

ERIE COUNTY FIRE ADVISORY BOARD – MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE:	December 7, 2023	
LOCATION:	Erie County Training and Operations Center	
CALL TO ORDER:	18:06	
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:		
ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:	PRESENT:	Ron Endle, Shad Garner, Paul Gorczyca, Jim Guy, Eric Karcher, Scott Kuhlmeier, Doug Lahnen, Bob Rackl, Donald Roth, Peter Spilsbury Jr., Eric Tuberdyke, Bob Zacher, Joleen Schlossin
	ABSENT:	Andrew Beehler, Jack Chiappone, James Gajewski, Michael Griffin, Kevin Jewett, Thomas Partridge, William Renaldo, Garrett Wynn,
	EXCUSED:	Roger Brennan, William Cleary, Kevin Herzog, Scott Plecha, Philip Wzientek, Mike Zekas
INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:	Welcome new members, Don Roth and Eric Tuberdyke	
APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING:	DATE OF LAST MEETING:	09/28/23
	MOTION BY:	Bob Rackl
	SECOND BY:	Paul Gorczyca
	APPROVED:	Approved by all
REPORT OF OFFICERS:		
CHAIRMAN:	Peter will be resigning as Chair after this term and Bob Rackl will be taking over. The board will need a new co-chairperson and treasurer. If anyone is interested in taking one of these positions, please let us know.	
CO-CHAIR:	Bob will be out of town for the Jan, Feb and March meetings.	
SECRETARY:	No Report	
TREASURER:	+\$27 from this meeting, \$149.05 total	
REPORT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES:		
COMMISSIONER:	No Report	
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER:	See Attachment	
DEPUTY FIRE COORDINATOR:	See Attachment	
OTHER:	-	
REPORT OF COMMITTEES:		
CANCER SCREENING:	No Report	
DRILL TOWER:	Paul/Bob – Wrapping up a busy training season. Having all 3 towers operational this year was very helpful. Working on ideas to keep the training that is delivered fresh and dynamic. Hoping to have the Engine Company trailer in service by the end of January, but spring at the latest. Need to brainstorm ideas for replacement of the training consumables and also a way to track supplies in the trailers that need restocking.	
FIRE PREVENTION:	No Report	
LINE OF DUTY DEATH:	Ron – We have an instructor that will come out in February for a one-day class – Advanced Planning for Chiefs. Unsure of which Saturday it will be at this point and also working on securing some funding to get this instructor here.	
BUDGET PLANNING & WALL OF HONOR:	Jim – There has been an index added to the front of the book. It has been divided by row (A, B, and C) and each person is listed in the order in which they are placed on the wall. The letters are divided into their sections (A, B or C) and alphabetized. Still need to get the labels to mark each row on the wall.	
REPORT OF BOARDS:		
ERIE COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS MUTUAL AID ORG.:	Doug – next meeting is in January at Sheridan Park. They have a new facebook page and webpage. They will be supplying water at the Firefighter Seminar Series on Wednesday nights at the academy. Also working on updating their membership scholarship applications.	
ERIE COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION:	No Report	
ERIE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION:	No Report	
ERIE COUNTY FIRE POLICE ASSOCIATION:	No Report	
EMS ADVISORY BOARD:	No Report	

BUFFALO FIRE DEPT:	No Report
LACKAWANNA FIRE DEPT:	Shad – Took delivery of their new light rescue truck. Waiting on their new ladder truck. An exam was posted and was opened up to county residents – closed now.
ERIE COUNTY HAZMAT:	No Report
OLD BUSINESS:	Need to check with Chris on FAB involvement with the EC Fair.
NEW BUSINESS:	Resignation letter received by William Cleary
GOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION:	-
NEXT MEETING DATE:	1/25/24
NEXT WORKSHOP DATE:	2/29/24
ADJOURNMENT:	19:35, Motion by Bob Zacher, seconded by Paul Gorczyca
MINUTES RECORDED BY:	J. Schlossin
MINUTES SUBMITTED BY:	J. Schlossin

Deputy Commissioner & Deputy Fire Coordinator Report

- Wednesday Firefighter Series is in the planning process. The first class will be on January 3rd @ 18:30hrs. Chris and Alex will be giving a presentation titled "Officer Orientation". This is a presentation on what the Fire Safety Division can offer in support of each fire department. It also outlines certain things the Chief Officers need to know on the administrative side of the job. As in previous years there will be a presentation/lecture scheduled each Wednesday @ 18:30hrs through April 24th.
- We are experiencing challenges with scheduling OFPC classes. Departments are requesting a multitude of classes which is a great thing. Unfortunately we are having issues getting enough instructors who are authorized for a specific class. NYS has put more policies in place that require safety officers and EMS on site for any class/unit that has a student in full PPE with an SCBA. To put this into perspective it will collectively take 15-17 instructors just to run our (3) Firefighter 1 classes that are upcoming this January. Committees have been formed within the County Fire Coordinators Association to help navigate the policy and hopefully push recommendations to OFPC. Some counties are now seeing larger issues as they don't have enough instructors to run a single firefighter 1 class. We are asking all departments to be patient with us as we are working hard to ensure we keep enough firefighter 1 classes on the schedule to meet the demand of new members all while keeping delivering a good amount of advanced classes for departments to help with retention.
- We are still working on a certificate of Occupancy for the Drager system at the Fire Academy. Chris and Alex met with the county engineer in person last week to discuss the issues they are seeing with the design. They have outlined the issue being the ground the system is sitting on and not the actual structure. We are now looking into a few possible fixes that will assist us in placing the new training prop in service.
- NYS OFPC has put in place a training stipend that will give new students money for taking classes outlined by OFPC. You must be a new student and have never taken the class before. Anyone who has taken the class previously cannot take the class again to receive funds. Currently if a student attends BEFO they will receive \$750.00 at the completion. IFO = \$1,250.00 and Fire Officer 1 = \$1,000.00. There is information and paperwork that will need to be completed and submitted to NYS in order for this to happen. It is 100% the responsibility of each departments chief. If a student does not receive their money we will be pointing them to the chief of their department. Every student who has completed (1) of the above classes is eligible as of 08/31/23. This means the most recent graduates are eligible. We anticipate the final documentation to be available around the first of the year. At that point the Fire Safety Division will be notifying each department with the appropriate information. There is also no time limit on submitting for the stipend. This means if a chief wants to use this as a retention tool they can by putting a time frame on filing the paperwork. They can wait until the individual is off probation if they so choose.

- Also written into the stipend law is the ability for each department to give their own stipend for each class up to a max of \$500.00 per class, per student. The department can put any monetary value on a class they feel is important from the OFPC catalog from \$1 - \$500. These funds must come out of the fire department's budget and will not be reimbursed by the state. There is other paperwork that will need to be filled with the state at the end of the year if a department chooses to opt into this part of the law. At the end of each year OFPC will review what classes departments throughout the state are deeming "Important" and try to then pull those classes into their stipend program.
- NYS OFPC has created a grant program for all volunteer departments to apply for. Some of the allowable will be radio communications or upgrades to a department (ex: exhaust systems, washers, dryers). OFPC was able to get \$25 million added to their budget for this grant. As more information is given and the application process is opened, our office will get the information to department chiefs.
- We are still working through the planning and organization process of merging Hazmat and Technical Rescue with placing them under one umbrella of Special Operations. We feel this will help us with recruitment and give us the ability to fill some gaps in incident response.
- The Erie County Hazmat team is officially driving again. Policies have been approved for the team to drive and retain their driving privileges.

Please call Alex or Chris with any questions you may have.

Email is always welcome

- Alex

ERIE COUNTY FIRE ADVISORY BOARD SIGN IN AND CONTACT SHEET

MEETING:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL	DATE: 12/7/2023				LOCATION:	FTA	ABSENT	EXCUSED
	Name	Board Appointments	# of Terms	Expiration Date	Phone #	Email	Signature			
1	Beehler, Andrew		1st	12/31/2023	716-954-9712	andrewbeehler@gmail.com				
2	Brennan, Roger		1st	12/31/2024	716-525-6617	firesafetyguy72@gmail.com			X	
3	Chiappone Jr., Jack		1st	12/31/2024	716-628-5458	jchiappone813@gmail.com				
4	Cleary, William		3rd	12/31/2024	716-796-8069	wcleary53@verizon.net			X	
5	Endle, Ronald		1st	12/31/2023	716-479-4186	ronfirellc@aol.com	<i>Ronald Endle</i>			
6	Gajewski, James		3rd	12/31/2023	716-864-6748	commjim10@yahoo.com				
7	Garner, Shad		1st	12/31/2024	716-984-6928	seabass126@yahoo.com	<i>Shad Garner</i>			
8	Gorczyca, Paul		2nd	12/31/2023	716-866-1634	gork315@gmail.com	<i>Paul Gorczyca</i>			
9	Griffin, Michael		3rd	12/31/2024	716-714-9772	opie652@gmail.com				
10	Guy, James		1st	12/31/2023	716-544-0327	jhguy@verizon.net	<i>James Guy</i>			
11	Herzog, Kevin		3rd	12/31/2024	716-725-2984	kevinherzog@roadrunner.com			X	
12	Jewett, Kevin		1st	12/31/2023	716-512-9054	kevin.jewett@erie.gov				
13	Karcher, Eric		3rd	12/31/2024	716-697-1395	ek7166971395@aol.com	<i>Eric Karcher</i>			
14	Kuhlmey, Scott		3rd	12/31/2023	716-392-7810	scott.kuhlmey@erie.gov	<i>Scott Kuhlmey</i>			
15	Lahnen, Douglas		3rd	12/31/2024	716-864-2240	dlahnen1@roadrunner.com	<i>Doug Lahnen</i>			
16	Partridge, Thomas		1st	12/31/2023	716-480-9871	sfibirdie1501@verizon.net				
17	Plecha, Scott		2nd	12/31/2023	716-909-4206	s.plecha@yahoo.com			X	
18	Rackl, Robert	Co-Chair	3rd	12/31/2023	716-341-3716	rwrackl@gmail.com	<i>Robert Rackl</i>			
19	Renaldo, William		1st	12/31/2024	716-860-4093	wren713972@aol.com				
20	Roth, Donald		1st	12/31/2024	716-523-2307	donroth9@gmail.com	<i>Donald Roth</i>			
21	Spilsbury, Jr., Peter	Chair	3rd	12/31/2023	716-583-0183	Peter.Spilsbury@erie.gov	<i>Peter Spilsbury</i>			
22	Tuberdyke, Eric		1st	12/31/2024	716-430-6737	erictuberdyke@gmail.com	<i>Eric Tuberdyke</i>			
23	Wynn, Garrett		2nd	12/31/2023	716-570-2209	gwynn@ucrestfire.org				
24	Wzientek, Philip		1st	12/31/2023	716-712-6315	phil.wzientek@gmail.com			X	
25	Zacher, Robert		1st	12/31/2023	716-863-1388	rjzacher@roadrunner.com	<i>Robert Zacher</i>			
26	Zekas, Michael		1st	12/31/2023	716-984-3606	mjz9229@msn.com	<i>Michael Zekas</i>		X	
	██████████					██████████	██████████			
					716-983-6080	daniel.neaverth@erie.gov				
					716-481-7970	christopher.couell@erie.gov				
					716-228-2822	alexander.doll@erie.gov				
					716-681-7111	joleen.schlossin@erie.gov	<i>Joleen Schlossin</i>			