

LANCASTER COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION, INC.
SEPTEMBER 9, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

First Vice-President Dean Gantz Jr. called the quarterly meeting of the Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Association, Inc. to order at 19:00 hours on September 9, 2026. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silence held in memory of departed Fire Chief Bob Hackman Sr. from Schoeneck Fire Company.

Guests – No guests.

Previous Meeting Minutes – Todd Kirkpatrick made a motion to accept the June 2026 Meeting Minutes as presented; seconded by Marc Hershey and passed.

President's Comments – Vice-President Gantz Jr. reported that President Brandt sent a letter to the Radio Advisory Committee with a position regarding the radio system structure for emergency management coordinators. EMC's are part of the Unified Command and can use municipal or countywide public safety channels, not the Fire/EMS hailing or operations channels.

Secretary Report – Secretary Ober reported that 2027 is the start of the next dues period and membership letters will be sent prior to the December Chiefs Assn. meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Rick Harrison gave the following report: Since the June 2026 meeting, the following bills were paid: \$690 for the June Chiefs Assn. meeting meal, \$949.94 for September meeting meal, and \$1,282 for the food for the Tobia training in February; two CTC awards, \$500 each; and the following payments, all related to the golf tournament: \$471 for advertising signs, \$1,917.59 for player gifts, \$800 for starting cash and cash prizes, \$17,519.20 for golf course and catering expenses, \$388 for insurance, and \$3,828.81 for awards. The current checking account balance is \$31,074.14. The balance in the Money Market account is \$83,850.49, for a total of \$114,924.63 in available funds. Bill Hall made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Bryan Duquin Jr., and passed.

Law / Legislative – No report.

PSP Fire Marshal – Secretary Ober reported that Cpl. Ryan Gehman has returned to patrol and is no longer leading the fire marshal division at Troop J. The remaining fire marshals are still serving Lancaster County – Tim Pray, Colby Shesko, and Sean Simmers. An invitation will be sent to them to attend our next meeting in December.

LANCASTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY -

Emergency Communications Center (ECC) – Brett Fassnacht introduced the new Deputy Director, Heather Chalfant, who came from the County's Purchasing Department. Her role will be the strategic and financial planning of the DPS, focusing on working with the County's leaders and other divisional leaders to formulate the long-range plans for the ECC and DPS. Brett will remain as Operations Manager.

Brett reported that there is a renewed focus on the CAD system project, hoping to keep it moving forward over the next few months. Heather Chalfant, the IT department, GIS staff, and Brad Shenk are leading the efforts to procure a new CAD system for the County. A request for proposal (RFP) process is starting soon, with a goal of signing a contract in early 2027. The implementation will take up to 18 months. On September 22nd, there will be an in-person working group session to have more discussion about what is needed in a new CAD.

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Andrew Lavin, who has been leading the training for the new dispatchers, is leaving, and his position will be filled soon.

There is discussion taking place about how to properly handle electric bike accidents, including making a new nature code for it. More information is still being collected before a final decision is made.

Brad Shenk has advised that 33% of the fire companies have upgraded their radios to Phase 2.

The “Storm Alert” status on the WebCAD has been changed to “Condition Yellow” or “Condition Red”, and will be based on special weather conditions, or high call volumes, which directly impacts the workload of the dispatchers.

Lastly, Brett reported that an alternative method of dispatching EMS units to Class 3 calls when first due units are unavailable due to other calls, will be piloted by LEMSA and Life Lion soon. The EMS station will be alerted of the pending call, and cover units won’t be dispatched unless a unit hasn’t been able to respond for up to 30 minutes. Local municipal approval is required before an agency can participate in this program.

Todd Kirkpatrick also spoke about the request from an emergency management coordinator for the ability to communicate on fire channels (as described earlier in the President’s report). Emergency management coordinators have been advised to use common available channels, such as municipal channels, to communicate with Incident Command.

Marc Hershey requested what is being done to fire police units who continue to ignore policy to stay off the hailing channels? Brett advised that a meeting with the fire police association will be held soon to address this topic again.

Emergency Management (EMA) – Zach Gibbons reported that Brooke Goodling has resigned, and they are in the process of hiring her replacement. Zach and Courtney Clearly gave a demonstration of the CERES (Chemical Emergency Response E-Service) plume monitoring (www.vlahi.com) and other applications within the software. Zach will send an email soon with information for any chief officer who would like access to CERES.

Training Center – Ken Weber and Sam Kochel are looking for ideas from fire chiefs for winter training class ideas – they can be certified classes or just company-level training opportunities. Todd Kirkpatrick shared that they recently purchased a simulation program that can be used for firefighter or fire officer training, to which Bill Hall gave a demonstration of the program.

Lancaster County Fireman’s Association – Bryan Duquin reported that the Bylaw changes passed, meaning the annual meeting will be moved to October, starting in 2027. Life Membership is also being awarded after 25 years of membership now. The LCFA is looking at ways they can provide more support to the Training Center. Bryan also explained the reimbursement program that they have in place for qualifying entry-level fire and medical training.

Lancaster County Fire Police Association – No report.

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) – Zach Gibbons reported that the Hazardous Materials Strategic Plan project is moving forward, with on-site visits and multiple interviews recently completed.

Lebanon County Haz Mat Chief Jason Weikel reported that their contract with Lancaster County has been renewed for another year. They are currently working on a memorandum of understanding with Lancaster City

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Bureau of Fire to provide mutual aid assistance with their hazmat technicians. Chief Weikel also thanked everyone for their cooperation and efforts over the past year of Lebanon County providing hazmat services in the county.

Radio Advisory Committee – Dean Gantz Jr. reported that they held their meeting at the end of July. They are addressing the idea of a Fire / EMS Signal 13, for when fire or EMS personnel need immediate assistance from law enforcement.

They will be sending out a survey soon to collect opinions about the timing of redispatching for emergency vs. non-emergency type calls.

He also shared that they are working with the ECC to address the creation of a nature code for E-Bike involved crashes.

Standards Committee – Josh Pfeiffer reported that Squad 54, Tanker 53, Utility 53-1, Utility 53-2, and TAC 70 were recently inspected and approved for unit radio ID change. If you have a unit that needs to be inspected, please email the committee at standards@lancofirechiefs.org so that the message will be received by all members and can be handled quickly.

EAST Committee – No report.

Golf Tournament – This year's golf tournament was held at Crossgates on July 10th. We had 136 golfers, and we netted \$14,325 in profit, up \$2,200 from 2025. Next year's tournament has been booked for Friday, July 9th, at Crossgates again. Rick Harrison reported that Kurt Gehman has stepped down as the chairman of the committee but will continue helping. Casey Tommasi from Restoration Relief has offered to lead the committee and tournament for us next year.

A list of the sponsors from this year's tournament: Commissioner's Club – SERVPRO; Founder's Club – Provident Insurance, Compleat Restoration, and LFCA; Chiefs Club – 10-8 Emergency Vehicle Service, Restoration Relief, Trillium Foods, and Glick Fire Equipment; Deputy Club – John Sly Grant Writing Services, Hursh Painting, Tim Martin, BluSky, Horst Insurance, and Fire Line Equipment; Lunch Sponsor – Frontline First; Captain's Club – Goodville Mutual / Beiler Insurance, Fire Line Equipment, Trout CPA, Turftime Equipment, and Walz Group.

Leadership Development (Training) Committee – Jason Topper reported that he is stepping down as the committee chairman due to changes with his job. If anyone has interest to serve as the Chairman, please reach out to President Brandt at mbrandt@lancofirechiefs.org.

Unfinished Business – None

Elections – Secretary Ober read the list of members nominated for the 2027-2028 officers of the Association: President – Mason Brandt (75); 1st Vice-President – Chris Slaymaker (42); 2nd Vice-President – Dean Gantz Jr. (7); Treasurer – Rick Harrison (20); Secretary – Duane Ober (8); Directors (2) – Brett Fassnacht (63) and Phil Colvin (75). No nominations were received from the floor.

New Business – Secretary Ober read the first reading of the changes to the Bylaws and Constitution, signed by Brett Fassnacht, Dean Gantz Jr., Duane Ober, Bryan Duquin Jr., and Rick Harrison. There were no questions raised about the changes. The next reading will be at the December meeting and require 2/3 majority vote of those in attendance.

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Open Discussion – David Johnson from Station 40 advised that at the recent meeting of the County’s EMS Council, they voted to send the County Commissioners a letter about the urgency to replace the current CAD System. He said the Council asked the Fire Chiefs Association to stand together and send a letter of support. Bill Hall made a motion for the Secretary to send a letter to the Commissioners and to the membership, so that fire companies can use the same draft to send in a letter of support also. The motion was seconded by Bryan Duquin Jr., and passed.

Good of the Order – Secretary Ober reminded everyone of the email that Blue Rock Fire Commissioner Duane Hagelgans emailed recently asking for input regarding injured firefighters and EMS billing.

Roll Call – Roll call showed 48 in attendance with (15) Fire Chiefs, (10) Deputy Chiefs, (12) Assistant Chiefs, (6) Past Chiefs and (5) Guests, representing 34 fire companies.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, December 9, 2026, at 7pm, at the Lancaster County Public Safety Training Center.

With no other business, Rick Harrison made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Todd Kirkpatrick. The meeting was adjourned at 20:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane Ober, Secretary
Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Assn. Inc.
September 19, 2026