

**METROPOLITAN FIRE CHIEFS COUNCIL  
OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND  
MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** Thursday, December 10, 2009

**HOSTED BY:** Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue

- 751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Room #401, Columbia, MD 21046

**1. Welcome** – Vice Chairman, Chief John R. Ray, Anne Arundel County Fire Department at 10:06 a.m.

- Chief Goddard, Howard County Fire and Rescue introduced the new members of his staff. He explained that they attend a lot of meetings on his behalf.

**2. Chairman's Report**

- Chief Ray explained that Chief Smith is not here as he gets ready for his retirement. He did not send a report.
- Chief Ray said that for everyone the economic issues are the struggles right now.

**3. Agency Reports**

Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

- There was no one present to give an update.

State Emergency Medical System Advisory Council (SEMSAC)

- There was no one present to give an update.

Maryland Institute of Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) – Dr. Robert Bass

- The state is not yet sure if the flu is over for this season. He still urges everyone to get the seasonal and the H1N1 vaccines, especially those who are healthcare providers. There is a possibility of another peak with the holiday season and so many people getting together. N95 masks are still required if you are within six feet of a patient with flu-like symptoms.
- The NTSB findings were released November 10 from the trooper accident. There is nothing new in the report. The Senate hearing for this is scheduled for December 17.
- Trooper 6 will be moving to ensure safer deployment.
- MD-1 is looking for new EMS providers for the Federal team for catastrophic events. Details are at website; [www.md1dmat.org](http://www.md1dmat.org).
- There is a new updated version of FRED-CHATS now in place. The module for patient tracking is currently in use. Baltimore UASI is purchasing hand held units for this. They used it in Cumberland to move patients during the new hospital opening.
- The educational standards committee will be done ahead of other states.

- Tuesday the Cardiac Intervention Centers were approved and patients will be transported directly to the hospital that can handle the type of call. This list will be in the protocols.
- They are looking at new products to replace EMAIS.
- Also at the Board Meeting on Tuesday regulations to go into effect October 2010 were discussed. There will be timelines for jurisdictions to submit data. Patient care records will be required to be completed within 24 hours of the call, although ideally the record should be left with the patient upon turnover to ED.

#### Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute (MFRI) - Director Steven Edwards

- Director Edwards gave out a report to all present.
- AFG is having their annual meeting today in Towson.
- There have been some issues with the Regional Training Center and security. Now two areas you have to pass through. Then when classes left at lunch they couldn't get back in. He has been told this is resolved now. If you hear of any experiences, please let him know.
- The new building is progressing. He expects the bids to go out in Spring of 2010. There are environmental issues with eagles. The U S Fish & Wildlife is looking into this currently. There was a public hearing last night in Edgewood, but no one from the public attended. The Maryland Fire Chiefs purchased the land and MFRI really appreciates that.
- EMT on-line training is progressing very well.
- February 26 – 28 is Maryland Weekend training and there will be six courses taught. Registration ends January 11.
- Currently the High School cadet program is in 16 to 18 counties. It is a great program but there have been some issues. MFRI is working on an Academy agreement which will be with MFRI, the jurisdiction and the school system.

#### Maryland Emergency Management Agency - Regional Administrator John Dulina

- They have hired a new Regional Representative, John Reginaldi.
- The Grants Administrator has said that the \$1.9 million for Port Security from FY07 will be closing shortly.
- They are working on database enhancements with GIS.
- MEMA training and exercises are being coordinated with Police education, and the states of Pennsylvania and Delaware. Registrations are handled online.

#### Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH)

- There was no one present to give a report.

#### Office of the Maryland State Fire Marshal (OSFM)- State Fire Marshal William Barnard

- The state Fire Marshal, William Barnard distributed a written copy of his report to all present.
- He thanked all Chief Officers for the support of staying for the October ICC Hearings, it was a long day, but the committee rejected the request to remove sprinkler requirements for homes.

- The Codes Administration of the Department of Housing and Community Development has adopted IBC and IRC codes which will go into effect January 1, 2010. Within six months, local jurisdictions are required to adopt or modify these standards. This month's NFPA Journal singles out what Maryland is doing here.
  - Nominations are being accepted for the Governor's Patriot Award. It requires an on-duty death or significant injury.
  - We have had 67 fire fatalities this year compared to last year 59.
  - The State Fire Prevention Code Maryland Register has been printed. The effective date is January 1 2010 and all training is completed.
  - NFIRS reporting is improving and there are fewer delinquencies noted.
  - Delmarva Power has donated 1000 smoke alarms.
  - The 2010 Life Safety Conference attendance was down a little. The programs were well received. September 28, 2010 is the date for the next one.

#### Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA) – President Roger Powell

- President Powell wished all a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season.
- His quarterly executive meeting was held last week. They are working on issues with MIEMSS, OSFM, MFRI.
- They realize that many departments across the United States are having budgetary problems. He reminded everyone that in our area we can take advantage of Education thru the NFA since we don't have to worry about the expensive travel to get there.
- He is not aware of any legislative issues at this time since they are expected to be tied up with budget issues this session.

#### Maryland State Police (MSP) - Aviation – Sergeant George

- Director Bernerd could not attend this meeting. There are two issues at this time.
- The procurement for the new aircraft is ongoing and they hope to have decisions made soon.
- Trooper 6 from Centreville will be moving to Easton before January 1, 2010. This is for safety reasons.

#### Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)

- There was no one present to give a report.

#### Professional Firefighters of Maryland-President Mike Rund

- New President Rund explained that they are trying to get legislation for cancer to be added to presumptive loss for firefighters.
  - They have decided not to re-introduce the Firefighter's Bill of Rights this year.
  - Cecil County is working on collective bargaining for Paramedics.

#### **4. Committee Reports**

##### Communications Committee - Deputy Manager of EOC Larry Mabe, Harford County

- Mr. Mabe was unable to attend but he sent an email that Chief Ray read.
- The update is that the committee has spent many hours negotiating a contract with Mororola for the CMARC Phase III Regional Trunked Simulcast System.

It should be signed this month. Motorola anticipates the system could be operational by the summer.

Diversity Committee - Division Chief Julian Jones, Anne Arundel County

- There was no one present to give an update.

Fire Marshal Sub-Committee – Chief Fire Protection Specialist Ed Torbert

- They are looking into new ways to monitor fire alarms through the internet.
- Modular buildings often have large concealed spaces which allow unrestricted fire penetration.
- They are looking at ways that drywall is applied. Often only glue is used and without screws or nails to hold it up drywall is coming down more quickly and decreasing fire protection as well as causing more danger to crews.
- He thanked SFM Barnard for the assistance and leadership with the successful ICC hearings. He also thanked him for the NFPA training he coordinated.

Legislative Committee - State Fire Marshal William Barnard

- There is not much going on right now. The sessions are going to be mostly about budget issues. He is hearing there is a problem in 2011 with \$2 Billion.
- He reminded everyone that the weekly meetings begin January 8 during the sessions.
- There are new novelty lights that need to be prohibited from sales. The bill is being drafted and sponsored by Senator Glassman and Delegate Malone.
- They are working on legislature to define the regulation of Fire Marshals.
- He cautioned everyone to watch for home builders' associations which are trying to bury legislation to prohibit state or local requirements for single/duplex family homes.

Safety Committee - Director Charles Rogers - Baltimore County

- Director Rogers was unable to attend but he sent an update that Chief Ray read.
- They held a Class A Foam Demonstration at the Baltimore County Fire Academy with 61 members from multiple federal and state jurisdictions. Many aspects were covered and he thanked all who assisted.
- He asked if the Metro Chiefs would be interested in a vendor display and short talk on Safety Equipment. Anyone with items they would like to see covered can email him. Everyone present was very interested. Ideas for sites were the Baltimore Training Academy or maybe a Metro Chiefs meeting. This will need to be further discussed.

Maryland Fire Rescue Education & Training Commission (MFRETC) – Deputy Chief Michael Robinson, Baltimore County

- They met in Carroll County yesterday.
- There are issues with the Charles W. Riley Reimbursement Program. This is not a scholarship program. It provides for 100% reimbursement of courses leading to a degree in Fire services. They want to keep this available as more departments are forced to cut tuition assistance with budgetary constraints. Director Edwards

- is assisting with this clarification of what the law says.
- They are working on a centralized area for heavy vehicle driving training. A survey is planned to justify the need by proving the number of driving accidents in the state.
  - Next week the Certification Board will give out the 100,000<sup>th</sup> certification since 1989.
  - All Metro Academies are being visited and re-accredited. So far all have been successful and they are pleased with the results.
  - There is still an issue with the 2013 requirements for accreditation of higher academies. This is to add validity to what is done. They are working on NFA approval for ALS training. Director Edwards said that the American Council of Education will also validate academies. Chief Herr added that these professional qualifications will allow for more degrees. Director Edwards added that there is now a list of accredited colleges for degrees so everyone should be careful what they put on their resumes.

#### Urban Area Work Group (UAWG) - Chief Herr

- Chief Herr offered to have a representative from the U S Attorney's Office come to our next meeting to give an update. Everyone thought this would be a great idea.
- MDOT is working on integrating closed circuit television in Maryland and they are very close to making that work. There are many targets in our areas and this would allow for technology for command vehicles to look before they engage in a mission. Chief Goddard said we are lucky to have this, only a few in the nation are capable of developing this technology.
- There was a panic about the maintenance of programs funded through grants. Chief Goddard said the ruling had been overturned and now they will be sustained. The time period from September 22 through November 20 is still being addressed. This was very important as the expenses can be hard to fund through department budgets.
- There was a very successful exercise with multiple jurisdictions and agencies that involved a HazMat call with railroad cars. It was a wonderful opportunity for numerous specialized teams to practice together.

#### Baltimore Region Incident Management Team - Deputy Chief Scholz - Anne Arundel County Fire

- There is training in Houston that the team is sending eight personnel to attend. Nationally this is gaining momentum and the sharing of information is helpful to everyone.
- These multi-day exercises are important to validate what the teams are doing. It also allows for backfills and more inexperienced personnel can gain acting experience.

#### MDOT-PSC - Assistant Chief Michael Baker

- Chief Baker gave out a copy of his minutes. The abbreviations are all new.
- The QA tower has been connected.
- They are working on bids for the 700mhz system and hope to have ready for final

report to the state by March 2010. They plan to interconnect all CAD's with dispatch sites. There is a way for chief officers to go in and look at the planned state functions. Contact Chief Baker for assistance with this.

- Prince George's County is going to the P25 system but it needs an access code key. They are working out how this will work with mutual aid agencies.

## **5. Old Business**

- Chief Ray thanked everyone for the help with the ICC Hearings. It was a long day but well worth it. He believes the final vote was 93% to 7%, but they ran out of voting devices.

## **6. New Business**

- Chief Ray discussed a conference call between Chief Goddard and him regarding BRAC. There are new challenges expected. All entities are looking into options and how to ensure safety. There will also be a large effect on traffic in the area of Ft Meade and NSA. Since PG County, Howard County and AA County all border the area, they are going to put together a committee to work through the expected issues. Anyone with suggestions, please email Chief Ray or Chief Goddard. They need to include law enforcement and Emergency Management teams.

## **7. Jurisdiction News and Reports**

- Deputy Chief Remaley said in Annapolis everything is about the budget. All departments to start are to cut 5% across the board from their budgets, since 93% is salaries that doesn't leave much in the 7% to cut.
- Chief Ray said it is the same in Anne Arundel County.
- Cumberland is in survival mode Chief Herbaugh reported. They are hoping to survive with only furloughs and no layoffs. Everyone is pitching in and helping out with all duties and learning to be leaner and meaner.
- Chief Hohman said that Baltimore County has been lucky so far. They have not had money issues yet. They opened a new station, have 30 new firefighters in their graduating class and are hiring 30 more in January. They still have 40 vacancies. No furloughs or layoffs are required at this time. They have eight new medic units and 8 or 9 new engines on order.
- Chief Goddard explained he has a new organizational chart in Howard County which is the reverse of most agencies. They currently have a recruit class which includes several for Annapolis. They have a new EOC facility coming.
- Director Edwards talked about a new issue with a determination of when you become a firefighter. Since the Baltimore training fire that caused a death to a recruit there is a debate of when you are official. Since you are not sworn in until after you complete the academy attorneys are working on this question. 11% of the fatalities occur during training so it is important to look at this issue. Of course they are covered by workers comp law, but the benefits are what is being questioned.

**8. Date and Location of next meeting:**

Chief Hoppes offered that they would host the next meeting on Thursday, March 11, 2010 at Salisbury.

9. **Closing** – 12:06 pm – Vice Chairman, Chief John R. Ray, Anne Arundel County Fire Department

/jsc