

## LANCASTER COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION, INC.

### SEPTEMBER 10, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

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President Mason Brandt called the quarterly meeting of the Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Association, Inc. to order at 19:00 hours on September 10, 2025. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silence held in memory of departed chief officers of the fire service.

**Guests** – On behalf of the Chiefs Assn. Executive Board, Secretary Duane Ober presented bricks to honor the fire service accomplishments of Eric Bachman and Bill Hall. Eric was honored for his service as a former Eden Fire Chief, Assistant Chief at West Hempfield Fire Rescue, MTFR Fire Marshal, and the Hazmat Planner / Administrator with LEMA. Bill was honored for his role as a chief officer with FDMJ, as a state fire instructor, and as an instructor for the Protective Services Program with the Lancaster County Career and Technology Center. Both bricks will be placed in the Memorial Garden in front of the Training Center.

Next, Will Titus and Francisco Martinez from Garage, were introduced. They shared information and examples of their business, which is a leading nationwide marketplace for selling used emergency vehicles and equipment around the country. More information can be found at [www.shopgarage.com](http://www.shopgarage.com). They were also the meal sponsors for this meeting.

Lebanon County EMA Deputy Director Gary Verna and Lebanon County Haz Mat Chief Jason Weikel presented information to the membership about their team. Gary shared that the team bills according to the South-Central Task Force Cost Recovery approved rates for billable incidents. He stated that he submits bills to the responsible party normally within 24 hours, so fire companies should provide information relating to their equipment used as soon as possible so that those expenses can be added to the bill. His cost recovery rate is at 76% this year and was 86% last year. The Lebanon team will also restock fire companies for the supplies used at incidents. He also shared that Zach Gibbons from the Lancaster County Dept. of Public Safety acts as a local duty officer, Monday through Friday. Gary can be reached at [gverna@lcdes.org](mailto:gverna@lcdes.org).

Chief Weikel advised that his team has 30 members right now, with 8 full-time employees, 10 part-timers, and others are volunteer mutual aid. They operate a Squad, Rescue, and 2 boats. While they can assist at technical rescues, they focus on hazardous materials incidents. He informed everyone that they are willing to travel to fire stations for a show and tell of their vehicles and equipment. He also reviewed their response times since they started providing service to Lancaster County. They have an average response time of 10 minutes (out the door). They have already been dispatched to the Quarryville and Martic Township areas and averaged a response time of 45 minutes to arrive on scene, which is below the state-mandated time limit of two hours. They also respond initially with a crew of 4-6 personnel, so that more crew can stay back to cover Lebanon County, and vice-versa. Chief Weikel can be reached at [jweikel@lcdes.org](mailto:jweikel@lcdes.org).

Duane Hagelgans, the Chairman of the Lancaster Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), then reviewed the role of the LEPC, including oversight of SARA Title and Tier 2 facilities, and is made up of officials from the community, including the fire and police services, local emergency management, industry, local media, and elected officials. The representatives on behalf of the fire service are not appointed by the Fire Chiefs Assn., but rather, nominated by those on the committee and voted upon. The fire service representatives on the committee include Duane Ober, John Kottmyer, Eric Bachman, and Chris DeLong. Hagelgans serves on the committee as a representative of the South-Central Task Force. For more information about the LEPC, contact Duane Hagelgans at [dhagelgans@comcast.net](mailto:dhagelgans@comcast.net) or Duane Ober at [dober@warwicktownship.org](mailto:dober@warwicktownship.org).

**Previous Meeting Minutes** – Rick Harrison made a motion to accept the June 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented; seconded by Bryan Duquin Jr., and approved.

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**President's Comments** – President Brandt reported that the NERIS roll-out in Pennsylvania and emails and information has been shared by the State Fire Commissioner's Office. The State has chosen Emergency Networking as their contracted vendor for incident reporting. Scott Ryno has been named as our local representative on the State Fire Advisory Board and can be reached at [sryno@comcast.net](mailto:sryno@comcast.net). President Brandt has also advised that he has contacted the three County Commissioners with a goal to meet with each of them soon. The 9/11 ceremony will be held at the Training Center on 9/11 at 9am. Lastly, he stated a review of the Association's Bylaws has been started and would like at least one member at large to help review and update them. If you are interested, please contact him at [masonbrandt4@gmail.com](mailto:masonbrandt4@gmail.com).

**Secretary Report** – Secretary Ober reported that the following fire companies have not paid their membership dues yet – Strasburg, Lancaster Township, and Bainbridge.

**Treasurer's Report** – Treasurer Rick Harrison provided the following report: since the June meeting, \$1,000 was paid to Lancaster County Career & Technology Center for student awards; \$1,171.32 to Mission BBQ for food at the June meeting; \$966.41 to Colvin Consulting for website support; and a total of \$25,286.10 for golf-related expenses. Income included \$25 in dues, and a total of \$18,950 of income from the golf tournament. Balance in the checking account is \$22,939.70 and \$93,841.13 in the Money Market account, for a total of \$116,780.83. The Treasurer's report was approved as read.

**Law / Legislative** – Darryl Keiser reported that he participated in a recruitment and retention conference with Senator Malone, East Petersburg Fire Chief Jamie Rohrer, and East Hempfield Chief Fire Official John Kottmyer. He also shared that the Governor's proposed budget does include the new \$30 million competitive grant program.

**PSP Fire Marshal** – No Report.

### LANCASTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY -

**Emergency Communications Center (ECC)** – Sara Sloat reviewed the CAD outage that occurred on September 8<sup>th</sup>. It started around 9:30am and everything was back online by 10:15pm. She credited the dispatchers for handling the outage by using pen and paper for all aspects of their duties. She gave an update on the effort to get a new CAD. They looked at a regional effort with neighboring counties and narrowed the choices down to Tyler and Hexagon. Lancaster County has decided to go with Tyler, the same CAD that Lebanon and York counties use. The next step is to present to the Board of Commissioners for their approval, to initiate contracts and secure the funding for it. The new CAD will also be cloud- and app-based. She will have more information at the December meeting; they're hoping to sign the contract by the end of the year and be online by the first quarter of 2027.

Brett Fassnacht reported that they appreciate the submissions being made through the help desk. He stated that they have received complaints that have led to changes in support and fire dispatching. They are striving to dispatch quicker, but also want to make sure the notes are accurate, with better documentation by the dispatchers. They are using the CAD notes to provide more details to reduce the need for Command and the dispatchers to communicate by phone. The 20-minute marks are being expanded to use on more than just structure fires, such as gas leaks, hazardous materials incidents, and technical rescues. The 20-minute mark will also begin at the time of dispatch, not when it is first requested. He asked that the Incident Commanders provide updates to dispatchers when possible to keep them informed on their status. After the first 20-minute mark, an engine will be transferred

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to the home company. At the 40-minute mark, more advanced notifications will be made. Brett also asked for feedback from the Chiefs if Ops Channels should be assigned due to the nature code or based on how many fire companies are dispatched on the incident? Brett can be reached at [bfassnacht@lancastercountypa.gov](mailto:bfassnacht@lancastercountypa.gov).

Brad Shenk reported that the upgrade to the Phase 2 radio system is still on track for January 2027. Additionally, he advised that the transition period will be throughout 2027 with a complete change to Phase 2 on 1/1/2028. The Phase 2 touch of the radio will include LSM (linear simulcast modulation), and GPS emergency location for portables, but optional for mobile radios. A question was asked about programming radios; Capital Area Communication can program Motorola radios, Radio Maintenance Inc. (RMI) can program Motorola and Kenwood radios, Triangle can program Kenwood radios, and BMoyer can program Harris and Tait radios.

**Radio Advisory Committee** – Dean Gantz Jr. advised that the committee has met twice since the June meeting. He stated the committee approved the 20-minute clock standard as proposed by the ECC. The committee has received feedback about the recent unit designation changes that went into effect in mid-July have included comments for and against the changes. There is a new designation of USAR, which has been assigned to the technical rescue units of the Rescue Task Force team. When you see a USAR or RTF Duty Officer assigned to a call, that is just a notification being made so that the on-call team leader can review the notes of the incident and prepare for a team response, if needed. It is not a response of that person, however, Command may communicate by phone with the duty officer, if needed. Dean asked for feedback about how incidents should be dispatched for gas detectors that are connected to automatic fire alarm systems – should it be dispatched as an AFA with the notes advising of the zone, or should it be different, such as a Gas Leak or Inside Investigation? Dean also spoke about the need to change nature code of “Accident with No Injuries” once the incident is updated to include fire police, fire response, or EMS response. He reminded fire chiefs to submit their updated list of Brush unit resources to the ECC. The committee and ECC have discussed the difference between saying “hold the units in quarters” versus units being cancelled. Lastly, he advised that the ECC support roles for fire, EMS, and police, are being combined to ensure cross-trained staff. Dean can be reached at [dean\\_gantzjr@mountvillefire.com](mailto:dean_gantzjr@mountvillefire.com).

**Standards Committee** – Josh Pfeiffer that the committee is working on a draft to update the Rescue equipment list and will send the list out for review / input. The committee is also working to update the pre-arrival assignments based upon the new unit designations. The resource lists for the new unit designations will also be added to the website soon. Lastly, he stated that there is a request to look at the differences between Utility units in the county, since some are as simple as a pick-up, while others carry a large cache of equipment. Josh can be reached at [Joshua.pfeiffer@bowmansvillefire.org](mailto:Joshua.pfeiffer@bowmansvillefire.org).

**Emergency Management (EMA)** – Brian Pasquale was present and stated that he doesn't have any additional information to share that wasn't already discussed earlier.

**Training Center** – Ken Weber stated that the State Fire Academy is updating the entry-level firefighter program and our Training Center has been selected as a pilot site. The new program will change from four modules to three; Introduction to Firefighting (16 hours) will be Mod 1, Firefighting Support will be Mod 2, and Exterior Firefighter and Interior Firefighter, leading to Firefighter 1 certification will be the third module. There is a new NFPA 1010 standard, certification for support firefighter. After modules 1 & 2, a certification test will be taken, requiring a passing grade to move onto the third module. It is possible that a fourth module will be added in the future, which

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will be the curriculum to test Firefighter 2. Ken also advised that a new NFPA 1091 pilot program will be offered at the Training Center in November, a certification for fire police and traffic incident management training. He will send an email to the chiefs with more information.

**Lancaster County Fireman's Association** – Bryan Duquin reported that the new fire prevention / public education safety trailer has arrived, but most likely will not be ready for use until 2026. The trailer includes a lot of technology-driven features and will take some time to get staff trained. The current trailer will be listed for sale in the October edition of the PA Fireman. Lastly, he advised that a working group, partnered with the Fire Chiefs Assn. and the County DPS, has been formed to review the Pequea Lane facility, to find ways to better utilize the property. Bryan can be reached at [bryan\\_duquin@mountvillefire.com](mailto:bryan_duquin@mountvillefire.com).

**Lancaster County Fire Police Association** – Merle Weaver, President of the Lancaster County Fire Police Association, advised that Traffic 62 has been placed into service. This is the first unit that was evaluated to the new Traffic Unit standard. There are a few other Traffic Units that are also in process of updating to the new standard, as letters have been sent to fire companies advising of the change. His association is also looking at creating a standard for fire departments who use a support vehicle to assist with traffic control. This would be a voluntary certification, with the goal that these units carry the basic equipment needed to provide traffic control, but do not wish to be a Traffic Unit. Merle can be reached at [weaver.merle@gmail.com](mailto:weaver.merle@gmail.com).

**EAST Committee** – Committee member Mark Steffy spoke about the upcoming class, “Taking Care of our Own” that will be held on Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at the Training Center. The class is led by representatives of the National Fallen Firefighters Association and is designed to help fire companies preplan for Line of Duty Deaths by reviewing the guidelines involved. More people are still needed to register to make sure the class is held. For more information about the class, contact Mark at [mcs210@hotmail.com](mailto:mcs210@hotmail.com).

**Golf Tournament** – Rick Harrison reported the golf tournament was held on July 11<sup>th</sup> at Crossgates Golf Club and we made approximately \$12,000 this year. The tournament was sold out and we received very good support from our sponsors. Rick advised that the committee was short-handed with help and is hoping next year more members can assist. The date for next year's tournament will be Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, at Crossgates again.

**Leadership Development (Training) Committee** – Jason Topper reported that Matt Tobia and Tim McKay have been booked to provide (2) 4-hour training sessions on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>. The training will cost \$2,000 plus the food. The committee is also planning a 2-day training session in April 2027 that will include lectures and HOT classes.

**Unfinished Business** – None

**New Business** – None

**Open Discussion** – Duane Hagelgans spoke about the issues he has encountered with a FEMA grant, where his request for reimbursements has been denied, after it was approved earlier in the grant cycle. He stated that the criteria for how the grant can be used was changed mid-grant.

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**Good of the Order** – Todd Kirkpatrick advised that they have been cleaning up around the building and have some misc. kitchen supplies in the hallway that are free for anyone to take with them.

**Roll Call** – Roll call showed 80 in attendance with (27) Fire Chiefs, (12) Deputy Chiefs, (19) Assistant Chiefs, (15) Past Chiefs and (7) Guests, representing 42 fire companies.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 7pm, at the Lancaster County Public Safety Training Center.

With no other business, Bill Hall made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jamie Weir. The meeting was adjourned at 20:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane Ober, Secretary  
Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Assn. Inc.  
September 20, 2025