

SARATOGA COUNTY FIRE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 25, 2021
7:00 pm

City/Town Representatives: **Present:** Bill Crawford - *Ballston*, Aaron Dyer - *Charlton*, Graham Champagne – *Corinth*, Kevin Barkley Jr. – *Galway*, Pete Shaw - *Malta*, David Houston – *Providence*, Joseph Dolan - *C/O Saratoga Springs*, Tom Rinaldi – *Stillwater*, Bill Morgan – *Wilton*

Excused: Patrick Champagne - *Clifton Park*, Robert Williams - *Greenfield*, Art Hunsinger - *Halfmoon*, Matt Dunn - *C/O Mechanicville*, Brian Myers - *Saratoga*

Absent: Alex Rockwell – *Edinburg*, Billy Winslow – *Hadley*, Kevin Krogh - *Milton*, John Smith Jr. - *South Glens Falls*, Tom Wood – *Northumberland*, Don Baldwin – *Waterford*

Present: Fire Coordinator Ed Tremblay, Dr. Mike McEvoy

Phone: Director Steve Gordon – excused - unable to access meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm and a moment of silence was observed for fallen brethren.

Due to not fulfilling the quorum at the October meeting, the September minutes will be approved at the November meeting along with the October minutes.

Commissioner Zeilman information

- The stipend positions for the Fire Training Center have been submitted with two position approved to date.
- The water line project for the Fire Training Center is moving forward.
- The antenna for the Mid-Rise Apartment building in Mechanicville came in and will be installed as soon as all remaining materials are received.

Fire Coordinator Tremblay

- State Classes
 - 3 VROL classes start tonight – Classroom sessions will have 60 students and held at Clifton Park Stations. The class will be divided into 3 skills sessions with 20 each at various locations.
 - FF1 – in progress – 20 attending
- The dinner meeting for the County Fire Officers will be on December 4th at the South Glens Falls Fire Department – details to follow.
- Repairs are taking place at the Fire Training Center.

Director Gordon

- no information to bring forward – unable to access meeting

Mike McEvoy

- The EMT class for military veterans was posted and will start the middle of December. Info is at: https://mcusercontent.com/7c2f58ae71dcfe7266460ffc2/files/48afa441-8690-2966-a025-1f15138a0d96/EMT_VET_Course_2021.pdf
- We're working on plans for an EMT course starting in February, more information to come.
- We are preparing for next week's booster vaccinations. We had to wait for the state to approve what was sent out by the Feds for J&J, Moderna and Pfizer. We are planning to hold a one-day event at the Northway Pain Center for First Responders.
- Public Health has been administering Pfizer boosters for about three months. They will be adding in Johnson & Johnson and Moderna, probably next week.
- EMS is talking about administering homebound antibody infusions for people that are high risk to get very sick from COVID. They will get infusion of monoclonal antibodies within the first five days of becoming ill, which dramatically lowers the risk of death or hospitalization. The problem in our county is that will have to send them to an infusion center in Albany which doesn't help with those in the upper parts of the county or just can't get to Albany. We are trying to figure out a way for our EMS to do some of those infusions.
- We were approved a few days ago by the CDC to for an experimental program, the first one in the United States, Test to Stay - kids that are ordinarily quarantined can be tested every single day and as long as they test negative and don't have symptoms, they will be allowed to stay in school. We are working on the details for that. EMS is going to help Public Health in the testing of the kids. We did get two other counties in New York State to sign on with us, so that's going to be a CDC experiment. Our Health Commissioner wants to do whatever we need to do to keep kids in school and not quarantine for 10 days.
- We are have a major problem with Recruitment and Retention for new Medics and EMT's. We are working with the County's Labor Task Force, looking for ways to bolster new people coming into agencies. The Towns of Clifton Park and Wilton are working with us on new ideas.
- The Office of Emergency Services will be merged with the Sheriff's Department sometime between now and January. Several other departments in the county have done the same to improve efficiency with costs being consolidated. We learned during COVID that sometimes we need additional manpower and can get some of that from the Sheriff's Department, so it makes sense to combine those two departments. The Department's name will be changed to the Office of Emergency Management. The County Board of Supervisors will continue to appoint the EMS and Fire Coordinators directly. Other staff will fall under the Sheriff.

Chairman Shaw

- American Recovery Program – I heard the County received \$44 million. Kevin said that Galway Fire received \$90,000. Some other departments have put in for the funds, but have not yet heard back. We may want to check with our Supervisors about getting some of the money for our departments.
 - I will draft a letter for Ed to send out to the Chiefs.

Vice Chairman Rinaldi

- no information to bring forward

Committee Reports

- Hazmat – Bill Morgan
 - We had a call last month that started with South Glens Falls in the basement of the old Mt. McGregor prison that turned out to be tear gas.
 - The pagers are in the process of being upgraded.
 - We've had one drill with the new suits as we haven't had a chance since COVID hit.

- Mutual Aid
 - no information to bring forward

- Personnel
 - Stipend positions to oversee the Fire Training Center were tentatively approved for next year's budget.

- Fire Training Center - Bill Crawford
 - Ed – one of the panels dropped and I'm having a contractor look at it.

- Legislative – Tom Rinaldi
 - Signed by the Governor into law
 - Open meeting documents to be presented, must be available to attendees prior to the meeting.
 - Sent to the Governor
 - Human organ delivery vehicle would be designated emergency vehicles.
 - Renewable energy sources in building and planning, must be taken into consideration for review and approval.
 - Some violations for the uniform code involving egress from a building could involve a fine up to \$7,500 rather than just an appearance ticket.
 - OSHA 2016 document 1910.156 proposed changes to the fire brigade regulations.
 - Everyone should be paying attention to this and should be writing your Federal Representatives, Senators and Congress People because many are not going to be able to comply with this which will decimate organizations and will be very difficult to pay for.
 - All of this information and much more is included in the Capital Bulletin that is sent out and includes links to open.
 - The Capital Area Association of Fire Districts is holding a Fall workshop on Saturday November 13th at the Verdoy Fire Station in Latham. There will be Fire Service Attorneys there to answer questions. There will be a presentation about Chiefs and Commissioners working together for the common good. Dave Dennison, the head of risk management for ESIP will be the presenter. There will be a review of the new firefighter benefit cancer program, presented by Tim Graves and myself. Lunch and networking is included in the price. You can register via www.afdca.org noted under upcoming events and the information is included in the bulletin.

- Budget –
 - Pete - The full \$300,000 requested for the 2022 budget for Recruitment and Retention was not included, but a portion was.
- Radio information –
 - no information to report
- Recruitment & Retention information –
 - Pete – question – Why in New York State, do we not have a paid on call? Tom R. - the VFBL laws would have to be changed and is being brought to the table in Legislation. Discussion took place.

Old Business

- Pete – I will send out the link for the Learning Management System that the state has implemented. We need to get people online in the management system. Individuals may not be able to see their own departments, but Administrators can. The entries need to be completed on an individual basis through a web form. Joe D. – Most of the members will be labeled as inactive if there is no email attached. Once you are in the system, you will be able to sign up for classes and the SFI's will be able to see if that person has the credentials for the class. Administrators do not have access. Discussion took place.

New Business

- Pete – I discussed with Chief Dolan regarding the classification of calls ie. smoke conditions vs. structure fire and apparatus being deployed. Discussion took place.

Good and Welfare

- Joe Dolan thanked the departments that participated in the live fire mutual aid training at the Fire Training Center. For some companies, it's the first time members from various companies met.
- The next meeting will be 7:00 pm Monday November 29, held virtually.
- Bill Crawford made a motion to close the meeting seconded by Aaron Dyer. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Cook

Saratoga County Office of Emergency Services