

NEW HAMPSHIRE BOARD OF FIRE CONTROL
MEETING, MARCH 6, 2013
9:30 AM
NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE FIRE ACADEMY
98 SMOKEY BEAR BLVD, ROOM 7
CONCORD, NH 03305

Attendees: Richard Heath, Allan Clark, Daniel Andrus, John Ela, Martin Michaelis, Norman Skantze, Brian Boudreau and John Raymond

Absent: William Ruoff, William Mead and Floyd Hayes

Meeting Called to Order at 9:31 AM by Richard Heath.

A motion was made to recess to Public Hearing. It was seconded by Allan Clark. All Approved.

The hearing portion was recorded and Richard Heath read the instructions for following the procedural rules during the public hearing. No one came to the hearing so the recording was stopped at that time. The public hearing portion was continued for 10 minutes as required by law.

If anyone has concerns or ideas regarding this hearing they may send a letter no later than March 13, 2013. This hearing was posted on the State Fire Marshal's website, the legislative website and posted on several State bulletin boards.

At 9:46 the public hearing was adjourned and the board meeting continued.

The minutes were reviewed and approved by the members of the board unanimously.

The board members received a copy of an informational brochure of what the Public Education department is working on for educating the public on safety issues in the home.

Report of the State Fire Marshal:

John Raymond spoke about the transition of the electrical licensing to the NH Joint Board and mentioned that Governor Lynch had designated that he wanted all boards to be under the NH Joint Board and that this may impact the future of the mechanical and plumbing employees. The concern would be how the investigators would fit in with the Joint Board under the governing hand of the boards.

The Fire Marshal feels that this could impact the safety of the residences of New Hampshire and he would like to see the inspectors stay with the Fire Marshal's office where they would be incorporated along with the other inspectors.

An amendment to SB 179 was added to keep the inspectors with this office.

In SB 28 an amendment was added to have the electricians division moved to the Joint Board immediately instead of waiting until July 1, 2013.

A question was asked if the Board of Fire Control should be involved with the amendment to keep the investigators with the Fire Marshal's office. John Raymond stated that all licensing clerks would go to the NH Joint Board as well as the board members but since the Board of Fire Control has an interest in the safety of the public, they have been asked to support the Fire Marshal's office.

Allan Clark made a motion to keep all inspectors with the Fire Marshal's office.

John Ely asked what would happen to inspections if the inspectors went to the Joint Board. John Raymond explained that in some cases, boards over inspectors have turned into a control issue where the inspectors could not do their job due to a board's conflict of interest.

Governor Lynch's idea to send boards to the Joint Board was to save money and would cut positions since the Joint Board had personnel to cover clerical duties. The Joint Board does not have regulations over the laws, they just do licensing so there is a concern as to whether the boards would regulate by the laws and for the good of the public.

It was suggested that the Board of Fire Control could testify on behalf of the investigators staying with the Fire Marshal's office to keep continuity, consistency and to keep the public safe.

Before the plumbing division came to the Fire Marshal's office they were governed by the plumbing board on a part time basis and there were many discrepancies in their budget and time spent on investigations.

The motion made to keep all inspectors with the Fire Marshal's Office was seconded by Brian Boudreau and all approved.

The sprinkler bill was pulled from the schedule. There was a concern by one of the legislators that this bill would hurt developers. It actually gave them a chance to propose residential sprinklers in developments to the planning boards which would save cost to widen roads and driveways as well as cisterns when developing these communities.

There have been fires in Durham near the college that are suspicious. These have been minor incidents.

Still looking for a replacement for Ken Walsh. Looking at two good candidates and they will be going through the oral boards soon.

Still looking for another plumbing inspector. The inspectors do generate revenues due to applications for inspections through the Fire Marshal's office.

John Raymond announced that he will be retiring on May 1, 2013 but will work with the Fire Marshal's office a few days a week to help with the transition of a new Assistant Director.

There have been more meth labs and drug labs lately so the Haz Mat unit has been very busy.

Arsons seem to have slowed some. There have been no reports of fatalities from fires this year. So far the most common factor with fires this year has been smoking while on oxygen and non working smoke and CO detectors. The public education personnel are working on getting more information to the general public about the concerns mentioned above.

Deb will send out to the board members a copy of Healthier Homes and the explanation of what One Touch means. She will also give the public education personnel the emails of the board members so they can be included in their monthly publication.

Bill Degnan has been spending many hours attending meetings at the State House this year. There seems to be an abundance of lobbyists at the State House.

There has been some interest in the fireworks bill after the incident in Pelham last summer. The loaders for fireworks seem to be the biggest issue with the fact that they do not come with instructions on how to use them or safety instructions when using them.

The term Fire Marshal can be used for state level as well as local level.

The bill describing the duties of the Fire Marshal should go to the Senate and ought to pass.

The bill for Hazmat to recoup their costs through towns was labeled Inexpedient to Legislate.

Norman Skantze spoke of the arson fire they had in Swanzezy and the combined assistance from the State Fire Marshal's office and how well everyone worked together to find the arsonist and obtain an arrest and a conviction.

There have been several fires in Franklin and the Fire Marshal's office has been successful in obtaining arrests in those incidents.

The Fire Marshal's office recently had fires in Durham and Littleton and those cases are coming to a close with possible arrests.

Old Business:

The State Fire Code Revision is being reviewed by Tom Humphrey who is a part time inspector for the Fire Marshal's office.

New Business:

Included with the board members packets were two cd's and handouts they may find informational and useful.

Bill Degnan is the president of the NASFM organization and he spends many hours working with this program. He will spend more time on conference calls instead of traveling to help save money. He feels he can accomplish what he needs

and stay in the state at the same time. If anyone from the board has any questions, they can send them to the Fire Marshal at john.degnan@dos.nh.gov.

LP Gas Odorant issue:

Bill Degnan has been working closely with Fire Marshal Cohen from Massachusetts regarding the odorant issue in LP gas. Some odorant is being added at the train stations. A question came up regarding, who is monitoring this activity and who is responsible for testing the LP gas once delivered, the truck company, the train company?

Dan Andrus gave a wonderful thank you to John Raymond for his dedication and willingness to work for the good of the public safety in his position as Assistant Director and wishes him well in his future endeavors.

Richard Heath asked that the board members contact him by email or by phone if anyone is interested in being chairman or co chairman as these two positions will be open and appointed by the Governor.

Any comments that come in by March 13th regarding the rule changes will be emailed to the board members for review.

The North Country now has a facility to do training for fire departments overseen by the Fire Academy. This facility is located in Bethlehem and will be used evenings and weekends with special training taking place two nights a week. The monies will come from the Fire Fund.

There has been no impact on Fire Service from the sequestration in Washington, DC. Several cars used for the Fire Marshal's office are getting on in miles and will need to be replaced this year. Many of the vehicles are over 180,000 miles.

The Board of Fire Control is still looking for a Chemical Engineer and if anyone knows of someone interested in joining the board, please contact Richard Heath.

The next meeting will be held June 19th with the location being announced prior to the meeting.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Martin Michaelis and seconded by Richard Heath. The meeting was adjourned at 11:01.

