

CHESTER COUNTY FIRE POLICE ASSOCIATION

Meeting Minutes

November, 2010

We were welcomed to Good Will Fire Company in West Chester by their representative, Bill Best.

President Joel Gramling called the meeting of the Chester County Fire Police Association to order at 2:02 PM on November 7, 2010. Art Daggett gave the invocation. The President led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Recording Secretary took roll call of Officers. Ron Miller was absent.

John Neff pointed out in the September minutes the fire school is in South Coatesville, not East Coatesville. Jim Ploumis made the motion, seconded by Tom Cole, to dispense with the reading of the September minutes and to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as corrected. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Checking account - \$4836.25. Stan Heist asked the membership for approval to get the bank statements online. He will print a hard copy with the bank logo. The banks are beginning to charge for sending printed statements. Jim Ploumis made the motion for our current and future treasurers to "go green". Seconded by Barb Yagle. Motion carried.

Mike Spirito, Deputy Director for Technical Support at the Department of Emergency Services and a retired police officer, gave a presentation on the projects going on in the County.

Rebanding: cost \$15.2M. It took 2 ½ years to decide how to do this. It was supposed to have been completed by 2008. Everyone will need extensive training on radio usage. Police departments are the first with rebanded radios in East Goshen and East Whiteland. Bad boards were found in the portables and the mobiles started to lock up. Project stopped. Portable issues were fixed, but not the mobiles. Testing will continue in early 2011 with the same police departments. There are also problems with the high-profile batteries. Sprint/Nextel are only obligated to replace what we have.

Fire Police will be on repeated systems and it should be much easier to use. They will take advantage of some old repeaters that are around. Training will be critical.

New radio project is on track. However, there definitely will still be dead spots and we need to learn where they are and how to get around the issue. The RFP should go out late January, early February.

The County is looking at a replacement CAD system in mid-2011.

The D block is a 700 MHz range space in the middle of all the frequencies, and the FCC wants these ranges to be shared by private and public safety users. Trying to require the FCC give us that block. Contact your congressmen. Interoperability is necessary. There should be no conflicts with frequencies in the future. This was one of the biggest issues on 9/11 - no communication between the firefighters and the police. Technology is not the holdup any longer so interoperability is now the policy.

Directors' Report(s): None.

Fire Police Commissioner's report: None.

Executive Board report: None

Committee(s)' reports:

Banquet Committee: None.

LED SOG: None.

Fire Chiefs' Assn: John Neff stated the Chiefs had met at Sikorsky Helicopter and had a good meeting including a tour.

Report from the County: Beau Crowding reported the paging system project is moving quickly. Participation by the fire police at the pager meetings has been tremendous. Ed Atkins has said that the Fire Police must be involved. The RFP has gone out for the voice pagers since the project must be done by 2013. Alphanumeric pagers depend on the CAD system and would be similar to what many individual fire companies already have but would run at a County level and be managed locally.

Fire School: the good news is that the Commissioners have signed the resolution for the agreement of sale for 92.5 acres from Mittal Steel in South Coatesville. Should begin to "move dirt" by June, 2011. The County will contact the Governor to give us the \$2M he promised. The designs that were already done are still to be used. This site has one very usable existing building and it can be expanded. Charlie Owens is the project manager for the new facility.

The County is looking for a part time fire instructor, a part time fire marshal and a part time hazmat tech. Go to the County website to apply. Bob Kagle is now the Emergency Management Deputy Director.

Wills for Heroes started with the first offering on 11/13/10. Free simple will and power of attorney. Will run the process every three months. Next time will be March. The County is providing the computers and space. The SE Regional Task Force is going well.

Joel, Ron Miller, and John Neff are working on getting the trailers ordered. The \$150,000 for the Fire Police is from Homeland Security.

Commissioner Aichele had asked about Dave Molnar who had been in an accident while responding to a call. Beau sends that information up to the County Commissioners when someone gets hurt.

A discussion ensued about Dave Molnar's accident. Jack Smith said sometimes we are out there but no one knows it. They are trying to come up with some type of accountability for fire police. An "I am responding" system. Jack Smith and Jim Skymba will bring the suggested system to Beau and the County. We need a simple system to let someone know if you're in trouble. Art Daggett said it was amazing that any fire police would be out of the line of sight with no radio. No one should be out there alone. Request additional fire police if necessary. Anyone with ideas please contact Jack Smith. Joel Gramling and John Neff push for radios for the FP at every meeting they attend. Barb Yagle said she spoke with John Haines and that on fire-police-only calls with no Captain or Lt. responding the fire police without 800 radios should call the radio room to announce their response. John Haines agreed.

State Fire Police Assn: Joel reported their last meeting was on Sept. 19 in Oaks. Most of the discussions were on the LODD and how to have the fire police included. They are looking to change some procedures. There are 20 other legislative efforts going on with a distracted driver bill coming out. The next meeting will be at the Brookhaven Fire Company in Delaware County on November 21 at 1 PM.

Motion to pay bills, Joel Gramling for misc. expenses - \$242.37, Eileen Amatrudo for postage and paper - \$128.43, Bill Best for food - \$189.13. Motion to pay bills was made by Barb Yagle seconded by Bob Massey. Motion carried.

Correspondence: CCFPA received a letter from Berwyn Fire Police Captain Mike Basking and Lt. Chris Natale questioning the FP trailers and message boards. Joel wanted the membership to be aware and that he would be drafting a reply stating he was sorry they were so unhappy with the Association's decisions and they could have participated. Jim Ploumis stated the reply should be stronger, put as much fire as you can in it

Joel mentioned that the results of the straw vote for pagers: 30 for voice and 7 for digital.

Bobby Kagle has mentioned he was going to have a meeting this Monday at 2:30 for future funding. Anyone have additional needs (not radios) please see me.

New Membership Applications: Ruthann Sciandra read off three new members' names and asked they be approved for 2011. Thomas Szewczyk – Valley Forge, Joe Inzone – Ridge, Ron Giacinto – West Chester. Jim Ploumis made the motion to accept the new members. Seconded by Jack Smith. Motion carried. Ruthann asked that she be notified of all life members and she will have cards at the next meeting.

Old business: None.

New business: Elections: President Joel Gramling appointed a delegation to count the ballots: Charlie Lobb, Jim Skymba, Jack Smith. Vote for one for the Alternate to the PA Fireman's Assn. Jim Metzger was nominated by Charlie Lobb to fill the Recording Secretary vacancy, seconded by Bill Best. Motion carried. The Recording Secretary cast the ballot for the unopposed offices. Charlie Lobb reported the election results – Jim Ploumis will be the alternate to the PA Fireman's Assn. Charlie Lobb made the motion to destroy the ballots, seconded by Jim Ploumis. Motion carried. Charlie Lobb made a motion to destroy the ballots, seconded by Jim Ploumis. Motion carried.

Officers for 2011:

President – Joel Gramling	Chaplin – Charlie Lobb
Vice President – Ron Miller	Asst. Chaplin – Eileen Amatrudo
Recording Secretary – Jim Metzger	Membership Secretary – Ruthann Sciandra
Treasurer – Stan Heist	Fire Police Commissioner – Bob Massey
Directors (5) -- Joel Gramling, John Neff, Jack Smith, Jim Ploumis and Bob Massey	
Delegates to PA Fire Police Assn (2) – Bill Best, Joel Gramling	
Alternates to PA Fire Police Assn (2) – Barb Yagle, Ron Miller	
Delegate to PA Firemen’s Assn. – Jim McVeigh	
Alternate to PA Firemen’s Assn (1) – Jim Ploumis	

Patrick Carmody had the letters for the Coatesville Christmas parade on Dec. 4. Please take one.

Joel Gramling reported that Sikorsky Helicopter has their own fire department with a big crash truck which is part of the County response team.

Seven FP traffic units from Chester County responded to the Collingdale fire in Delaware County.

Montco is putting together documentation on employers not firing responders.

DES has evacuation maps for the residents that show the evacuation sites and routes.

Ridge Fire Company has offered to host the CCFPA meetings in 2011. Jim Ploumis made the motion to accept their offer, seconded by John Neff. Motion carried. Goshen Fire Company had also offered and may host in 2012. Our first meeting is on January 9, 2011 due to the first Sunday being on a holiday weekend.

John Neff mentioned that credentialing is on hold due to the federal government changing guidelines again.

Jim Ploumis has volunteered to be in the committee defining terminology for traffic control for NFPA.

50/50 winners: Jim Skymba, Jim McVeigh, Bob Massey.

President Joel Gramling thanked the Host Company and Bill Best for the wonderful food all year.

A motion was made by Jim Ploumis to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Barb Yagle. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 3:52 PM. There were 39 members representing 22 stations and one guest present.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Amatrudo, Recording Secretary