

# Connecticut State Firefighters Association

## Education Committee

### Meeting minutes

Meeting – November 30, 2006 – 19:00

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:08 with the following representatives present:

Burrville Fire School – Rich Winn, Robert Norton, Jr.  
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Al Hawkins  
Fairfield Regional Fire School – Doug Chavenello  
Hartford Fire School - Chet Haber  
Middlesex County Fire School – Fred Dudek, Jay Woron  
New Haven Regional Fire Academy – Bill Seward  
Valley Fire Chief’s Regional Fire School – Peter Wols, Jr.  
Wolcott Regional Fire School – Paul Perrotti  
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Rich Nicol, Jim Wilkinson  
Stamford Fire Department Regional School – Tony Conte  
Guests: Don Ouillette, D.P.W.

No one was present from the Connecticut Fire Academy

The minutes of the October 26, 2006 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved – motion by Haber second by Wols.

#### 1. Status of properties acquisitions

Valley Fire School – Don Ouillette reported that the appraiser is on the job working on the appraisal for ten acres of the Oxford property. The state plans to prepare the sub-division and extend utilities onto the property.

Middlesex Fire School – Attorneys for D.P.W. are working with those from the city of Middletown to work out terms of a Memorandum of Understanding. The last correspondence was sent by D.P.W. approximately one month ago, there has not yet been a response from Middletown.

Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Rogers Corporation is interested in conveying the property “as is” at a reduced price if the state will facilitate the environmental clean up. Shane Mallory from D.P.W. property acquisitions is attempting to work out a suitable agreement.

Burrville Fire School – D.P.W. is continuing to work with D.E.P. over details of a future lease agreement.

#### 2. New Haven Renovation – Design

There was a planning meeting on October 10 followed by a design kick off meeting this morning. Bill Seward report that the meeting this morning was a productive meeting. Roger LeBoeuf, from Elliot, LeBoeuf and Associates discussed design details for the new burn building. Roger suggested that the design details should be consistent with the desired operations of the facility users. There was significant discussion about desired roof design and the inclusion of anchor points and staging platforms for instructors to use to reduce the fatigue associated with operations requiring instructors to remain on the roof for long durations. Bill also stated that the second floor interior design would incorporate a central corridor with doors on both sides,

consistent with many apartment and business structures in the New Haven area. Bill also reported the current expense for thermal tiles to protect the ceilings is approximately \$65 per square foot.

### 3. Hartford County – Design

The advertisement is being prepared to solicit interest in the design. Don predicts that it will be an additional one or two months before the advertisement is placed and three or four additional months prior to the selection of a design team. Don suggested that directors of all of the regional schools look at existing training buildings and begin to formulate design plans for their burn buildings and other training props.

Jim Wilkinson said that he has a standing offer to tour the Worcester burn building.

Chet Haber reported that he toured the Springfield burn building which is very similar to the building in the facility study. He took many pictures and lots of notes. There is a rehabilitation structure next to the burn building that consists of a roof structure with ceiling fans. The structure is open on three sides and approximately twenty feet wide by thirty feet in length. Jay Woron reported that multiple fires are conducted simultaneously at the Springfield building. Jay also noted that the C.F.A. would be conducting burns for the recruit program at Springfield on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Chet also intends to tour the Worcester and New Hampshire burn buildings.

### 4. Bond funding update – 2007 legislative initiatives

Al Hawkins expressed concern about the fact that the New Haven renovation project is under-funded because of the escalating construction costs. The design team is attempting to value engineer to accomplish some cost reductions but the renovation work to the administrative building and the construction of a new drafting pit have already been cut from the project scope. He was concerned that if we begin to reduce the scope of the project to fit the budget that it would be a disservice to the fire service that we are trying to serve. Since this is the first project and significant reductions to the scope of the project are being considered, how will the resulting reductions impact the later projects?

Jim Wilkinson offered that we should hold to the original scope of the projects at each school. The committee and the legislature bought into the recommendations contained in the “Facilities Study Master Plan” that was paid for the state legislature and we should hold to the original scope of the project.

Peter Wols also expressed that we should hold to the original scope of the renovation projects and solicit necessary additional funding as needed.

#### a. Suggested adjustments to project budget

Motion was made by Doug Chevenello to fund the New Haven and all other regional school projects such that the projects were constructed to remain consistent with the original project scope as defined in the facility study master plan. Second by Peter Wols. Motion carried unanimously.

### 5. Other items from membership

Don Ouillette reported that he felt optimistic that the D.P.W. would engage the design/build concept to complete the later fire school construction projects. Don feels that this construction method will provide for some cost savings and also increase the efficiency and thus accelerate the process.

Jim Wilkinson relayed discussion at the November monthly meeting of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control relative to policies about outside employment for Connecticut Fire Academy instructors. Jim

reported that the discussion lasted nearly an hour. The commissioners directed that no such policy will preclude working for a regional fire school. Jim also reported that there are 16 new adjunct instructors that have been hired, at least two already teach at a regional fire school. The commissioners have committed to continue to monitor issues relative to restrictions placed upon C.F.A. instructors.

There was also a report about the C.F.A. seminar series. The series has been so popular that the program has been moved to the Connecticut Air Museum to accommodate the number of students. There have been complaints about that venue for the series. It was very difficult to see and hear the presenters.

The Joint Council on Fire Service Organizations has embarked on a legislative initiative for the 2007 session for a training bill. The Fire Department Instructors Association is the lead agency and they are attempting to convince the legislators that they need to develop a funding source to pay for basic level fire service training for both career and volunteer firefighters. John Brady is chair of the organizing committee, Jim Wilkinson also sits on the committee. Jim reported that the committee is working to develop a position paper on the initiative and to try to develop a list of courses that should be included in the initiative. The initial direction of the committee is to fund all courses that are equivalent to the recruit school. The initial list of courses considered for inclusion are Firefighter I and II, Fire Service Instructor I, and Fire Officer I and II. No suggestions were going to be offered to the legislators relative to what specific funding initiative should be pursued.

Jim Wilkinson also asked for each regional school to designate two representatives for membership on the Education Committee. He asked for those designations to be addressed to him in writing.

Jim also distributed a draft letter from the Commissioner of Labor relative to the suggested roles and limitations placed on juniors, cadets, or explorers (under the age of 18) that operate in conjunction with a fire department.

Rich Nicol reported that the C.F.P.C. has received three presentations on an initiative to construct a public safety complex at Rensselaer Field in East Hartford. The intent is to include space for the F.B.I., local police, a fire department, and an emergency medical services unit and a training facility that would include a burn building and emergency vehicle operations course including a skid pan. The plan has been presented as a for profit enterprise constructed with private funding.

Rich also reported that the Comptrollers Office has requested that every state agency has been asked to develop a plan to accomplish a 5% and a 10% overall cost reduction. Rich is not sure whether the regional fire schools are intended to be part of this contingency plan.

Paul Perrotti reported that he believes that the fit testing machines ordered through the DEMHS have arrived.

## 6. Next meeting date

The December meeting will be December 28, 2006 at 19:00 at Wethersfield Company #3. In the case that the December meeting is cancelled, the January meeting will be on January 25, 2007, same time and location.

The meeting was adjourned at 21:05 (motion by Dudek second by Wols)

Submitted by:  
Al Hawkins, chairman