

Berrien Fire Chief's Association

3-21-12

Meeting called to order by Chief Davidson at 0830 hours.

ATTENDANCE: Agens-BC911, Sexton-BC911, Koebel-RTFD, Spiegel-NBFR, Heyn-LTFD, Burkett-LTFD, DeLaTorre-SMCAS, Lamb-NFD, Bailey-BCSD, LaBaBard-BC911, Knuth-BFD, Sirk-ARC, Jones-WFD, Bower-PTFD, Maynard – SJTFD#1, Stiles – ECFD, Jesswein – BTFD, DeBest - BFD

TREASURER'S REPORT – The treasury was reported at 1,173.34. Motion and Second with all in favor.

MINUTES – Minutes from the 2-14-12 meeting were approved as emailed. Motion, Second and all in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS / BILLS –

Galien will be welcoming a new Police Chief tomorrow.

Also tomorrow there will be a suicide prevention class at the Michigan Works Building.

Buchanan Twp will be hosting a fish fry on April 14th.

The Sheriffs Golf outing will be coming up on June 8th. Save the day, \$65 for the event.

The Berrien County Chapter of the Red Cross has welcomed a new director.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

911 – Dave discussed his frustration with the fire frequency project. One of the frequencies awarded by the Frequency Coordinator was being used at Cook for their sirens. In not realized this could have resulted in a large fine from the NRC. He did mention that St Joe Twp has a few frequencies that they weren't using so he forwarded them to the program manager to see if they might work. Chief Bower from Pokagon in Cass County reported that still another channel might interact with the Elkhart Road Division. Our frequency coordinator has approved it for use with letters of concurrence; however, Dave will look into these issues.

Our grant deadline is tomorrow. Chief Jesswein has worked with FEMA to extend the grant timeline by escrowing the money, however at the end of the meeting there were still issues relating to this without a formal extension request. Dave reported that the equipment is in place and testing will begin as soon as the frequency issues are corrected. An initial coverage test from Telrad was very positive. Good portable coverage was noted even outside our county. They didn't check below the bluffs at the lakefront yet because of weather conditions. He has also developed a plan for the changeover as we move forward utilizing the new secondary transmitters that will later be used as a Simplex MAYDAY channel.

Denny and Jim reported that the presentation that will go out to responders to educate them on the new radio system is almost complete. It was felt that the first presentation should be to the chiefs with other presentations following at the firefighters association and individual departments when radio reprogramming is performed. Still a few tweaks need to be made including putting whatever frequency we end up having in the end.

They are also including a piece to improve communications on high traffic incidents like storms.

DNR – None

Funeral Protocol – None

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – None

LEPC –. New Buffalo Twp has put Weather warning sirens in place. This has prompted a discussion to develop standard policies for their activation across the county. It was noted that the education of the public as to what to do when they hear a siren, as well as the understanding to the sirens limitations and the need for alternate inside systems like weather radios.

SHERIFF- The Sheriff discussed the 3 fatal accidents on the previous day. He praised fire crews for their assistance with traffic control. Still more coordination between all agencies is still needed to improve communication between all players. It was consensus that simply placing barricades and other traffic control devices while our people are working in the roadway was not in the best interest of everyone. It was acknowledged that quick clearance is best for everyone but personnel safety is most important. It was also discussed about development of a CERT or Vest team as is in place in St Joe County IN that could be called out for long term events. Director Agens will share concerns and the desire to open dialog on the issue with the Police Chiefs later in the week.

Chief Spiegel, whose crews worked 2 of the incidents, discussed issues relating to switching to UIC1. He recommends that when we ask to switch over that all agencies do a sort of roll call to assure that everyone has made the transfer. Denny will include this in the radio training program.

The Sheriff also discussed Emergency Management Division. Chief Deputy Bradley will be filling in for Corey while he remains out on injury leave. Karen and Gayle will also be in the office. Ron is at a 6 week training program in Aniston, AL. It is the hope that Corey should begin rehabbing his injury after the end of the month. He went over the Mercury Spill at Buchanan High School. He praised the School staff as well as responders. As with many of these incidents the initial parts of the response were challenged as the school initially called the health department. After they arrived to find the amount and extent of the problem they called Berrien County Hazmat. Rocky arrived to find that Local Fire and Police had yet to be called so he had dispatch contact them right away. The Sheriff commented on the effective use of Incident Management Techniques that were used on the call. He was very pleased by the response to this unusual incident.

BCFFA - Discussions relating to increase involvement at meetings was discussed. One point made was that by going in alphabetical order we regularly go to the same area of the county 2-3 times in a row. We might want to consider a schedule that bounces around more. Additional discussion on quality of programs was discussed. Future meeting of the Fire Simulator Training Group may be held following the meeting.

BCYF –. None

TRAINING –Chief Davidson is still looking for qualified training instructors to present drills at the new trailer. Must be minimum of FF1 however the group is looking for a balance between training and experience to apply. All application must come through the local chief to assure that the applicant is indeed prepared for the job. Mike also discussed

with the group that the trailer has been delayed due to an error in production as the trailer chassis company. They had forecasted the build then never got it onto the line. The issue has been corrected with the trailer still arriving during sometime this summer.

MABAS- Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS - Discussions about continuing to hold monthly Chief's Meetings was discussed and voted on with the group. It was felt that having them monthly was still important to get the work done. There is a lot that is going on and we all need to pitch in to get it done. Because of FDIC the next meeting will be held on the 4th Wednesday at Lincoln Twp at 1830 hours.

NEW BUSINESS- Discussion relating to information especially photos taken at the scene was discussed. Several departments already have policies in place on the issue. They are to prevent the posting of photos that could impair later investigations on Facebook and Twitter in some cases before we leave the scene by department personnel. Chief were concerned that even if they had policies for their department mutual aid companies may not know or comply. Copies of the existing agreements will be forwarded to Chief Heyn for review. Future discussions to developing a county policy on the issue will be forthcoming.

Adjourn 1010 hrs, Next Meeting: 4-25-23, 1830 hrs, Lincoln Twp Fire

RS Larry Lamb