



Cumberland County Fire Chiefs' Association

"Preservation of Life and Property through Organization"

Minutes of the January 23, 2023, Monthly Meeting



The Chiefs' meeting was hosted by Chief Parrish, Cumberland Road Fire Department and the meal was sponsored by Atlantic Coast Fire Trucks. The January 2023 meeting was held at Paradise Acres, and the association thanks Chief Parrish, his staff, Atlantic Coast Fire Trucks and Paradise Acres for their great hospitality.

- Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by President Johnson at 7:00 pm.
- Opening Prayer:** Fire Chief Gary Brock provided the opening prayer and blessing of the food.
- Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Johnson.
- Roll Call:** Roll call was conducted with 18 departments and 7 associate members present.

Members Absent:

- Fire/EMS Departments: None
- Associate Members: **County Managers Office, Retired Fire Chiefs,**

Approval of Minutes: The December 19, 2022, minutes were approved as presented by the Secretary.

Guests:

- Mr. Chris Dixon, Haigh, Byrd & Lambert, LLP
- Representative Diane Wheatley
-

Vendors Present:

- Lance Deal, Atlantic Coast Fire Trucks – Meal Sponsor

Treasurer's Report: The daily TRUIST bank fund balance was provided by the Treasurer. The balance as of January 23, 2023, is \$1,259,300.00 with several checks outstanding.

Meeting Points of Interests:

*Next Chiefs' Meeting is scheduled for **Monday, February 27, 2023, at the Dr. J. Larry Keen Regional Fire and Rescue Training Center.** This is a General Board of Directors Meeting with snacks. **There will also be a Department of Labor (DOL) OSHA update class.***

Stoney Point FD Air-19 has the Air request service calls during the month of February 2023. With Fayetteville Air-1 assuming calls during the Month of March 2023.

Items of Interest Handouts

- FTCC Training Opportunities
- CCSO Arson / Fire Investigation Statistics 2022 Calendar Year.
- 2022 Fire Calls by Station

- TRUIST Association Bank Balance dated January 23, 2023
- Thank You Note – Tracy Jackson, Assistant County Manager
- January 26, 2023 LEPC Meeting Agenda – FTCC Training Center 10 AM
- Updated Association Meeting Rotation Schedule Jan 2023 – Mar 2026
- NCDPS Approved Radio Vendor List dated 1 January 2023

OLD BUSINESS:

1. President Johnson apologized for the mix up reference our new 800 MHz radio template activation scheduled for noon Wednesday February 4th but started immediately after mid-night on the 1st. This was due to a communications issue, but overall everyone responded positively to the change and we have had no major issues since switching over. He reminded everyone that all Incident Commanders must monitor two radios, one for the ground channel to talk with dispatch, and one for your departments OPS channel to monitor incident traffic. Dispatch does not have the ability to monitor OPS channels.

President Johnson also advised should the City of Fayetteville Fire Department experience a loss of radio communications on the 800 MHz Durham System they will switch over and utilize our overflow talk groups until their communications have been restored. Our new system has been designed for interoperability between the Durham and VIPER system. He also advised that Chief Hill and his staff are working with N.C. VIPER to obtain additional talk groups.

He further advised that Adam Johnson 9-1-1 Supervisor advised that all our VHF radio issues have been fixed and we can once again communicate on VHF. All our pagers are on the VHF radio frequency.

President Johnson also advised that during 2022 there were 17,244 incident calls dispatched to county-fire, and 27,641 incidents to City Fire, for a combined total of 44,885 incidents. He also stated that county dispatch also dispatched 94,380 CCSO calls, 66,409 EMS calls, 21,265 HMPD and 14,849 SLPD calls for a total of 214,147 annual dispatches. That is lot of calls that require processing and to do to our part it is important that we start following our dispatch and communications Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) and start utilizing the technology on our trucks. Another way to address this issue and assist dispatch is to look into digital dispatch to free up dispatchers for the Ground Channel. Our guidelines also call for radio traffic from the host stations, while all others utilize their Freedom App tablets or MCT's to check in route and on the scene. The host engine, and a size up by the first arriving apparatus or officer should be over the air. Naturally if computers are down an over the air transmission is required. Our radio traffic is further tied up with units checking in route over the air and waiting on a reply from dispatchers, who are often tied up on other channels. There the call is repeated until a reply is received. We are all in this together and therefore assist each other with this issue.

He updated the membership that both the City of Fayetteville (COF) and Cumberland County are working together to replace the current Computer Automated Dispatch (CAD) system in the foreseeable future. He stressed that it is important to share the same CAD for interoperability between our two (2) entities and hoped in the best interest of public safety that the two (2) PSAP's would collocate.

2. President Johnson again reminded the members that we will have an Instructor from North Department of Labor (DOL) coming in for our February 2023 Chiefs' meeting and conduct an OSHA class dealing specifically with changes as they relate to the fire service in North Carolina. The February 2023 meeting will be held at the Dr. J. Larry Keen Regional Fire and Rescue Training Center at Tom Starling and Corporation Drive. **Please consider bringing in all your Chief Officers for this important update.**
3. President Johnson asked the members to consider turning all their old radios no longer in use back to the CCFCA for a bulk sale and return the funds into our account. He thanked Westarea and Grays Creek # 18 for already turning their old radios back in.
4. President Johnson stated that he is working with Motorola to inquire about associated costs to update our code plugs on our old hand-held portable radios.
5. President Johnson reminded the County Chiefs to be sure to update their VENDOR Link account with Cumberland Finance.
6. Reminded the membership and asked every Chief to submit an American Rescue Plan (ARP) application to Cumberland County and apply for the \$50,000.00 non-profit cap. He advised that he sent out examples of each of the questions asked and each department only needed to change Stoney Point to their department's name. Although the application does not conform to Public Safety Agencies, he asked that everyone apply for salary assistance in the requested amount. The application also requests documents which every department should have. There is no suspense date listed on the application, which is listed on the county-website.
7. Reminded the membership that our SCIF Committee will render a report to the membership on our FY 2022-2023 projects during our February meeting at the Dr. J. Larry Keen, Regional Fire and Rescue Training Center.
8. President Johnson stated that we have not acted on the Tanker Task Force Concept SOG. He stated that we will have an up or down vote during our February meeting, and to contact either Assistant Chief Murphy or Deputy Chief Tracy Smith with any further comments on the SOG. He also stated that he would send out another digital copy of the SOG with our minutes.
9. Reminded the membership that we are in the process of acquiring bids to remove the wrap from our Surry Fire Safety House and replace it with a new image. This will be work in process.
10. President Johnson stated that we have changed our NFPA Subscription service to the new NFPA LINK account. We still have the same number of LOG-INS but saved right at \$3,000.00 annually by switching to a LINK account. He reminded the members that NFPA no longer use the PDF format for its standards. The LINK account allows copying and pasting. Please call President Johnson if you need to LOG in. Fort Bragg has been utilizing LINK for some time and is pleased with the process.
11. Provided a quick update concerning the on-going dilemma with our AED Batteries and informed the membership that he met with Mr. Gonzales, a company regional representative who asked us to download at least two (2) defibrillators from each station that had their batteries go dead. They can utilize his information to determine what the issue is with the batteries and

address these issues with the battery manufacturer. He will provide additional information once he receives specifics from the company representative.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. President Johnson introduced Mr. Chris Dixon, with Haigh, Byrd, and Lambert LLP, Certified Public Accountants. Haigh, Byrd, and Lambert conducts our annual audits for most of our volunteer departments. Mr. Dixon is here to announce a current issue, and requested assistance henceforth regarding timely submission of required financial documents if his company is asked to conduct your departments annual financial audit.

Mr. Dixon explained the current dilemma about the requested GAAP audit listed in our county contract, versus the Cash Basis Audit that we have submitted for decades. The county contract signed in 2019 requires a Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) audit. The issue was realized this year and there are on-going discussions with county-government to resolve this issue. A GAAP audit is far more expensive than our current audit method. He also advised that if any department receives a FEMA Grant or Federal Government Loan of \$750,000.00 or more, they are required to submit a Single Program Specific Audit in addition to their normal annual audit. He stated that there is no one in Fayetteville that completes Single Program Specific Audits, and he has sent those affected departments' financials to a firm in Raleigh. The CCFCA SCIF grant requires a Single Program Specific Audit. These audits are very expensive and could cost up to \$15,000.00 to complete. He also asked all departments to submit their financials for the previous fiscal year to his firm no later than August 15 of each year, otherwise the audit will not be completed in time to meet the county's annual December 31 submission deadline. He also informed the Chiefs that Cumberland County will enforce the deadline and withhold funds until the audit is submitted moving forward. He said he has eight (8) that they are working to complete now.

2. President Johnson updated the membership concerning our Secretary Fire Chief Mark Melvin's current and on-going estate and family medical issues and that Mark may be out for some time. Deputy Chief Scott McGuire will be attending in his place when possible. He asked the membership to keep Mark and his family in our immediate thoughts and prayers moving forward.

3. President Johnson advised the Chiefs to be thinking about the up-coming FY 2023-2024 Cumberland County Service District Grant Program. Application will be posted on our Chiefs Only members portal starting in March and will be submitted electronically via a fillable on-line format within the portal. Additional information will be forthcoming during our February 2023 meeting. Vendor Invoices/Quotes will be required to be submitted with your grant application.

4. Announced that the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs (NCAFC) Mid-Winter Conference in Concord, North Carolina starts next week Tuesday and runs through Saturday February 4, 2023. Chiefs Jason Autry, (Bethany), Ricky Kennedy (Eastover) and Scott Bass (Westarea) are the Chiefs attending sponsored by the CCFCA.

5. President Johnson advised that with the changes approved during the last Legislative Session, changes were approved to several of our Arson related General Statutes, and for our Chiefs situational awareness provided the following information. All changes were effective on December 1, 2022, and included several changes to the fair sentencing act.

- N.C. General Statute § 14-58 Second Degree Arson – was amended to increase the punishment class for a conviction of second-degree arson (Burning of an unoccupied dwelling) from a Class **G** Felony to a Class **E** Felony.
- N.C. General Statute § 14-59-1 Burning of Penal Institutions, provided new language addressing, “If any person shall wantonly and willfully set fire to or burn or cause to be burned, or aid, counsel or procure the burning of a special institution as defined in G.S. §14-208.6 or its contents, the person SHALL be punished as a Class **D** felon.”
- N.C. General Statute § 14-62.2 Expanded the definitions for commercial structure, whereas commercial structure means any building or structure that is designed principally for the manufacture, distribution, or exchange of goods or services, or any other business or trade purposes.

The new law also provided guidance on the following, **Burning of Occupied Commercial Structure**, and unless greater punishment is listed in other provisions, it states that any person SHALL wantonly and willfully set fire to or burn or cause to be burned, or aid, counsel or procure the burning of any **COMMERCIAL** structure **or its contents**, and the structure is occupied at the time of the burning, the person SHALL be **PUNISHED** as a Class **D** felon.

The law also addressed the Burning of an Unoccupied Commercial Structure relating to the class felony. The wording is the same as above but states that a person SHALL be **PUNISHED** as a Class **E** Felon.

- N.C. General Statute § 14-62.2 Burning of unoccupied commercial structure.
 - N.C. General Statute § 14-62.2 Expanded definition when it comes to the type of churches.
 - N.C. General Statute § 14-62.3 Crime of burning a commercial Structure.
 - N.C. General Statute § 14-69.3 Added language for advanced Emergency medical Technician.
6. A discussion was introduced by Assistant Fire Chief Kevin Murphy, concerning the current BLOCK system used for certification training by the Community Colleges. This system is extremely cumbersome for volunteers, especially within our region where a large percentage of our members are in the military. It also hampers volunteers who are juggling their work schedule to accommodate certification training based on a block with several classes within the block. If one is missing the student has to retake the entire block. Our local certifications are down as a result. After a discussion Fire Chief Charles Hodges introduced a **MOTION** to have the association write a letter to the North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission with copies to the CERT board to address this on-going dilemma. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Fire Chief Gary Brock and **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED** by a VOICE Vote. Assistant Chief Murphy will author the letter.
 7. The 2023 FEMA AFG program is still open and closes in February, don't miss the opportunity.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

ID CARD COMMITTEE

- **FYI.** Fire Chiefs are required to send a signed letter or memo with a firefighter requesting an ID Card. For any questions or an appointment contact 424-0694 or e-mail at cjohnson.spdf@gmail.com

President Johnson again asked the members to please continue to recycle or return the clips used for our ID Cards. These clips are extremely expensive, and we need to reuse them as much as possible in order to hold down costs. Please collect clips when your members leave a department and recycle the clips. He also reminded the membership that we do not print blue tags, which are considered temporary tags only.

LIFE SAFETY/EDUCATION COMMITTEE Kevin Lowther (Fire Marshal)

E-Mail: klowther@co.cumberland.nc.us

- No report.

STANDARDS & POLICY COMMITTEE D/C Tracy Smith (Pearce's Mill FD) Chairperson,

E-Mail: pmfd0302@nc.rr.com

- No report.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE Chief R. Marley (Pearce's Mill) Chairperson,

E-Mail: pmfd0301@nc.rr.com

- No report.

TRAINING COMMITTEE Assistant Chief Kevin Murphy (Stoney Point) Chairperson

E-Mail kmurphy1903@gmail.com

- No report.

FINANCE COMMITTEE Deputy Chief Freddy Johnson Jr. (Stoney Point) Chairperson,

E-Mail: spfd1302@nc.rr.com

- Next Report is due in February 2023.

RESCUE COMMITTEE Deputy Chief Hank Harris (Cotton FD) Chairperson,

E-Mail: hankharris@cottonfirerescue.org

- No report.

COMMUNICATIONS /DISPATCH STEERING / AVL COMMITTEE Chief Chuck Hodges (Hope Mills FD), Chairperson, E-Mail: clhodges@townofhopemills.com

- Committee Chair Chief Hodges briefed the membership concerning changes to our dispatch protocol. It was recommended that we dispatch by Unit Number rather than by Station

Number. This is something we did in years past and then changed to the Station number dispatch.

- He also reminded the Chiefs that with any multi-unit response the incident will be worked on the OPS Channel of the Station responsible for the incident.
- All single unit dispatches will be worked on the ground channel.
- Dispatch will no longer announce the Ops Channel unless an overflow channel needs to be assigned.

President Johnson stated that these changes need to be incorporated into our current Dispatch SOG by removing old protocol language with the new protocol standards.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – Division Chief Brandon Hanzal (Stoney Point) Chairperson, E-Mail: bhanzal@stoneypointfire.com

- No report.

HOSTILE RESPONSE / ACTIVE SHOOTER – Assistant Chief Kevin Morgan (FFD) Chairperson, E-Mail: kevinmorgan@fayettevillenc.gov

- President Johnson stated that it has been five (5) years since we last adopted our Active Shooter Rescue Task Force Response Protocol. Since that time, there have been many changes in leadership and personnel. As a result, it is time to re-look at our currently adopted standards and make updates and changes as necessary. Assistant Chief Kevin Morgan, FFD who retired on December 31, 2022, was responsible for Active Shooter Response responsibilities, held several meetings already with key agency leaders. Chief Morgan is being replaced by Battalion Chief Chuck Mims and additional meetings with key agency heads from all first responder agencies will be held in the near future to discuss these issues, recommend changes, training protocol and associated exercises.

RECRUITMENT / RETENTION COMMITTEE – Fire Chief Justin Nobles (SVFD # 23) Chairperson. E-Mail: jnobles@stedmanfire.com

- ***Committee In-Active***

SCIF PROJECT COMMITTEE - Fire Chief Keith Matthews (GFFD # 17) Chairperson. E-Mail: gffd1701@nc.rr.com

- Next Report is due in February 2023.

JOINT INCIDENT / DISASTER RESPONSE COMMITTEE – Assistant Fire Chief Richard Bradshaw (VFD) Chairperson, E-Mail: rbradshaw1@nc.rr.com

- ***Committee In-Active***

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS REPORT

COUNTY MANAGERS OFFICE – Assistant County Manager Tracy Jackson

E-Mail: tjackson@cumberlandcountync.gov

- No report.

EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR/ ECC-911 (Gene Booth, Director),

E-Mail: wbooth@cumberlandcountync.gov

- **Emergency Services Director Gene Booth**

- Not Present

- **Emergency Management Coordinator Garry Crumpler**

- Advised that the resource manual is being updated and that the next WEB-EOC exercise is scheduled for March 2, 2023. Reminder emails will be sent out.

- **Fire Marshal Kevin Lowther**

- Kevin addressed Smoke Detectors and upcoming canvasses. He also informed the membership about the Cardiac Arrest initiative.

- **9-1-1 Supervisor Adam Johnson**

- No Present.

EMS DIRECTOR: David Grovdahl, EMS Chief E-Mail: dgrovdahl@capefearvalley.com

- EMS Chief David Grovdahl reminded the membership that the new EMS protocols will be going into effect on February 1, 2023. All protocols have been distributed via email through the association.

HAZMAT: AC David Richtmeyer - POC telephone for HAZMAT is 910-229-6938,

E-Mail: davidrichtmeyer@fayettevillenc.gov

- No report

NC FORESTRY: Craig Gottfried, County Ranger, E-Mail: craig.gottfried@ncagr.gov

- County Ranger Craig Gottfried advised that the weather forecasts for this year's fire season predict a warmer and dryer season, thus increasing our ground-cover fires. He reminded the members that he is currently down to only one (1) tractor, with job postings for a second operator being posted.

FTCC Steve Drew, E-Mail: drews@faytechcc.edu

- Director Steve Drew announced that the Firefighter II night Academy is scheduled to start on Monday February 6, 2023, at the Dr. J. Larry Keen, Regional Fire and Rescue Training Complex.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE Sheriff Wright ewright@ccsonc.org (Sr. Sgt. Tara Whitman) Email - twhitman@ccsonc.org

- Provided the calendar year 2022 Fire Investigation Unit (FIU) Fire / Arson Investigation Statistics and Report

FAYETTEVILLE POLICE – Police Kemberle Braden, Email – kemberlebraden@fayettevillenc.gov

- No report.

NC HIGHWAY PATROL – Colonel Freddy Johnson Jr. Commander NCSHP.

E-Mail: Freddy.johnson@ncshp.org or First Sergeant Jamie Hinson B-1 Fayetteville

Mail: james.hinson@ncshp.org, or S. Johnson SHP Raleigh Training Center, E-Mail sean.johnson@ncshp.org

- Colonel Johnson announced that Defibrillators have been assigned to all patrol vehicles. This multi-million-dollar program will save future lives across our states highways, whereas every SHP trooper now carries a defibrillator.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

- Fire Commissioner Keefe provided a quick overall update and additional information concerning the 501-C(3) Non-Profit American Rescue Plan (ARP) application process that is on-going.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made to adjourn by Chief Brock and seconded by Deputy Chief Hank Harris. The meeting was adjourned at 2048 hours.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Freddy L. Johnson Sr.

Freddy L. Johnson Sr., CFO
Fire Chief / President

Mark A. Melvin

Mark A. Melvin, CFO
Fire Chief / Secretary

Enclosures – 1.

1 – January 23, 2023, attendance roster

Enclosure # 1 – Attendance Roster

MEMBERS PRESENT (19)		19																	
ASSOCIATES PRESENT (09)		07																	
Total Number in attendance		55																	
CC Fire Chiefs DEPARTMENTS & ORGANIZATION Chief's Only Meeting		23-JAN-23- CRFD # 5	27-FEB-23- FTCC	27-MAR-23- BVFD # 12	24-APR-23- SPFD # 19	22-MAY-23-FTCC	26-JUN-23- WAFD # 15	24-JUL-23- WVFD # 16	28-AUG-23-FTCC	25-SEP-23 - GFFD # 17	23-OCT-23- GCDF # 18	27-NOV-23-- FTCC	18-DEC-23 - SHERIFF						
MEMBERS		MEETING DATES																	
01	BEAVER DAM STA 26 & 27																		
02	BETHANY STA 12																		
03	COTTON STA 4																		
04	CUMBERLAND ROAD STA 5																		
05	EASTOVER STA 1																		
06	EMS EMERGENCY MED SVC																		
07	FAYETTEVILLE FIRE DEPT																		
08	FORT BRAGG FIRE DEPT																		
09	GODWIN – FALCON STA 17																		
10	GRAYS CREEK STA 18																		
11	GRAYS CREEK STA 24																		
12	HOPE MILLS STA 21																		
13	PEARCE'S MILL STA 3																		
14	SPRING LAKE STA 23																		
15	STEDMAN STA 23																		
16	STONE POINT STA 13 & 19																		
17	VANDER STA 2 & 8																		
18	WADE STA 16																		
19	WESTAREA STA 15-20 & 25																		
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS																			
01	CC EMERGENCY SERVICES																		
02	COUNTY COMMISSIONERS																		
03	COUNTY MANAGERS OFC																		
04	FORESTRY																		
05	FTCC																		
06	HAZMAT																		
07	HIGHWAY PATROL																		
08	RETIRED FIRE CHIEFS																		
09	SHERIFFS OFFICE																		

Special Notes:

CODES: (P) – Present (A)-Absent (E) – Excused