

Rutland County Fire Mutual Aid Association, Inc.
Minutes of the February 18, 2010 Meeting

The meeting was held at the Brandon Fire Station and called to order by President Schlachter at 7:10 p.m. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our fallen brothers and sisters in the fire service.

SICK AND DISTRESSED:

None reported.

ROLL CALL:

Department Members Present: Brandon Fire Department, Chittenden Fire Department, Clarendon Fire Department, Fair Haven Fire Department, Ira Fire Department, Killington Fire-Rescue, Mt Holly Fire Department, Poultney Fire Department, Proctor Fire Department, Rutland City Fire Department, Rutland Town Fire Department, West Haven Fire Department, West Rutland Fire Department

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

Coordinators Present: Schlachter, Skaza, Kerber

Other Guests: None

Secretary's Report / Approval of Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to table the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting. PASSED.

No correspondence has been received by the Secretary that needs to come before the Board.

Treasurer's Report

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

Mutual Aid Responses

Mutual Aid responses were reviewed. The discussions involved the following incidents:

- Chittenden: Structure fire in a wood shop.
- Killington: Structure Fire, Rebecca Lane
- Killington: Electrical Motor Fire, Killington Grand Hotel
- Clarendon: Chimney Fire
- Hubbardton: Structure Fire with LP Tank Involvement

State Dispatch

President Schlachter reported that all preventative maintenance on the transmitters has been completed by Adirondack Two-Way Radio.

The Association will be filing a request for funding to VCOMM for the upgrade of the Mt Holly transmitter to a unit that is narrow band compliant.

Dick Hill made a presentation to the group regarding narrow banding. As of January 1, 2010, the FCC mandates that all frequencies must be a 12.5 khz bandwidth. All recipients of HSU funds must be in the process of migration to this bandwidth. He recommended relicensing now as opposed to waiting for your expiration date to avoid delays. He also reported that there is no guarantee that you will get relicensed at the same frequency. Each department is responsible for relicensing their own frequencies and the Association will take care of the dispatch and mutual aid fire ground frequencies. A motion was made and seconded to authorize President Schlachter to move forward with FCC license renewal and frequency coordination of the mutual aid frequencies. PASSED.

New Business

Chief Schlachter will be using the services of a newly obtained assistant to update the County equipment list through the LEPC.

Discussion took place surrounding H527 ó Municipal Cost Recovery Bill, an act permitting municipal fire departments to bill for services provided under certain conditions. The following issues were discussed surrounding this proposed legislation:

- The bill only applies to municipal fire departments. Those present felt that it should extend to non-municipal fire departments as well.
- The group present supported enabling legislation to this effect, but was not in favor of a bill that would require a fire department to bill for services.
- The groups would like to see specific language that would allow a fire department to opt-out of billing.

A motion was made and seconded to ratify the Association's agreement on the above named points. PASSED.

The Division of Fire Safety has issued a directive that allows a drastic reduction in the clear opening of an egress window. Discussion took place among those present that concluded on the fact that this directive was counterproductive to ensuring for the life safety of building occupants. Additionally, it was agreed that such reductions in window clear openings would decrease the likelihood of a firefighter entering a window to make a rescue or utilizing the window as a means of escape. A motion was made and seconded calling for the Association to send a letter to Director John Wood of the Division of Fire Safety expressing the Association's concerns and opposition to the changes in egress window requirements as stated in the Division of Fire Safety, Operations Manual, Section 7(Annex A)(08) dated February 17, 2010. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

The Southern Vermont Regional Fire School will be held at Mt St Joseph's Academy in Rutland on May 1 and 2, 2010. The fire school brochure is due out in the very near future.

Senator Sanders has secured \$100,000 in federal funds for the recruitment and retention of fire and EMS responders in Vermont. A Steering Committee is being formed to create guidelines for how the money will be disbursed.

Senator Sanders and the US Fire Administrator will be holding a Town Meeting for the fire service on March 20, 2010 at Vermont Technical College.

There will be a Fire Act Grant Workshop at the West Rutland Fire Station on March 25, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Chief Flanders of the Clarendon Fire Department has submitted the new Association patch to the First Responder newspaper and it will be featured in a future edition.

Chief Flanders requested a patch from each department within the Association to make a plaque to present to the Vermont Fire Academy as they open their new Administration and Classroom Building.

Chief Kilpeck asked for the Association to develop a protocol to outline what types of calls fire departments will be dispatched to. The goal of the protocol would be to eliminate dispatches where fire department services are not needed. Chief Schlachter stated that the PSAP Administrator must be included in this discussion and tabled the issue until a future meeting where she can be present.

The Vermont Emergency Services Memorial will have its pavers installed on the walkway within the memorial this spring. The Association has not yet purchased a paver for this project. A motion was made and seconded to purchase a paver for \$100.00 with the Association's name on it to be placed at the memorial. PASSED.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. PASSED. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael J. Skaza

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Secretary/Treasurer