

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 29, 2000 MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Chairman Carozza with the following members present: Commissioners Haber, Maheu, Milewski, Munkenbeck, Nicol, Stankye and Wilkinson. Commissioners Chatfield, Gomeau, Johnson, Kowalski, Mullen and Vendetta were excused. Staff members Morrissette, Ouellette and Piskura were present.

Guests to the meeting were identified as former Commissioners Jon Andresen and Maurice McCarthy, Jr., Charles M. Stankye, III, Derby Fire Department, Mark Amatrudo, Russ Emons, and Paul Nyerick from the Connecticut Fire Academy.

Chairman Carozza welcomed the guests to the meeting and asked former Commissioners Maurice McCarthy, Jr. and John Andresen in turn to come forward for a special presentation. He then presented each individual a citation from Lieutenant Governor M. Jodi Rell inscribed as follows:

“In recognition for your dedication to serving the State of Connecticut as an active and vital member of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control. Your leadership and guidance have made you an invaluable asset to the state. Your tireless efforts have been recognized and appreciated by those who had the pleasure of working with you. You are a true role model for your family, friends and peers.”

In addition, Chairman Carozza presented each past Commissioner an engraved brass desk clock in recognition for their service to the Commission.

Also, a certificate of appreciation was presented to former Commissioner Jon Andresen. Both Commissioners McCarthy and Andresen thanked the Commission for the opportunity to serve the Commission.

Chairman Carozza called for a five-minute recess.

Chairman Carozza returned the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and asked Charles Stankye, III to come forward.

Mr. Stankye, III reported on a memorial service that took place in Derby this past December to memorialize the six firefighters from Worcester, MA who died in the line of duty. In addition, he

presented one of the memorial candles from the service to Chairman Carozza and State Fire Administrator for display at the Connecticut Fire Academy.

Chairman Carozza thanked Mr. Stankye and the Derby Fire Department on behalf of the Commission for all their efforts and for organizing the memorial tribute for the Worcester Firefighters.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Nicol and SECONDED by Commissioner Maheu to approve the minutes of the November 30, 1999 meeting. Motion carried.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Munkenbeck and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski to approve the Staff Report for the period of November 15, 1999 - December 14, 1999, December 15, 1999 - January 14, 2000 and January 15, 2000 - February 14, 2000. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza asked if there was any objection to move to agenda item 6 f.) under Unfinished Business.

Mr. Piskura reported that at this point the Training Division has established a replacement for an incumbent Program Coordinator for Public Fire Education. He introduced Russ Emons and asked him to report on some of the current and long term activities he is involved in.

Mr. Emons stated that he was thrilled to be working at the Academy and briefly explained some goals and objectives for the Fire & Life Safety Program. The first objective was to put in place plans for the Year 2000 Fire & Life Safety Conference. The initial goal was to attract 100 participants for this conference but new plans call for increasing the total participation to 125. The speakers that have been selected for this conference are quality people. He invited all Commissioners to attend the conference on April 28, 2000 to be held at the Ramada Inn in East Hartford. He then gave an overview of some of the other initiatives he was involved in.

Mr. Morrissette stated that it is very evident that Mr. Emons has put a lot of time and effort and has dived right into his new responsibilities. He has a lot of passion for the subject and is maximizing the use of limited resources to accomplish the goals and objectives at hand and we thank him for it.

Chairman Carozza moved to item 7 b.) under New Business and asked Mr. Amatrudo to give an overview of the Fire Officer III Program.

Mr. Amatrudo stated that he would like to spend a few minutes to talk about the philosophy behind the new Fire Officer III and Officer IV programs. The Fire Officer III program at this point in time is nearly complete. Once complete, we'll move on to Officer IV. The two programs will be effectively put together the same way with a little different content. The overall philosophy of these programs is to develop a bridge between the Officer I/II programs and post-secondary (or technical college) fire service education programs. The main objective was to develop programs that would allow senior fire officers with and without previous Fire Officer certification to develop the critical skills needed to be effective volunteer and career chief officers. He explained that the matrix developed for Fire Officer Program rewrite used a three-step approach (i.e. (a) Group Discussions, (b) Development of a Project Portfolio and (c) Oral Board Review of Project Portfolio). A candidate who passes the Oral Board review and has met the prerequisites will be granted Fire Officer III certification. If prerequisites have not been met, a certificate of completion will be provided. He stated that he had with him for review

the course outline and the Oral Board invitation letter. He invited any Commissioners interested in participating on the Oral Board to let him know.

Commissioner Nicol inquired about the number of contact hours.

Mr. Amatrudo replied that it would amount to approximately 60 hours for each level.

Commissioner Wilkinson inquired how soon the first phase would be ready for delivery.

Mr. Amatrudo stated that the hope is to pilot Officer III in mid to late spring. This is a completely new approach, but we are confident that it will be successful.

Mr. Morrisette stated that the Commission already has regulations in place to certify to the Officer III level. That was done back in 1996 in anticipation of moving forward either with a Commission program or with a partnership on the outside. We need to receive conceptual approval from the Commission today to develop regulations for the examination delivery system for these two new levels. The approach that the curriculum team has been working on has been laid out for you today. Mr. Morrisette indicated he thinks it's a very exciting change that lends itself quite well to the Officer III/IV level and probably other levels in the future. To move forward and begin the regulation development process for the delivery system, we would be looking for approval based upon what is laid out on the matrix and flow chart.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Nicol and SECONDED by Commissioner Munkenbeck to adopt the proposed Fire Officer III/IV training and certification program. Motion carried.

Moving to item 6 a.) Mr. Morrisette reported on the Department of Labor's (DOL) review of the draft proposal for the Accelerated Training Program for Firefighter I and the concerns expressed by Conn-OSHA. Generally Conn-OSHA indicated that they do not approve or comment specifically on training, but rather what they look for is proof of competency. Any type of guidance the Commission provides to fire departments will have to summarize or include a copy of the DOL letter.

Commissioner Munkenbeck asked for clarification of the third concern expressed by CONN-OSHA.

Mr. Morrisette stated that the revised NFPA Pro-Qual Standards now have in addition to traditional objectives, prerequisite skills and knowledge. These are part of the job performance requirements of the Professional Qualification Standards.

Commissioner Nicol commented that in releasing this accelerated FF-I training program to a department it should be made known that there is a reduction in the number of contact hours. He then asked how the agency planned to disseminate this accelerated program.

Mr. Morrisette stated that first the agency will have to come up with a guidance document as it relates to this program. Secondly, the agency has agreed to go out and conduct outreach sessions to those interested fire departments and regional schools throughout the state.

Moving to item 6 b.) Mr. Morrisette stated that the Commission had now been granted IFSAC accreditation for all levels requested. At a previous Commission meeting there was discussion and a motion to permit the agency to roll out the IFSAC National registry and certification program for any

of the incumbents currently certified by the Commission. In doing some additional investigation we've determined that we would like to propose a modification to what the Commission had approved at the last meeting. As you may recall, you authorized the agency to circulate the information as it relates to accreditation and assess a \$5 per level administration fee to complete the necessary paperwork for any of the interested individuals seeking national registry and certification. What we've been able to do with IFSAC is develop a single application form that they are in the process of approving. Essentially, this application will permit us to document the levels of certification on a single piece of paper. This will not require nearly as much work as we had anticipated. As such, we are looking to have the original motion amended or a new motion put on the table which would authorize us to distribute information and applications for IFSAC certification and assess a \$5 fee for one or multiple levels an individual may apply for. As far as administrative work, it will probably take only a minute to process each application. Once the application is received by an individual they can apply enclosing IFSAC's applicable fee(s). This is a voluntary program.

Commissioner Nicol AMENDED an earlier MOTION made by Commissioner Kowalski authorizing the agency to conduct a general mailing to extend IFSAC certification to all persons eligible for accredited levels for which they are certified for in the state and assess a \$5 processing fee per individual.

Mr. Morrisette stated as mentioned previously, the agency will not be sending a letter to each certified individual because it would be too costly. What we propose to do is a general mailing to fire chiefs/fire companies and to the fire service organizations. There's no expiration date or limit to when an individual can apply.

The AMENDED MOTION was SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski. Motion carried.

Moving to item 6 c.) Mr. Morrisette stated that he was hoping Commissioners had a chance to review the "Draft Strategic Priorities" document. At this time he is asking for approval of these priorities to serve as the foundation document for which to move forward from. The comments that were received from the public forums, from the staff both full and part-time, from the Division Directors and from the Commissioners is collected within this document. One of the major themes that was recognized is that the Commission should become the principal and most effective advocate on behalf of the fire service in Connecticut. Furthermore, Commission members should become effective advocates within their respective constituent organizations and the fire service generally in support of the mission and role of the Commission. Another area that a tremendous amount of time was spent on deals in the area of communications both internally within our own organization as well as externally between the Commission and the fire service.

A discussion period followed.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and SECONDED by Commissioner Stankye to approve the Strategic Plan Draft and authorize the State Fire Administrator to move forward with this process. Motion carried.

Moving to item 6 d.) Mr. Morrisette reported that the agency was not successful in a bid proposal to the Department of Health for EMS testing both for EMT and paramedic level. He indicated that he made a request in writing for a copy of the successful bid for the paramedic testing. To date a copy of this document has not been received.

Mr. Piskura who represents the Commission on the EMS Advisory Group gave an update of meetings he attended as this group looks at the EMS organization in the state.

A discussion period followed.

Moving to item 6 e.) Mr. Morrisette stated that effective February 1 the agency signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Public Works to secure the services of Servus Management for a six-month trial period to administer our dormitory and facility reservation system. Staff met several times with Servus and it is hoped that a test of the dormitory reservation system will take place within a week.

Moving to item 5 g.) Mr. Morrisette gave an update of the Firefighters Memorial. He stated that he has been in contact several times over the last month with Mr. Ernie Herrick to obtain an update. He indicated about one year ago a letter was sent to the Mashantucket Pequots to solicit a donation. To date nothing was heard and finally Mr. Herrick sent another letter. He received a call stating that there was some kind of mix-up and that a new check would be authorized and sent for the memorial. That was about four weeks ago and to date no check has arrived. Mr. Herrick has reported a balance of approximately \$61,000 in the memorial fund.

Commissioner Nicol stated that at a recent Legislative Reception he asked Senator DeLuca whether a bill had been proposed to obtain additional funding for the memorial. He said at this point that the window period is closed on individual legislators submitting bills.

Moving to item 7 a.), Mr. Morrisette gave a legislative update. He stated that he has been sending out copies of all new legislative proposals. Some of the more important items are coming up for public hearing such as on the fire service training bill that has a hearing scheduled for this afternoon at the LOB. Another issue that's been fairly large deals with open burning permits and making local fire marshals responsible for that. There has been some dialog between the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Joint Council, the Office of State Fire Marshal and also with Senator Dailey the Chair of the Environment Committee to amend this Public Act. The area regarding grants to the municipalities for the purchase of thermal imaging cameras (TIC) seems to be the hot item this year with eight bills being proposed. Last week the Academy took part in a demonstration of a TIC for Senator Hurlihay who is proposing a bill utilizing the tobacco funds. We also participated in a press conference here at the Academy as well as one at the LOB, both which went very well. This event generated calls and questions from members of the public and from legislators. Another press conference and demonstration will be conducted at the Capitol tomorrow with Representative Tulisano.

Moving to item 7 c.) Mr. Morrisette stated that due to a technical error, the policies for Certification revocation and expiration were inadvertently eliminated from Section 7-3231 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies when rewritten in 1996. This policy submission is designed to re-institute those portions of the Regulation exactly as they appeared in the 1983 edition of the Regulation. At this time, the agency is looking for approval to reinstate this policy. We will submit this change to the Legislatures' Regulation Committee soon.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Maheu and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski approving the re-establishment of the Certification Revocation/Expiration Policy as written. Motion carried.

There being no comments from the public, Chairman Carozza moved to item 9 and asked for matters to be raised by Commissioners and Staff.

Commissioner Wilkinson stated that he had the opportunity to attend the memorial service in Derby and offered his compliments to the Derby Fire Department for organizing and bringing forth such a meaningful ceremony.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and SECONDED by Commissioner Milewski requesting that the Commission send a letter to the Derby Fire Department acknowledging their donation of the memorial candle and to thank them for organizing the ceremony and hand delivery of the candle to the Worcester Fire Department. Motion carried.

Commissioner Haber read a letter from Chief Timothy S. Wall, North Farms Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. and President Connecticut Fire Chiefs' Association asking that some type of FF-I certificate be issued for Firefighter Joshua Keczkemethy from the Burrville Fire Department. Firefighter Keczkemethy is gravely ill and is being treated for cancer with tumors on his spine and lungs. Friends of his in the fire service are trying to establish a charitable fund to help with medical expenses. Chief Wall stated that Dale C. Martin, 1st Lt. of the Paugasset Fire Department, made this request.

A discussion period followed.

Chairman Carozza asked if there was any objection to this request. All Commissioners unanimously agreed to act quickly on this request and issue a FF-I certificate to Firefighter Keczkemethy.

Mr. Piskura stated that a new recruit class has just started yesterday and he invited Commissioners to visit them in class. Just as a reminder, the NFPA is hosting a regional meeting today and tomorrow at the Double Tree Inn on Route 75 if anyone is interested to stop in and hear what they are talking about.

Commissioner Maheu stated that at a recent meeting of the Fire Marshal's Training Council a policy was approved which he believes would be of interest to Commissioners. Essentially this policy allows a fire department to provide training to its certified fire marshal, deputy fire marshal and fire inspectors up to 50% of their required training credit hours per three-year cycle. Therefore, if an individual needs 90 hours he can now receive a large part of that training through his local fire department provided the training meets the guidelines established in the policy. This is a step forward for the Office of the State Fire Marshal in forming a partnership with the local fire departments to minimize their expenses when they have several inspectors on staff and have to release them for training. Now local fire departments will be able to provide much of this training in house.

Mr. Morrissette reminded the Commissioners of the upcoming Fire Service Day at the Capitol scheduled for March 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Chief Tim Wall, Chairman of the Joint Council will be sending a letter to the Fire Chiefs in the state asking them to make personal contact with their legislators and if possible schedule an appointment with them on that day.

Mr. Morrisette brought up the subject of the possibility of holding a night meeting for the Commission. He stated that Commissioner Nicol had mentioned that the Middlebury Fire Department would be interested in hosting such a meeting and inquired whether there was interest to schedule one of the upcoming meeting dates for a night meeting.

A discussion period followed with Commissioners agreeing to look into scheduling a night meeting in April or May.

Mr. Morrisette stated that the agency would once again be hosting an 800 FIRE LINE Recruitment and Retention Open Forum this Thursday, March 2 at the Southbury Fire Headquarters at 7:00 p.m. He asked Commissioners to pass this information along to their respective organizations. Lt. Governor Rell has sent out a letter of solicitation to the Insurance Industry seeking funds to assist with the development, distribution and airing of a public service announcement supporting the 800 FIRE LINE Program and recruitment and retention in general. Lt. Governor Rell has some possible support from the Hartford Insurance Group and we are awaiting for her to give the go ahead to schedule the production of these announcements. Also, at the open forum meeting we have a generic PSA, which was developed by the National Volunteer Fire Council, which we will showcase. We are planning on duping that tape and distributing it to any of the local communities that would like to utilize it on a local level through their local cable company.

Mr. Morrisette stated that he was contacted by Chief Natrass of the Stratford Fire Department indicating they had recently approved a contract, which finally eliminates the FF-III benefit. You may recall the Commission had agreed to continue offering FF-III certification to those communities that had provisions within their labor contracts recognizing FF-III. It was my understanding that Stratford was the only community with this provision still in their contract. After the Chief of Stratford called, we received two calls from individuals who are working with Charter Oak College and would like to obtain FF-III certification in order to obtain college credits. Does the Commission wish us to continue offering this certification? We're not sure how valid or reliable it is, but when is this going to end.

Commissioner Munkenbeck recommended this certification level be eliminated.

Mr. Morrisette reported that for last calendar year IFSTA reported that the Connecticut Fire Academy distributorship sales grossed over \$100,000. This was achieved through very little marketing on our end. So as we move forward and pursue a full time bookstore operation, we believe that the IFSTA sales alone is enough justification to show that we can support a full time position.

Mr. Morrisette stated that the National Fire Academy alerted the agency that \$25,000 would be earmarked for each of the 50 states to aid in the support of delivery of their programs. One of our initial concerns was that this grant would be directed to the Governor's Office. Our concern is that the money may be misdirected to another agency. We have alerted our Budget Analyst about this funding with hope it is appropriately directed.

Mr. Morrisette stated that he was alerted by the Chief of Staff for Senator Dodd that within the President's 2001 budget package was included a proposal for a \$25 million dollar grant program for FEMA to develop a pilot demonstration program providing funding to distressed municipalities for purchase of equipment. There are a lot of questions whether this is the sell-out for the Fire Act Bill. We have generated some information and have asked the Office of Policy and Management to assist us in the development of a pilot program for consideration by FEMA. It is possible Connecticut could

serve as the pilot demonstration program for the United States and garner a larger percentage of the initial appropriation. There is still a lot of lobbying going on in support of Fire Act Bill, both in the House and the Senate.

Commissioner Milewski inquired if a motion was needed to stop the Certification of FF-III.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Milewski and SECONDED by Commissioner Munkenbeck to no longer offer certification to the level of FF-III. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nicol recommended that someone from the Commission be selected to act in an advisory capacity to assist Fire Departments and families in the event of a line of duty death here in Connecticut.

Mr. Morrissette stated that historically when there is a firefighter fatality this agency has contacted the fire department and offered assistance. He stated that the agency could certainly look to formalize a process.

Commissioner Maheu inquired about PTS terminating their contract and whether there would be a loss of revenue for the Commission.

Mr. Morrissette stated that there is no real loss of direct revenue. The royalties have been given solely as computer hardware and software. He indicated that he was still waiting for a final reconciliation from PTS for the last two years.

Commissioner Nicol inquired if funding for the tower renovation was approved.

Mr. Morrissette reported that he received a call late last week indicating that DPW's infrastructure funds did not make it on the Bond Commission agenda.

Chairman Carozza thanked the person responsible for the nameplates.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilkinson and SECONDED by Commissioner Munkenbeck to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Carozza adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Dated: _____

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

MOTIONS**Commission Meeting – February 29, 2000**

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STAFF FOLLOW-UP REQUIRED

Accelerated FF-I Training Program - Commissioner Nicol commented that in releasing this accelerated FF-I training program to a department it should be made known that there is a reduction in the number of contact hours. He then asked how the agency planned to disseminate this accelerated program.

Mr. Morrisette stated that first the agency will have to come up with a guidance document as it relates to this program. Secondly, the agency has agreed to go out and conduct outreach sessions to those interested fire departments and regional schools throughout the state.

IFSAC Certification Offer - What we propose to do is a general mailing to fire chiefs/fire companies and to the fire service organizations. There's no expiration date or limit to when an individual can apply.

EMS bid proposal - Mr. Morrisette reported that the agency was not successful in a bid proposal to the Department of Health for EMS testing both for EMT and paramedic level. He indicated that he made a request in writing for a copy of the successful bid for the paramedic testing. To date a copy of this document has not been received.

Certification revocation and expiration - Mr. Morrisette stated that due to a technical error, the policies for Certification revocation and expiration were inadvertently eliminated from Section 7-3231 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies when rewritten in 1996. This policy submission is designed to re-institute those portions of the Regulation exactly as they appeared in the 1983 edition of the Regulation. At this time, the agency is looking for approval to reinstate this policy. We will submit this change to the Legislatures' Regulation Committee soon.

Request to issue a FF-I Certificate - from Chief Timothy S. Wall, North Farms Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. and President Connecticut Fire Chiefs' Association asking that some type of FF-I certificate be issued for Firefighter Joshua Keczemethy from the Burrville Fire Department. Firefighter Keczemethy is gravely ill and is being treated for cancer with tumors on his spine and lungs. Friends of his in the fire service are trying to establish a charitable fund to help with medical expenses. Chief Wall stated that Dale C. Martin, 1st Lt. of the Paugasett Fire Department, made this request.

Chairman Carozza asked if there was any objection to this request. All Commissioners unanimously agreed to act quickly on this request and issue a FF-I certificate to Firefighter Keczemethy.

Schedule a night Commission Meeting - Mr. Morrisette brought up the subject of the possibility of holding a night meeting for the Commission. He stated that Commissioner Nicol had mentioned that the Middlebury Fire Department would be interested in hosting such a meeting and inquired whether there was interest to schedule one of the upcoming meeting dates for a night meeting.

A discussion period followed with Commissioners agreeing to look into scheduling a night meeting in April or May.

Line of duty death package to assist fire departments & families - Commissioner Nicol recommended that someone from the Commission be selected to act in an advisory capacity to assist Fire Departments and families in the event of a line of duty death here in Connecticut.

Mr. Morrisette stated that historically when there is a firefighter fatality this agency has contacted the fire department and offered assistance. He stated that the agency could certainly look to formalize a process.