

Rutland County Fire Mutual Aid Association, Inc.
Minutes of the November 2, 2008 Meeting

The meeting was held at the West Rutland Fire Station and called to order by President Schlachter at 7:10 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance, moment of silence for passed members.

SICK AND DISTRESSED:

None reported.

ROLL CALL:

Department Members Present: Benson Fire Department, Brandon Fire Department, Castleton Fire Department, Chittenden Fire Department, Clarendon Fire Department, Danby-Mt. Tabor Fire Department, Fair Haven Fire Department, Hubbardton Fire Department, Ira Fire Department, Killington Fire Department, Pittsford Fire Department, Poultney Fire Department, Proctor Fire Department, Rutland City Fire Department, Rutland Town Fire Department, Wallingford Fire Department, West Haven Fire Department, West Pawlet Fire Department, West Rutland Fire Department

Officers Present: Chief Robert Schlachter, President; Chief Tom Fucile, Vice-President; Michael Skaza, Secretary/Treasurer

Coordinators Present: Tim Kerber

Other Guests: Dan Zimmer, Vermont Fire Academy/Arlington Fire Department; Captain Don Patch, VT State Police; Laura Wallet, VSP PSAP Administrator

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES:

A motion was made and seconded to dispense of the approval of the minutes of the last meeting as it was a Convention organizational meeting and no minutes were available. PASSED.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Schlachter reported that gubernatorial candidate Gaye Symington recently made a comment indicating that the fire service is not operating efficiently because of the amount of apparatus that she sees at parades. Many of our members contacted her campaign regarding this issue and have received a boilerplate response back from her campaign staff.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

None.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer's Report was presented. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report as submitted. PASSED.

STATE DISPATCH:

Captain Patch stated that VSP is trying to increase the efficiency of the dispatch center and ensure that the dispatchers are handling emergency calls only. One proposal that he is exploring is to eliminate the service of receiving calls from local agency's 7-digit phone lines. He indicated that a large number of calls are taken on the 7-digit lines that are non-emergency calls. No numbers were available for presentation to indicate exactly how many calls are being received on fire department 7-digit lines. Concerns were raised over the 911 requirement for emergency service organizations to maintain a 7-digit phone line and the fact that fire departments need a 7-digit phone line as a means for monitoring companies to report alarm activations to, since they can not access VT 911 from out-of-state. If local 7-digit phone numbers are eliminated, then it is possible that alarms could be reported using the County roll-over lines, which are 7-digit numbers already in place at dispatch. It was acknowledged that the elimination of the local 7-digit emergency phone numbers would require a huge undertaking by the local agencies to ensure that every resident was notified that they would have to call 911 to report an emergency and to ensure that every alarm monitoring company operating in their jurisdiction changed their systems to the County roll-over line. Captain Patch suggested that if a department wanted to keep their 7-digit phone line, they could investigate the option of having it answered elsewhere, such as a commercial answering service. It was pointed out that one of the reasons for organizing the state dispatch system in Rutland County was because the private commercial answering services would not accept emergency calls due to insurance issues. Captain Patch asked those present to think about the situation and contact him with any ideas.

A motion was made and seconded instructing President Schlachter to contact Fairpoint Communications to obtain a report of incoming call activity on the County roll-over lines to further this discussion. PASSED.

Laura Wallet asked departments to please contact the dispatch center with information updates. She also asked that department heads review the Dispatch SOGs with their departments and ensure that they are followed.

The question was asked whether run cards were ever going to be implemented in the Rutland Dispatch Center. Laura Wallet stated that it would not be considered until departments were able to keep their contact information up to date, which is not happening now.

OLD BUSINESS:

It was reported by President Schlachter that funding for the proposed Vermont Fire Academy Administration Building has been cut, which has in turn decreased the size of the building to a single classroom. This upset some members because of how long we have waited for such a building to be built. A motion was made and seconded to support a request for funding of an additional \$500,000 as originally proposed to complete the VFA Administration Building project as originally designed with two classrooms. PASSED.

NEW BUSINESS:

Recent mutual aid responses were discussed including a forest fire in Hubbardton and a structure fire in Rutland Town.

Proctor Fire Department announced that it has a 1800 gallon tanker in service to replace their older tanker. Benson Fire Department announced that it has a new crash truck in service. Wallingford Fire Department stated that it has two trucks out of service due to mechanical problems. If anyone knows of used fire apparatus in good condition, please contact Wallingford Fire Department.

The members present discussed the option of moving our meeting nights from Sunday to Thursday to try to improve attendance. There was no opposition voiced, so the following 2009 Meeting Schedule was drafted and approved:

January 15, 2009	Castleton Fire Station
March 12, 2009	Pittsford Fire Station
April 16, 2009	Clarendon Fire Station
June 18, 2009	Fair Haven Fire Station
August 13, 2009	Danby ó Mt. Tabor Fire Station
October 15, 2009	West Pawlet Fire Station
December 17, 2009	Wallingford Fire Station

Dan Zimmer of the Vermont Fire Academy provided the members with a status update from the Vermont Fire Academy. The new Firefighter I and II curriculums have been launched and are in their first delivery around the state.

With no other business at hand, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. PASSED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael J. Skaza

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Secretary/Treasurer