



Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs

Minutes of the Zone 2 Meeting

Friday, April 1, 2011

Grimsby Peach King Arena

162 Livingstone Avenue

Participants: Mike Cain, Larry Coplen, Dave Cunliffe, Terry Dicks, Ken Eden, Rob Grimwood, Chris Halliday, Rodger Hill, Greg Hudson, Jim Jessop, Jeff McCormick, Mark Mehlenbacher, Denys Prevost, Phil Ross, Rob Simonds, Lee Smith, Rick Smith, Bill Thomson, Jo Zambito

Regrets: Shayne Mintz, OAFCA, Paul Boissonneault, Garth Dix, Chris Cole, Mike Seth

Guests: Rick Finnemore, OFM and Cynthia Ross Tustin, OFM

Minute Taker: Joanne Miron

1. Welcome

- Chief Grimwood extended a warm welcome to all members and guests and thanked Chief Cain from the Grimsby Fire Department for hosting
- Shayne Mintz sent his regrets.

2. Update from the Fire Marshal's Office – Rick Finnemore & Cynthia Ross Tustin

- a) Ted Wieclawek – new Fire Marshal
 - Gave a brief explanation of his background
- b) Messages from Other Sections -
 - Gave update and distributed the following handouts
 - Ontario Fire College Company Officer Levels One and Two
 - Communiqué – Office of the Fire Marshal Resources for Major Incidents
 - Communiqué – Access to Provincial Resources for CBRN Response and HUSAR
 - Standard Incident Reporting – Selected Issues
 - Municipal reports are available for a 5 year period on fire and emergency calls
- c) OFM Website –
 - Has been revamped, hopefully is more user friendly
 - Sometimes the OFM rep receives inquiries from the public via the website – generally refers the public to the area Chief but if it is of a serious nature Rick will follow up.

- d) Propane Regulations –
 - Lengthy discussion regarding propane regulations and the RSMPs
- e) Staffing Guidelines – Not a standard but is considered a best practice. Much discussion took place regarding transparency to the community to ensure the public are well aware of the level of fire service they are provided. The Official Guide to Matching Resource Deployment and Risk is a tool to assist municipalities in meeting their obligations as set out in the FPPA. This tool assists Municipal Council in setting the level of service and the costs associated.
- f) Reviewed the staffing of the Southern Region from 1988 to today
 - Seen a large reduction in staff
 - As such, current staff rely on emails to communicate and disseminate information
 - Although some services are moving towards the use of use twitter and facebook, the security levels of the OFM will not permit their staff to use these ways of communication.
- g) Annual Compliance
 - Overall good response
 - Tip – start early – make it a habit
- h) Mutual Aid Plans
 - June 1st is the deadline for submission
- i) Seminars for Municipal Leaders
 - May 19th – Zorra Township
 - June 8th – County of Brant
 - June 22 – Welland
 - Will invite surrounding areas for saturation – Fire Chief should attend if their officials attend
 - No Fire Service Leaders seminar set yet
- j) Post MFPIS Meeting
 - 69% compliant in Southern region – 10 more to complete to be in 100% compliance
 - Once complete, Rick will re-cycle around
 - Valuable opportunity to meet and prompt improvements

3. OAFIC Update – Shayne Mintz

- a) Will forward minutes from the last Board of Directors meeting to Rob Grimwood for distribution and review.
- b) Karen Hanna from the MOL will attend a future meeting to discuss Section 21 Committee guidance notes, updates and information. She may be at liberty to talk about the charges in Meaford and Point Edward as well as the recent incident in Listowel.
- c) Discussed the topic of mandatory retirement for suppression firefighters at the age of 60.
- d) Discussed the issue surrounding 24 hour shifts for full time firefighters.

4. CAFC Update – Rob Simonds

As Paul Boissonneault was not able to attend Rob Simonds gave an update.

To date no group speaks to the Federal government for the Fire Service. Both EMS and Police have representatives and a voice at this level. The CAFC has not always had the best reputation but now has a new approach to governing tough issues. Fire Service cannot afford to be on the outside looking in so will work with the Federal government respectfully to communicate information and discuss ideas. The association is positioning themselves to be a public advisory voice taking a focused, business approach. There are many different groups with worthy causes, such as education, health, etc., competing for funding. The CAFC has a role to play in communicating the needs of the Fire Service.

Some objectives for the association are tax relief for volunteer firefighters and changes to the Building Code. The \$3000 tax relief does not replace the \$1000 tax exemption. A short discussion took place. The tax relief was a budget initiative of the Conservative party but has the support of all parties. The final outcome of this initiative will be in limbo until after the Federal election.

A lobbyist group has been hired by the CAFC to identify gaps and guide the association in knowing what to approach the government for and how.

Improvements have been made to the website and everyone was encouraged to refer regularly to the site for information.

The CAFC and the OAFC have a good relationship, working together for the same goals.

5. “Lessons Learned” – Highrise Fires in St. Catharines.

Fire Chief Mark Mehlenbacher showed a power point presentation entitled *Apartment Fire Trilogy – Cooperation and Response*. The presentation was initially created for many groups such as Red Cross, Social Services, etc. not just the Fire Service. Unfortunately the department had 3 apartment fires in a very short period of time. The Chief walked the group through each fire explaining the size of the building, number of occupants, cause of the fire, type of attack, issues faced by firefighters, and the assistance of agencies such as Red Cross, Salvation Army, Community Care, Regional Social Services, Public Transit and Victim Services. He spoke about housing the displaced residents, using public transit to keep occupants warm, and the importance of daily briefings with the residents. Many tenants in the apartments tend to be seniors which can pose additional problems due to their lack of mobility. Chief Mehlenbacher spoke in length about the importance of fire safety plans, the investigative work of his fire prevention staff and the charges laid. He also spoke about the taxing of resources as these fires were so close together.

A short video from the CHCH new coverage was shown. Chief Mehlenbacher continues to be frustrated with lack of working smoke alarms in residences and uses all avenues possible to get the message to the public that smoke alarms must be operational and checked regularly.

6. New OAFB Advisory Note on Care Occupancies

Deputy Chief Jim Jessop of the Niagara Falls Fire Department started his presentation with a video entitled *Burning Question and the Debt Trap* from the show *Marketplace*. He then showed a power point presentation on the new OAFB advisory note on care occupancies and the importance of installing sprinklers in all homes where residents must have assistance to evacuate. He spoke about the 1983 Webber Report which is still being referenced today..

7. New Business

- 1) OAFB Ames will be held April 30 – May 4th, 2011 in Toronto.
- 2) Two resolutions presented. After some discussion the resolutions were moved forward as follows:
 - a. Municipal Act Amendments Re: Vacant Building – moved by Jim Jessop and seconded by Rob Grimwood
 - b. Developing an Ontario Municipal Bargaining Committee – moved by Denys Prevost and seconded by Mike Cain
- 3) Rob Grimwood called for nominations for Zone 2 rep. Ken Eden nominated Rob Grimwood to continue in this role and Rob accepted.
- 4) OPFFA Negotiation Status:
 - a. Niagara Falls
 - i. Expired 2010
 - ii. Don't anticipate completion until the end of 2011
 - b. Brantford
 - i. Contract ended 1 year ago
 - ii. Going to arbitration July 18th and September 9th
 - iii. Monetary issues and the 24 hour shifts keep the two side apart
 - c. Welland
 - i. Expired 2010
 - ii. Negotiating volunteer contract
 - iii. Issues tend to be non-monetary
 - d. Norfolk
 - i. Contract expires in May 2011
 - ii. Unique in that only 1 of the 11 stations are unionized.
- 5) OMFPOA Conference will be hosted by the Niagara Falls Fire Department at the Sheraton Falls View Resort and Conference Centre from Sunday, April 17th to Thursday, April 21st, 2011.
- 6) Niagara Regional Fire Chiefs 12th Annual Spring Classic Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday, May 19th, 2011 at the Beechwood Golf and Country Club in Niagara Falls.
- 7) International Association of Arson Investigators – Ontario Chapter will be offering the *2011 Certified Fire and Explosion Investigator Training Program* at Brock University in St. Catharines from June 6th to June 10th, 2011. The burn site will be in Port Colborne.
- 8) Next Meeting will be hosted by Niagara-on-the-Lake. Date to be announced.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:50 p.m.