

LANCASTER COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION, INC.
MARCH 2021 MEETING MINUTES

President Scott Little called the quarterly meeting of the Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Association, Inc. to order at 19:01 hours on March 10th, 2021, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Previous Meeting Minutes:

The December 2020 Minutes were distributed via email; no corrections or additions were needed. Motion by Tim Hoerner to approve the Minutes as written; seconded by Nelson Dagen and approved.

Secretary Report:

Brett Fassnacht (filling in for Duane Ober) reported that some companies still need to pay their dues for the 2021-2022 term. If any company would like to find out if they still need to pay their dues, please contact Duane Ober.

Law and Legislative

Ernie Rojahn reported the New Jersey State Fire Marshal issued a safety alert for the Scott AV-3000 HT Face-piece. There have been several departments that have reported cracking of the polycarbonate lens component of some of these face-pieces.

The Keystone Chapter of Fire Service Instructors reminds all PA State Fire Instructors that your 2021 membership dues must be paid by March 31, 2021.

The PA Move Over law is set to go into effect on April 27th, 2021. The Manheim Auto Auction is looking for assistance from local agencies in making YouTube videos to go with a safety campaign for the new law. Interested agencies should contact the auction for more details.

June 20th through 26th is this year's "Safety Stand Down: Rebuild Rehab" which is sponsored by the IAFC, NVFC and the NFPA.

Penn State University is conducting a survey on agricultural safety for first responders. Go to <https://extension.psu.edu/first-responder> through April 30th to participate in the survey.

The 2021-2022 PFESI legislative priorities are relief association reform, new options for organizing fire and EMS systems (authority concepts), modernization of youth (junior firefighter) programs, reforming the fireworks law, mental health protection for first responders, and 10-year smoke detector mandate for rental properties.

The NVFC will be celebrating its 45th anniversary this month.

East Hempfield Township and East Petersburg Borough have created a joint fire commission and have hired a Chief Fire Official. John A. Kottmyer has been appointed and will use the designation of Chief 167.

Fire Marshal:

No report.

LCWC:

Matt Shenk reported that several agencies are complaining about the amount of chatter that is happening on the hailing talk groups. He reminded everyone to please use your assigned private talk group for single agency responses. Additionally, if there are agencies from the same municipality operating together on a call, your municipal talk group should be used.

Several cases of “radio drift” are being reported across all brands of radios on the P-25 system. Agencies should make sure to contact your local vendor to ensure your radios stay tuned correctly.

Warren County, PA is still paging on low band and is in desperate need of pagers. If any agency has low band pagers they wish to donate, please drop them off at LCPSTC through the end of March.

Matt has been sending emails on radio project status about once a month. If any chief is not receiving these emails, please contact him to get on the email chain.

A question was raised about the emergency button on the portables being activated while on private or a municipal talk group. Will it still activate at the dispatch console and will the dispatcher be able to monitor those talk groups? Matt replied that yes, the consoles will activate for an emergency button push on any talk group but no, the dispatchers will not be able to monitor the private or municipal talk groups. The dispatchers would have to notify the IC on the hailing talk group to advise of the emergency button activation on the private or municipal talk group.

An additional question was posed that inquired if no ops talk group is assigned for a call, could one be requested for the duration of the call. The answer was yes, any company can request the use of an ops talk group at any time.

Keith Eshelman asked about LCWC using the supplemental paging system (Pagegate) to send follow-up messages like recall notifications. He said that is not happening on a regular basis and asked what the policy is on doing that consistently. Matt replied that he dispatcher is to send follow up pages when necessary.

Ann Weller reported that LCWC is reviewing fire calls where EMS is automatically dispatched. The initial review was spurred by a request from a local EMS agency asking to be removed from gas leaks in Lancaster City. Shortly thereafter, additional fire departments began asking for the same. The LCWC Support Staff advised changing this per department is much harder to do than it would be if it was done globally. LCWC decided to take this opportunity to review all incident types where EMS is automatically dispatched with the first alarm fire response but there is no reported patient present. The following incident types were suggested to have EMS removed from the initial dispatch:

1. Gas Leaks
2. Aircraft Fires (not the same as an Aircraft Crash)
3. Outbuilding Fires
4. Silo Fires

5. All Vehicle Fires

Again, this is only if there is no reported injury or sickness as the scene. After some brief discussion, President Little assigned this to the Radio Advisory Committee for further review and creation of a survey to get the feelings of the chiefs. The topic was tabled until the June meeting.

Ann reported that 9-1-1 centers in Pennsylvania have been mandated to begin using protocols for fire and police call-taking and dispatching (EMS protocols are already in place). The 9-1-1 centers in the SCTF decided jointly to use the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch for our protocols. Dauphin and Franklin Counties have already been using these protocols for all three disciplines. LCWC will begin training the dispatchers this summer and into the fall. The current target for implementation is early 2022. There is no current plan to change any fire dispatching procedures due to the implementation of these protocols. This system will help to structure the call-taking and improve the information received and provided by the dispatchers. There is the potential for some changes to our current nature codes. Once more is known about what those changes will be, that information will be disseminated.

DJ Gantz made the suggestion that LCWC and the Radio Advisory Committee (RAC) should work together to see the changes in the nature codes implemented to make sure everyone is on the same page. LCWC will take this into consideration.

Lancaster County Emergency Management:

Phil Colvin stated the vaccine center at Park City opened today. Over the next few days they will keep ramping things up. A survey was sent out to Fire and Police to see how many people would like to be vaccinated. 769 responders replied they wanted to be vaccinated. Phil warned that there will be no special treatment for first responders to be pushed ahead of the public. They will be lumped into group 1-B with the rest of the population.

A new employee has been hired by LEMA. Violet De Stefano, is the Health and Medical Preparedness Coordinator. This brings their total staff to eight personnel.

If anyone still needs PPE for the COVID-19 pandemic, LEMA still has it. There will be an online form available for anyone that needs to obtain some additional protective equipment. Once the pandemic is over, they will need to get rid of all the PPE that has been stockpiled. So please reach out for some if you need it.

TMI no longer has an emergency planning zone. All the nuclear fuel is out of the reactor building and in storage silos on site. Peach Bottom still maintains a 10-mile zone.

The county is slated to get \$108 Million from the new stimulus package. There is no guidance yet on how this money should be spent. LEMA is waiting for word on how this money needs to be used.

Lancaster County Public Safety Training Center:

Todd Kirkpatrick reported the fit test machine is here and operational. A new model was introduced and given to LCPSTC for the price of the older machine. It's been used by 3 departments so far. LCPSTC will train reps from each station on how to use it. Bill Hall said it's a very simple machine to use. The reports on all members can be exported to a thumb drive for record keeping. There will be a scheduling plan developed on getting companies in throughout the year for fit testing. Reach out to Ken Weber to get reps in for training on how to use it.

Todd reminded everyone to make sure payments for certification courses go to the LCPSTC-Foundation, not LCPSTC.

The water on the training grounds will be turned on soon and Haz-Mat classes will soon be ramping up.

The LCPSTC Foundation took care of a ladder repair project. The outside prop repairs that were scheduled will be pushed back to late June. There is no anticipation for any problems with any other props.

Lancaster County Fireman's Association:

Randy Gockley reported that Fire Expo has been cancelled again this year (due to COVID). That means the association has lost roughly \$900,000 over the last two years. The association is now using their reserves. Even with the loss, the LCFA is donating \$50,000 to the LCPSTC Foundation, they are still contributing to the partial funding for the LCPSTC Coordinator, and the member benefit is not in danger of being underfunded.

The LCFA is always open to new ideas and thoughts on what the association can do for the fire service as a whole. Please reach out to them with ideas on ways they can improve the fire service as the whole. By the LCFA rules, you must have your dues paid by April 1st. Randy has a list of those still needing to pay their dues.

EAST Committee:

President Little reported on behalf of Chairman Jim Herr. In 2020 the committee helped with a few funeral details. They will be coming out to LCPSTC to catalog all the EAST supplies. The flag is currently out being cleaned. If you use any gloves for or badge holders, please let them know so they can restock.

Golf Committee:

Joel Neff reported on behalf of Chairman Kurt Gehman. Friday, July 16th is the date for the tournament this year. The committee is in need of sponsors. If anyone knows of any potential sponsors, please advise the committee. There will be two flights allowed this year. Four flights in the morning and eleven in the afternoon.

Leadership Development (Training):

Dave King reported that they are looking to bring someone in around September for a presentation and possibly a one or two day training event. If anyone has any suggestions, send them to the committee for review.

Radio Advisory Committee (RAC):

DJ Gantz reported on the open MHZ (rebroadcasting) project. There was a problem with programming and some I.T. issues which have delayed things. The project is still in progress.

There is a rumor that Motorola radio batteries have changed and created an issue with the radios staying intrinsically safe. Check with your vendors if you have questions about this.

If anyone has any ideas for the committee to work on, please contact DJ.

Readiness:

President Little reported on behalf of Chairman Rick Kane. The Readiness Committee is currently working on an update to the Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Handbook and Guidelines.

The deadline for the 2021 Complete Restorations Scholarship are due no later than April 15th, 2021. Please submit to Rick Kane for consideration.

Standards Committee:

Brett Fassnacht reported on behalf of Chairman Craig Rhineer Jr. The Standards Committee has gone through a recent reorganization. The current committee consists of the following members:

Craig Rhineer Jr. - Station 50 (Chairman)

Brett Fassnacht - Station 63

Kenneth Zimmerman - Station 67

Jeff Garner - Station 22

Stefan Kuenzli - Station 39

Kyle Hackman - Station 29

Erik Lofgren - Station 52

Cory Imler - Station 61

Drew Wenger - Station 47

The committee met and discussed some priorities for projects to work on in this term. Three main guidelines were identified to be developed. The first is a guideline on pre-determined arrival instructions. There are enough companies using these predetermined instructions now and each agency does things a little differently than the others. The goal is to gather the procedures from each agency that uses them and come up with a guideline that closely matches what a majority of the agencies are doing. This guideline will be presented at the June meeting.

The next focus will be on a training guideline for interior firefighters. This is being developed to help define what level of training or membership category should count as part of a verbal staffing report given by apparatus upon response. The idea is to get all of the agencies that give staffing on their response to count their personnel the same way. This will better facilitate for the IC the manpower they will have available to them.

If anyone had ideas for the Standards Committee, please email them to the Standards Committee email address.

Sustainment:

Duane Hagelgans reported the Sustainment Committee has been established with the following members:

1. Duane Hagelgans - Station 90 (Chairman)
2. Mason Brandt - Station 75
3. Bill Hall - Station 75
4. Ernie Rojahn - Station 64
5. Brad Shenk - Station 55

Duane then spoke about the topic of SWIF. If a municipality is still in SWIF for their workers' comp insurance for the fire service, they should contact their local elected officials and have them get in touch with our state legislators, because the state is planning to use SWIF funds, which are our premiums, to give to small businesses due to COVID. These funds, by law, should be returned to the policy holders. This is a backdoor tag on our citizens who are forced to pay outrageous premiums to SWIF to support this High Risk Insurance carrier.

A question was raised about the new ruling which only allows a Firefighter 1 certified member to be used once for grant applications, even if that member serves multiple organizations. There is no reason a certified member, who may serve one company while at home and another while at work, should not count toward the total certification for both agencies. Reach out to your local legislators to have this ruling changed.

Unfinished Business:

Darryl Fisher (EMS 37) showed a short video put out by the I-Chiefs about the Pulsepoint app and how it works (on Youtube). The EMS Counsel is still trying to push this forward. A year ago, the County Commissioners gave approval for EMS Counsel to start working with county solicitors on this project. One of the biggest hurdles was the liability. At this point, the word is they are ready to sign-off on it. So they are looking to move ahead on this immediately.

New Business:

President Little reported the E-Board looked into how we can take the money we have raised and apply it. They felt that \$10,000 in the training budget was a good start. Also it was felt that increasing our contribution to the PFESI from \$1,500 to \$2,500 is appropriate.

Bill Hall made a motion to increase the funding to the PFESI from \$1,500 to \$2,500. The motion was seconded by Mason Brandt. The Motion passed unanimously.

Phil Colvin spoke about the LCFCA website which is old and outdated. Look for potential upgrades to be on the horizon. Input on what the chiefs want to see on it is needed. He is looking to budget \$1,500 for this project.

A motion made by Duane Haglegans to approve up to \$1,500 for a new website. The motion was seconded by Keith Eshelman. The Motion passed unanimously.

President Little said that after a meeting with LCPSTC, the E-Board felt a contribution of \$5,000 for fire hose/nozzles was appropriate. This should get them 1,700' of hose. A motion made by Jared Artes to approve up to \$5,000 for the LCPSTC Foundation to purchase hose and nozzles, the motion seconded by Matt Gohn, the motion passed unanimously.

The E-Board would like to continue to sponsor the Fire Dispatcher of the year and the two CTC awards. We were giving \$100 per award. The E-Board would like to increase that to \$500 per award. A motion was made by DJ Gantz to make the increase as described. The motion was seconded by Tim Hoerner. The motion passed unanimously.

The E-Board would like to look at a way to support a Firefighter in need (with guidelines). If anyone has a guideline on this, please send it to the E-Board so we can reference it. We plan to show this at the June meeting.

The E-board is looking at \$23,000 per year for a general association budget depending on the golf tournament.

Treasurer's Report:

Brett Fassnacht presented the report on behalf of Rick Harrison. There is \$15,525.56 in our checking account. All income is related to dues received. The expenses were \$13.19 for envelope return address labels, \$1,395 to Incites CPA to catch us up on annual filings and getting our tax exempt status (we never had this before), and \$13,267.50 for the fit test machine. This money was paid to the LCPSTC Foundation, who then purchased it to help save us from paying taxes on it.

The Money Market account stands at \$83,801.12 and is just earning monthly interest. There have been no deposits or expenses since December.

Total assets are \$99,326.68.

Open Discussion:

None.

Good of the Order:

President Little proposed an idea for a showcase of some kind over the summer. The idea would include an invite to vendors and perhaps some of the county's newer apparatus to be on display. More on this to follow.

Roll Call:

Roll call showed 29 agencies represented totalling 52 people in attendance. 18 Fire Chiefs, 4 Deputy Chiefs, 8 Assistant Chiefs, 13 Past Chiefs, and 9 Guests.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 9th, 2021 at 19:00 hours at the Lancaster County Public Safety Training Center.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 20:41.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brett J. Fassnacht
Director, Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Association, Inc.
March 12th, 2021