

**UNOFFICIAL
STATE FIRE COMMISSION MEETING
CHARLESTON, WV
OCTOBER 31, 2008**

The official business meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman Charles Eversole.

Assistant Fire Marshal Charles Vannatter thanked everyone for all the help, support and the cards he received from everyone.

A moment of silence was held for Emma Vannatter; a former employee of the Fire Marshal's Office, Joe Weaver; and for Audrey Fife, Jim Fife's widow. May they rest in peace.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Charles L. Eversole, Chairman
Dale L. Clayton
Randy James
James L. Oldaker
David Tolliver

Bill L. Spencer, Vice Chairman
Larry Goodwin
Kenneth Morgan
Chuck Runyon

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

John Bailey, Secretary
Francis A. Guffey, II

Joseph J. Bostar, III
Victor Stallard, Jr.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes of August 22, 2008. Commissioner Runyon seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Cory Roblee, ICC
Ron Bateman, ISO
Joe Fratantaro, ISO
Ben Roy, NFPA
Murrey Loflin, WVU-FSE
Bill Wilcox, WV Dept. of Education
Rick Rice, RESA I
Jim Ancell, RESA V
Roderick Armstrong, RESA V
Stan Traylor, RESA VI
Mike Freeman, RESA VII
David Plume, RESA VIII
Mike Basile, Spilman, Thomas
Deron Wilkes, WVOEMS

Mike Reel, WVAHI
Capt. Kevin Price, Fire Marshal, City of Beckley
Len Hancock, Life Force Rescue Systems

STAFF PRESENT:

Sterling Lewis, Jr., State Fire Marshal
Nancy Olson, Secretary
Debbie Hudson, Secretary
Carol Nolte, Deputy Fire Marshal
Joe Leake, Deputy Fire Marshal
Anthony Carrico, Deputy Fire Marshal
Shawn Alderman, ASFM, RRT
Charles Vannatter, Assistant Fire Marshal

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Captain Kevin Price, Beckley Fire Department, stated he had a couple of questions. One is where do they stand on the new format for the fire code and two, what is the time table for the adoption of the 09 edition of the fire code. He stated he had to present it to the City Council so they could start enforcing it. He also asked about the process of being certified to install fire alarm systems and licensed through the State. He requested how the Fire Marshal's Office would get that information to the local entities. Fire Marshal Lewis stated that as to the timeline, the plans for the adoption of the 2009 code is the adoption period at the national level will be this fall. Deputy Fire Marshal Joe Leake stated both the Fire Code and the ICC code have been adopted. Fire Marshal Lewis stated the written material is coming out soon. Then it will be processed through our agency to see what changes, if any, will be needed to the current Fire Code. They are hoping to get this introduced in the 2009 process and submitted to the Legislature for the 2010 session. He suggested Capt. Price keep in close contact with Deputy Fire Marshal Leake to work on these codes.

Fire Marshal Lewis stated the fire alarm installers passed last year was originally supposed to go into effect January 1, 2009. During the legislative process, there was some things omitted. Hopefully, the changes will be made during the 2009 Legislative Session and it will probably not be effective until approximately May 1st with an effective date of maybe October. The only part to start on January 1st will be the sprinkler certification. He stated the best way to be kept apprised is to keep in touch with Deputy Fire Marshal Tony Carrico. His division will be handling that.

Len Hancock, Life Force Rescue Systems. Mr. Hancock made a power point presentation on a very new and innovative rescue tool. He stated it his company is the only fire apparatus builders in West Virginia. They have a long history of specialty hydraulic systems. He left some information for anyone to pick up and he has a truck in the parking lot if anyone would like to see the rescue vehicle. Discussion followed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from State of Connecticut, Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, requesting input on dates for the 2010 Mid-Atlantic Association of State Fire Commissions.

STAFF REPORTS

Fire Marshal Lewis stated the Annual Report was in each packet. He stated he feels the Fire Marshal's Office is doing a tremendous job with the amount of personnel. The fatality numbers were down last year, however, there are still an unacceptable number of fires and fire deaths. He encouraged anyone to call if they had any questions.

He stated the report and recommendations from the Chemical Safety Board on the Ghent explosion was presented to the Commission. He thanked the Commission for taking up the recommendations in the training session. He will contact the Chemical Safety Board about the Commission taking up the recommendations.

The Summit Park VFD that was brought to you a few months ago is now in compliance. They have retained their workers' comp and insurance for their apparatus. They are on a 6 month probationary period and in February or March of 2009, they will be evaluated again.

He stated the Fire Marshal's Office is going to a Class A uniform. There is a new patch on the shoulder. This will be everyday wear for the office for the supervisors and the Fire Marshal. The field personnel will be issued a uniform for court, memorials, firefighter memorial services, etc. He stated they are very proud of this uniform.

AGENCY REPORTS

Technical and Adult Training, Vo-Tech, Mr. Wilcox stated he would have the training numbers at the next meeting. They will break it down by region. They are working with the Training Committee and are close to finalizing a few things. They took care of some issues with granting and recognition of certificates.

Training, WVU-FSE, Mr. Murrey Loflin stated they are slowly getting moved into the new building. They have a new Administrative Assistant, Connie Hoover. West Virginia state weekend is near, December 6th & 7th. They have 102 people registered at this time but are hoping for more. The registrations will be accepted through November 3rd. They are having a memorial service on Sunday morning at the chapel. There are two new courses, Fire Behavior for Single Family Residences and Fire Testing for Code Enforcement. The classes are 2 day courses and will be offered on February 14th & 15th. He stated they are hoping to bring in a Plans Review course for fire inspectors. On January 26-30, 2009, they are going to offer a Fire Inspector I course in conjunction with the Fire Marshal's Office. Class size is limited to 30. Discussion followed on pre-requisites.

Insurance Services Office (ISO), Mr. Ron Bateman stated they did a presentation on Thursday regarding the ISO. He stated if anyone had any questions, to please contact them.

Office of Emergency Medical Services – Mr. Deron Wilkes stated that Chuck Peoples is no longer with their office. He went back to Cabell County EMS. They have started the search for his replacement. They are in the process of hiring a couple of staff for vacancies in their office. They are getting ready to undertake a couple of huge projects. One is to develop a electronic patient care record (electronic flow sheet). He stated he hopes by November 15th, they will start receiving first data on those electronic patient care records. They have partnered with the State of North Carolina to build a data system that will be almost real time. Mandatory reporting of all responses within a 24 hours. They will be able to track any sudden influx of flu, etc. The state trauma rule passed several years ago and one of the requirements was that a centralized hospital emergency medical tracking resource center. This is under construction and will open with limited capability on January 1st. The idea behind that is the function will be there to assist hospitals in finding places to send patients. Discussion followed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Training Committee, Commissioner James stated the committee met on Thursday with 25 participants. (Copy of minutes of committee meeting attached) Fire Marshal Lewis presented the CSB's investigation video on the Ghent explosion. The board recommended two items to the Commission to revise the Fire Commission rules to have firefighter's refresher classes every year. Marshal Lewis presented the U.S. Chemical and Hazard Investigation Board's video and report on the Little General Store Propane Explosion in Ghent. The Board recommended two items to the West Virginia State Fire Commission: 1. "Revise the Fire Commissions rules and codes to require annual hazardous materials response refresher training for all firefighters in West Virginia". 2. "Revise the Fire Commission rules and codes to require that all West Virginia fire departments perform at least one hazardous material response drill annually". Chairman James proposed that the Training Committee take up these recommendations and with help from the two education partners, WVU and Department of Education, begin work on how to implement these recommendations and how these will be delivered to the state's fire personnel.

Detailed discussion concerning the course training application: The addition to the definition for "Certificates" in particular. Final verbiage will be on the agenda and finalized at the December meeting. A discussion about Instructor 1's possibly being used for in-house training and to teach classes that are not for firefighter certification. This instructor may be responsible for maintenance of in-house training records. This is a particular concern to the Fire Marshal during routine fire department evaluations and ISO during their field surveys. This discussion of Instructor 1's will be on the agenda and discussed at the next Training Committee work session.

Four courses were submitted with the proper documentation and in significant time for evaluation:

1. Emergency Vehicle Driver Training, 16 hours, by VFIS.

2. Firefighter Self Rescue and Survival, 16 hours, by RESA 5. Motion made to accept by Commissioner

3. Managing Emergency Incidents on the Roadway, 8 hours, by Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association, approved.

Motion made to accept the previous three courses made by Commissioner Runyon. Seconded by Commissioner Clayton. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

4. Fire Ground Tactics and Strategies was not approved due to train-the-trainer issues.

A fifth class about Weather Emergencies by Tom Miller will be considered at the next Training Committee meeting.

Bill Wilcox reported for RESA that the annual figures for all classes taught by the Dept. of Education will be presented at the next Fire Commission meeting. A preliminary figure for the number of students exceeds 40,000. The Dept. of Education announced a Memorandum of Understanding with Cristian Fernley concerning NIMS courses.

Murrey Loflin of WVU Fire Service Extension reported that a Fire Inspector 1 course (NFPA 1031) will be given January 26 to 30 at the new Fire Academy. There is a 30 student limit per class. If more than 30 apply, a second class may be held. This is a Pro-Board course. Mr. Loflin was asked about Jr. Firefighter camp funding. Bill Wilcox added that scholarships were still available to students in the State's emergency services vocational programs.

Ron Bateman reported for ISO. He stated that ISO had presented their program to the Mingo County Fire Chiefs.

Point of Clarification regarding the two recommendations made by the Chemical Safety Board on the Ghent explosion: Fire Marshal Lewis asked if it was the Fire Commission's intent to work those two recommendations between this meeting and the December meeting. Commissioner James said no. Commissioner Spencer made a motion the recommendations from the CSB has been approved by the entire State Fire Commission to allow the Training Committee and the members to research, discuss, plan and bring back to the Committee a full report at the February meeting. Commissioner Oldaker seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Fire Marshal Lewis stated it is staff's opinion in the draft of the verbiage on the certificates the wording shortened to "Fire Marshal's approval". Discussion followed.

FD Standards Evaluation, Commissioner Oldaker stated they met and reviewed one application for equivalent certification. It appears to meet the requirements and he stated he and Commissioner Morgan signed off on it. It is the Committee's recommendation to the full Commission would be to approve Fire Officer I equivalent certification for Bruce Lee Orsborn from Winfield District Volunteer Fire Department. The third party review and validation was signed off by Chief Clayton of Winfield District VFD. Commissioner Runyon made the motion to approve the application. Commissioner Spencer seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Oldaker stated at the last Commission Meeting, the committee presented for draft review, a certificate for the equivalent certifications that have been approved. The committee is requesting this certificate be approved. Commissioner Runyon so moved. Commissioner Spencer seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Oldaker stated he would like to point out for means of clarification, he would like to read what the fire department requirements are in regard to HazMat Training. Section 5.05 says "Fire department members and officers shall be trained in NFPA Standard No. 472, Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents. All Fire Department personnel shall be certified at the Awareness level. Fire Department personnel that operate at hazardous materials incidents must minimally meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements for response at the Operations level. Additional training should be at the discretion of the fire chief based on possible involvement with hazardous materials incidents unless otherwise directed by federal or state statutes, rules and/or regulations." The minimum awareness level was originally designed for those just getting in and have not had the opportunity or the time to get into an operations level to allow them to start functioning and become functional with firefighter one and first aid, CPR in that interim time. It was to allow fire department personnel that do not respond on HazMat calls such as medical personnel only, support people, auxiliary members and those that need to be trained in at least the awareness level. There was nothing that ever intended that firefighters operating at hazardous materials incidents be any less trained than that at the operations level. He stated he would like to request that data be obtained from the delivery people so that it could be put into training and for standards for the next meeting. Prior to the next meeting, he would like to know what is the average pass/fail rate statewide and look at the whole haz mat training program. There may be something that needs to be added to the rules. Discussion followed.

Recruitment and Retention Committee, Commissioner Runyon stated the WV State Firemen's Association and his committee have been working very closely together, and have met with Senator Foster and other legislators working with the the governor and his staff to come up with some legislation for the 2009 session.

Procedures Development Committee, Commissioner Bailey. No report.

Special Issues, Commissioner Bostar – No report.

Legislative and Budget, Commissioner Spencer – No report.

Home Inspectors, Building Code Officials, Building and Fire Code Committees, Commissioner Guffey – No report. Commissioner Tolliver stated that Raleigh County is anticipating passing a levy for fire departments. He has been asked to get some information on other counties that have fire levies and how they are directed. Fire Marshal Lewis gave him a copy of a list of counties that have a fire board and fire levies. Discussion followed.

TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Commissioner Runyon made a motion that the next Fire Commission Meeting be held on December 12th in Lewisburg, WV with Work Session on Thursday, December 11, 2008. Commissioner James seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Runyon stated at the next meeting, they would schedule 3 meetings in advance to schedule events for the Fire Marshal's 100th Anniversary.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

.Chairman Eversole stated that Commissioner Spencer and himself attended the Mid-Atlantic Conference in Annapolis, Maryland. He stated they have a lot of great programs and good instructors at the Maryland Fire Institute.

Commissioner Runyon stated he and Commissioner Oldaker would like to thank everyone that attended the Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service in Charleston on October 12, 2008.

Fire Marshal Lewis stated he had the privilege of attending the National Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service as a personal escort for the Burroughs family for Fred Burroughs who was killed in the Ghent explosion. He spent the weekend with all three families that were honored from West Virginia. They were very appreciative of the Fire Marshal's Office, the Fire Commission and the fire service of the State of West Virginia.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Tolliver made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Runyon 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