

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

Meeting minutes

Meeting – May 25, 2006 – 19:00

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:15 with the following representatives present:

Burrville Fire School – Scott Potter

Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Lloyd Niles, Al Hawkins

Fairfield Regional Fire School – Doug Chavenello

Hartford Fire School - Chet Haber, Mike Jepeal, James Baldis

Middlesex County Fire School – Fred Dudek

New Haven Regional Fire Academy – Bill Seward

Stamford Fire Department Regional School – Tony Conte

Valley Fire Chief's Regional Fire School – Peter Wols, Jr.

Wolcott Regional Fire School – Jim Tzraski

Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Rich Nicol, Jim Wilkinson

Connecticut State Firefighters Association – Ted Schroll, Charles Stankye, Jr.

Connecticut Fire Academy – Jeff Morrissette

Guest: Don Ouillette, D.P.W.

All regional schools were represented.

The minutes of the April 27, 2006 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved – motion by Haber second by Jepeal.

1. Status of properties acquisitions

Willimantic site – One appraisal has been received, the other is due this week. The appraisal that has been received places the value of the Rogers site at \$1.65 million and the Franklin site at \$425,000. D.P.W. will need to affirm that Rogers Corporation will facilitate environmental site clean-up and Phase III Environmental Report. Don reported that substantial savings could be realized at the Rogers site because of the extensive site work that has been done to develop that site. The Franklin site would eat up a substantial portion of the allocated budget for site work.

Derby site – Appraisals have been requested for the proposed site in Oxford. Those appraisals are expected in August. Don Ouillette advised that the Ct. D.P.W. would intend to seek option to purchase 10 of the 22 acres available. D.P.W. would then facilitate a sub-division on the entire 22 acre site.

Burrville site – Don reported that Attorney Pam Adams from D.E.P. has plans to coordinate with D.E.P. to start to work out an agreement for the Burrville site.

Middlesex site – D.P.W. is still working to refine an Memorandum of Understanding for the Middletown location. That agreement will need to be approved by the Attorney General. Middletown will not purchase property until there is an agreement on the content of the M.O.U. Fred Dudek reported that Middletown was ready to proceed with the purchase of that property.

Hartford County site – The \$34,884 has been included in the approved state budget for the first year funding for the lease agreement. Once an agreement is reached between the C.F.P.C. and the Ct. D.O.T. design work will start. No construction will commence until a lease agreement is executed.

Cheshire site – There was discussion about the need to transfer the property to the C.F.P.C. in order to make this property transfer consistent with the other regional schools. That change would need to be made to the 2004 legislation

that called for the property to be conveyed to the Waterbury Area Fire Chiefs Association. Action will have to wait until the start of the 2007 legislative session.

2. New Haven Renovation – status

Contract for design services has been negotiated. The B-100 has been modified to reflect the escalated cost for this project as discussed at the April meeting. The proposed property needs to be approved by the Connecticut Property Review Board. Design is expected to begin early in July. The Attorney General will not allow any construction work at this site until an M.O.U. has been executed between the City of New Haven and the Connecticut Department of Public Works.

3. Regional Fire School – property ownership issue

Don Ouillette observed that the legislation that passed in 2004 for the transfer of the Cheshire property called for that property to be transferred from the Ct. Department of Corrections to the Waterbury Area Fire Chiefs Association. In order for that project to proceed changes to the text of that bill would need to be proposed during the next legislative session.

Lloyd Niles reported that the directors of the Eastern Connecticut Fire School have voted to support ownership of any successor site by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control.

Jeff Morrisette reported that he had discussed the proposed ownership plan with Steve Sarnoski from the Attorney General's office. Steve indicated that the agreement between the C.F.P.C. and the governing structure of each regional school could probably be best accomplished by a licensure agreement. Jeff offered to invite Steve to a future Education Committee meeting for further discussion.

A motion was made by Wols and seconded by Seward that the Education Committee commit that all future properties acquired for the operation of regional fire schools be held by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control. The details of specific agreements necessary to provide for local operation and control will be worked out as we proceed. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Legislative Session – Bond Bill Status

At the present time the state has adopted an operating budget. The Bond Bill has not come to the floor of the House or the Senate for a vote. Of those state representatives polled some believe that there won't be a bond bill passed this year, others believe that there will. Ted Schroll reported that there is some rumor that the Bond Bill could be acted upon at the veto session in June, or at a special session.

5. Other items from membership

Bill Seward reported that the use of the New Haven Regional Fire Academy by outside agencies, outside of their normal hours of operation was "out of control". Seward is concerned about lack of oversight and the associated liability. Some of the regional fire schools do not allow for use of their facilities without their own directors/staff present.

Doug Chavenello from the Fairfield School also reported on control issues at their school during outside use of their school grounds.

Jim Wilkinson reported that he has proposed a by-laws change for the Connecticut State Firefighters Association that would establish the Education Committee as a permanent standing committee. That proposal has been submitted for consideration at the annual meeting in September.

Lloyd Niles expressed concern that the June school did not address the needs of volunteer firefighters since no programs were offered on weekends. Jeff Morrisette reported that a lot of thought and analysis of past attendance trends prompted the C.F.A. to try to offer the June school during weekdays only. Jeff further reported that the weekend classes in the past have been poorly attended and many were cancelled.

Lloyd expressed that more C.F.A. classes should be offered at regional schools. Jeff offered to work with any of the regional fire schools to help deliver necessary classes regionally.

Jim Wilkinson offered that the June school was just a small part of the total fire service training picture. Jim stated that training is something that we do 365 day each year, not just one week in June.

Rich Nicol offered support for Jeff Morrissette. He stated that the C.F.A. tries different programs and different schedules in order to better judge the needs of the fire service.

There was general discussion that the completion of the regional fire school capital project would provide for far more opportunities for regional delivery of C.F.A. courses. The general feeling was that the deteriorated conditions at the regional schools could not support very many hands-on deliveries.

Bill Seward reported that the New Haven Regional Fire Academy had recently hosted a practical skills exam for a Firefighter I program. Several candidates withdrew and left because one chosen practical skills evolution called for the deployment of a 20' roof ladder. The candidates felt that the required ladder was "too heavy".

Tony Conte reported that the Stamford Regional Fire School is running a Firefighter I class with 15 students.

Jeff Morrissette reported that he has received a request for files from past years activity from the Department of Administrative Services. Apparently the Office of Policy and Management wants to look at the activity reporting for analysis.

Jeff also reported that Paul Benyada has left his position at the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

6. Next meeting date

Next meeting date scheduled June 22, 2006 at 19:00 at Wethersfield Fire Company #3. SUBSEQUENTLY CANCELED

July meeting will be held on July 27, 2006 at 19:00 at Wethersfield Fire Company #3

Submitted by:
Al Hawkins, chairman