

Berrien Fire Chief's Association

5-18-11

Meeting called to order by Chief Davidson at 0830 hours.

ATTENDANCE: Agens-BC911, Sexton-BC911, Brovold-NCTFD, Maynard-SJTTFD#1, Heyn-LTFD, Davidson-CTFD, DeLaTorre-SMCAS, Lamb-NFD, Jesswein-BTFD, LaBaBard-BC911, DeBest – BFD, Stiles –EPBTFD, Corteville – BCEM/SJTTFD#2, Burks – BCEM, Knuth – BFD,

TREASURER'S REPORT – With the addition of \$300 in Dues the total in checking is 2282.17.

MINUTES – Minutes from the March meeting were approved as presented. Motion & Second with all in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS / BILLS – Al DeAugustino – Fire Truck Repair, inc. presentation.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

911 – The Simulcast equipment has been delivered and Chief Jesswein has been paying the bills. The agreement is waiting for the State. City of Niles is asking for some additional language in the MOU for the use of the tower with a generator being planned for the Mayflower site as a backup there. Director Agens is still working with AEP at New Buffalo on Clay Street there. Still doesn't have a second frequency pair approved for the new channel. Still waiting on a Level of Concurrence from Bangor for one of the frequencies. The eventual use of 40 watt mobiles on the channel trigger rules not required for simply 5 watt portable transmissions. Bangor happens to be on one of the frequencies and using it for portable traffic.

Chief Heyn discussed some issues he has had with distortion with voice. Possibly could be atmospheric. Could be operator error with the wrong tower being used by dispatch. Dave hopes that the simulcast system will illuminate the need for dispatchers to decide quickly which tower to select. As a precaution Chief Jesswein requested that the tower be inspected for issues like water infiltration in the coax as they have had similar issues in Chikaming. This could also be caused by the complexity of the test. Chief Davidson asked Dave to review with his personnel the importance of good communications.

Chief Jesswien asked if a written report on the projects status was available. He will need something in writing to include with a request for an extension. Dave stated that 90% of the equipment was in and the racks are being pre-built. Discussions for the switch over and migration to narrow band are already in the works. Tim will ask for more time than we need as you are limited to a single extension with the program. Discussion about the other frequency is ongoing. Backup power from Bertrand Site is coming from the 911 fund and will be installed by parks department. Niles Twp issues were discussed. Two of 8 councils wouldn't work. Telrad rebooted them and they worked. They were retested and all working fine.

DNR –.NONE

Funeral Protocol – Everything is back in Berrien. Chief Stiles discussed coming up with a funeral protocol that would lay out a guide that could help chiefs related better with grieving families and firefighters about specific honors for a departmental funeral. This would only be a guide and would in no way be a requirement for departments to follow. Doug Myers, Gerry Kableman, Chief Maynard, were nominated to a special committee. Chief Jesswein will also call Chief Weaver to see if any policy was established in the past.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT –

Director Burks discussed the resource typing. He presented handouts for municipalities that he needs updated. Please return the info to him as soon as possible. TIC updates will follow in the near future. Corey also announced several events that will promote NOA weather radio programs he will be holding in the next few months. Departments that would like to help can call Corey for more details. It was also identified that as we migrate to 12.5 bandwidth the need to update the school notification program as those old pagers are wide band only.

EAS (Emergency Alert System) Project is moving to a satellite based platform. The system automatically trips test fine. Supervisors have been trained on the new system. Problems have been identified and including some security questions with unmanned stations. The new way will allow us as well as the NWS to automatically break in much faster. Amber alerts would still be done through normal channels.

LEPC –.

SHERIFF- Contract for New Buffalo twp passed 3-1. A new Sheriff's Boat for the Marine Division was ordered. Cook, the Casino, and Whirlpool all contributed \$180,000.

HAZ-MAT- Deputy Corteville discussed a recent industrial battery incident in St. Joe. They needed a wrecker to lift it. He suggested that each department place acid absorbent and keep it on their rig. 1-3 gallons released. Sodium Bicarb would also be helpful. Chris also announced that this was his last meeting. Rocky Adams has been recommended to crew the Haz-mat team as the replacement but no official decision has been made. Chief Davidson praised Chris's service to public safety in our county and the group wished him well. Chris presented an award to Corey Burks for his participation with the Haz-mat program.

Chief Jesswein discussed the need for training in air monitor calibration.

BCFFA - None

BCYF –. None

TRAINING –Corey Tested 40 new firefighters. 12 out of 14 passed the practical. Written is still coming in. We lost 6 total on the practical test. (2 Cass – 2 Berrien – 2 – Career Pathways.) Retest will be available mid to late summer. Corey thanked those department who helped with the practical. He reported that they already have 14 kids signed up for next year's Career Pathways program. He will try to get a digital copy of the program flyer out to the chiefs.

MABAS- Chief Lamb reported on the MABAS 201 Tactical Rescue Team's deployment to Indiana for an exercise. Captain DeLaTorre submitted a new policy on

firefighter rehab for review. A joint training exercise a Clay Fire Territory will be held to increase coordination between mutual aid crews near the state line.

OLD BUSINESS -. Chief Davidson discussed the new training trailer. The RFP would be released in 2 weeks. He reported progress and the funding program is still moving forward. Mike reported that the Sheriff is requesting a grant through AEP. They are hopeful. A joint request will be sent to Chiefs so that they can put it on their own letter head and release it to other possible donors.

NEW BUSINESS-.

At the most recent LEPC large animal rescue was discussed. They are looking for departments that would be willing to house some equipment and become trained to respond to these large animal events and rescues. Bridgman and Benton Twp were recommended initially for their location to interstates but it was also discussed that a joint county wide team may work as well. Chief Stiles also recommended including other folks like 4H groups and interested farmers. Chief Heyn stated that his department would be interested in participating. Deputy Corteville discussed the mounted division, vet associations. Chief Davidson will contact Gerry Kableman regarding BCFFA involvement.

Chief Jesswein made a motion to donate \$250 to Little Squirt for the Fair Tent. Motion seconded with all in favor. Chief Spiegel is now serving on the Squirt Board.

Discussion relating to the numbering of boats. It was stated that a 70's number would be best for rescue crafts, and 80's numbers are for utility vehicles.

Chief Gowen recently separated from Buchanan City Fire Department. Their new Chief is Mike Adams who was the long time Assistant Chief there. Chief Brovold was nominated to replace Tim as Vice President. The proposal was seconded with no other nominees. Motion Passed Unanimously. Chief Brovold will complete the term as Vice President.

Next Meeting: July 20, 1900 hrs, Lincoln Twp Fire

RS Larry Lamb