

Rutland County Fire Mutual Aid Association, Inc.
Minutes of the February 25, 2007 Meeting

The meeting was held at the Poultney Fire Station and called to order by President Schlachter at 7:00 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance, moment of silence for passed members.

SICK AND DISTRESSED:

None reported.

ROLL CALL:

Department Members Present: Benson Fire Department (3), Castleton Fire Department (1), Clarendon Fire Department (1), Danby-Mt. Tabor (3), Fair Haven Fire Department (3), Hubbardton Fire Department (1), Killington Fire-Rescue (1), Mt. Holly Fire Department (1), Poultney Fire Department (2), Rutland City Fire Department (1), Rutland Town Fire Department (1), Shrewsbury Fire Department (1), Wallingford Fire Department (1), Wells Fire Department (2), West Haven Fire Department (2), West Rutland Fire Department (2)

Officers Present: Chief Robert Schlachter, President; Chief Tom Fucile, Vice-President; Michael Skaza, Secretary/Treasurer

Coordinators Present: Tim Kerber

Other Guests: J.J. Kaveny, Dispatch Supervisor

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES:

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2006 meeting. PASSED.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Schlachter reported that he has been attending the LEPC meetings and representing the Association in many other capacities including Homeland Security meetings. Planning is underway for the 2007 Southern VT Regional Fire School and that committee is meeting and seeking help.

President Schlachter reported that he had been appointed to the State E-911 Board by Governor Douglas. There is an equipment upgrade underway within the VT E-911 system. He also provided a reminder that all emergency service agencies must maintain a 7-digit telephone number for reporting emergencies.

The VT Coalition of Fire and Rescue Services recently held its legislative luncheon and set its legislative priorities, which include:

- Securing a stable funding source for the VT Fire Academy
- Legislation requiring the release of information patient information following a blood borne pathogen exposure by a rescue worker.
- Dry hydrant program funding.

- Recruitment and retention programs for the fire service.

An update on the VCOMM project was provided by President Schlachter and a brochure was distributed. This included the use of VCALL/VTAC and UCALL/UTAC frequencies. A motion was made and seconded to authorize President Schlachter to apply for emergency funding from VCOMM to upgrade the Mt. Holly transmitter. PASSED.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

No report.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that there was little activity in the Association accounts since the last report. We are awaiting receipt of dues and State Dispatch user fees, which was billed out in January and is now due. A motion was made and seconded to table the Treasurer's Report until the next meeting. PASSED.

STATE DISPATCH:

Chief Schlachter received a complaint from Brandon Fire Chief Kilpeck that his department was dispatched to a lifeline call rather than the Rescue Squad. When looking into the call, the lifeline operator specifically requested the fire department and when asked, did not want EMS. The call was cancelled by the fire department and re-routed to EMS.

Chief Schlachter has been receiving complaints regarding the Wallingford Fire Department's use of the dispatch frequency for routine non-emergency messages. It was reiterated that this is a clear violation of the system policy and our FCC license. It was recommended that the department look into the purchase of multi-channel pagers and announce messages on their own frequency. A motion was made and seconded to issue Wallingford Fire Department a letter of warning regarding the use of the dispatch frequency for non-emergency messages in accordance with our approved policy. PASSED.

An incident recently occurred in Clarendon in which a Chief from a neighboring department was the first on the scene of a structure fire. That Chief requested a mutual aid assignment be dispatched prior to the arrival of the fire department of the jurisdiction. The dispatcher would not perform the mutual aid dispatch until permission was granted by the fire department of jurisdiction. It was discussed that there is a concern about the credentials of some, but a Chief officer of a department should be recognized as an authority when making a request. A motion was made and seconded to make a policy authorizing State Dispatch to honor requests, such as mutual aid requests, from officers and mutual aid coordinators of other departments, who may be on a scene before the arrival of the department of jurisdiction. PASSED.

All departments must update their contact and dispatch information with the dispatch center. Many departments have not done this in years, making the information at dispatch inaccurate. Please contact the dispatch center regarding this matter if you have not already done so.

It was requested that Dispatch Center provide the name of the residence when dispatching emergency calls. This will assist local responders in quickly locating some calls. J.J. Kaveny will pass that request on to the dispatchers.

OLD BUSINESS:

Benson Fire Department reported the traffic control situations are being handled much more smoothly since the Association met with Lt. Patch of the Vermont State Police.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chief Finer of Killington asked if the Association could coordinate the billing of State Dispatch User Fees and Dues with the fiscal year of the departments. A quick survey concluded that there were too many different fiscal years being used within the organization to accommodate everyone. The Association will be looking for a new Treasurer if they want bills sent out multiple times per year to accommodate each member department. Billing will continue to be done in January, but this issue can be taken up at the Annual Meeting if desired.

Killington Fire-Rescue will be holding an SCBA Course for the next 3 Tuesday evenings. There is no charge for this course.

Discussion took place on H.283 - AN ACT RELATING TO COMPENSATING VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND VOLUNTEER RESCUE SQUADS FOR RESPONDING TO CALLS ON STATE AND INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS. A motion was made and seconded for the Association to NOT support this legislation as proposed, but to request legislation that enables and authorizes local fire departments to have the option of billing for responses. PASSED.

The following meeting schedule was proposed:

April 26, 2007	Annual Meeting	Clarendon Fire Station
June 24, 2007	June Meeting	Chittenden Fire Station
August 26, 2007	August Meeting	West Haven Town Hall
October 28, 2007	October Meeting	West Pawlet Fire Station
December 16, 2007	December Meeting	West Rutland Fire Station
February 24, 2008	February Meeting	Benson School

A motion was made and seconded to accept the meeting schedule as proposed. PASSED.

With no other business at hand, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. PASSED. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael J. Skaza

Michael J. Skaza
Secretary/Treasurer