

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

Meeting of July 18, 2018

The New Jersey Fire Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at the Surf City Fire Department in Surf City, NJ.

Commission Members Present: Mr. Kevin Krushinski, Chairman
Mr. Pasquale Intindola, Vice Chairman
Sen. Sam Thompson
Mr. Stanley Sickels
Mr. Lawrence D. Wood
Mr. Kevin Bellew
Mr. Daniel DeTrolino
Ms. Kathleen O’Leary
Mr. Arthur Londensky
Mr. Raymond Heck

Commission Members Excused: Mr. Richard Blohm
Mr. Armando Roman
Mr. Gerard Naylis
Mr. Steve O’Gorman
Mr. Fred Collender

DCA Staff Members Present: Richard Mikutsky, NJDFS Director
Lou Kilmer, NJDFS
Rick Farletta, NJDFS
Jason Spiecker, NJDFS
Kent Neiswender, NJDFS
Frank Clark, NJDFS
Craig Augustoni, NJDFS
Charles Lavin, NJDFS
Jerry Clark, NJDFS
Michael Whalen, Codes and Standards

Guests: Mark Ciarlariello, NPF (Ret.)
Ronald McGowan Jr, Wildwood Crest Fire
Tony Correia, NJES Health Coalition
Michael Wilson, NJFSAB
Paul McGrath, City Fire

A. Call to Order

Chairman Kevin Krushinski called the meeting to order at 10:11 AM. He led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence, and pointed out the fire exits.

Chairman Krushinski thanked the Surf City Fire Department for hosting today's meeting and the New Jersey State FMBA for providing the refreshments for breakfast and lunch.

B. Approval of Minutes

With no discussion requested or additional corrections, the minutes of the regular meeting of May 16, 2018 were approved.

C. Correspondence

Chairman Krushinski noted that all correspondence for today's meeting is contained in the Fire Safety Commission packets. With no discussion requested on any of the items, the meeting was moved to Public Comment I.

D. Public Comment I

Chairman Krushinski opened the meeting up to any members of the public wishing to comment before 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.

E. Division of Fire Safety Activities

Director Richard Mikutsky began his report by announcing the passing of recently-retired staff and dear friend of the NJ Division of Fire Safety, Jim McFadden. Director Mikutsky asked for a moment of silence for Jim and his family.

Director Mikutsky spoke about a recent fireworks safety program that was held at Middlesex County Fire Academy in conjunction with News 12 New Jersey. The focus was dealing with the safety challenges given the passing of laws last July legalizing certain types of fireworks in New Jersey. Part of the demonstration showed which fireworks are legal, which are not, and how damaging fireworks can be when used improperly. Director Mikutsky also reported that upwards of 3,500 smoke alarms had been distributed in recent weeks through the Operation 7:Save-a-Life program in the northern and central parts of the state. The process of distributing all 5,000 of the 10-year sealed-battery smoke alarms is ongoing.

The NJ Division of Fire Safety has been working on the junior firefighter legislation with the Department of Labor and lawmakers. This will give the junior firefighter program in New Jersey some true guidelines and make it an asset to the fire service as a whole. Director Mikutsky also spoke about the Fire & EMS Lifeline, which helps firefighters

with mental health issues, that will be run through Rutgers University. Legislation is currently being worked on to fund this hotline and get it up and running again.

Director Mikutsky spoke about the NJ Division of Fire Safety expanding partnerships outside the fire service, and reported that they have been working closely with Homeland Security. They understand the importance of the NJDFS - and the fire service as a whole – in being eyes and ears on the street when it comes to public safety. Director Mikutsky also noted that they will be meeting soon with Port Authority on establishing a working relationship to the benefit of New Jersey's citizens.

To date, the NJDFS's Arson Investigations Unit has done 140 investigations so far in 2018. Director Mikutsky commended the Unit on their hard work and spoke about witnessing their efforts up close at the recent tragic fire in Union City. As of July 5th, the NJDFS has done roughly 9,500 inspections and the Training and Certifications Unit has been hard at work on the Fall Semester Brochure through Kean University.

Director Mikutsky also reported that the NJDFS is continuing to work closely with the Atlantic City Fire Department through a difficult time given the funding situation. The focus, as always, is doing the best we can in the name of public safety and firefighter safety.

Bureau Chief Lou Kilmer continued the NJDFS Activities report by talking about a bill that was introduced to remove the law requiring fire extinguishers at a change of occupancy. Director Mikutsky noted that this is Assembly Bill 4047, and is currently in the Housing and Development Committee. Also, there are two vacancies now on the Peer Review Board, and the NJDFS is taking names of interested candidates at this time.

The biggest thing the Division of Fire Safety has been working on since the last Commission meeting was the 2015 Fire Code – which went into effect on July 1, 2018. The books can now be ordered via the Division website. The Division of Fire Safety will also be providing Code Books to any Commission members who may need them. The 2015 Code is online, and the 2006 will remain available online for some time as well. The Division of Fire Safety is also in the process of submitting a proposal that will correct a series of minor errors contained in the Code that was approved – this will be out in the near future. Chief Kilmer also noted that two items – the 10-year sealed battery smoke alarm requirements and the propane tank labeling - will not go into effect until January 1, 2019.

Chief Kilmer spoke about the farm inspections. A guidance document was sent out to all local fire officials, encouraging them to make sure all commercial farms are inspected. NJDFS staff has been out doing inspections in their towns and the farms have been very cooperative for the most part. The Division of Fire Safety continues to get the word out regarding the safety of temporary housing facilities at New Jersey's farms.

Chief Kilmer also announced that the Division of Fire Safety had finished out the fiscal year (2018) having collected \$1.4 million in unpaid fees. Sixty-five percent of that

amount will go back to local agencies to run their programs. Chief Kilmer noted that there had not been any further progress regarding the high rise survey at this time, due to the time taken up by the fireworks issue, farm inspections, and 2015 Code.

F. Advisory Council Reports:

1. Codes Advisory Council

Vice Chairman Pat Intindola reported that the Codes Advisory Council had met on June 20th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville. The minutes of that meeting are contained in the Commission packets.

Vice Chairman Intindola spoke about the Codes Council review of the Consumer Fireworks Proposal, and inquired as to whether there were any incidents during the July 4th holiday week. Chief Kilmer reported that there were no incidents in the towns that the NJDFS handles, and as far as he knew there were no issues with any public fireworks displays. There were some incidents with sparklers, etc. and fireworks-related incidents have been added to the NFIRS system – so it will take some time to measure the true impact of the new fireworks bill.

Vice Chairman Intindola reported that the Codes Advisory Council is still working on the Fire Protection Color Tag System, as well as the Subchapter 3 and 4 reviews. Code books are currently being printed and are available for pre-sale from the International Codes Council.

There was a lengthy discussion about mulch fires, and the NJDFS is currently working on a proposal that would require any combustible mulch products to be at least 18 inches from a building (against combustible construction). Commissioner Stanley Sickels commented that this is a serious issue and there have been fatal fires in New Jersey that were a direct result of combustible mulch products igniting the exterior of a building. Commissioner Sickels made a motion that the Fire Safety Commission endorse the 18-inch proposal in regards to the mulch products. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kevin Bellew and passed unanimously.

Vice Chairman Intindola spoke about the possibility of the legalization of marijuana throughout the state and how that might have an effect from a code perspective. It was suggested that the Codes Advisory Council review the regulations from Denver, CO to gain some insight on what works.

Commissioner Sickels spoke about the recent tragedies in Middletown and Union City, and cited them as examples that new construction needs to be suppressed going forward. To not use today's information and technology for fire and life safety is not acceptable, particular when the costs of it pale in comparison to what is spent on entertainment and luxury aspects of a home. Commissioner Sickels also spoke about the need for the Division of Fire Safety to investigate and report on large-loss fires – even when there are no firefighter fatalities involved. Commissioner Sickels spoke about the Deitz & Watson

and Seaside Boardwalk fires that had huge impacts, but are not required to be closely examined so that lessons can be learned.

The next meeting of the Codes Advisory Council is scheduled for August 15th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville at 10:00am.

2. Training and Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Lawrence Wood reported that the Training and Education Advisory Council had met on June 19th, and the minutes of that meeting are contained in the meeting packets. Commissioner Wood began his report by speaking about the bills concerning junior firefighters. Commissioner Wood said that the Training and Education Advisory Council will be working alongside NJDFS staff to provide some potential tweaks to the bills.

Commissioner Wood said that David Shaw will be giving a presentation at the next meeting to demonstrate training using virtual reality technology. He encouraged any and all Commission members to attend that meeting.

Commissioner Wood also inquired about a Carcinogen Reduction Guideline that Director Mikutsky and Tony Correia had been working on to distribute to the state's fire service. Director Mikutsky said that the document is still on his desk and will be completed and ready for distribution very shortly.

The next meeting of the Training and Education Advisory Council is scheduled for August 21st at the Dempster Training Center in Lawrenceville at 10:00am.

3. Statistics and Information Advisory Council

In the absence of Commissioner Gerard Naylis, no official report was given.

4. Master Planning and Research Advisory Council

Commissioner Raymond Heck reported that the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council met on July 2nd at Morris County Emergency Services Training Academy. Commissioner Heck recently took over as Chairman of the Council and he outlined the direction it will be going in moving forward. Commissioner Heck talked about returning to the roots of planning and research of fire service issues, and they will be establishing flexible "work groups" to highlight certain areas.

Commissioner Heck spoke about the legislative work group and how they would be geared towards examining the impact of bills (and potential bills) and how they would impact the fire service statewide. There would also be a focus on educating the legislature on fire service issues, as often they are not as well-versed as they should be on what the fire service needs to move forward. Commissioner Heck also spoke about

actively working with County and Municipal officials on addressing the wide-ranging set of challenges the fire service in their area faces.

Commissioner Heck also requested that the Division of Fire Safety assign a liaison to work with the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council, so they can have a direct pipeline of information to and from the NJDFS. Director Mikutsky agreed to provide one as soon as possible.

Anthony Correia commended Commissioner Heck on the new format of the Council and asked if the meetings would be open. Commissioner Heck said that anyone is welcome to attend meetings and participate, as they are looking for as many perspectives as possible. The next meeting of the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council will be on August 13th at the Toms River Fire Academy in Toms River.

5. Public Education Advisory Council

Commissioner Daniel DeTrolgio reported that the Public Education Advisory Council had not met since the last Fire Safety Commission meeting and asked Charles Lavin to give a brief summary of the current public education programs going on at the Division of Fire Safety.

Charles Lavin reported that, since the last Fire Safety Commission meeting, the State Championship of the 2018 New Jersey FIRE Bowl was held at Kean University. The competition saw Nicholas Oresko School of Bayonne defeat Helen A. Fort Middle School of Pemberton in a close contest. Mr. Lavin also reported that, as Director Mikutsky mentioned earlier, the summer has seen the bulk of the smoke alarm distribution from Operation Save-a-Life done in the northern and central parts of the state.

Charles reported that he had attended the NFPA Conference in Las Vegas and spoke about the success of last fall's New Jersey Fire Safety Summit. Based on that, and meetings with other representatives throughout the region, New Jersey will be hosting the first "Mid-Atlantic Fire Safety Summit" – which will include partnering with Maryland, Delaware, DC, New York, and Pennsylvania. The event will be held at the Sheraton Raritan Center in Edison on November 28th. It will run from 10:30am until 3:30pm – both registration and lunch are free to all attendees.

Jerry Clark reported that the 2017-2018 New Jersey Fire Safety Poster Contest was successfully held in conjunction with the New Jersey Fire Prevention and Protection Association. Charles Lavin is now working with new representatives from Atlantic City Electric on the design and printing of the 2019 New Jersey Fire Safety Calendars. They are hopeful that the new calendars will be available by the Wildwood Convention – if not, by Fire Prevention Week at the latest.

The next meeting of the Public Education Advisory Council is scheduled for September 6th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville.

6. Firefighter Safety and Health Advisory Council

In the absence of Commissioner Richard Blohm, no official report was given.

7. Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council

Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary reported that the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council had not met since the previous Fire Safety Commission meeting. However, the executive board and Charles Lavin have been consumed with the planning of the 16th Annual New Jersey Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference. Charles reported that the lineup of instructors is nearly set, and the full program and registration should be open by the next Fire Safety Commission meeting in September.

The next meeting of the Youth Firesetter Prevention Advisory Council is scheduled for September 12th at the Wildwood Crest Fire Department.

G. Committee Reports

1. Residential Sprinkler Committee

In the absence of Commissioner Gerard Naylis, no official report was given.

H. Old Business

With enough Commissioners present to make a quorum and able to take official action, the floor was opened for nominations of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the New Jersey Fire Safety Commission. Commissioner Stanley Sickels nominated Commissioner Kevin Krushinski for the position of Chairman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kathleen O’Leary. With no other nominations for the position of Chairman, a vote was held and Kevin Krushinski was unanimously elected as Chairman of the New Jersey Fire Safety Commission.

Commissioner Daniel DeTrollo nominated Commissioner Pat Intindola for the position of Vice-Chairman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stanley Sickels. With no other nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman, a vote was held and Pat Intindola was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman of the New Jersey Fire Safety Commission. The Commission members collectively congratulated both Chairman Kevin Krushinski and Vice-Chairman Pat Intindola on their new positions.

I. New Business

Director Rich Mikutsky took a minute to publicly thank the Surf City Fire Department and Chief Kyle Costable for their hospitality in hosting today’s meeting on Long Beach Island. Also, Director Mikutsky thanked the New Jersey State FMBA for providing the breakfast and lunch refreshments.

J. Public Comment II

Tony Correia from the NJ First Responders Health & Fitness Coalition spoke about the Symposium that was held back in April. Mr. Correia thanked Kent Neiswender and the Kean University staff, and hoped that they would be able to plan another similar event going forward. He thanked Director Rich Mikutsky for his support in the efforts towards helping firefighters enjoy safer and healthier careers and beyond. Mr. Correia also spoke about prioritizing the fire services many issues and challenges, and voiced encouragement of the efforts of Commissioner Heck on the Master Planning and Research Advisory Council. Mr. Correia also voiced displeasure with many of the Commission members whose attendance is continually lacking.

Mark Ciarlariello from the North Plainfield Fire Department (retired) spoke about the junior firefighter program and how a partnership with the polytechnic institute in Hunterdon County allowed for recruits to do all the types of training necessary. He suggested looking into similar partnerships to augment the junior firefighter programs.

Michael Whalen from Codes & Standards reported that the International Codes Council will be holding their voting on the 2021 International Fire Code in Richmond, Virginia from October 24-31, 2018. He stressed the importance of registering and participating in the vote, and encouraged all voting members to do so.

With no additional members of the public wishing to comment at this time, the meeting was moved to adjournment.

K. Adjournment

Chairman Krushinski called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner DeTrollo made a motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Intindola and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:29 am.

*** The next meeting of the Fire Safety Commission will be on Thursday, September 13, 2018 at 10am. It will be held at the Wildwood Crest Fire Department in Wildwood Crest, NJ ***