

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY  
NEW JERSEY FIRE SAFETY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**Meeting of May 16, 2012**

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, May 16, 2012, at the Monmouth Junction Fire Department in Monmouth Junction, NJ.

**Commission Members Present:**

Assemblyman Scott T. Rumana  
Mr. Pasquale Intindola, Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Charles W. Schilling  
Mr. Roger Potts  
Mr. John Lightbody  
Mr. Paul Hartstein  
Mr. Kevin Bellew  
Mr. Arthur Mercurio  
Mr. Stanley Sickels  
Mr. Kevin Krushinski  
Mr. Arthur Londensky  
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood  
Mr. Armando Roman  
Mr. Daniel DeTrollo  
Mr. Gerard Naylis  
Mr. Frederick Collender  
Ms. Kathleen O'Leary  
Mr. Kenneth Swider

**Commission Members Excused:**

Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Chairman  
Senator Anthony Bucco  
Mr. Richard Blohm  
Mr. Steve O'Gorman

**DCA Staff Members Present:**

William Kramer, Acting Director  
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS  
Jim McFadden, NJDFS  
Jerry Clark, NJDFS  
Rick Farletta, NJDFS  
Charles Luxton, NJDFS  
Charles Lavin, NJDFS/NJFSC Secretary  
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

**Guests:**

Nicholas Kikis, NJ Apartment Assn.  
Ronald McGowan Jr., Wildwood Crest Fire Co.  
Daniel P. Mulligan, Ocean Co. FM

Craig Babcock, Rockaway Twp. Fire Prevention  
David Matos, NJ Fire/EMS Inst.  
David Kurasz, NJFSAB  
Brian Kubitz, Toms River Dist. #1  
Jeanette Hartstein  
Chris Weniger, Somerset Co. Fire Marshal

#### **A. Call to Order**

In the absence of Chairman John Wisniewski, Vice-Chairman Pat Intindola called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM and began the meeting with the “Pledge of Allegiance” and pointed out the fire exits.

Acting Chairman Intindola introduced a new member of the Fire Safety Commission, Assemblyman Scott T. Rumana. Assemblyman Rumana, who replaces Assemblyman David Rible, was attending his first meeting and looks forward to working with the Fire Safety Commission to help further the missions of New Jersey’s fire service.

Acting Chairman Intindola thanked Commissioner Roger Potts for hosting today’s meeting, as well as providing refreshments for the morning’s proceedings.

#### **B. Approval of Minutes**

With no discussion requested or necessary corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of March 21, 2012 were approved.

#### **C. Correspondence**

Acting Chairman Intindola noted that all correspondence for today’s meeting is contained in the Fire Safety Commission packets. With no discussion requested on any of the correspondence at this time, the meeting was moved to Public Comment I.

#### **D. Public Comment I**

Acting Chairman Intindola opened up the meeting to any members of the public wishing to address the Fire Safety Commission. With no members of the public wishing to comment at this time, the meeting was moved to Division of Fire Safety Activities. Acting Chairman Intindola noted that there would be another Public Comment segment at the end of the meeting.

#### **E. Division of Fire Safety Activities**

Acting Director William Kramer reported that the new computer system “RIMS” (Registration Inspection Management System) has been undergoing testing as of last week. The Division of Fire Safety has dedicated a lot of time and resources to this new system and it is making progress. Testing will be conducted throughout the summer of

2012 and the Division is anticipating a November launch date. Chief Kramer expressed his excitement that, after years of talking about the need for a new system, it is finally becoming a reality. Commissioner Gerard Naylis asked if the upgraded system would require local LEAs to update their IT infrastructure. Chief Kramer answered that it would not. Commissioner Lawrence Wood asked if there would be anything in regards to FI/FO certifications incorporated into the new system. Chief Kramer answered that, as of now, it isn't but that is not to say it won't be in the future.

Chief Kramer reported that, as of the end of April, the Division of Fire Safety is about \$250,000 ahead of last year in terms of revenue. Chief Kramer found this very encouraging given the state of the economy. Also, the Bed & Breakfast amendments and Mattress Flammability regulations were adopted in the May 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the New Jersey Register. Chief Kramer added that he knows there have been many regulations that have been languishing for some time, but he will be working with Codes & Standards to work on moving some (if not all) of them through. Acting-Chairman Intindola asked if a Bulletin would be sent out on the new regulations. Chief Kramer said that the Division could certainly send out something to provide more guidance at the local level.

Chief Kramer reported that a number of vacancies in the Code Enforcement Unit have been successfully filled. Five new inspectors started on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. There are an additional two vacancies that have been approved. One of the new vacancies is for Senior Inspection, so there will be a promotion at the Division for the first time in several years. Once all these positions have been filled the Inspections Unit will be at 100% staffing. Chief Kramer feels this is a big positive for the Division – something he didn't think was possible only six months ago. Chief Kramer added that the Division has been approved for 14 new vehicles, which will help to update a fleet that had gotten extremely old and run-down.

The contract for purchasing recruit firefighting training manuals is set to expire at the end of this fiscal year. The Division has purchased enough manuals to carry us through 2014. This will allow enough time for the new standard to be adopted by NFPA and next the process for purchasing the manuals to take place.

Chief Kramer spoke about the recent high-risk conditions for forest fires. There have been a handful of fires, particularly in South Jersey, and the Division of Fire Safety has been involved with the Forest Fire Service and worked well with them. Also, the State of Delaware reached out and requested use of our southern Neptune system. We were not able to deploy the equipment, but Chief Kramer found it to be a good thing that the communication and teamwork is there. Chief Kramer also spoke about the testing of the equipment on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry, which had very impressive results. The Captain of the ferry actually said that he could feel the system's power pushing the ship – operating only at 80%.

Chief Kramer reported that the Division of Fire Safety received a grant from Homeland Security to provide the County Coordinators with iPads. The Division is kind of a guinea

pig on this, because the State of New Jersey is generally averse to anything Apple. The tablets will be received and distributed soon, and they will replace the laptops the County Coordinators currently have.

Chief Kramer spoke about the New Jersey FIRE Bowl, which is holding its final event this Friday (May 18<sup>th</sup>) at Kean University. He encouraged all Commissioners to attend if they can make it, because it's a fun and exciting fire safety event. Commissioner DeTrollo will speak more on this in his report. Also, the winners of the New Jersey Fire Safety Poster Contest have been selected. Commissioner Stanley Sickels will be reporting on the names of all the winners, and the Department of Community Affairs is all set to send out a press release with the announcement.

Chief Kramer spoke about two upcoming press conferences to publicize New Jersey's receiving their share of smoke detectors from the WABC Operation Save-a-Life program. One will be at Middlesex County Fire Academy; the other will be at North Hudson Regional's new headquarters in Union City. Charlie Luxton has been working closely with Kidde on this. The Division of Fire Safety elected to receive the new 10-year smoke detectors, so the number of units compared to past years has been reduced. We are trying to tie these events in with Arson Awareness Week, and Chief Kramer has drawn up a proclamation in hopes of getting the Governor involved.

Chief Kramer talked about how the travel restrictions on Division employees seems to have loosened somewhat. He spoke about two Division of Fire Safety personnel going to New England for a Juvenile Firesetter Conference, something that has not been permitted for the past several years. Chief Kramer found it to be very encouraging that under DCA Commissioner Constable's leadership, the Division of Fire Safety will have the ability to collaborate with other states when appropriate.

New Jersey Weekend was recently held at the National Fire Academy in Emmittsburg, Maryland. 230 firefighters made the trip down and took part in nine courses throughout the weekend. A lot of positive feedback was received regarding the program, and the most encouraging thing was that 40% of the attendees were first-timers. New Jersey Weekend 2013 will be held in late June.

Chief Kramer reported that the Division of Fire Safety is continuing its program in Camden that identifies high-risk abandoned buildings. The survey has identified at least 26 buildings with serious problems related to structure or utilities or occupants, etc. The program itself is working well and the Department of Environmental Protection is looking to expand it to other cities around New Jersey.

Chief Kramer expressed his excitement with where the Division of Fire Safety is going under the DCA's leadership of Commissioner Constable. Chief Kramer feels that the DFS has Commissioner Constable's support as long as they are willing to provide him with whatever reports/evaluations/data he requests – which Chief Kramer and DFS staff are more than happy to do.

Commissioner Stanley Sickels asked about the concept of “essential employees” and how it relates to Division of Fire Safety personnel. Chief Kramer explained that there is a new credentialing system that is to be initiated by Homeland Security. The process dictated that the Division reevaluates who is placed in what category, but it will absolutely not affect the Division’s ability to perform its duties and move people when they need to do it. Acting-Chairman Intindola asked if the idea of standardized identification cards for first-responders is still on the table. Chief Kramer answered that it is a Homeland Security initiative and he is not sure where it stands at this time.

Commissioner Roger Potts asked if Chief Kramer could comment on the proposed legislation regarding the reorganization of the Division of Fire Safety. Chief Kramer said that he could not. Commissioner Sickels added that it was his understanding that the legislation in question had been rescinded.

## **F. Advisory Council Reports:**

### **1. Codes Advisory Council**

Commissioner Charles Schilling reported that the Codes Advisory Council met on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville. Commissioner Schilling said he was glad to see the Bed & Breakfast and Mattress Flammability regulations finally move, and hopes that this is a sign of things to come that other regulations will begin to move as well.

The Codes Advisory Council is continuing to look into the secondary signage for Solar Panels. After much discussion, the Committee on Solar Panels is looking into a universal all-hazards sign that would identify potential hazards such as solar panels. The Committee, and the entire Codes Council, appreciates the dangers that solar panels represent to responding firefighters and they will continue to work on this issue. They will provide another report on this at the following meeting.

The Codes Advisory Council is also examining the issue of sprinkler exclusions for windowless basements. After much discussion, the Council decided to table the issue and not approve the proposal. The Fire Official still has the right for variances. Also, many communities have already complied with this proposal. As cited, the proposal will remain in effect and the issue will be left as it is. There was also a proposal by the Codes Advisory Council to adopt digital record-keeping. This would first have to be cleared with the Division of Archives and Records Management.

Commissioner Schilling made a motion that Craig Babcock be added to the Codes Advisory Council. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Stanley Sickels spoke further on the Solar Panel Signage, and mentioned that there is a section in the 2012 International Fire Code that provides for an all-hazards marking. Given that this is already out there, the Committee is going to review the

section of the IFC that deals with this and come back with recommendations in regards to the signage.

## **2. Training and Education Advisory Council**

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported that the Training and Education Advisory Council met on April 10<sup>th</sup> at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville.

The Training and Education Advisory Council is working on reviewing the IFSTA 8<sup>th</sup> Edition Fire & Emergency Services Instructor Manuals. A committee was formed to perform this review. The IFSTA 8<sup>th</sup> Edition Instructor will probably begin in January 2013.

At the next meeting, New Jersey Learn will be sending a representative to speak about their processes and how the fire service training can be better utilizing their system. Commissioner Wood also spoke about the issue of colleges not having standardized credits for fire science courses and degrees. He feels this is something that needs to be standardized across the board, and asked if there is a possibility of setting up a website (through the Division of Fire Safety) for higher education. This way there could be a better understanding – both by the fire service and higher education – of what credits translate where. The system as it exists now is nonlinear and confusing. Assemblyman Scott Rumana commented that he had dealt with fire service training through Passaic County Community College, and it was his understanding that you got college credit through Firefighter I and II. Commissioner Wood said that this is not always the case, as it varies at different institutions. Assemblyman Rumana said he would look into ways that there could be uniformity when dealing with these credits.

Chief Kramer added that the Division of Fire Safety is in the final stages of applying to Pro-Board for accreditation for about 12 of its programs. This application should be completed within the next week or two, and then it is a process of reviews over the next several months. There will be a cost involved in regards to the seals, and the Division is exploring options at this point.

The next meeting of the Training and Education Advisory Council will be on June 19<sup>th</sup> at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville at 10 A.M.

## **3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council**

Commissioner Gerard Naylis reported that, to date, about 94% of fire departments have turned in their 2011 data. However, a handful of those departments have not submitted data for every month of 2011, but they are expected to resolve that as the reporting process goes on.

Commissioner Naylis added that the Statistics and Information Advisory Council is continuing to work on the Wires Down program and is reaching out to the Board of

Public Utilities on this. Commissioner Naylis will work with Chairman Wisniewski on the legal end of this when it comes to fire department liability.

Acting-Chairman Intindola asked if the Statistics and Information Advisory Council had any findings in regards to the rash of fire deaths in New Jersey so far in 2012. Commissioner Naylis said this is a work in progress and hopes to have an update for the following meeting.

#### **4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council**

Commissioner John Lightbody reported that the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council met on May 7, 2012, at the Toms River Fire Academy in Toms River. He gave the following report:

“Eileen Byrne from the St. Barnabas Burn Center attended the Fire Sprinkler Coalition meeting for the first time and asked what the general mission of the Coalition is. David Matos explained that the Coalition’s ultimate purpose is to get legislation passed that would require fire sprinklers in one- and two-family residences. David Kurasz added that this is something that is already in the national code, but New Jersey has chosen not to adopt it thus far for political reasons. The Coalition went on to offer further background on the issue.

David Kurasz gave an update on the new legislation. He said that Assemblyman Wisniewski feels he has enough support in the Assembly to move the bill, and they are still working on getting Senator Norcross to introduce it in the Senate.

Mr. Kurasz spoke about the potential for litigation regarding homes built without fire sprinklers. All it takes is a fatality to occur in a building that should have been sprinklered, and it will ultimately come back to the builder. He added that we should keep an eye on California, where this could potentially occur.

The discussion evolved into an examination of how lightweight construction has brought about the need for residential fire sprinklers – both for the preservation of property and the safety of residents and firefighters alike. Commissioner Kevin Bellew added that the re-building of burned down homes is worth nearly \$8 billion worth of business to the building industry annually (nation-wide). This is part of the underlying reason that the building industry is so against sprinklers.

Commissioner Bellew also asked Eileen Byrne if St. Barnabas kept records of what types of fires (and in what types of buildings) their victims were injured in. She said she would look into what kind of data St. Barnabas has available. It was also suggested that this type of research could be compiled by a college student, possibly for credit.

Commissioner Lightbody spoke about an article he had put together for the League of Municipalities monthly magazine. The article is about the time and money that could be saved (particularly in towns with volunteers) by residential fire sprinklers. It is his

understanding that the article will be published in June. Also, Mr. Charles Lasky reported that the International Codes Council will be holding its annual 2013 meeting in Atlantic City next September. Mr. Lasky stressed that this is a great opportunity for New Jersey to put together a formidable voting block at the meeting. Mr. Ray Lonabaugh gave a report on a couple other states in regards to their residential fire sprinkler legislation. In Maryland, Governor O'Malley has signed residential sprinkler legislation into law.

Commissioner Lightbody announced that, as of the January Fire Safety Commission meeting, Kevin Bellew had been appointed Vice-Chairman of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council. In the area of Shared Services, Dan Mulligan said he was still unable to meet with Acting Director Bill Kramer about the survey that is to be sent to all fire departments. Mr. Mulligan even tried stopping by Division of Fire Safety headquarters when he was in Trenton one day, but he and Chief Kramer's schedules have not been able to match up. Chairman Lightbody mentioned that Shared Services is something that Senators Sweeney and Norcross are extremely high on and pushing for, so it may be worthwhile to contact them and collaborate in regards to the fire service.

Chairman Lightbody reported that there doesn't seem to be any movement as far as appointing a permanent State Fire Marshal, and that Chief Kramer is still "acting". Chairman Lightbody feels that, in all facets, Chief Kramer is the ideal man for the job and he has many people advocating for his appointment.

An update was given in regards to a bill posted in the Assembly by Connie Wagner that would move the Division of Fire Safety to the Department of Homeland Security. It was her initial thinking that this is what the fire service wanted, but later rescinded the bill when she learned otherwise.

In the area of Shared Resources, Commissioner Lightbody reported that Bob Yaiser is continuing to explore ways of "doing more with less" and using Toms River's collaboration with their public schools as the model for this. As evidenced by Mr. Yaiser's absence from today's meeting, towns are asking more of their staff and many of the members of Councils such as this one are no longer able to get away. Commissioner Lightbody spoke about the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters, and he believes the problem is getting worse. Firefighting used to be a "family business", but due to economic pressures and a more fluid population, potential firefighters are not staying rooted to the same area and/or do not have the time to dedicate to the job. This is regardless of any incentives the department might offer."

The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council will be held on July 9, 2012 at 12:00 pm. It will take place at Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ.

## **5. Public Education Advisory Council**

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo reported that the Public Education Advisory Council met on May 9, 2012, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville. Commissioner

DeTrollo spoke about the upcoming FIRE Bowl finale. Charles Lavin reported that the State Championship of the 2012 New Jersey FIRE Bowl is all set to take place on May 18<sup>th</sup> at Kean University. The two highest-scoring schools – Primary Prep of Jersey City and Nicolas Oresko School of Bayonne – will be competing live to become the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual FIRE Bowl Champions. The program will begin at 10 AM at Kean University’s Little Theater – which is located inside their main campus center. All are welcome to attend.

Mr. Lavin described a very successful spring of FIRE Bowl competition in the six participating school districts. The FIRE Bowl sponsors – including IMTT, Hartz Mountain, the NJ State FMBA, and Joshua Marcus Group – have once again been very generous in keeping the program afloat. Also, representatives from prospective districts for the 2013 program will be in attendance at the Final. So hopefully this will drive up participation for next year.

Commissioner DeTrollo spoke about the ongoing fire safety education campaign that is based on Dr. Frank Field’s video “Fire Is...” Currently, the Division of Fire Safety’s Jerry Clark is working closely with Dr. Field and the County Coordinators on promoting the program state-wide. Commissioner DeTrollo also mentioned the fact that, given his recent actions, Newark Mayor Cory Booker could lend some media star-power to the “Fire Is” campaign and he will look into making him a spokesperson for it.

Charles Lavin reported that all the State winners of the New Jersey Fire Safety Poster Contest were selected by a panel of judges on May 15<sup>th</sup> at Springfield Fire Department. The NJ Division of Fire Safety and NJ Fire Prevention & Protection Association once again collaborated on running a successful program. Commissioner Stanley Sickels announced the winners. They are:

Division 1	Xavier Marquez John M. Bailey School Bayonne, NJ	(Hudson Co.)
Division 2	Jasmine Barraza Robert L. Craig School Moonachie, NJ	(Bergen Co.)
**Division 3	Alissa May Garilao Henry E. Harris School Bayonne, NJ	(Hudson Co.)
Division 4	Morgan Zygmund-Murphy Holy Family Academy Bayonne, NJ	(Hudson Co.)
Division 5	Halie Burns Union County Vo-Tech High School Scotch Plains, NJ	(Union Co.)



Don Porth, Paul Swartzman, and others. Hopefully the entire Conference will be set in stone by August 1<sup>st</sup> so that it can be published in the fall course catalogue that is distributed through Kean University.

Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary reported that no further progress has been made in getting a representative from the Attorney General’s Office on the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council. This topic was brought up at the most recent Fire Safety Commission meeting, and Assemblyman Wisniewski said he would contact the A/G’s Office on the matter. No updates have been given since.

The next meeting of the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council will be at 10 A.M. on Thursday, September 6, 2012, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville.

## **G. Committee Reports**

### **1. Residential Sprinkler Committee**

Commissioner Naylis said he wished he could report on progress from the governmental level, but there has been no progress in that regard with the Governor citing economic issues. Commissioner Naylis also took issue with some of the comments about his Committee from the Fire Sprinkler Coalition, and said they need to realize the difference between a Committee operating under the umbrella of the Fire Safety Commission and an independent coalition.

## **H. Old Business**

Commissioner Stanley Sickels requested an update on the SCI bottle issue that has been ongoing in several municipalities throughout the state. Chief Kramer answered that there is no change, the NIOSH requirement is still there, and the Division is looking to collect data on the amount of these unapproved bottles are out there. There has been some resistance at the local level in departments saying that they have them. Commissioner Sickels also asked for an update on the issue of poor test results on the inspector’s exam. Chief Kramer answered that this was a matter of an instruction issue at the local level, which he has personally allocated staff to resolving the problem in very specific areas.

Commissioner Arthur Mercurio asked if travel expenses for the Mid-Atlantic Conference would be covered this year given the new loosened restrictions on out-of-state travel. He said that in past years he and past-Commissioner Ken Anderson had paid out of their own pockets to attend, and it would be nice to get a stipend to attend the Conference going forward. Chief Kramer said this would not have been an option last year, but they can certainly put a request in for this coming July.

Commissioner Lawrence Wood spoke about the liability issue that stemmed from fire departments being held responsible when dealing with public utilities. He said that the Deputy Chiefs Association is going to be holding a seminar on this topic in the near

future. Commissioner Wood feels this is an extremely important issue, particularly considering the greater and greater frequency of mutual aid.

Chief Kramer gave an update on Cancer Presumption Legislation that was discussed at the last Commission meeting. He did some research on this and said that bills have been reintroduced every year for more than a decade now, but the bills never go anywhere. Every year there are less and less sponsors, so the issue has seemed to have waned in interest. This year it is Assembly Bill 2509. Assemblyman Scott Rumana said he would look into the specifics of this bill. Commissioner Naylis added that this type of legislation (regarding firefighter injury/disease from exposure) is a prime example of why data collection is so important.

Chief Kramer also reported that the Division of Fire Safety is working with the Somerset County Fire Academy and International Fire Chiefs on state-to-state mutual aid plans. They received a federal grant to work on this project to foster interstate mutual aid agreements.

## **I. New Business**

Commissioner Gerard Naylis announced that, in April, Chairman John Wisniewski was given the NJ Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineer's "John B. Kelly Award". Commissioner Naylis offered congratulations on behalf of the Commission. Commissioner Wood added that Assemblyman Wisniewski would be receiving the NJ Fire & EMS Institute's "Legislator of the Year" award. A dinner is being held on June 20<sup>th</sup>, and all Commission members are encouraged to attend.

Commission Arthur Mercurio strongly urged the legislative members of the Fire Safety Commission to act on the fire service's behalf when it comes to the legislative process in Trenton. Assemblyman Rumana answered that, this being his first meeting, he already has a list of issues that he has catalogued today that he would like to see immediate action on. He is looking forward to collaborating with the other legislative members of the Commission to get things done.

Chief Kramer announced that Division of Fire Safety employee Maggie Knight had recently received a Civilian Award in Hamilton Township. While on duty performing inspections, she assisted law enforcement in the apprehension of a suspect fleeing on foot after causing a traffic accident.

## **J. Public Comment II**

Lou Schwartz of South Brunswick wanted to publicly thank all the members of the Fire Safety Commission and Division of Fire Safety for the tremendous job they do each and every year. He thanked them for their dedication on behalf of the citizens of New Jersey.

Ronald McGowan from Wildwood Crest commented on Assembly Bill 2720, the bill that would suggest the reorganization of the Division of Fire Safety. While Commissioner

Sickels says the bill has been rescinded, Mr. McGowan said that it is still posted on the website as being active – and asked what could be done about this. Acting Chairman Intindola and Assemblyman Rumana said they would look into the status of the bill and see what action would be appropriate in regards to it.

#### **K. Adjournment**

Acting Chairman Intindola asked if anyone had any additional business they would like to bring before the Commission. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 11:43 am.

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**\* The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be held on Wednesday, July 18, 2012 at 10am. It will be held at the Toms River Fire Academy in Toms River, NJ \***