

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

Meeting minutes

April 16, 2005 – 19:00

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Keliher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:20 with the following members present:

Burrville Fire School – Richard Winn
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Lloyd Niles, Al Hawkins
Fairfield Regional Fire School – Scott Bisson
Hartford Fire School - Chet Haber, Mike Jepeal
Middlesex County Fire School – Fred Dudek
New Haven Regional Fire Academy – Bill Seward
Stamford Fire Department Regional School – Paul Newman, Tony Conte
Valley Fire Chief’s Regional Fire School – Charlie Stankye, Jr.
Wolcott Regional Fire School – Paul Perrotti
Connecticut State Firefighters Association – Ted Schroll
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Rich Nicol
Connecticut Fire Academy – Adam Piskura, Mark Salafia
Guests: Don Ouillette, DPW

Minutes from the March meeting were reviewed and approved as submitted.

1. Information on NIMS training by the C.F.P.C. – C.F.A. staff

Mark Salafia and Adam Piskura gave a presentation on NIMS training opportunities. Mark reported that most anxiety is unfounded. Bill Auclair is the program coordinator.

Courses available include:

- Two-hour informational session geared toward Police, Public Works, other first responder organizations within a community.
- IS-700 – Overview of NIMS. Mandated by order of the governor for all employees. This mandate applies to state agencies only.
- Updated N.F.A. courses follow the NIMS format
- IS-100 is the lowest level
- IS-200, IS-300, IS-400 are progressively more detailed.
- Response teams are identified by Type. Type 5 is lowest level, Types progress to Type 1 which is the highest level. Specific training requirements can be found on the National Response Plan web site.
- Municipal response training goes well beyond the local fire department.
- Compliance with NIMS by a municipality is technically required in order to apply for federal funds under the “Fire Act”. There is no provision for local verification or policing.
- N.F.A. will offer IS-100/200 on-line. There is also a pre-class on-line training program for IS-300/400.
- NIMCAST web site has a 76 question survey to use to determine level of compliance for a municipality. Point of contact for a municipality should be the Emergency Management Director.
- National Credentialing is part of NIMS along with interagency communications.

Adam distributed a draft document specifying appropriate levels of training for NIMS for various command functions at an incident.

2. Status of properties acquisitions

Don Ouillette reported on discussions that he had with Attorney Mia Liesse from D.P.W. Currently the state cannot sell bonds to purchase property unless ownership is by a state agency.

Municipal property can be developed by D.P.W. if an acceptable memorandum of understanding is executed.

- New Haven Fire Academy – The city owns all property to be developed by D.P.W.
- Burrville Fire School – Mia is working with D.E.P. on a long-term lease agreement
- Valley Fire School – Private property is being offered
- Wolcott Fire School – Property at Naugatuck Valley Community College is being pursued. This property would be transferred by a long-term lease agreement.
- Fairfield Fire School – Property belongs to the town of Fairfield. Don will need a copy of the deed.
- Middlesex Fire School – The city is proposing to purchase property on Newfield Street. Don will need to develop a M.O.U. for that parcel.
- Hartford Fire School – Chet Haber is still waiting for a commitment from the Department of Transportation for the subject property. The first meeting with D.O.T. was held in July of 2004. Don Ouillette is trying to locate a copy of the written agreement with D.O.T. for the current C.F.A. property.

Progress on regional schools, other than New Haven, are stalled until property is secured for other sites. The current plan calls for the design and construction for New Haven and Hartford first. Then the design for Willimantic, followed by the design for Burrville, Derby, Fairfield, Middlesex, and Wolcott.

Paul Perotti asked if the Waterbury site could move up on the implementation plan. Al Hawkins answered that it is up to this committee to set or reorganize the implementation plan for this project.

Rich Nicol asked if after several sites were designed, would the plans be reviewed prior to implementation.

Don Ouillette answered that there would be a separate civil engineer to finalize the site layout for each school.

3. “Holding agency” for acquired regional fire school properties

There was a discussion about the April 12th meeting with Commissioner Fleming and staff.

This meeting centered around four points:

- Language needs to be added to the bond bill allowing bond funding to be used for property acquisition.
- Who will own property acquired for the construction of regional fire schools?
- How much liability exposure is transferred to the state through this project?
- Other options relative to the Willimantic school property needs.

D.P.W. legal staff will investigate these issues for further discussion.

4. New Haven Burn Building/Renovation - status

D.P.W. has hired Goodkind as the prime contractor for the design phase. Negotiations are underway with regard to pricing. The April bond commission meeting has been canceled. There is normally no bond commission meeting in June. Don is hopeful that the project can be on the July bond commission agenda. Bill Seward described the contractor selection process used for the selection of the design team for the New Haven project. He likened it to a promotional exam. There were four questions asked of each contractor and the answers to those questions were the basis for the selection. Don Ouillette reported that the process is now changing slightly. Rather than basing the selection on the answers to the four questions, the selection would be based on judgment by the members of the selection panel on which vendor they felt were most qualified to complete the subject project.

5. Legislative Session 2005 – what’s new

Ted Schroll reported that Walter Pawelkiewicz was working on improving the budget process for operational funding for the regional fire schools. Ted cautioned that this committee be sensitive to retention of local control of the operations of the regional schools through this process.

The appropriations committee budget was released a couple of days ago. Ted has not gotten to look at the forecast numbers for the regional schools. (The numbers on the appropriations budget are identical to those released in the governor’s budget. There is no increase for the regional fire school operations grants.)

6. Standardization Committee – S.O.P., injury management, forms

S.O.P.s are under construction. The committee is working on forms relative to standards for documentation. The committee is also working on fire training standards. They are referencing Firefighter I skills sheets to develop scenarios that specifically address these skills.

7. Other items from membership

Paul Newman from the Stamford school asked about recent discussions about the “ownership” of various courses. Stamford has historically offered training to the Hazardous Materials Technician level and wishes to continue to do so. Paul asked why the Certification office of the C.F.A. could not continue to test to this level after they delivered the program.

Al Hawkins offered that the basis for the decision was cost. Many of the Connecticut Fire Academy courses offered incorporate “imbedded” practical skills evaluation within the course. Al believed that those issues could probably be worked out for specific program deliveries such as the Stamford Haz Mat Technician program but that agreement should be worked out with the Certification Director prior to the course delivery so that any imbedded testing could be provided during the training and that resulting costs could be addressed. It was agreed that Paul would discuss the specifics with the Certification staff and bring the issue back to this committee if agreement could not be reached.

Al Hawkins reported on a meeting held with Representative Mazurek on April 6, 2005 at the Legislative Office Building. Representatives Orange and Pawelkiewicz were also in attendance. Mazurek was concerned about the recent firefighter deaths at the Wolcott school. In attendance at that meeting were: Rich Winn, Jeff Morrisette, Chet Haber, Ted Schroll, and Al Hawkins. The following points were emphasized by the committee members present:

- No one on our committee is willing to accept fatalities during training evolutions.
- Of those of us involved in firefighter training in Connecticut none of us can remember a training death before the recent incidents in Wolcott.
- Fire service training is conducted to comply with national consensus standards.
- One of the primary objectives of training is to reduce the numbers of injuries and deaths at emergency responses. This training needs to be conducted safely but in a realistic manner.
- After investigation by the state department of labor the education committee will assess the method in which we conduct ladder training and initiate further discussion with Representative Mazurek.

The meeting was adjourned at 22:05

**Next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 19, 2005 at Wethersfield Co. #3.
Subsequently changed to Tuesday, May 24, 2005 – also at Wethersfield Co. #3**

Submitted by:

Al Hawkins, chairman