to be an EMT in order to take Core. He said he responded that he believes one has to now and they asked where is it written because they have people who are in the program already that are MRT's and they want to continue or finish the program or they can't be certified anymore. He asked if that is in effect now.

Mr. McGowan said yes it is.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if any new people coming into the Core have to have EMT but anyone that is in the program currently doesn't.

Mr. McGowan said that's correct.

Commissioner Kowalski asked if that is published anywhere.

Mr. McGowan said it has not as yet.

Commissioner Kowalski said that's probably something we should do just because there are so many questions out there.

There was a discussion on the training, standards and the impact it would have if the Commission was to mandate it.

The **MOTION** was amended by Commissioner Kowalski and **SECONDED** by Commissioner Schenck that we refer the issue to the Chief's Association as well because they will also have an impact as far as training is concern. Motion carried.

Moving to item 5b.) NFPA 1001 Standard Implementation Schedule – Mr. Morrisette said as Commissioner Nicol had mentioned there are concerns regarding the implementation of new NFPA 1001 standard 2008 edition. He said we've been discussing this internally for some time awaiting the changes. He asked Mr. McGowan to report on what the changes within the standard are and how we anticipate dealing with those changes and when we will look to implement those. He said with the Commission's approval we would communicate the changes to the Regional Fire Schools and others.

Mr. McGowan said that revisions to the NFPA 1001 Firefighter Professional Qualifications have already taken place and approved as of November 2007. The changes are relatively minor in nature. He said more importantly is the addition of some of the Operational Hazardous Materials requirements found under NFPA 472. He gave an overview of the general requirements for FF I under the new standard. Essentially, the skills for Hazardous Materials which need to be captured in FFI are those found under NFPA 472 Chapter 5.2 through 5.5. These along with Chapter 6.6 form the Core competencies. Under the new NFPA 472 mission specific components include Weapons of Mass Destruction and leads to discussion regarding the overall dealings. He said from a certification standpoint it's going to be relatively simple for us to make those adjustments. We already have the test bank questions from PTS with the Version 8 for FFI and II and Haz-Mat. He said that we have begun to vet the questions and validate to the local level. He said there are some 1320 questions for the FFI test bank alone of which we will select probably 100 to 150 questions for the written component. Mr. McGowan said the Certification Coordinator Ed O'Hurley is working to make adjustments for the practical skills moving some of the FFII skills to the FFI. The other adjustments will have to be added to the mix including the decontamination for WMD and emergency decon corridor. He said the timeline for the state to move on and not burden the Regional training schools would be in place for November/ December 2008 testing season. He also said that he has had discussion with the Training Division and that

the next recruit class would be under the new standard as well as the new editions for training manuals. He asked Mr. Piskura to comment and then he would discuss the direction Certification would undertake.

Mr. Piskura said for the Recruit class they are looking at the array of publishers commercially produced curriculum. He said they will let the Program Leads and Instructors make the selection for what publication they are going to elect to go with. He said they are going to wait for Recruit class 41 to be done and then give them a month or two to review what's available and make a selection and they would use that product in the future. He said at this point we are not with any particular publisher's lesson plans to meet the standard but we have all the books available in the Bookstore from five different publishers.

Mr. McGowan said as a follow up that he did review the test questions and their reference material and found that all the major publication companies are represented. What this means is that no significant changes or adjustments would have to be made to the test no matter which publishing company was selected by the training institutions in the state. He said the Certification timeline to discuss with the Education Committee, the Chief's Association and other organizations would most likely occur in April and May.

Commissioner Nicol asked for the names of the five publications Mr. Piskura had mentioned.

Mr. Piskura remarked they are IFSTA/Fire Protection Publications, Cengage/Delmar, Jones and Bartlett, Pennwell Fire Engineering and Brady Publishing.

Commissioner Nicol said the reason he asked is the Education Committee was also talking about forming a subcommittee within their group to look at the different textbooks that are available to consider standardizing the textbooks that are used within the Regional Schools. He said he's not sure they'll be able to accomplish that but that was their thought process.

Mr. Morrisette added that one concern is that we utilize a commercially developed database of questions. That same publisher makes those questions available for a fee to anyone and you can buy the study manuals containing the questions from Jones & Bartlett. He said he believes some of the publishers will be producing test banks and provide them to accredited entities only. He said there may need to be a discussion sometime in the future as to whether we should only utilize validated test banks that are solely available to accredited entities such as ourselves. Test question security is a major issue with the Pro-Board and IFSAC. They both may need to rule on this issue of the commercially available study guides and test question banks.

A brief question and answer period followed.

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

Moving to item 7 – Matters to be raised by Commissioners and staff – Mr. Morrisette said the next Commission meeting date on the agenda is incorrect. It should be Tuesday



April 29 and not April 25<sup>th</sup>. We will look to possibly schedule this meeting at the Legislative Office Building as the close of the legislative session is the following week.

He also said Commissioner Nicol brought to his attention following the Education Committee some questions that came up on the part of a committee member as to concerns about the Connecticut Fire Academy's ability to deliver or meet the demand for Instructor I and Officer I training. He said he wanted to allow Mr. Piskura an opportunity to respond to the issues. He said if someone was present and can frame the issue better it would be helpful, but his understanding was concerns were expressed about the CFA turning students away from Fire Service Instructor I (FSI-I) and Fire Officer I (FO-I) training programs and not enough of these programs being offered in the field specifically at the Regional Fire Schools.

Commissioner Nicol said the discussion was that these particular programs are controlled or offered through the CFA and in some cases when those programs are offered they fill up very quickly. He said one of the directors mentioned that they could use more in their area and the CFA responded that they are tapped out. He said the thought was if the CFA can't provide the classes why can't they be done locally.

Mr. Piskura replied that there are two questions being asked. One is why can't they do it locally and the other is our capacity. He said our capacity is to deliver 12 to 13 of those classes annually which he feels is too high as it places significant stress on our instructor cadre. He also said he's very proud that we can offer 12 to 13 of those deliveries per year. He said we're very sensitive to geographic distribution and in the calendar there aren't 12 or 13 because we contract out the other ones. They are heavily subscribed to courses and FS-I is capped at 16 students per class because of the necessity for the skills application within the class to satisfy certification requirements. All the students have to do multiple deliveries so it's very time consuming to rotate 16 students to do that. He said it's not a student to Instructor ratio thing it's the time in getting the delivery done. He said it's a very time consuming class that takes a special cadre of people to perform and there is embedded certification criteria. He said the access tree for certification changed about three years ago and we're now getting an insurgence of people who all of a sudden discovered they want to be FO-I, II III or IV and realize they have to become a FSI-I first. He said the reason we don't let the Regional Fire Schools do this class is it is part of our Mission Delineation Agreement because this is probably one of the most important classes we offer and it's the one that provides the base for anything we do from hereon. He said we need to maintain strict control of that class and those that teach within the program as well as because of the embedded certification testing. The Training and Certification Divisions work together with implicit trust. He said that is a core course for our business here at the CFA. He said he doubts we could offer many more deliveries. He said he feels its okay to have a precious course. He also said we do try to accommodate people if they have special circumstances.

Commissioner Kowalski said he agrees that the FSI-I program should be kept at the CFA because of the amount of testing that takes place during the program. He said we went through this approximately four years ago when the same question came up and we resolved it with the delineation of responsibility memo that was given to all the Regional Schools. He said the downside is that the FSI-I course is part of the promotional ladder

of FO-I, II, III and IV so by not offering more to our customer we are holding up the opportunity to go to FO-I certification. He said at one time we were waiving the requirements to go to the class of FO-I and they couldn't get certification until they completed the FSI-I program. He asked if there is something we could do in that scenario.

Mr. Morrissette said that anyone can apply to attend any class and a person can move to FO-I without being a FSI-I however they cannot be certified as FO-I until they achieve FSI-I certification.

Mr. Piskura said there maybe timelines involved for certification.

Mr. McGowan added that we've implemented inside our new policies a concern for stacking. He said as his predecessor suggested there is that learning curve that falls off the edge while you're involved in the other course and then going backwards to get certified to the minimum standards before moving on to the new level.

A brief discussion period followed.

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

Chairman Carozza adjourned the meeting at 11:05 am.

Dated:

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James P. Wilkinson, Secretary  
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control