

Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Meeting

Approved

Meeting Minutes

Date: April 11, 2016, 1900 hours

Location: Winchester Hall
3rd Floor Hearing Room
12 E. Church Street, Frederick, MD 21701

Attendance:	Battalion 1 (Marc McNeal)	Absent
	Battalion 2 (David Remsburg)	Present
	Battalion 3 (Susan Nicol)	Present
	Battalion 4 (Randy Williams).....	Present
	Battalion 5 (Tim Clarke).....	Absent
	Career Rep (Warren "Jay" Schwab).....	Present
	Career Rep (Chad Cave).....	Present
	Citizen Rep (Susan Reeder Jessee).....	Absent
	Citizen Rep (Carroll Jones).....	Present

Nonvoting Reps:	Frederick County Executive (Mrs. Jan Gardner)	Absent
	Jurisdictional Medical Director (Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore)	Present
	Fire & Rescue Services (Chief Tom Owens)	Present
	Volunteer Fire & Rescue Assoc. (President Eric Smothers)	Present
	Volunteer Fire & Rescue Assoc. (Chief Chip Jewell)	Present
	Local #3666 (President John Neary)	Present (7:07)

Guests: Deputy Chief Tom Coe, representing the Response Review Committee

Frederick County Fire Advisory Board Meeting
April 11, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson, Randy Williams.

II. ROLL CALL OF VOTING AND NONVOTING MEMBERS:

Absent was:

1. Marc McNeal, Battalion #1.
2. Tim Clarke, Battalion #5.
3. Susan Reeder Jessee, Citizen Rep
4. Jan Gardner, County Executive

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

Chief Tom Coe, Response Review Committee.

IV. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to Approve: Moved by David Remsburg; Seconded by Susan Nicol.

VOTE: YES: 6 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

V. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Susan Nicol verbally recognized Lieutenant Steve Shook for his many years of service to Frederick County and wished him luck in his retirement.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

VII. EX OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS:

A. Frederick County Executive, Mrs. Jan Gardner:

As County Executive, Jan Gardner was absent, there was no report.

B. Jurisdictional Medical Director, Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore:

EMR to EMT Bridge

Dr. Fillmore reported that MEIMSS is coming up with a process for this and that it was discussed at the state meeting. He also advised that the MS Operating Fund (MSOF) will probably be good through fiscal year 2019. He stated that next month he will probably be able to give an update on what is happening in the legislature with regard to EMS and Fire.

Dr. Fillmore had no further report from Battalion Chief Cole to share at this meeting.

C. Fire & Rescue Division Director, Chief Tom Owens:

Fire Rescue Code

The County Council has scheduled a work session for May 10th at 4:30pm for the fire rescue code update. The work session will provide the council members with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with any legislative item(s) appearing on their docket, and it will be open to any board members wishing to attend the meeting.

FY-17 Budget

Chief Owens informed the board that County Executive Gardner would be making her presentation of the FY-17 on Friday, April 15th, at 11:00 am.

Assistance to Firefighters/SAFER Grants

Both the Assistance to Firefighters Grant and the SAFER Grant applications were submitted by their respective deadlines. The Federal government must dispense this money before September 30th, which is the end of their fiscal year. It is anticipated that the AFG awards will be made first, and the SAFER Grant will follow.

Middletown Fire Station

This project has been re-started. A design meeting was held on March 29th with representatives from the Department of Public Works, the Middletown Volunteer Fire Company, DFRS staff, and the architect. The goal is to have the construction drawing package ready to go out to bid this fall.

Firefighter Eligibility List Testing

Chief Owens reported that the first step in the recruit firefighter eligibility list testing has been conducted. Of the 1,167 applications received, 1,110 were screened by county human resources as meeting the advertised qualifications. Those candidates were invited to sit for the written examination. From that group, 786 scheduled themselves through the online process to take the written exam, and 516 actually sat for it. The exams have been sent off for scoring, and the pass/fail rate should be known within another week. The next step will be to begin the mentoring program for the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT), which is an 8-week mentoring process before that exam is administered.

D. FCVFRA President, Eric Smothers:

President Smothers had no report at this time and opted to catch up later on during the meeting.

E. President of the Career Firefighters Association, John Neary

New Recruits

President Neary congratulated the 28 recruits who will begin their careers with fire and rescue on Friday, April 15, 2016.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VFRS, Chief Chip Jewell:

Moodlerooms/Compliance Training

Moodlerooms is up and running with licenses for the volunteers. The training CDs were distributed to the fire companies, and compliance training is underway. Once the data is in, volunteers can begin to use it.

Membership Database

The database was implemented on March 1, 2016. Chief Jewell had hoped to have all the information in by now, however, there have been some technical issues. They are working very closely with IT and still anticipate having the membership database completed in time to utilize it for the worker's compensation audit. It will also be utilized for the tracking of LOSAP, and will hopefully address some of the issues from the audit.

Property Appraisals

The property appraisals on all stations and ancillary buildings insured under the county government policy for fire and rescue have been completed. The results have not yet been received.

ISO Grading

The ISO gradings for Frederick County have been completed. A copy will be sent out in the next packet showing the old gradings vs. the new gradings for each community. He further stated that he is asking ISO to take a detailed look throughout the county to see if there are any other areas that can be improved upon.

Everbridge

Everbridge is now active, and each company will have a coordinator. The intent is to replace code messaging, although code messaging will remain up for a period of time until everyone has been able to convert over.

Gear Inventories

Chief Jewell reported that there has now been a response from every company. Most companies have returned the inventory sheets with notations, and twenty to thirty sets of usable gear had been returned. A large portion of the returned gear was over 10 years old, but Logistics is looking at what can still be utilized. Much progress has been made.

Winter Storm Update

A meeting was held to go over the FEMA declaration in reimbursement areas. Director, Seamus Mooney from Emergency Preparedness will be holding a meeting the week of April 18th with those who submitted a reimbursement request.

Question Asked: “Do we still have time to submit?”

Chief Jewell answered that it is too late for the individual companies to submit claims, but because only a few of the individual companies applied, he is also submitting a group claim, and he can probably add individual claims in with the group submission.

Internship Program

The internship program is going well with two very good interns; one in Middletown and one at Carroll Manor.

Accreditation Process

The accreditation process with Vigilant Hose Company went very well overall. By the next meeting, we will probably be ready to start the process with the other companies.

Active Assailant Training

The Active Assailant Training will be presented to the Chief Officers at the next Operations Meeting, and that the training will then be rolled out to the Chiefs in order to get them up and running on that. A tactical medic program is also out right now, and any career or volunteer member who meets the criteria is eligible.

Smoke Alarm Blitz

The door-to-door Smoke Alarm Blitz in Middletown went very well. It brought the number of installed smoke alarms to well over 500 since last year.

Fire Police MOU with Frederick Police

Chief Jewell reported that both city and county legal departments have agreed to the MOU and will go through the process to the County Executive for final approval, hopefully in the next few weeks.

Statewide Volunteer Recruitment

Six companies participated in a statewide volunteer recruitment over the weekend of April 9-10. Between 12 and 15 additional volunteer applications were received.

Fire Museum

The Fire Museum is open; Chief Jewell welcomed anybody Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 4.

Question Asked: “Along with the accreditation that you and the Chief went up to Emmitsburg to do, wasn’t this body supposed to be participating, or are you waiting until after you get everything ironed out?”

Chief Jewell answered that this was a beta site – the test stage. Chief Owens added that there are several steps that need to take place before that happens, and that the purpose of the pilot test was to give feedback on final adjustments needed in the documentation manual, as well as the forms of documentation. Once everything is ironed out, there will be a training opportunity for whomever the corporations choose to go through the accreditation manual at the station level. When training is complete, there will be a timeline for corporations to get through the accreditation process, and at that point, the five battalion representatives will do peer reviews. The fire board will be “plugged in” when this is officially rolled out.

B. Operations Committee, Chief Chip Jewell:

The primary issue at the last Operations Committee meeting was the approval of the Response Review, as well as the EMS Documentation Policy. Both were approved and distributed.

The Standards Committee will be conducting re-inspections in May. It was noted that deficiencies at two of the companies have not yet been corrected. An attempt will be made to get those corrected prior to the re-inspection.

C. Planning and Research Committee:

Several vehicle purchases are moving through the process, but nothing there is nothing that the Planning & Research Committee needs to take action on at the present time.

D. Emergency Medical Services Committee:

President Smothers reported that the next big roll-out countywide will be the EpiPens or the Epi transition and training.

Chief Owens added that the state had been having problems with Field Bridge on the eMEDS system. The issue has now been resolved. Chief Cole had sent out an e-mail for everyone to reboot their laptops, and hopefully the issue has been corrected.

E. Budget Committee:

President Smothers reported that everything is in and that they are waiting on the county process.

F. Training Committee:

MFRI training is available. They are looking for people to sign up, especially chief officers. Protocol reviews are also out. If anyone has difficulty getting online, President Smothers, Dr. Fillmore, or Chief Cole can address the issue through MIEMSS.

IX. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Old Business

Update on Fire Rescue Service Initiatives and Projects

These issues were already been covered.

Response Review Committee Update

Chief Coe reviewed the findings of the Response Review Committee. The committee consisted of President Smothers, Chief Jewell, Chief Coe and three representatives from the Volunteer Association Executive Board and three members of the International Association of Firefighters here at Frederick. It was formed with two goals in mind; one, to develop a system to provide more accurate reflections of response performances; and two, to review and adjust dispatch assignments to better match our dispatch needs and our ability to respond to the initial portion of an incident.

Chief Coe explained that the report is broken down into two sections; 1) a text version of the findings of reports along with the recommendations based on the reporting criteria and the apparatus assignments, and 2) a spreadsheet of all the emergency fire dispatch assignments located at our Emergency Communications Center and the appropriate recommended response unit to those incidents.

A monthly failure report is published, and some loopholes were discovered in the data accuracy. The Response Review Committee has come up with a few recommendations, and they have already implemented some of them to try to improve statistical performance. Chief Coe led a discussion through the statistical part of the Response Review Committee, with explanations of the performance measures. One important measure they have asked IIT to develop is a report that furnishes the time from dispatch to the first appropriate unit on the scene.

Question Asked: “What are those percentages going to be rated on? Is it going to be on response time? Is it going to be on arrival time? Are you going to take both into account?”

Chief Owens answered that percentages will still be rated on response time, because that is what is in the code. The legal parameter that has been established is still about the initial response mark. The 8-minute mark remains for statistical purposes until the ordinance changes, and will be tracked per unit, not per station. The Response Review Committee is recommending tracking on a per-tactical unit basis instead of judging station performance by the first unit out the door.

Question Asked: “You said we’ve implemented some of the recommendations already?”

Chief Coe answered that the only one implemented was a memo to the Emergency Communications Center requesting them to keep track of units. The ECC was previously taking the primary unit dispatched to a call off the incident when a second-due unit was dispatched to cover that call. This created false data. Notice has been sent to the ECC to let the clock run on the primary unit to give a data benchmark once time is expired.

Question Asked: “When did this go into effect at ECC for them to do that?”

Chief Coe answered that it was in October and that it wasn’t a change in policy; it was a clarification of CAD in general.

Question Asked: “With this policy, there’s nothing changing as far as the response times, replacement of units, meaning it’s still going to be the 4 and a 5. Nothing changes then?”

Chief Coe stated that was correct. Chief Owens added that replacing the units for the purpose of moving extra units needed to cover responses has nothing to do with the time benchmarks used for data.

Question Asked: “Are the station dispatches on structured assignment that includes a station with an ambulance in-house -- I know we have seen them go code 2 pretty quickly. Does that pull them off the call? Does this eliminate that code 2 situation and count that as a failed response for that ambulance unit?”

Chief Coe answered that if any “Code 2” unit normally staffed doesn’t get out in 9 minutes, it gets a failure.

Comment: "It would be nice if we could figure out somehow in the response criteria that units that are obviously not staffed, or if their staffing is not there, that there was some way we could send something sooner rather than later as far as either staff or something so it can get on the way there, even before that unit fails."

Chief Coe said that this would set the foundation to do those sorts of things. Chief Owens pointed out that with putting this system in place, it will give a unit-specific look at performance and will show where we historically have a trend in particular areas. With this data, leadership in a station can be worked with when a unit is typically not going to meet its response mark. It can be listed as a Code 2, and if a crew musters, it can be put in service and respond to the call.

Question Asked: "But it is good to get a crew and then muster and respond on a call? Then that changes, right? They're not marking it as a fail then, correct?"

Chief Owens stated that as long as a unit gets out before the 8-minute mark it is not considered "failed."

Question Asked: "My question is, without tearing this whole thing down ... I know a lot of work was done ... is there the ability to re-evaluate what's there and make some adjustments now, even after it gets approved?"

Chief Coe answered that this can be refined as many times as this body wants it to be refined. He is very confident in the recommendations that were passed through the Operations Committee as being solid, but it is really the decision of the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board as to how it goes forward. If there are individual issues that need to be addressed down the line, he said, they can certainly be revisited at that point.

Question Asked: "If a call starts out as something simple like a car fire, and they get there and realize it's a car fire underneath a fuel tanker, does that criteria not show up on the assignment card?"

Chief Coe answered, "No." Once units are on the scene, the initial call is overridden and the units on the scene request what they need.

Question Asked: "... so it's no longer something already established in CAD?"

Again, Chief Coe answered, "No," stating there are certain things established in CAD, but it is up to the person on the scene to ask for what they need. Chief Owens pointed out that it relieves the dispatcher of having to make all the changes while in the midst of call-taking.

Chief Coe noted that a lot of work went into this report, and that he feels this is a good start in clarifying our statistics and standardizing our countywide responses with regard to how we handle tactical units. Chief Coe also advised that if this is successfully passed, any issues processed through it need to be communicated so that they can be evaluated and addressed.

Question Asked: "What channel would that take as far as making adjustments to this?"

Chief Coe answered that it would be no different than any change to the communications policy as it is. It would be vetted up through the chain of command. It would come to the Operations Committee, and a determination would be made and a recommendation to push ECC.

Question Asked: “Some companies in major cities throughout the United States are going to cold and hot responses. Was that addressed ...?”

Chief Coe stated that this was not specifically discussed at any of the committee meetings and that it is not addressed as part of the report. Chief Owens stated that he feels it is an issue that needs to be discussed.

Dr. Fillmore advised that the State Ambulance Safety Committee is reconvening, and that he feels they will actually come out with some recommendations.

President Smothers suggested moving forward with the Response Review recommendation in its current version, and then make adjustments as it moves forward

A motion was made by David Remsburg that it be recognized as a living document to move it forward, and that the Board recommend and approve the report from the Response Review Committee and the recommendations made therein. Susan Nicol seconded the motion.

A discussion then ensued. President Neary stated that the information had not been received in a timely manner by certain members. He questioned how the committee was formed, what Local representation had been chosen, and what their role was in reporting back. Chief Owens stated that Chief Neary's concerns were valid, and that they are in the process of making changes regarding appointed representatives.

The Fire Advisory Board then chose to move forward with the taking of individual votes:

Battalion 1:	Absent
Battalion 2:	Yes
Battalion 3:	Yes
Battalion 4:	Yes
Battalion 5:	Absent
Lt. Jay Schwab:	Yes
Capt. Chad Cave:	Yes
Susan Reeder Jessee:	Absent
Carroll Jones	Yes

VOTE: YES: 6 NO: 0 ABSENT: 3 PASSED

Protective Clothing for Volunteers

Since the last Fire Advisory Board meeting, Chief Jewell has received six more sets of gear. Chief Owens stated that some of the returns still need some work, and Chief Jewell is reaching out to those corporations.

Volunteer Member Database

Chief Jewell felt this topic had been previously discussed.

Question Asked: “Ultimately, what’s the plan for the database? About everything that you’re looking to accomplish with that, I know we’re already looking at . . . Again, it’s producing a list for the county insurance. It’s going to be used to track LOSAP activity and things like that. What are some of the other things that we’re hoping to do?”

Chief Owens added physical fit tests to the list, but went on to say that the biggest driver of cost is maintaining the membership roster of valid personnel, since the county pays for its workers compensation insurance from those demographics. Companies add people, he said, but they don’t remove members when they are no longer engaged in the organization, and they are included in the count that the insurance premium is based on. Chairman Williams raised concerns about members transitioning from operational to administrative, how that affects fundraising efforts within the volunteer corporations, and accurate tracking of LOSAP points for those members. Chief Jewell added that his fear is that if they are not in the system and are injured, they are not covered.

Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Terms Expiring in June

Chief Owens informed the board that Mr. Jones and Chief Williams both apprised Joyce Grossnickle of their intent to not seek reappointment. This will create a vacancy for a Battalion 4 representative and an at-large citizen representative as of June 30th.

Question Asked: “Have you communicated to Battalion 4?”

Chief Williams replied that the Battalion 4 meeting would take place the following night, so official notification would go to the Chiefs at the Battalion 4 meeting. Chief Williams asked if the positions would be advertised. Chief Owens responded that the battalion representative would not be advertised; however, the Citizen Representative position would be. Anyone interested in the position, he said, should submit a resume and a letter of interest to Joyce Grossnickle. Chief Owens also added that with Chief Williams leaving the Board, a new Chair will need to be appointed by July 1st.

Volunteer Officer Standards, the Association Action

President Smothers advised that the issues brought up at the previous meeting about the volunteer officer standards are being reviewed by a subcommittee. He stated that he feels there is enough representation, both career and volunteer, to come back to the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board in May for further direction on the matter. After much discussion, it was agreed that the committee should move forward with their appointed task and give their report at the conclusion of their workshop.

B. New Business

Pilot Testing of Volunteer Accreditation Process

Chief Owens expressed his appreciation to the Vigilant Hose Company for becoming the first accredited company under the current process in Frederick County. He shared how the manual was put together and advised that a complete copy of the manual would be provided to each of the stations for use as a training tool.

X. ACTION ITEMS

Response Review Committee

Chief Williams stated that this was passed previously in the meeting.

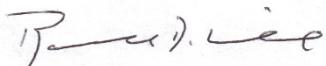
XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by David Remsburg to adjourn. Chad Cave seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

VOTE: YES: 6 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

Meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

APPROVED



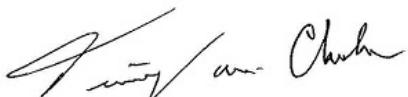
Randy Williams, Chair

APPROVED

5/9/2016

Date of Approval

APPROVED



Tim Clarke, Vice-Chair

APPROVED

5/9/2016

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