

Cumberland County Fire Chief's Association

Minutes of April 28, 2008 Monthly Meeting

The meeting was held at EMS Base. We thank Commander Ainsworth for the use of his facility and hospitality.

Opening Prayer: Chaplin Casanova provided the opening prayer.

Roll Call: Roll call was conducted with 19 Departments and 6 Associate members present.

Members Absent: Fayetteville FD, Westarea FD #15, Godwin Falcon FD # 17, Hope Mills FD #21, Spring Lake FD # 22,

Associate Members Absent: HazMat, Life Link, Sheriff's Office, and Forestry

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the March 24, 2008 meeting were approved as presented

Guests: None

Vendors Present: None

Treasurer's Report: President Johnson presented the report for the Treasurer and provided a hand-out with all the fund balances along with an expenditure report by category. Today's fund balance is \$ 150,321.88.

Meeting Point of interests:

- **Next Chief's Meeting** will be held May 19, 2008 the **Cotton Fire Department # 4**. The general membership meeting will begin at 7:00 pm with Dinner.
- President Johnson passed out the following informational papers;
 - ¼ Cent Sales Tax Hand-out
 - Fire Tax Motion from the Finance Committee and a Copy of County Fire Contract allowing up to 15 cents fire tax in support of individual department's critical budget shortfalls.
 - Domestic Preparedness and Readiness Regions (DPRR) Handout.
 - FY 2008 Homeland Security Grant Program Investment Justification North Carolina.
 - Fire/EMS Calls for March 2008 and Year to date Call Information Data
 - FDID Incident Type Summary for Cumberland County. (NIFIRS) Information
 - Ethanol Fuels Fire Concern Article – 2nd Handout
 - Fire Chief Legal Briefs April 2008 Issue
 - Jim Long Hand-Out-For Wayne Goodman seeking support.

- .President Johnson discussed the ¼ cent sales tax issue up for a county-wide vote next week Tuesday. He urged all members in attendance to support this sales tax measure and urge their perspective memberships to support this also. A county-wide reduction of 2 cents of property tax is scheduled if this issue passes. This sales tax is shared by everyone, whereas property tax is only supported by property owners.
- President Johnson briefed the membership concerning the Domestic Preparedness and Readiness Region (DPRR) concept and provided hand-outs to illustrate the issue. He stated that the Cumberland County rural fire representatives are Chief Hodges and Chief Bill Bullard.
- Briefly talked about the FDID Incident Type Summary report published by OSFM concerning Cumberland County participation, whereas not all departments submitted the required annual reports. He reminded that one of the reasons's the Firehouse program used to record NFIRS and the Road Runner Internet connection is provided to all departments free of charge is for all of us to submit our data to OFSM by the annual suspense date of 31 March. (Departments not in compliance are, Eastover FD #1, Pearce's Mill FD #3, Westarea FD #10,15,&20, Spring Lake FD # 22, Stedman FD # 23)
- President Johnson informed the membership in lieu of the Hazardous Material incident in the Grays Creek # 24 Fire District that we stay abreast of what types of Hazardous Material travel through our areas. Especially those departments with major highway system. The Ethanol Plant slated to open up in Hoke County later this year will move 185 thousand gallons of Ethanol daily utilizing all major road-ways. This will be a problem for most of us directly. Let's get ready and train and plan now to meet this new challenge.
- President Johnson briefly talked about the request from Commissioner Jim Long concerning his request to assist Wayne Goodman who is running for the position of Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshal. Our organization has a vested interest in that particular position, whereas the Department of Insurance (DOI) those all our credentialing and certification programs.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. President Johnson informed all members that the finance committee during its monthly meetings discussed in detail the rising costs of equipment, apparatuses, insurance, personnel costs, medical benefits and the ever rising fuel costs are all having a negative impact on fire district's budgets. This problem further compounds already financially distressed or low wealth departments. Until viable alternative funding sources can be identified the finance committee voted that on a district by district basis and based on the financial need of each department to adjust the local fire tax levy not to exceed 15 cents in accordance with the current Cumberland County Fire Contract.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. President Johnson brought up to the membership that Mr. Ernest Ward, FTCC advised him of the new Junior Member Non-Certification Credit standard adopted by the North Carolina Fire & Rescue Commission. The standard identifies nine (9) classes that will not receive credit if taken before the Junior Firefighters 18th birthday. The memorandum from Harley Cook and Timothy Bradley cites Federal and State Labor rules. This will

directly impact on Fire Departments especially in the rural areas where recruiting and retention problems are at an all time high and many of these departments depend on 16 and 17 year old volunteers to help man their departments. He stated that he does not agree with this ruling, our Federal Labor Laws allow 17 year olds with a signature from either parent to join the military service and fully participate and even deploy into action (War). All our certification courses are all taught in controlled environments with direct supervision by primary and assistant instructors. This issue came up suddenly and there was no prior discussion on the impact of this issue on our states volunteer fire service. In the event you have a Line of Duty issue with members of your department in the target age group our OSFM and the Commission will cite this Junior Member Standard and state and federal labor laws therefore be careful how you proceed with this issue. Don't look for them to help you. I have talked with State Senator Tony Rand, about this issue and he informed me that he had received numerous calls from across the state from other senators and representatives concerning this issue. I have follow up meeting scheduled with him next week and several other law makers concerning this issue. He stated that his program is sanctioned by all participating members' parents who sign the JR Firefighters packet and the program is supervised. Currently he has two 17 year old members that already graduated from High School, one is in the National Guard and has completed Basic Training and will ship out in July to Afghanistan but yet he can't participate or take certain controlled fire classes. President Johnson stated that it appears that the people in Raleigh have lost touch with reality and instead of helping struggling departments throughout our state they make it more difficult. The way this issue suddenly came out of no-where also shows that there is a lack of communication between OSFM the Fire and Rescue Commission and our volunteer fire service, whereas I have received no communication from OSFM or the Rescue Commission concerning any of this. He will keep the membership informed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

ID CARD COMMITTEE Lt. Tara Johnson (Stoney Point) Chairperson

- **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 tara@stonepointfire.com

FIRE PREVENTION/EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- No report

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE Chief B. Bullard (Stedman) Chairperson

- Chief Bullard stated that he will call a meeting to discuss the automatic aid dispatch procedures and have a proposal for the May 2008 meeting.

STANDARDS & POLICY COMMITTEE Chief K. Hall (Cumberland Road) Chairperson

- No Report but the committee is working on the review and update of the Incident Command Procedure Policy. President Johnson asked all members to get involved in the process.

TRAINING COMMITTEE Chief P. Strahan (Westarea) Chairperson

- No report

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE Deputy Chief S. Blackburn (Ft. Bragg) Chairperson

- No Report

AUTOMATIC AID/MUTUAL AID COMMITTEE Chief J. F. Hall (Bethany) Chairperson

- Chief Hall discussed the impact that automatic and mutual aid had on the fire recently experienced in the Westarea Fire District

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

- See Hand-Out

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

- No report

EASTERN FIRE SCHOOL Chief R. Marley (Pearces Mill) Chairperson

- Chief Marley asked all members to submit any special requests for classes.

EMS DIRECTOR: Colonel Wally W. Ainsworth

- Doctor Reid advised all departments that he is now authorizing the use of AED devices by non EMT's. He explained that AED's are now found in most public places and are being used by average citizens. He did request that we do train our members on the proper use of the device and continue the continuing education process for EMT's.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS REPORT

EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR/ ECC-911 Kenny Curry, Director

- Director Curry introduced Scotty Harris as the new Deputy Director and Greg Phillips as the new Emergency Management Coordinator. President Johnson welcomed both to the association.

- Director Curry requested that if there is a complaint about dispatching or a dispatcher that the Fire Chief or in his/her absence the Deputy Fire Chief call him to handle the complaint. Currently Firefighters are calling and complaining directly about dispatch procedures and dispatchers. Director Curry has instructed his dispatchers not to engage in complaints and instead have them referred to the Chief.

HAZMAT BC Hieu Sifford - POC telephone for HAZMAT is 433-1729.

- No report.

FORESTRY DISTRICT Ranger J. Johnson

- No report

FTCC Ernest Ward

- No report

SHERIFF'S OFFICE Sheriff Butler

- No report

HIGHWAY PATROL

- No report

CHRISTIAN FIREFIGHTERS Chaplain Casanova

- No report

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS Fire Commissioner Ed Melvin

- Fire Commissioner Ed Melvin discussed the economic impact of the ¼ percent sales tax. It is the CC Commissioners intent to lower the property tax by 2 cents if the sales tax proposal is passed. He asked that we support this issue next Tuesday when we go to vote. He stated that currently on 30% of the people support the property tax system, whereas 100% of the people that purchase or spent money will pay for this sales tax initiative.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:

- Chief Marsh thanked all the agencies that supported the Hazmat Incident that his station responded to. Everyone did an excellent job. He did bring out that there was a delay with the response of the requested Foam Trailer. President Johnson asked Director Curry to check and see what the break down was. With three (3) Foam Trailers in the County there should be no delay. Let's review our policy.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting Adjourned at approximately 2110 Hours

Respectfully Submitted By:

Freddy Johnson
Fire Chief Freddy Johnson
President

Mark A. Melvin
Assistant Chief Mark Melvin
Secretary