

ERIE COUNTY FIRE ADVISORY BOARD – MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE:	March 26, 2026		
LOCATION:	Erie County Training and Operations Center		
CALL TO ORDER:	18:05		
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE:			
ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:	PRESENT:	Andrew Beehler, Ronald Endle, James Gajewski, James Guy, Kevin Herzog, Mark Mendola, Dan Nash, Peter Spilsbury Jr., Jonathon Torre, Joleen Schlossin	
	ABSENT:	Webex Attendance: Douglas Lahnen, Michael Zekas, Thomas Morris, Robert Rackl, Eric Karcher, Scott Kuhlmeier	
	EXCUSED:	Shad Garner, Paul Gorczyca, Michael Griffin, Kevin Jewett, Scott Plecha, William Renaldo, Garrett Wynn	
		Jennifer Andres, Jack Chiappone, Robert Zacher	
INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:	Matt Gianquinto – System Sales Director, JVCKENWOOD – looking to learn more about the public safety community in Erie County		
APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING:	DATE OF LAST MEETING:	1/29/26	
	MOTION BY:	Peter Spilsbury Jr.	
	SECOND BY:	Dan Nash	
	APPROVED:	Approved by all	
REPORT OF OFFICERS:			
CHAIRMAN:	Please make sure you're putting in for the meeting dues. That helps fund the summer picnic, which is planned for 7/30 at South Line Fire District.		
CO-CHAIR:	No Report		
SECRETARY:	No Report		
TREASURER:	+\$19 this meeting, \$174.92 total		
REPORT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES:			
COMMISSIONER:	No Report		
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER:	No Report		
DEPUTY FIRE COORDINATOR:	No Report		
ASST. FIRE COORDINATOR:	See attachment		
REPORT OF COMMITTEES:			
CANCER SCREENING:	Mark Mendola – The city has a relationship with Roswell and the mobile scan. Will reach out to see if this service is available for volunteer departments. There needs to be better record keeping for exposure. Discussion about creating an exposure form and making it available on the Erie County Fire website, should any department want to use it. Also, there was discussion about a self-reporting exposure app on your phone.		
EC FAIR:	Tom Morris – Bob and Pete to assist. Volunteer Firemen's Association does not want to participate in a fire truck pull, so putting it out there whether the Fire Advisory Board would want to sponsor that. Another thing to think about is a way to provide enough water for the volunteers working at the fair.		
LEGISLATIVE:	Dan Nash – Fire Chiefs have been consistently inviting legislators to their meetings and there was representation at the last meeting who were very receptive to the concerns. Dan has the contact information to reach out for attendance at the Fire Advisory Board meetings if desired.		
LINE OF DUTY DEATH:	Ron Endle – Still waiting on the information gathered on the flash drive to be accessible on the Erie County Fire Safety website. Jon will look into this.		
RADIO:	Bob Rackl – Peter to assist. Kevin Hughes will probably be the contact for the county trunk system. Bob will plan to reach out when he returns from Florida.		
TRAINING:	Jon/ Andrew Beehler – COLT training 3/27 and 3/28 at Orchard Park Fire. Flashover training 5/2 and 5/3 at Newton Abbott.		
WALL OF HONOR:	Jim Guy – the committee has been working on a way to computerize the book. There will be some sort of touch screen on site of the Wall of Honor and also looking into some sort of mobile unit. A county legislator has expressed interest in providing funding for this. Nomination letters are due by 5/31/26		
REPORT OF BOARDS:			

ERIE COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS MUTUAL AID ORG.:	Dan – last meeting was 3/16 at Doyle 1 with 23 attendees. Looking to update the bylaws. Next meeting is 5/18 at Grand Island. Co-sponsoring with the Fire District Officers on an Autism program on 4/18 at Maryvale Schools. It is \$20/person to attend the training.
ERIE COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION:	Tom – Awards dinner this past Saturday which was well attended. Many awards were given out, as well as certificates of appreciation for all those that assisted with I-90 bus accident. Meat raffle canceled due to lack of interest.
ERIE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION:	No Report
ERIE COUNTY FIRE POLICE ASSOCIATION:	No Report
DISASTER ADVISORY BOARD:	No Report
EMS ADVISORY BOARD:	No Report – would like to invite a representative sometime for an update
BUFFALO FIRE DEPT:	No Report – maybe contact the new commissioner to invite him or a representative to attend
LACKAWANNA FIRE DEPT:	No Report
ERIE COUNTY HAZMAT:	Jim Gajewski – a couple of new trucks have come in. The tractor trailer is gone.
OLD BUSINESS:	-
NEW BUSINESS:	Peter – Can anything be done about lift assists in the senior living facilities? Kevin – resignation letter from Roger Brennan. Motion to accept by Dan Nash, seconded by Jim Gajewski, approved by all.
GOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION:	Scott Kuhlmeier – 217 background checks for last year. Pretty steady increase in injury reporting. There has been an increase in burglaries following fires, so far 6 this year. Would like to encourage the fire chiefs to document before the fire department leaves who's securing the property or who they're turning it over to. J-Fire has 2 more cases in progress. Having a hard time contacting the parents. They have had 5 for the year. Kevin – sat in on WNY Stress Reduction Program meeting this past Tuesday. Tom Luca will be stepping down as president and some board changes but are trying to reinvigorate the team. More information to come. But the team is still there and available and willing to help. If you're a chair for a committee and want to schedule a room for next month, let Joleen know and keep Kevin in the loop.
NEXT MEETING DATE:	05/28/26
ADJOURNMENT:	19:28, motion by James Gajewski, seconded by Dan Nash
MINUTES RECORDED BY:	J. Schlossin
MINUTES SUBMITTED BY:	J. Schlossin



MEMORADIUM



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Division of Fire Safety

3359 Broadway – Cheektowaga NY 14227

(716)681-7111 / fire@erie.gov

www.erie.gov/fire

DANIEL J. NEAVERTH
Commissioner

CHRISTOPHER COUELL
Deputy Commissioner

ALEXANDER DOLL
Deputy Coordinator

JONATHON TORRE
Assistant Coordinator

1. The 2026 Seminar Series will run every Wednesday from January until the end of April. We have 17 classes offered, with many brand-new topics. The schedule is posted. Departments can use this for their drill nights if they would like. Next week will be “Multi-Family Residential Fire Tactics”.
2. All student applications should be sent to us through the county website. We will enter them into LMS after checking for prerequisites and receiving a TAL (Training Authorization Letter) signed by the Chief. You will not be enrolled in a class without that signed TAL, per NYS. It is important so that students are covered from the time they are enroute to a class, and until they return home. We have a new email address for this. TAL@Erie.gov
3. The County is applied for the V-FIRE grant. Thank you for submitting your consent forms. The grant will go towards refurbishing the old fire tower at the Fire Academy
4. Officer Contact information is due for 2026. Please use the link on our website erie.gov/fire – Missing Clarence Center, Clarence, Colden, Collins, East Concord, Evans Center, Farnham, Lake Erie Beach, Lawtons, Mortons Corners, North Evans, River Road, Seneca Fire, West Falls,
5. There has been a large amount of structure fires around the county so far this year. Most can be attributed to the extreme cold, mixed with alternative heating usage. We are working with ECSO Fire Investigators to come up with numbers to compare to other years.

6. OFPC is in discussions about expanding the stipend program to include higher level courses. This may be retroactive, so you may be eligible for a stipend. More information to come.
7. Textbook update- separate for textbooks for BEFO/IFO/HMFRO. OFPC/Erie County Fire Safety are working on a solution to make this change more affordable.
8. Old Tower refurbishing and looking at adding a cold smoke/gas fed training simulation to the tower.
9. Classes on Fire behavior and flashover live fire training will start this spring at the Academy.
10. Still looking for a donation of a working fire engine for the Academy for all the county-based fire training.
11. Erie County is also looking for out of service 1-3/4" hose for training props, please contact fire safety if you have any to donate. Thank you in advance.
12. Back to full roster for CFI with Don Page added
Don Page (CFI =****) = Don began his firefighting career with the Eggertsville Hose Company in 2004. In 2012 Don was hired by the Oswego Fire Department and attend the State Fire Academy in Utica. In April of 2014 Don transferred to the City of Tonawanda Fire Dept. where he has risen through the ranks and currently holds the title of Assistant Chief.

ERIE COUNTY FIRE ADVISORY BOARD SIGN IN AND CONTACT SHEET

MEETING:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL	DATE: 3/26/2026			LOCATION:	FTA	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Name	Board Appointments	# of Terms	Expiration Date	Phone #	Email	Signature			
1	Andres, Jennifer		1st	12/31/2026	716-908-4446	jenniferandres919@gmail.com		X	
2	Beehler, Andrew		3rd	12/31/2027	716-954-9712	andrewbeehler@gmail.com	<i>Andrew Beehler</i>		
3	Brennan, Roger		2nd	12/31/2026	716-525-6617	firesafetvguy72@gmail.com			
4	Chiappone Jr., Jack		2nd	12/31/2026	716-628-5458	jchiappone813@gmail.com		X	
5	Coons, Matthew		1st	12/31/2026	716-462-7978	mdcoons9@gmail.com			
6	Endle, Ronald		3rd	12/31/2027	716-479-4186	ronfirellc@aol.com	<i>Ron Endle</i>		
7	Gajewski, James		5th	12/31/2027	716-864-6748	commjim10@yahoo.com	Present		
8	Garner, Shad		2nd	12/31/2026	716-984-6928	seabass126@yahoo.com			
9	Gorczyca, Paul		4th	12/31/2027	716-866-1634	gork315@gmail.com			
10	Griffin, Michael		4th	12/31/2026	716-714-9772	opie652@gmail.com			
11	Guy, James		3rd	12/31/2027	716-544-0327	jhguy@verizon.net	<i>James Guy</i>		
12	Herzog, Kevin	Chair	4th	12/31/2026	716-725-2984	kherzog@twindistrict.com	<i>Kevin Herzog</i>		
13	Jewett, Kevin		3rd	12/31/2027	716-512-9054	kevin.jewett@erie.gov			
14	Karcher, Eric		4th	12/31/2026	716-697-1395	ek7166971395@aol.com			
15	Kuhlmeiy, Scott		5th	12/31/2027	716-861-7933	scott.kuhlmeiy@erie.gov			
16	Lahnen, Douglas		4th	12/31/2026	716-864-2240	delahnen@gmail.com		X	
17	Morris, Thomas		1st	12/31/2026	716-491-1979	eastaurorafire@gmail.com			
18	Nash, Dan		2nd	12/31/2027	716-870-9056	nashd2237@gmail.com	<i>Dan Nash</i>		
19	Plecha, Scott		4th	12/31/2027	716-909-4206	s.plecha@yahoo.com			
20	Rackl, Robert		5th	12/31/2027	716-341-3716	rwrackl@gmail.com			
21	Renaldo, William		2nd	12/31/2026	716-860-4093	wren713972@aol.com			
22	Spilsbury, Jr., Peter		5th	12/31/2027	716-583-0183	pspilsbury@wsfd5.com	<i>Peter Spilsbury</i>		
23	Wynn, Garrett		4th	12/31/2027	716-570-2209	gwynn@ucrestfire.org			
24	Zacher, Robert		3rd	12/31/2027	716-863-1388	bobjr@zacherelectric.com		X	
25	Zekas, Michael		3rd	12/31/2027	716-984-3606	michael.zekas@erie.gov			
	Neaverth Jr., Dan	Commissioner DHSES			716-983-6080	daniel.neaverth@erie.gov			
	Nowak, Carraugh	Special Assistant to DHSES			716-858-4595	carraugh.nowak@erie.gov			
	Couell, Chris	Deputy Commissioner			716-481-7970	christopher.couell@erie.gov			
	Doll, Alexander	Deputy Fire Coordinator			716-228-2822	alexander.doll@erie.gov			
	Torre, Jonathon	Assistant Fire Coordinator				jonathon.torre@erie.gov	<i>Jonathon Torre</i>		
	Schlossin, Joleen	Scribe			716-681-7111	joleen.schlossin@erie.gov	<i>Joleen Schlossin</i>		

Webex:
 Doug Lahnen
 Mike Zekas
 Tom Morris
 Bob Rackl
 Erick Archer
 Scott Kuhlmeiy