



# BERRIEN FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION

Meeting 3-16-16

Called to order by Chief Davidson at 0837 hours

## ATTENDANCE: Included in Packet

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – Chief Lamb reported a balance of 2009.58 with 16 cash on hand from last month's meeting. \$17 was collected for refreshments and coffee this morning. Chief Lamb also reported that we have received several dues checks back already. Motion and Second to approve with all in favor.

**MINUTES** – Minutes from the February 17-16 meeting were approved.

**COMMUNICATIONS / BILLS** - None

**PRESENTATION** - None

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**911** – Asst. 911 Director Caitlin Sampsell was in for Dave who was on Vacation. She reported on repairs that were underway to replace the clocks on the Buchanan and New Buffalo Towers. She also reported that the issue that interrupted communications during the recent State of Michigan tower upgrade has been corrected by the State's Networking People. No longer should the system fail keyed up like it did. This should allow us to use our backup towers more effectively than previous.

A lively discussion regarding Medical Control's recent changes including moving response crews off their main frequencies and onto an 800 unified channel on all Medical Calls and their most recent Priority Level Update. Several Chiefs expressed issues with the policy however the conversation was cut short as they would take their concerns to the upcoming Medical Control Meeting.

Caitlin discussed the progress on CAD mapping. New world is moving forward but not quite there yet to roll out.

Discussions relating to a recent call in Galien relating to Wide Area Search. Discussion relating to the importance of unified command and a coordinated multi-agency approach to these calls.

Denny discussed and showed off an 800 Pager that he has been trying out with Captain DeLaTorre and Chief Jones. Some of the initial reports showed slightly better exterior coverage with some bonking issues inside structures. They identified that the towers must be programed into each unit and once done performance improved. Chief Jones commented on increase voice clarity.

This sparked a lengthy discussion on long range communication issues and goals. Several Chiefs would like to see VHF improvements looked into. It was decided that since system improvement themselves couldn't be funded under a Regional Assistance to Firefighters Grant that we should again look at pager, mobile and portable replacement.

A committee was organized to work on development of a long range communication plan that will lead the effort for a regional communication grant. The Committee will be made up of the following Chiefs. (Davidson, Lamb, Stover, Brovold, Jesswein, and Durham.)

A Motion was made, seconded, with all in favor to request that 911 Tech and Advisory both look into what future improvements and or adjustments can be planed for to improve the current simulcast VHF system.

**DNR** – None

**Funeral Protocol** – Berrien

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT/LEPC** – Dave reported on efforts to prepare for both Palisades as well as the upcoming PGA event. There will also be concerts just off of Pipestone in coordination with this year's event. He also reminded the Chief's that EM will be offering 300-400 classes this June and July. School Fire Drills are winding down for the year with tornado drills occurring now. SARA plans are coming in with only 3 facilities yet to come in. Chief's interested in Dave's plans can give him a call for a copy. Dave shared a recent speaker at LEPC who handles contingency planning and related issues for business effected by disasters. They have been in operation for 29 years and give business another service option that can come in real handy if tragedy were to strike.

**EMS-** Medic 1's Bob Hale reported on his agencies efforts to gear up for the PGA event. He also discussed a field training program that they are using to better train their members. SMCAS's Frank DeLaTorre shared issues his crews are seeing with the new EMS communication model.

**SHERIFF-** Sheriff Bailey reported on efforts preparing for Palisades. Looking for volunteers to assist with school reception and decontamination centers. He also discussed some personnel changes at Cook with the plant representative that will be connected to the BCEOC during the upcoming drill. He touched base on plans to increase patrols in Benton Harbor through a 50/50 match. Governor Snyder is supporting the investment. Finally, he reported on a remodeling effort in the receiving area of the Jail. The cost of the project is approximately 4.5 million and will take the next couple of years to complete.

The Sheriff also reminded everyone of the importance of using proper response techniques. He discussed the recent lessons learned with a Benton Township Officer who was responding without proper emergency warning equipment and how a good public servant can quickly find themselves in serious issues with not good options following a mistake of this type. Responders are reminded to always have lights and siren on when responding in an emergency status.

**RED CROSS-**None.

**HAZ-MAT-** None

**BCFFA-** Denny discussed Benton Harbor Public Safety's recent meeting. Comments were made that question the effectiveness of their Public Safety Organizational Structure. The Next meeting will be in Berrien Springs.

**BCYF** -- Gerry was asked to get his budget for this year's safety effort in early.

**TRAINING** – Watervliet announced they will be sponsoring a Fire Officer 1&2 Series at their station. Flyers will be out in a few weeks.

Dave discussed the April 16 full practical and the need for plenty of help to streamline the process. Doug DeBest asked if specific criteria on the individual stations could be forwarded to the Chief's so they would have knowledge of what is expected. Dave let everyone know that everything has been available for the students for weeks posted on the bulletin board. They will have check sheets available for proctors so no one should be apprehensive about helping out.

Doug DeBest offered Live Fire Training in Kalamazoo with the Cook Brigade for those interested and available. There are 5 days available (May 5, 12, 19, 26 June 2<sup>nd</sup>) with training going from 8-4 pm each day. Crews will work on Transformer Pad, foam, extinguishers and Propane Tree in the morning with live fire multiple room burn training in the afternoon. The training is free and even lunch is provided. Contact Doug at DADEBEST@aep.com.

### **MABAS-**

New MABAS Statewide Agreement discussed by Chief Lamb. Need to get them signed and back in 2 months if possible. They do not need a formal resolution as this is just an update. We leave it up to each unit of government's process to sign the agreement. This update relates to special team use with no changes to normal fire mutual aid. Chief Lamb will forward out copies of the updated agreement to participant departments.

Chief Lamb still working on Out of Division Box Cards. He hopes to have something for the Chief's at the next meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS -.**

**NEW BUSINESS** – President Davidson asked the group for support on a letter he wrote on the behalf of Chief Ron Burkett. He is competing for his position as it is going from part time to full time. The measure passed unanimously.

*Next meeting 4-18-16 @ 1830*

RS Larry Lamb

## **Berrien Chiefs Communication Subcommittee**

The Committee has met once to begin the planning process relating to a proposed Assistance to Firefighters Regional Grant this fall. The hope would be to update the aging fleet of Minitor 5's as well as update old out of date or unserviceable VHF and 800 portable and mobile equipment. The grant will also include the option of headsets in high noise apparatus. The match for such a grant wouldn't be due until Late Spring of 2017 and right now it looks like we would have a 20 % local match requirement. We are planning to dedicate the May Chiefs meeting to a discussion that relates specifically with Communications. Topics will include the proposed grant, future communication goals, and the possibility of bringing in subject matter experts including local communication contractors to discuss possible directions we should look in the future relating to possible improvements with our current VHF simulcast system.

In the meantime, the committee needs to know which departments would be interested in participating with the regional AFG grant in the fall and how many units departments

would be looking to replace. Remember a regional grant will not stop you from putting in your own grant as long as it isn't related to radios and pagers. The simplest way to get the basic information we need right now would be to send an email back to Chief Lamb within the next month at [llamb@nilesmi.org](mailto:llamb@nilesmi.org) with the following.

**Department Name:**

**Name/rank of member submitting report.**

**VHF Replacement**

**Number of Mobile Radios?**

**Number of Portables?**

**Number of Pagers?**

**Description, Kenwood, Motorola, Model, etc.**

**Their Age?**

**800 Replacement**

**Number of Mobile Radios?**

**Number of Portables?**

**Description, Kenwood, Motorola, Model, etc.**

**Their Age?**

**Any headset systems?**

**What type of apparatus would it be on?**

***You will not be bound by this request. We are just trying to get an idea of the numbers and interest we would be looking at.***