

**UNOFFICIAL
STATE FIRE COMMISSION MEETING
FLATWOODS, WV
FEBRUARY 20, 2009**

The official business meeting was called to order at 8:35 AM by Chairman Charles Eversole. Chairman Eversole thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He thanked the Gassaway VFD and Commissioner James for the hospitality on Thursday evening at the reception for the Fire Marshal's 100th anniversary.

Chairman Eversole stated there were two firefighter fatalities in Craigsville VFD, Nicholas County, WV. He requested a moment of silence in their memory.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Charles L. Eversole, Chairman
Chuck Runyon, Secretary
Dale L. Clayton
Francis A. Guffey, II
Kenneth Morgan
Victor Stallard, Jr.

Bill L. Spencer, Vice Chairman
Joseph J. Bostar, III
Larry Goodwin
Randy James
James L. Oldaker

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

John Bailey

David Tolliver

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Runyon made a motion to approve the minutes of December 12, 2008. Commissioner Stallard seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Bob Nevins, ISO
Mark J. Doty, WVU-FSE
Bill Wilcox, WV Dept. of Education
Edward Hicks, WV Dept. of Education
Jim Ancell, RESA
David Plume, RESA VIII
Deron Wilkes, WVOEMS
Corey Roblee, ICC
Ted Shriver, Architects
Mike Reel, WVAHI
Mike Phillips, WVAHI
Tim Cunningham, HBAWV
Paul W. Linger, IEW
Jay C. Gibson, IA EI, WVCOA
Jack E. Jamison, Jr., WVIAEI
Rick Roda, Eaton, Cutler, Hammer
Jason S. Turner, Ballard VFD
Michael C. Jackson, Chapel VFD
Paul Jordan, Williamstown VFC
Doug Miracle, Williamstown VFC

Troy Phillips, Williamstown VFC
Derek V. Long, Sutton VFD
Eric A. Chichester, Parkersburg FD
Timothy J. Flinn, Parkersburg FD
Carl E. Sizemore II, Parkersburg FD
Gary Bonnett, WVSFA

STAFF PRESENT:

Sterling Lewis, Jr., State Fire Marshal
Nancy Olson, Secretary
Debbie Hudson, Secretary
Carol Nolte, Deputy Fire Marshal
Reed Cook, Deputy Fire Marshal
Joe Leake, Deputy Fire Marshal
Tony Carrico, Deputy Fire Marshal
Edsel Smith, Assistant Fire Marshal

COMMENTS BY INTERESTED PARTIES

Fire Chief Chichester, Parkersburg Fire Department, requested information about Life Safety Code classes. Much discussion followed. It was decided that the Fire Chief and Fire Marshal's Office get together to discuss this situation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Jason Turner, Fire Chief, Ballard VFD, stated he had a question regarding training issues for junior firefighters. He stated to take Firefighter I class, a junior firefighter must be 16 years of age, however, you have a 14 year old that is interested in firefighting and goes to the junior firefighter camp and can participate in everything and then they come back and want to take the Firefighter I class and cannot sit in the class and wait to take the test until they are 16 years old. He would like to allow 15 year olds to audit the class.

Deputy Fire Marshal Carrico stated that there are federal and state child labor laws and they are specific and the age is set at 16. A lot of things are strictly prohibited for minors less than 16.

Discussion followed regarding the situation. It was decided that the subject needs to be researched and added to Unfinished Business for the next meeting.

Paul Jordan, Williamstown VFD, stated he has been involved in a year long situation. He stated they had been handling classes in-house and now they no longer have these resources. They want to be able to train their firefighters in-house at a speed they can manage with different schedules. They want a 40 hour instructor methodology course for public service training. It is offered around the State.

Much discussion followed with Commissioners and Jim Ancell, RESA.

Commissioner Runyon made a motion to request RESA to give them the class they requested. Commissioner Bostar seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Willamstown VFD stated they will work with RESA to make sure all their people are qualified.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from ISO regarding Independent Survey of Fire Chiefs. (No action needed)

STAFF REPORTS

Deputy Fire Marshal Anthony Carrico stated that two legislative rules have been filed as modified. Those rules are the Building Code Officials rule and the Fire Protection Workers rule. Hopefully, these will make it out of Legislative Rule Making Review Committee and sent to the full Legislature.

Another issue is the situation in Ronceverte in Greenbrier County. Relations between the fire department and city obviously deteriorated to the point where the city requested a financial statement and wanted to review some things. The fire department refused and the city called in the state police and they initiated an investigation. This came up before the circuit court of Greenbrier County. The Circuit Judge issued three orders, the judge ordered the town to dissolve the fire department and to take ownership and possession of everything they had. Since that time, Deputy Carrico and the Fire Marshal have been working with the city administration and members of the fire department and they are working close to an agreement and to resolve this issue as satisfactory to the judge. It is not final yet. Fire protection is being provided by two neighboring fire departments. Discussion followed.

AGENCY REPORTS

Technical and Adult Training, Vo-Tech, Mr. Wilcox stated that Escape will start this week at Pipestem. He stated that any other information can be found in the Training Committee minutes.

Training, WVU-FSE, Mr. Mark Doty stated a Fire Inspector I course was held the last week of January and another one will be scheduled in May. Assistant Fire Marshals John Oliver and Edsel Smith were the lead instructors. The Fire Inspector II course will be held in September. Coming up April 4th & 5th, we have the safety seminar by the State Firemen's Association. The speaker will be Dennis Rubin, Fire Chief of District of Columbia Fire Department. He will be talking about "Old Problems – New Solutions: Command Safety". Also, they will have Pat Brandenburg, Battalion Chief of Loudoun County, VA Fire & Rescue. He will talk about "Fireground Cultural Change". And Murrey and Lannie will be talking about Operational Fire Safety and Practical ICS. The dates have been set for the Junior Firefighter Camp. It will be held on June 27 to July 2, the ages are 14-17 and the cost is \$199.00 per student. The WV Weekend at Emmitsburg has not been scheduled yet. Discussion followed.

Insurance Services Office (ISO), Mr. Robert Nevins stated he had two items to discuss. One was the news release on the ISO study and the other was the finished annual report. During 2008, ISO reevaluated 18 fire protection areas within West Virginia. Eleven of those improved in classification. Six of those 18 remained the same.

One fire protection area retrogressed in its classification and they are working with that department over the next 12 months to regain their classification. Discussion followed.

Mr. Nevins was asked how much the current building codes affect the ISO ratings. He stated it does not incorporate into that evaluation. It is a separate classification that insurance industry uses. They are currently working on a revision of the fire suppression rating schedule which is used in the fire protection area rating. They have taken under advisement and are currently considering reincorporating into the fire suppression rating schedule, which is a fire prevention and fire code program, as part of that evaluation. It has not been determined if that is the road they are going to take. Discussion followed.

Office of Emergency Medical Services – Mr. Deron Wilkes stated the electronic patient care program has 15 agencies reporting at this time. They hope all agencies will be reporting by the end of the year. They are still working on the new center located in Flatwoods. The building is up but not completely finished. Positions are being posted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Training Committee, Commissioner James. See attached report. Discussion followed.

FD Standards Evaluation, Commissioner Oldaker stated the following applications for Fire Officer I equivalency certification were received and evaluated and met all the criteria to be certified:

Tom Miller, Sissonville VFD	Timothy Gooch, Sissonville VFD
Michael Hoffman, Dunbar FD	Mark Roberts, Dunbar FD
David Ellis, Dunbar FD	Harvey Johnson, Trap Hill VFD

Commissioner Stallard made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Commissioner Runyon seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Oldaker requested that a formal request be made from the WV Department of Education and WVU-FSA regarding information on classes being taught and the pass/fail ratios.

Recruitment and Retention Committee, Commissioner Runyon stated they had been following through with Committee F of the Legislature during Interim meetings. During the State of the State address, there were 200 firefighters lining the halls to show support for recruitment and retention. He stated there is a bill being introduced for a scratch off lottery ticket. There are some things in the works for the recruitment and retention to help with the fire service. They do not know if anything will come of this.

Procedures Development Committee, Commissioner Bailey. No report.

Special Issues, Commissioner Bostar – No report.

Legislative and Budget, Commissioner Spencer – Everything is moving along. Deputy Fire Marshal Carrico stated that this code adoption at the next meeting will be a crucial one on decision time. If it goes any further than the next meeting, it will be almost impossible for staff to develop the rules for the Commission and get them through the Legislative Rule Making Review Committee.

Home Inspectors, Building Code Officials, Building and Fire Code Committees, Commissioner Guffey stated that two submissions for continuing education for home inspectors are not acceptable and will be returned for further information. Mike Reel from the Home Inspectors has volunteered to look into these companies and report back at the next meeting.

The Home Inspectors Association is meeting at noon at this location.

Commissioner Guffey stated that the 2009 Building Codes will be available next week. They have received several recommendations for building and fire code amendments. Several people spoke regarding their recommendations.

Corey Rublee, ICC, stated that the Stimulus Package was providing a sum of money in conjunction with the 2009 Energy Conservation Codes.

TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Fire Commission Meeting will be held April 16 & 17, 2009 in Beckley, WV; and the June meeting be held on June 11 & 12, 2009 in Charleston, WV in conjunction with the State Fire Marshal's 100th Anniversary Celebration.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Oldaker stated that proceeds from the scratch off ticket will be split 50/50 between the volunteers for retention and the municipal police and fire pension fund on the unfunded liability.

Fire Marshal Sterling Lewis gave a brief report on the firefighter fatalities in Craigsville. He stated he would have an update at the next meeting. He also stated there was a fatality in Wyoming County.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Clayton made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Sterling Lewis, Jr.
State Fire Marshal

Minutes
WV Fire Commissions
Training Committee Meeting
02/19/2009 Flatwoods, WV

The Training Committee met at 1500 hours at the Days Hotel in Flatwoods. There were 20 participants.

Chairman James passed out copies of the minutes of the Lewisburg meeting, including attendees and today's agenda.

Discussion began concerning the Associate Degree program from West Virginia State. Bill Wilcox reported that Jim Skidmore, Chancellor of the West Virginia Community and Technical Colleges, had been contacted. Mr. Wilcox conveyed that he and Murrey Loflin had discussed how the West Virginia Dept. of Education and WVU Fire Extension could connect classes and information from the high school or vocational school through the college level. Jim Shedd added that the Associate Degree could recognize the apprentice programs of some of the career department.

During the October meeting, the Fire Commissions was charged by the U. S. Chemical and Hazard Investigation Board to revise rules and codes to require annual hazardous material response refresher training. Lanty Adkins presented the draft version of the course that West Virginia Department of Education, RESA, and WVU Fire Extension has developed. The Course will be in two segments or DVD's. These two DVD's will be presented to the departments. The first DVD is an "orientation" presentation about haz. mat. response in general and covers the Emergency Response Guide. It is by no means a substitute for haz. mat. awareness or operations. The second DVD is specific to the original charge of responding to propane emergencies. This program will be expanded yearly to include a different scenario. The first DVD will primarily stay the same, concerning haz. mat. responses in general. A demonstration will be given at the next meeting in Beckley.

Marshal Lewis relayed some concerns that had been relayed to his office regarding a fire department's legal responsibility to respond. This came to light following last week's storms that caused some departments to delay or possibly not respond to all calls received for their first due areas. Discussion followed with no clear cut answer to the inquiries. Several factors, each different for different departments, were brought out. Some of these were, legal and moral responsibilities, scene security, department SOP's, insurance, and workman's comp.

Next came clarification and discussion regarding the definition of "Certificates" adopted at the Lewisburg meeting. Mr. Wilcox distributed a handout of the West Virginia Fire Training Pyramid. Also distributed was a draft clarification letter to inform how this "Certificates" definition affects fire department training classes. All the members of the Training Committee were charged with the task of studying this draft letter and suggesting improvements before being sent to the departments.

Mike Freeman updated the committee to the new national standards for Firefighter 1. These include hazardous material operations. Commissioner Oldaker questioned that since testing for haz. mat. operations could not be "oral", then wasn't the new standard

eliminating the firefighter whose reading skills are challenged but are otherwise indispensable to their respective departments? He asked about existing data that would suggest a percentage of firefighters affected by this new standard. Several members of the education sector of the training committee were familiar with a similar situation with EMS. After exceptional high failure rates for EMT's, the Department of Education came up with a reading skill test known as the Taab Test. EMT test scores began to improve after this test highlighted where some learning issues were located and what steps the instructors could use to address them. They suggested this may be adapted for firefighters in the future. This problem will need to be addressed soon in that RESA is almost out of the current textbook and the new ones are to the national standard. Instructors will have to be updated. Discussion also included a West Virginia path similar to the Fire Instructors, West Virginia path or Pro-Board.

Lanty Adkins gave the report for WVU Fire Extension. Mr. Adkins will give a similar report to this Commission during his agency's report.

Bob Nevins announced that ISO had nothing to report.

Jim Ancil gave a report on the Instructors' Seminar in Canaan Valley

Jim Shedd announced the Expo in Charleston, May 13, 14, and 15. Check releases for a list of speakers.

Commissioner Oldaker filled the committee in on details of the propane training sponsored by NVFC. This is on a grant through the Propane Transportation Committee and they are spending approximately \$100,000 for training sessions in West Virginia. This first round of 2 day training takes place March 28 and 29 at Chesapeake, WV. They are looking for another venue near north central West Virginia.

The meeting adjourned at 1650 hours.