



ASSOCIATION OF
FIRE DISTRICTS
★ ★ CAPITAL AREA ★ ★

THE CAPITAL BULLETIN



FIRE DISTRICT NEWS

NOVEMBER 19TH, 2022

EDITOR - TOM RINALDI

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*If nothing else read the articles preceded by ***

CAPITAL CALENDAR:

WWW.AFDCA.ORG

2023 CAPITAL AREA MEETING & TRAINING SCHEDULE

Saturday January 7th 9:00am general membership breakfast served at 8AM

Thursday February 9th 7:00pm general membership dinner served at 6PM

Thursday March 9th 7:00pm general membership dinner served at 6PM

Saturday, March 11, 2023 6:00 PM Officer Installation Location in Saratoga Springs TBD

Thursday April 6th Board of Director's Meeting 7PM

Thursday May 11th Meeting of the General Membership

Thursday June 8th Board of Director's Meeting 7PM

Thursday July 13th Board of Director's Meeting 7PM

August, No Meeting

Thursday September 14th, General Membership Meeting 7PM

Thursday October 12th General Membership/Nominations for Officers & Directors

Thursday November 9th, 7:00pm general membership dinner served at 6PM/Elections

December, No Meeting

Printable Calendar – See Last Page

Mandated Commissioner Training Sanctioned by the State Comptroller's Office, \$85.00 per person

Saturday, February 11, 2023 8:00 AM 6 hour Commissioner Training Averill Park, Rensselaer Co. w/Greg Serio

Saturday, March 4, 2023 8:00 AM 6 hour Commissioner Training Clifton Park Saratoga Co. w/Greg Serio

Saturday, March 25, 2023 8:00 AM 6 hour Commissioner Training Berkshire Fire District Fulton, Co. w/Greg Serio

2023 Membership Activity Options Being Explored

Saturday, November 11, 2023 8:00 AM Fall Workshop Location and Date to be determined

We want to thank the Clifton Park – Halfmoon Fire District for allowing us to use their facility for the Capital Area meetings.

CAPITAL AREA ASSOCIATION NEWS:

WWW.AFDCA.ORG

You Are Invited to Join Us!!

The Capital Area Association has voted to amend its By-laws to allow both individual and regional or county Fire District Associations to join. The updated By-laws are posted to the AFDCA.org website.

Individual membership fee will be \$50 annually, fire district association fees will be \$300 annually.

Download THE APPLICATION HERE: <https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-Application.doc>

AS WE WORK OUT ALL THE GLITCHES AND PURCHASE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT THE CAPITAL AREA WISHES TO INFORM ALL OUR MEMBERS THAT WE ANTICIPATE THAT ZOOM WILL COMMENCE AT THE JANUARY 2023 MEETING. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE.

The Capital Area has logo ware for sale, long and short sleeve polo shirts. Contact Secretary/Treasurer Tony Hill to purchase shirts.

Please advise your secretaries that all correspondence go to the Capital Area Association Mailing Address at:

AFDCA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063

EMAIL: CAAOFD@GMAIL.COM

[518-407-5020](tel:518-407-5020)

If you see ** it indicates a must-read article with educational value or leadership qualities.

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- Santa's workshop was very nearly homeless this year! Capital Region Toys for Tots lost their footing in Clifton Park after the warehouse where they stored and sorted the toys was sold. "Unfortunately, you know, we lost the lease on the old property, and we're 40 days, 45 days behind the power curve," explains Capital Region Toys for Tots coordinator USMC GySgt. Albert Roman, Jr. "Without a warehouse, it's kind of like trying to fight a war without a base," adds fellow coordinator USMC SSgt. Patrick Lurenz. Fortunately, the Halfmoon-Waterford Fire District opened up its new station giving Toys for Tots a temporary shelter while they hustle to catch up on this year's donations. "Through the generosity of these volunteer guys that give up their time for their community, they are helping us now to continue to get back into this community," says Lurenz. The firehouse will act as home base until after the collection and distribution season is over, at which point Toys for Tots hopes to find a new permanent location quickly. Nice!!
- John Meehan has announced that he will not be a candidate as the Region 1 Director for the State Association. ***If anyone is interested*** in being endorsed as the Regional Director please send a letter of intent to the Capital Area Association at caaofd@gmail.com. **A new Director needs to be named by the Capital Area by the end of November.** You must be an active fire district official; commissioner, treasurer or purchasing agent.
- **December 19th At Quick Response:** RSVP to Fabian Johnston at fjohnston@qrrstore.com You will need this flyer to gain entry!!



December 19th at
Quick Response.pdf

- Anyone interested in purchasing the FASNY 150th Anniversary Commemorative Book, you can use this link: <https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FASNY-150th-Commemorative-Book-Order-Form.pdf>
- Tom Rinaldi has been re-elected to a 4th term as chairperson of the NYS Fire Service Council. Richard Frasco from Greene County has also been re-elected to his 4th term as Secretary/Treasurer.
- Stellantis is recalling nearly 250,000 heavy duty diesel Ram pickup trucks in the U.S. because transmission fluid can leak and cause engine fires. The recall covers certain 2020 to 2023 Ram 2500 and some 2020 through 2022 Ram 3500 trucks, all have 6.7-liter Cummins diesel engines.
- Whether career or volunteer its very hard on everyone to lose a colleague, our sympathies to the Albany Fire Department on the sudden passing of Firefighter Edward Verhoff.

- ***If you no longer wish to receive the Capital Bulletin you have the option to "unsubscribe" at the bottom of the introductory email.***

TRAINING APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR ENTIRE BOARD/SECRETARY/TREASURER



COFFEE WITH COMMISSIONERS 2022

[2022 Schedule click to register](#)

Saturday, Dec 3 Topics for Annual Organizational Meeting

[Click Here for Previously Recorded Webinars](#)

Duties & Deadlines Secretary Webinar

Duties & Deadlines Secretary Webinar Schedules

Start time 6:00pm

November 22, 2022 - What will we need for the Org. Meeting

December 20, 2022 - Organizing for the New Year

***If you have already registered you DO NOT have to register again, you will automatically received all zoom links.**

REGISTER AT THIS LINK: https://mms.afdsny.org/members/evr/reg_event.php?orgcode=FDNY&evid=32091843

THE LATEST FROM THE NYS LEGISLATURE

Beginning of the Well-Intended Assault on Lithium-Ion Batteries

S9596 Krueger - A new article of the General Business Law is intended to prohibit the distribution, assembly, or sale of second-use lithium-ion batteries for e-bikes and e-scooters that have been assembled or reconditioned using cells removed from used batteries. A person who violated the law would be subject to a civil penalty. The civil penalty would range from \$200 for a first violation to \$1,000 for each subsequent violation within two years. (to assembly sponsor)

My Question to you is who is going to enforce this, who is going to track down the people who are using the used cells and who is going to have the jurisdiction to track down the perpetrators in the country that they are operating in. I suggest this is feel good legislation that is not practical and will be very difficult if not impossible to enforce.

S9597 Krueger - A new article of the General Business Law to prohibit the sale of batteries for mobility devices such as electric bicycles or scooters unless such batteries have been listed and labeled by a nationally recognized testing laboratory or other approved organization. A person who violated the law would be subject to a civil penalty. The civil penalty would range from no monetary penalty for a first violation to \$1,000 for each subsequent violation within two years. (no assembly sponsor)

My question again is who is going to be the battery police, there are already regulations dealing with the sale of listed devices by federal regulations, this would just be redundant and would require a state agency to enforce the standards. Specifically, OSHA [29 CFR 1917.157 Battery Charging and Changing](#) – This standard primarily goes over who is able to change batteries, where they can be changed, and what to look for in terms of hazards. NFPA has Electrical Safety Standards.

In addition, everyone needs to understand that devices assembled in other countries have no qualms about slapping a counterfeit label on the products they are selling.

When we find these products in the marketplace who is going to be fined, the seller?

We need you to pick up the phone and call the governor's office in support of this Bill!

Call 518-474-8390 in support of bill S9131!

As you all know I have working for the last 8 months to get the NYS Legislature to pass legislation **allowing counties** to give tax breaks to First Responders.

After the June recess I thought the issue was dead until January when the new session would convene.

However, I made all the material (Draft of proposed legislation, Drafts of County implementation of the proposed legislation and news articles describing the need for assistance by fire companies for aid in recruitment and retention.) to the lobbyists for several of the New York State Fire Service organizations.

Well, it appears the fire service lobbyists continued the fight and the result is the bill now before the Governor for signature **granting all 62 NYS Counties the power to enact legislation** to grant First Responders tax breaks.

As more details become available after Governor Hochul signs the Bill, I will keep you informed.

Copy of the Bill is attached.

My thanks to Commissioner Robert Blauw for bringing the passage of this legislation to my attention. My special thanks to Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin, Past Rensselaer County Executive Kathy Jimino and retired State Senator Kathy Marchione for their very active support in all phases of this endeavor.

Now we need to encourage the Governor to sign this bill.

LINK TO BILL:

<https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/BILL-NUMBER-9131-10-2022-3.docx>

The 2022 Legislative Session and Fire Service Bill Status

Bills that didn't gain any traction and were stuck in committee were amendments to the heart and lung bill making them permanent, rather than renewing them every five years or so. Hopefully this effort will be renewed next year.

Several other bills that affect fire service business operations are the following, many have not been signed by the Governor yet, she is probably too busy running for re-election:

- (S7623A) EXTENDS PROVISIONS OF LAW AUTHORIZING POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS TO PERMIT ANY PUBLIC BODY TO HOLD MEETINGS REMOTELY AND WITHOUT IN-PERSON ACCESS DURING THE COVID-19 STATE DISASTER EMERGENCY, UNTIL THE EMERGENCY IS DECLARED TO BE OVER. **SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR 1/14/22**
- (S7718) AN ACT TO AMEND A CHAPTER OF THE LAWS OF 2021 ESTABLISHING THE NEW YORK STATE RURAL AMBULANCE SERVICES TASK FORCE IN RELATION TO MODIFYING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE. **SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR 2/24/22**
- (S7144) PROVIDES CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM TRAINING, MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID, IMPLICIT BIAS TRAINING AND NALOXONE TRAINING TO FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL BY THE COMMISSIONER OF MENTAL HEALTH. **SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR 5/6/22**
- (S9405) THE NYS ENERGY CODE PRODUCT AND APPLIANCE STANDARDS WILL DELIVER A PROJECTED \$15 BILLION OF TOTAL UTILITY BILL SAVINGS (SUPPOSEDLY) BY 2035 FOR NEW YORK CONSUMERS, INCLUDING AN ESTIMATED \$6 BILLION IN TOTAL UTILITY BILL SAVINGS FOR LOW-TO MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS. THIS LEGISLATION ALSO PROVIDES DOS WITH ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY OVER ANY STATE STANDARDS. **SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR**
- (S3532) AUTHORIZES STATE AND MUNICIPALLY OWNED VEHICLES TO AFFIX GREEN OR ALTERNATING GREEN AND AMBER LIGHTS TO MOTOR VEHICLES ENGAGED IN SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCREASING VISIBILITY DURING WINTER WEATHER EVENTS. **SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR**
- (S7399A) AN AMENDMENT TO THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW, IN RELATION TO AUTHORIZING A MUNICIPALITY TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF YEARS OF SERVICE THAT **A VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE SERVICE** PARTICIPANT IN A DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM OR A DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM MAY RECEIVE A CONTRIBUTION. **NOT YET SIGNED [PERTAINS TO AMBULANCE VOLUNTEERS ENROLLED IN A LOSAP PROGRAM NOT FIREFIGHTERS]**
- (S926B) REQUIRES ELECTRIC CORPORATIONS TO PRIORITIZE RESTORING SERVICES TO POLICE DEPARTMENTS, FIRE DEPARTMENTS, AND AMBULANCE SERVICES, WHEN SUCH SERVICES ARE INTERRUPTED. **NOT YET SIGNED**
- (S9131) A BILL TO ALLOW ANY COUNTY TO ADOPT A LOCAL LAW THAT WILL PROVIDE AN EXEMPTION ON REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY AN ENROLLED MEMBER OF AN INCORPORATED VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, DEPARTMENT, OR VOLUNTARY AMBULANCE SERVICE. THE BILL WOULD EXEMPT UP TO 10% OF THE ASSESSED VALUE FOR MEMBERS WHO SERVED A MINIMUM OF TWO YEARS. THE BILL WOULD REQUIRE LOCALITIES THAT CURRENTLY PROVIDE THE EXEMPTION ADOPT A LOCAL LAW TO CONFORM TO THIS PROVISION. **NOT YET SIGNED**
- (S6093A) THIS BILL IS INTENDED TO CLARIFY THE INTENT OF THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING EXISTING STATUTORY PRESUMPTIONS PERTAINING TO HEART-RELATED DISABILITIES SUFFERED BY MEMBERS OF THE NEW YORK STATE LOCAL POLICE, FIRE RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND THE NEW YORK STATE AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM. CLARIFICATION IS NECESSARY BECAUSE A SERIES OF NARROW JUDICIAL INTERPRETATIONS HAS PREVENTED THE STATUTORY PRESUMPTIONS FROM ACHIEVING THEIR INTENDED PURPOSES. **NOT YET SIGNED**

- (S953A) REQUIRES BUSINESSES THAT MAKE PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES TO PROVIDE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH NOTICE OF THEIR INTENTION TO CHANGE ASSESSMENT. **NOT YET SIGNED**
- (S8524B) ALLOWS FOR THE USE OF GREEN LIGHTS ON THE VEHICLES OF MOBILE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONDERS. **NOT YET SIGNED**
- (S7863A) THE GENERAL BUSINESS LAW IS AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT NO ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS MAY BE SOLD IN NEW YORK STATE BY A PERSON, FIRM, PARTNERSHIP ASSOCIATION OR CORPORATION REGULARLY ENGAGED IN THE BUSINESS OF ASSEMBLING, MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTING, OR RETAIL SALE OF SPACE HEATERS UNLESS THEY: CONTAIN A THERMOSTAT; HAVE AN AUTOMATIC SHUTOFF; AND HAVE BEEN CERTIFIED BY AN APPROVED BODY. **NOT YET SIGNED** My Question is, who is going to enforce this. Suspect only action will be on complaints or as a result of lawsuits.
- (S7582A) TO REQUIRE THAT THE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL COMPOSITION INCLUDE PERSONS WITH KNOWLEDGE OF FLOODING HAZARDS AND THAT THE BUILDING CODE BE REVISED TO INCORPORATE MEASURES FOR FLOOD MITIGATION AND FLOOD SAFETY. **NOT YET SIGNED**

It's recommended that the fire service start to think about legislation it would like to present for 2023, bills will begin to be introduced on the first week of the legislative session starting January 2nd. If you have legislation you would like to suggest, contact your local representatives or a member of the legislative committee of one of the fire service organizations in the State.

NEWS FROM THE NYS VOL. FF R&R TASK FORCE

Updated Link for the Recruitment and Retention Task Force:

<https://www.dhSES.ny.gov/volunteer-firefighter-recruitment-and-retention-task-force>

The task force in their most recent meeting has broken into sub committees.

Open Meetings and Webcasts are located at: <https://www.dhSES.ny.gov/open-meetings-and-webcasts>

LET YOUR MEMBERS KNOW ABOUT THIS OPPORTUNITY!



Mentorship ESIP LEADERSHIP SERIES

Join our Risk Management team as we discuss the importance of mentoring our people. We will look into the advantages of formal and informal mentoring programs in our organizations.

Wednesday, November 30th, 2022, 7PM

REGISTER AT THIS LINK: https://webinar.ringcentral.com/webinar/register/WN_RUZs7oM_TOuysel-FOL8bA?utm_source=ESIP+Risk+Management+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=457a5cb66d-

[EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_21_04_23_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f653b3c566-457a5cb66d-278064383](https://webinar.ringcentral.com/webinar/register/WN_RUZs7oM_TOuysel-FOL8bA?utm_source=ESIP+Risk+Management+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=457a5cb66d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_21_04_23_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f653b3c566-457a5cb66d-278064383)



Posted to our web site at this LINK: <https://afdca.org/vfis-training-opportunities-a-wealth-of-information/>

You will find:

[2022 VFISU-Flyer](#)

[2022 VFISU Course Catalog](#)

[2022 ETC-Resource-Catalog-VFIS](#)

[2022 VFIS-Responder Help Flyer](#)

[NY - Flyer EVDT-EMSVO-I Depew Nov 5-6, 2022](#)

[NY - Flyer UTV ATV-I TRL-I Neversink FD Nov 19-20 2022](#)

[New Course! Leadership for the Fire & Emergency Services](#)

The NVFC has released a new course in the Virtual Classroom on “Leadership in the Fire & Emergency Services.” This on-demand course provides an overview of leadership roles, how anyone can be a leader regardless of rank, and tips to help in succeeding as an emergency service leader. Virtual Classroom courses are always free to **NVFC members**, but this course is free for a limited time to all members of the fire and emergency services. **Register now:** <https://virtualclassroom.nvfc.org/products/leadership-for-the-fire-emergency-services>

[Innovative Recruitment Ideas for Volunteer Fire, EMS, and Rescue Departments](#)

Recruitment is a challenge for many volunteer and combination emergency service departments. The NVFC has released a new one-pager featuring 10 ideas to help jump-start your recruitment initiatives. Download it [here](#). You can find more tools and resources to help with recruitment – including customizable outreach materials and PSAs – from the NVFC’s [Make Me A Firefighter campaign](#).

OUR CHANGING FIRE SERVICE –CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES!

[OPPORTUNITIES:](#)

[USFA Summit Highlights Fire Groups Singing Off The Same Sheet Of Music](#)

Billy Goldfeder

I was recently privileged to be invited to the [U.S. Fire Administrator’s 2022 Summit on Fire Prevention and Control](#). Now to be honest, by nature of my age and refusal to go away, I've been honored to participate in many of these "where are we going" national forums and discussions on the future of the fire service. Some have mattered, and some have not. So, before I detail more about this one, I want to share one example from the event where I think we may be getting it right. While there are many common challenges to all aspects of the fire service, one comment provided me with a real “aha moment.”

During introductions of the leadership panel, National Volunteer Fire Council First Vice-Chair Kevin Quinn commented about some differences in the fire service, specifically the very real volunteer challenges these days. To this IAFF General President Ed "Edzo" Kelly responded, “I don't think we have that many differences, and we certainly have a whole lot of common challenges that we will work on together.” And Kevin smiled and affirmed Edzo's comments.

BAM!

The fact that the leader of the largest firefighters’ labor union and the leader of the nation’s volunteer firefighters publicly agreed that solving our many common problems will require a team effort is a phenomenal place to start.

Common ground issues

Just take a look at the primary challenges facing America’s firefighters today (and in the future):

- Training and PPE for those working in the wildland/urban (suburban) interface
- Recruitment and retention
- Occupational cancer
- Firefighter behavioral health
- Elevation of the fire service – federal policy development and prioritization
- Codes and standards to protect the public and firefighters

If you are issued bunker gear, every one of the above issues impacts you. *Every single one.*

Recruitment: The volunteer fire service is in serious trouble, but we are also seeing measurably less interest in people applying to be career firefighters.

Retention: Keeping volunteers with increased call load, time restraint and requirements? In so many areas, career firefighters are moving to other departments or leaving the service all together for a variety of reasons, including working conditions, pay and leadership challenges.

Behavioral health: Firefighter wellness, mental health, PTSD and suicide – hardly a strictly career or volunteer issue.

Cancer: There is not a firefighter in America, career or volunteer, who doesn't know another brother or sister who has or had ... or is dealing with it themselves.

Hopefully I've made my point, as Edzo certainly made his.

If the leaders of the primary fire service organizations – IAFF, IAFC, NVFC, NFPA, NFFF and CFSI, and many other organizations leaders who were represented – maintain their commitment to actually work together, under Dr. Moore-Merrell’s support and energy, and commit to actually work together, they *will* (without question) be more powerful than if they work by themselves, and they *will* impact the critical issues threatening our nation's fire service.

Breaking down our challenges

In 1947, President Harry S. Truman convened the first National Conference on fire prevention, life safety and control activities. Seventy-five years later, the USFA continued this tradition with this Summit on Fire Prevention and Control.

The summit focused on the nation’s fire problem and the needs of the fire and emergency medical responders. It served as an opportunity to engage national leadership, evaluate the state of science, and collaborate to set forth actionable steps that can be taken. There are numerous well-defined and organized working groups that are breaking down the issues and developing plans to go forward. This is NOT a "meet and go" scenario where a report sits on a shelf. This is a “meet, work and do more work” scenario until realistic and funded solutions are identified. *Multiple solutions to some very tough problems.* Further, the Summit was only the beginning of work that will lead to reports and deliverables at the 2023 U.S. Fire Administrator’s Summit, which is to be held annually during October Fire Prevention Week.

During the summit, the energy was palpable by participants eager to actually take on these issues, because every one of them knows these are very real problems. And while we had President Joe Biden join us and address the group virtually, his positive and supportive words of encouragement were great, no different than a highly motivating coach – it all comes down to how we perform *together* moving forward.

Imagine your favorite band performing but each musician playing "their own way." That is often what our fire service looks like. Sure, it may sound good on occasion (especially during a solo), but imagine how great it would sound if the musicians practiced together. While each musician is different in their own sound (just like the differences among career, combination, volunteer, urban, rural, suburban departments, etc.), when they come together, they will almost always get a standing ovation, and cheers for more.

That's the *very doable* potential of the U.S. Fire Administrator’s 2022 Summit on Fire Prevention and Control, as long as those involved focus not only on their own issues but also the big national picture so that we all benefit – and the public, too. There is a whole lot of work ahead, and if we stay focused and genuinely work together, we will see a much stronger nationally united fire service, with some great sounding music.

CHALLENGES:

Specing For The Future: Planning Ahead Doesn’t Require A Crystal Ball

Vincent Bettinazzi

Selecting and purchasing fire apparatus is an exciting yet daunting process, especially now with prices steadily climbing and build processes becoming increasingly complex. As decision-makers for our organizations, we must be mindful of these considerations throughout the apparatus vendor selection and build process.

APPARATUS PRICES ARE SOARING

Inflation is the buzzword of the day, and fire apparatus are no exception to the impact. Manufacturers are adjusting pricing to account for increasing prices on just about everything. Some estimates show fire apparatus costs climbing over 20% from 2020. This is due to the higher overall costs for the building supplies, electronics and other components needed to build these unique machines.

Municipalities are forced to either pay these prices or look for creative solutions, like drafting specs for apparatus that can serve dual functions. Maybe instead of selecting a new fire engine and separate rescue, a singular apparatus is designed and equipped to handle both duties. The same thinking could be applied to ladder trucks, which have traditionally served a singular role, but could be designed as a quint in order to provide a multi-functional purpose and more flexible role in the department’s fleet – all to make the dollars and cents go a little further.

No matter what situation you face or what solutions you’re considering, it’s vital to have open communication with the people in charge of finances. Let them know of the pros and cons, plus the realistic capabilities that are available in your given spending ceiling.

EQUIPMENT IS COSTLY TOO

Unfortunately, fire apparatus aren't the only big-ticket items with a higher price. From hose and ground ladders to hand tools and EMS equipment, many equipment vendors have been forced to increase prices. This is a big deal, as new equipment that would normally be replaced or included in a new fire apparatus begins to drive up the already high price. If you're part of your department's apparatus purchasing committee, make sure that you are clear which direction you want to head in terms of equipment. Will you be using existing equipment on the new truck, or will it be delivered fully loaded with equipment? This is particularly important, as even the smallest changes to equipment or associated compartment sizes, hosebed dividers and tool-mount locations can impact where the old equipment can be placed on your new apparatus.

Additionally – and this may seem obvious – you must ensure that your new fire apparatus can fit inside and maneuver out of its intended firehouse. This is a critical consideration if the vehicle has changed significantly, like if the apparatus bay was once sized for a small fire engine now much accommodate a taller ladder or quint needs. Don't forget, the longer the apparatus, the wider the turning radius. Please make sure you have enough room to accommodate it.

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

With apparatus build times reaching nearly two years from order to delivery, decision-makers must consider the future needs of the organization. Will the fire truck you order today still serve its function in two years? How about 10 years or 20?

With several of our departments experiencing population increases and building booms, our service demands and responses will have to adapt to meet these needs. Plan the apparatus for the potential to carry additional equipment, even additional firefighters. Will a four-seat cab serve your department in 10 years? Will that extra compartment fulfill a need in 2025?

Additionally, consider that this new fire apparatus may have to serve the community for a longer time period. Could it last 15 to 20 years? We often become so focused on the now that we forget to look ahead.

BE A 'FUTURE-THINKER'

It can be a lot of fun to buy a fire truck, including the manufacturer visit for the apparatus inspections, but apparatus and equipment purchasing is a big responsibility. With costs top of mind, it's critical to be a "future-thinker" at all stages of the purchase process. This will help ensure that you receive a fire truck that's not only within budget but will serve your needs for many years. After all, a million-dollar item needs to have a million-dollar plan.

HEALTH – SAFETY & LODDS – TAKING CARE OF YOUR MEMBERS

*IN 2022 WE HAVE SADLY EXPERIENCED **88** FIRE FIGHTER LODD'S*

According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com

*In 2021 we experienced **136** LODDs reported nationally.!*

Those who died in the line of duty in NYS were, Peyton Morse, Jared Lloyd, Judy Spencer and Vincent Malveaux.

YOU JUST NEVER KNOW!!

- A member of the Niles, Ohio fire department died unexpectedly over the weekend
- 46 year old Albany firefighter Edward Verhoff died unexpectedly over the weekend
- More Close Calls at: <https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/>
- A fire truck on scene of an accident was struck by another vehicle this morning on State Highway 37C, according to fire officials. Massena Fire Engine 28 was dispatched to a motor vehicle accident and while responding, Engine 28 was struck by a passenger vehicle that lost control due to wintry conditions,

Reference Material for Use in a Line of Duty Death

- VFBL Firefighters Guide to Benefits, wcb.ny.gov/content/main/vf-vaw/injured-in-lin-of-duty.pdf
- Survivors Benefit Guide, www.firehero.org
- National Fallen Firefighters Foundation <https://www.firehero.org>

BUILDING & FIRE CODE ISSUES – WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Home builders and realtors already “drive” legislation with a history of disregard for life safety and a disgusting misinformation campaign about the cost of residential fire sprinklers, deaths are an awfully expensive price to pay to save money. Stop the carnage, install residential sprinklers.

WEEKLY FIRE FATALITY DATA AS REPORTED BY THE MEDIA

Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS	69+2=71 (Exceeded 2021)
Latest fire death Village of Florida, Orange Co. Unk at this time	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	118+3=121
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	1128 + 31=1159
Top Three State with the most 1&2 Family Deaths	1 PA -- 98
	2 OH -- 78
	3 TX & NY 71
There has been a total of 1915 civilian home fire fatalities in 2022	
There were a total of 2248 residential fire fatalities reported in 2021 in the US media.	
Both the states of Maryland and California require sprinklers in residential dwellings	

In 2021 in New York State **68** residents perished in fires in 1 & 2 family occupancies.

FIRE DISTRICT FINANCES

Truxton Fire District – Board Oversight

Background

The District is located in the Town of Truxton (Town) in Cortland County. The District provides fire protection services to the entire Town.

An elected five-member Board governs the District and is responsible for its overall financial management.

The Board appointed the Treasurer who acts as the District’s chief fiscal officer. The Treasurer is responsible for receiving, maintaining custody of, disbursing and accounting for District funds, as well as preparing periodic financial reports and keeping the minutes of Board meetings.

Audit Objective

Determine whether the Truxton Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) provided adequate oversight of District financial activities.

Key Findings

The Board did not provide adequate oversight of District financial activities and did not complete mandatory fiscal oversight training. The Board did not:

- Establish adequate controls over the work of the Secretary-Treasurer (Treasurer), which include receiving and disbursing cash, signing District checks and maintaining the accounting records.
- Audit all District claims prior to payment and conduct an annual audit of the Treasurer’s records.
- Ensure the Treasurer provided financial reports to the Board or filed the District’s required annual update documents (AUDs) for fiscal years 2015 through 2021.

Had Board members attended the mandatory training, they would have better positioned themselves to oversee the District’s financial activities, and ensured the necessary internal controls and reporting requirements were in place.

Key Recommendations

- Complete mandatory fiscal oversight training, file the required AUD in a timely manner, routinely review the Treasurer’s work and audit all claims before payment.

Town of Watertown Fire District – Procurement

Audit Objective

Determine whether the Town of Watertown Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) used a competitive process to procure goods and services not subject to competitive bidding.

Background

The District is located in the Town of Watertown in Jefferson County. The District is governed by an elected five-member Board responsible for the District's overall financial management and for approving purchases, including professional services.

The Board appointed a Secretary-Treasurer (Treasurer) who acts as the chief fiscal officer. An appointed clerk oversees the daily functions within the District, including the procurement process.

Key Findings

We examined purchases totaling \$292,992 and found purchases totaling \$179,903 (61 percent) were not competitively procured as required by the District's procurement policy.

As a result, the Board and District officials do not have assurance that goods and services are acquired at the best price and that purchases are being made in the most prudent and economical manner in the best interest of taxpayers.

District officials did not:

- Use a competitive method to procure professional services and insurance coverage from five vendors totaling \$102,136.
- Obtain written quotes for 21 purchases of goods and services totaling \$77,767.

Key Recommendations

Update the procurement policy to provide officials with additional guidance for soliciting competition for professional services and insurance coverage.

Obtain quotes as required by the procurement policy and ensure that all proper documentation is maintained.

Lyndon Fire District – Disbursements

Audit Objective

Determine if the Lyndon Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) provided adequate oversight to ensure disbursements were authorized, supported and for appropriate District purposes.

Background

The District provides fire protection and emergency services to the Town of Lyndon.

The District is a district corporation of the State, distinct from the Town of Lyndon in Cattaraugus County. An elected five-member Board governs the District and is responsible for its overall financial management.

An elected Treasurer is the chief fiscal officer and is responsible for receiving, maintaining custody of, disbursing and accounting for District funds. During our audit period, two Treasurers served the District. Treasurer A served for all of 2021. Treasurer B began serving the District on January 1, 2022 and continues to hold this position.

Key Findings

Aside from minor exceptions, disbursements were authorized, supported and for appropriate District purposes.

However, the Board could improve oversight of and internal controls over disbursements. The Board:

- Did not properly segregate the disbursement duties or implement adequate mitigating controls, and it did not properly review disbursement activity.
- Could not explain what specific procedures its reviews of financial reports included.

Because the Board did not properly review disbursement activities, there is an increased risk for unauthorized and inappropriate transactions.

Key Recommendations

- Segregate incompatible duties or establish adequate mitigating controls.
- Become familiar with the resources listed in Appendix C of this report for training opportunities. District officials agreed with our findings and indicated they would initiate corrective action.

Link to complete report here: <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/local-government/audits/2022/pdf/lyndon-fire-district-2022-132.pdf>

Coeymans Hollow Fire Corporation (Company) - Board Oversight (Fire)

Audit Objective

Determine whether Coeymans Hollow Volunteer Fire Corporation (Company) Board of Directors (Board) provided adequate oversight of financial operations.

Background

The Company is a not-for-profit organization that provides fire protection within the Coeymans Hollow Fire District (District) in the Town of Coeymans in Albany County.

The Company's primary source of revenue is a fire protection contract with the District. Additional revenues come from foreign fire insurance, fundraisers and donations.

The Company is composed of volunteer members and governed by its bylaws and a seven-member Board, which is elected by the Company's members.

The Board is generally responsible for managing and overseeing the Company's financial activities. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining custody of Company financial assets and depositing and disbursing funds. The Financial Secretary is responsible for the accounting for Company assets.

Key Findings

The Board did not provide adequate oversight of the Company's financial operations. As a result, there is significant risk that Company money could be used inappropriately without detection.

The Board did not:

- Adopt or enforce adequate bylaws.
- Review claim documentation for appropriateness and did not sign vouchers to approve claims for payment.
- Establish adequate controls to ensure that all money received was properly recorded and deposited.
- Ensure that the Treasurer and Financial Secretary performed bank reconciliations for Company accounts.

Key Recommendations

- Amend the bylaws and/or adopt supplemental written financial policies and enforce compliance.
- Review claim vouchers and supporting documentation to ensure disbursements are for proper Company purposes.
- Ensure that the Financial Secretary maintains adequate cash receipts records and the Treasurer deposits funds in a timely manner.
- Perform bank reconciliations for all Company bank accounts.

RETAINING AND RECRUITING

PS419: Ohio Program Takes A Homegrown Approach To Public Safety Recruitment

Kris Lynch

A three-year program teaches Toledo high schoolers about careers in public safety.

The 2021/2022 academic year at Ohio's Toledo Public Schools (TPS) began much the same as any other year, with one notable exception – an innovative new career tech program in public safety was introduced.

Like so many others across the nation, the city of Toledo's fire and police departments have been plagued by staffing shortages and a lack of new recruits. Addressing this issue required some creative problem-solving, and fortunately, TPS had a solution. The district decided to transition its existing EMT program into one that covers a range of public safety career opportunities.

ORIGINS OF THE PROGRAM

PS419 is a reinvigorated and expanded version of the school EMT-B cohort program introduced in 2013. This earlier program was the brainchild of Councilwoman Doctor Cecelia Adams and Toledo Fire Lieutenant Daniel Brown-Martinez (now deputy chief), who wanted to support TPS students interested in pursuing careers in emergency medicine.

Not long after the EMT-B cohort program began, Toledo Fire and Rescue Department (TFRD) and Toledo Police Department (TPD) leadership and other community leaders expressed their interest in broadening the scope of the

program. Amid recruiting challenges, their desire was “to more fairly hire from within the community and more accurately represent the demographics of whom they serve,” says Deputy Chief Brown-Martinez, who now serves as PS419 lead partner. “TPS students were identified as one of the hidden gems of potential applicants.”

In 2018, with the support of Toledo Fire Chief Brian Byrd and his administration, the EMT-B cohort program was refined and redeveloped to include the interests of all public safety careers. Byrd and other local leaders believed that with the right mentorship and support, an influx of highly capable young adults who grew up in the area and who are invested in the community would be ready to join the department after high school graduation.

“We’re a community service agency,” Byrd told WTVG in 2021. “If we can’t relate to the people, you either have to have the ability to learn how to relate and/or bring that to the table when you come.”

GETTING OFF THE GROUND WITH THE RIGHT INSTRUCTOR

Many former police and fire personnel were considered for the PS419 instructor position. It was important for candidates to have the perfect balance of both hard and soft skills required for the job. “An engaging personality and commitment to [the] program [are] critical to ensuring its success through the challenges encountered by all new career tech programs,” Brown-Martinez says.

Ultimately, Instructor Andre Tiggs was selected as a good fit based on his unique qualifications and years of experience. Tiggs is a newly retired Toledo Firefighter and Police Arson Investigator, as well as a TPS graduate who continues his education at Owens Community College and the University of Toledo. Tiggs’ overlapping experience in both departments was a win, and his passion for the students and the program is unmatched, making him the right person for the job, Brown-Martinez explains.

RECRUITING AND ENROLLING STUDENTS

As for promoting and increasing interest in the program, TPS has a recruitment process in place with the support of the TFRD, TPD and TPS Career Development Coordinator Jose Rosales.

Instructor Tiggs also attends high school sporting events to inform parents of the program. Additional recruitment efforts, according to Cassandra Seimet, career technology supervisor and PS419 program supervisor, include TPS’s in-school program tours and its Career Connect Expo, both of which expose and recruit students to the program.

In its first year, PS419 enrolled approximately 40 students. The program’s gender ratio was 60% male and 40% female, with many minority groups represented.

PS419 PROGRAM CURRICULA

The three-year program allows sophomore students to begin to explore a public safety career by enrolling in “Foundations of Firefighting and Emergency Medical Services.” The year-long introductory course addresses the basics of careers in the fire service and emergency medicine.

During their junior and senior years, students can participate in four public safety courses and one capstone course. The curriculum includes the following:

- *Semester 1, Junior Year* – “The American Criminal Justice System”: This first course in the criminal justice pathway traces the history, organization, and functions of local, state and federal law enforcement.
- *Semester 2, Junior Year* – “Police Work and Practice in Public Safety”: Students will learn the skills necessary to prevent, detect and react to crime.
- *Semester 1, Senior Year* – “The Correctional System and Services”: Students will learn institutional rehabilitation and community corrections strategies that prepare them for work in a correctional setting.
- *Semester 2, Senior Year* – “Capstone Course”: Students explore firefighting or law enforcement in more depth, depending on their preference.

Joseph Miller and Emily Lewandowski don PPE. (Photo/PS419)

Through Ohio’s College Credit Plus program, PS419 students can earn high school and college credits at the same time by taking courses from Owens Community College. They can pursue degrees or certifications in the following public safety fields:

- EMT-Basic, EMT-Intermediate and EMT-Paramedic
- Emergency Services Technology
- Firefighter I and II
- Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement

Depending on their chosen career path or course of study, students can attend courses on the college campus or at their high school.

POST-GRADUATION OPTIONS

If students choose a career in firefighting, they can take a test with the City of Toledo and begin their TFRD careers at age 18.

Students who go into law enforcement can enroll at Owens Community College to take additional criminal justice courses until they are 21 years of age. They are then eligible to apply with TPD.

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

The PS419 program includes a variety of interactive extracurricular activities to supplement the required coursework. Some of the guest speaker and field trip offerings:

- TPD Canine Unit
- TFRD EMS
- TPD Police Athletic League (PAL)
- TPD Station 4
- SWAT Team
- TFRD Chief Brian Byrd
- Retired Ohio Liquor Control Agent Earl Mark
- Sergeant Laurie Renz (TPD), Crime Scene Investigator (CSI) – criminal investigations, forensics, evidence collections, documentation and fingerprinting
- Retired Detective Andre Cowell (TPD) – homicide investigations
- Lt. James Trevino (TFRD) – arson investigations
- Assistant Deputy Safety Director Angel Tucker – PS419 program tours and information
- Detective Jeff Dorner – criminal investigations
- Owens Community College Public Safety Expo field trip
- Toledo Walleye ice hockey game field trip

ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING

Both TFRD and TPD are participating in the mentorship program. Students are paired with mentors who match their interests and desired career paths. Currently, all mentors are volunteers who have chosen to participate because they believe in the students and the program.

Seimet explains that because the scheduled mentoring sessions did not always coordinate with the mentors' schedules, TPS created drop-in mentoring whereby mentors visit the schools at their convenience. TPS staff also encourage both mentees and mentors to reach out to each other regularly.

FIRST-YEAR OUTCOMES

This year, three eligible seniors applied for and took TFRD's initial examination. One student moved on to the next stage in the hiring process. The other two are maintaining their relationship with the recruitment team and could test at the next opportunity.

Seimet adds that four seniors have earned the CPR credential, and the program is currently working to get the juniors credentialed. In addition, a few seniors are looking into 911 dispatch, while the juniors continue to explore options in both fire and police.

Of the program's success so far, "The combined efforts of all parties involved led to its current success," Deputy Chief Brown-Martinez says. "We fully anticipate enrollment to increase as the program graduates are hired by the invested departments."

Although the first 3 to 5 years of career tech programs are usually the most challenging, Brown-Martinez remains optimistic and rightfully so. He knows that these early years are also when such programs establish their roots and make their most significant growth.

EQUIPMENT THAT YOU PURCHASE!

The New NFPA 1802 Portable Radio Standard

John Facella

Since the 1970s, the portable radio has been a vital tool on incident scenes. Unfortunately, the extreme physical environment that's encountered by firefighting, hazmat and technical rescue punishes these devices.

Furthermore, the hazard profile of residential structures dramatically increased because of furnishings that burn faster and hotter, engineered building materials that can fail and open space architecture that requires longer supports.

In June 2011, two [San Francisco Fire Department](#) firefighters tragically perished in a residential fire. The investigation revealed that both firefighters' remote speaker microphones (RSMs) failed because of high heat. Therefore, they couldn't transmit a mayday that they were trapped. Unfortunately, this wasn't an isolated incident. Communications are one of the five most frequent contributing factors in [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health](#) (NIOSH) reports. As a result, there were calls for a new standard to define radios that are better suited for the hazard zone.

The NFPA established a committee in March of 2013 to define a more rugged portable radio. This new standard, [NFPA 1802: Standard on Two-Way, Portable RF Voice Communications Devices for Use by Emergency Services Personnel in the Hazard Zone](#) (2021 edition), defines for the first time a radio and speaker microphone that are designed for the inherently hostile environment in which firefighters, hazmat teams and other agencies operate.

Thirty-five Technical Committee members worked on this effort, along with another 21 committee alternates and several other noncommittee observers. The group classifications on this Technical Committee included users, enforcement, manufacturers, labor, testing laboratories, consumers and special experts. Fire departments represented major areas and suburban/rural departments. The committee was led by Robert Athanas, who served on the FDNY for 36 years. He was assisted by NFPA Staff Liaison David Trebisacci.

OVERVIEW

The technical committee worked on three major areas to define these new devices: ergonomics, feature set and environment. Decisions were made at the beginning:

- The standard would encompass both the radio and the RSM, because the RSM often is the most exposed item to the fire environment
- The standard only would concern two-way voice devices
- The standard would be agnostic to the specific technologies that are used, such as radio frequencies and communications technologies (analog vs. digital modulation; trunking vs. nontrunking; LTE 4G as found in broadband devices); the result is that this standard will be useful even as voice communications advance

Author's note: The standard is very wide-ranging. Therefore, the summaries that are below are highlights and not all-inclusive. For specific details refer to the standard, which can be found at [nfpa.org](#).

ERGONOMICS

Emergency incident scenes are stressful and distracting. Multiple researchers have discovered first responder "tunnel vision" when a situation deteriorates. Thus, every first responder's wireless lifeline device must be simple to use, to reduce the chances for error. Some of the key issues addressed:

- Radio control knobs and cable connectors must be able to be manipulated by responders who have large hands and/or who are wearing structural firefighting gloves
- The emergency alert (mayday) button must be easy to find
- Manipulation of the radio's controls is difficult or impossible if a member is trapped or injured or the radio is worn under the turnout coat or in the coat radio pocket; therefore, some important controls must be available from the RSM, which typically is worn on the outside of the turnout coat: the RSM is required to have an emergency alert button, and it can have at least one programmable button, which can be used for various purposes, such as reverting back to a home channel/talkgroup; the cable that's between the radio and the RSM is monitored; problems create an alert
- NFPA 1802 radios and RSMs will include voice announcements of various actions, including channel/talkgroup changes: if there is radio traffic, the voice announcement is delayed and then played when the radio traffic ceases; announcements while the radio is operated in the hazard-zone mode are louder
- The radio must provide clear voice transmission and reception; speech intelligibility is objectively measured with an internationally recognized test method that's used by cellular telephone carriers, called POLQA

FEATURE SET

At minimum, every radio must allow for analog conventional (nontrunked) transmission. This requirement provides for lowest-common-denominator communications among all emergency scene radios, even if all of the supporting radio infrastructure should fail.

Interoperability is guaranteed among all NFPA 1802-certified radios and all NFPA 1802-certified RSMs by means of the inclusion of a universal connector.

Visual and audible indicators of battery status are displayed.

Hazard-zone operation is different from the nonhazard zone, and the radio defaults to the hazard-zone mode when it is powered on initially. In the hazard zone, the radio's volume is louder. Radios can be programmed so that inadvertent powering off of the radio can be reduced when in the hazard zone.

Bluetooth technology allows the use of wireless SCBA microphones/speakers, RSMs, etc. As well, the radio periodically self-checks, and it must have a data logger that stores recent events, such as mayday activation. The purpose is to provide information for both the fire service and its vendors regarding proper performance of this equipment under stress.

ENVIRONMENTAL & TESTING

Overtemperature events are detected, recorded and alerted, and the radio and RSM must be rated nonincendive (Class I Division 2). Optionally, the radio and RSM can be certified as intrinsically safe-rated (Class I Division 1).

Radios and RSMs must undergo very extensive environmental testing. After most tests, the radio and/or RSM must undergo successful voice quality and operational checks. Here are a few highlights:

- Six complete cycles of 15 minutes of baking at 350 degrees F (177 degrees C), followed by immediate immersion in water for 15 minutes
- A three-hour vibration test
- Impact tests are performed on three devices by dropping on a concrete floor from 9.8 feet (3 meters), as if dropped from the bed of a ladder truck or engine
- Corrosion test includes high humidity and a salt spray
- A high-temperature test exposes the device to 500 degrees F (260 degrees C) for five minutes
- Heat and flame test first exposes the device for 15 minutes to a temperature of 203 degrees F (95 degrees C), after which the device is subjected to a 1,742 degrees F (950 degrees C) flame for 10 seconds
- A temperature stress test exposes the device to multiple cycles of warm-hot-warm-cold temperatures

NOW WHAT?

The committee didn't address the provision of SCBA audio devices (microphones and earpieces). This will be the responsibility of the committee for [NFPA 1981: Standard on Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus \(SCBA\) for Emergency Services](#). When NFPA 1981 includes this, voice intelligibility will improve significantly.

Radios and RSMs that meet this standard will have new levels of ruggedness and ease of use and improved voice quality and functionality, which will result in improved safety for firefighters and others who work in the hazard zone.

Although the standard only recently was issued, several manufacturers plan to introduce NFPA 1802 radios and RSMs.

FIRE APPARATUS!

What Would Your Dream Apparatus Feature?

If you could spec the perfect apparatus, what would it have that's currently out of reach? Imagine your dream apparatus – within reason; it can't fly for example. What might this apparatus of the future realistically feature 10, maybe 30, years from now – something you'd like to see in your lifetime or at least wish for a future generation of firefighters?

Yes, it's a little pie-in-the-sky, but this is where great ideas are born.

We asked several FireRescue1 contributors for their thoughts – and we want to hear yours, too!

CHIEF MARC BASHOOR: FROM COW-PUSHERS TO BLUETOOTH AND BEYOND

Don't we all dream like this? I know when I was growing up, the animated show "The Jetsons" showed us the world of the future with flying cars, robots and speaking gadgets – and now, in 2022, we're *almost* there! But what about fire apparatus? What would they look like if we had "our way"?

- *Cow-pushers*: Now, this one might seem uncaring, but let's face it, haven't we all wished we had train-like cow-pushers on the front of our engines to move traffic out of the way? I know I'm not the only one who's talked about it and, in fact, I know a few fire trucks and specialty vehicles that have been used that way, just without the formality of an attached cow-pusher mechanism.
- *Bluetooth*: Bluetooth technology at all levels of what we do exists today – pump panels, mobile data terminals, SCBA tracking, and more. Bluetooth and/or satellite technology immersed in what we do would help dispatchers and incident commanders track firefighters, apparatus and equipment; help locate downed firefighters on the X, Y, and Z axes; keep firefighters connected throughout their shift; and improve safety at various levels by providing hands-free capability for communications.
- *Hybrids*: A hybrid fire apparatus that uses wind, solar, electric AND diesel to maximize efficiency while working to reduce the overall carbon footprint.

I suspect some of you are screaming defiantly, "Wake up, Chief" while others are thinking, "Dream on, Chief." I'll keep one eye open and let you know how it goes!

DEPUTY CHIEF BYRON KENNEDY: FIREFIGHTER SAFETY IN FOCUS

Today's apparatus are undisputedly safer, more efficient and comfortable than ever before. Capabilities have also increased over the year; however, this is the area where we may have some of the biggest opportunities.

- *Low-profile/waterproofed drone compartment*: Many fire departments/districts already have drone capabilities for tethered and untethered drones. Understanding that space is already limited for storage, I believe that super-fast deployment opportunities for these drones can be accomplished by creating a low-profile compartment on the top of the apparatus that allows for an apparatus-based drone deployment (tethered or untethered).
- *Apparatus-specific personnel monitoring*: Many departments enjoy the luxury of being able to monitor certain vitals of firefighters who are actively involved in fire suppression. Typically, the information goes to the IC's vehicle, and the data is never shared with the unit's personnel. With this added feature, personnel will have the ability to review their own data once they return to the station without worrying about being criticized for having a higher-than-expected heart rate or respiratory rate, for example.
- *Mounted rehab misting nozzles*: In many regions, firefighters endure the austere environments within structures and come outside of the structures to endure extreme heat and humidity. This simple setup would require an outlet on the intake side of the pump with retractable sturdy plumbing that extends a safe distance from the apparatus fuel exhaust. Of course, the unit would need to be connected to an appropriate water source to be careful of the fact that tank water can become extremely hot. The apparatus using the misting devices should be in the cool zone where rehab is more productive.
- *Bullet-resistant glass*: For years, our industry has enjoyed a non-threatening stance within the community. But today, we are seeing more and more instances in which firefighters and medics are having to retreat to their apparatus for cover during active gunfire. Current apparatus offer concealment rather than cover. We should have bullet-resistant glass.

BATTALION CHIEF VINCE BETTINAZZI: AUTO-PILOT APPARATUS

I'd like to see an auto-piloted apparatus – one that receives the incident's location and automatically takes the firefighters to the scene. The technology would be able to predict traffic patterns, identify road closures, and receive the fastest route time through GPS. The apparatus would allow the responding personnel to focus on preplanning and strategically prepare for their scene actions en route to the call. When the incident is over, this apparatus will safely return the crew to quarters and park itself inside the bay.

CAPTAIN ROM DUCKWORTH: AUTO-DEPLOYED DRONES

Situational awareness is a key factor at every emergency scene. Following current trends, down the road, I see non-aerial fire apparatus of the future equipped with top-mounted, automatically deployed drones. This technology would be the scene surveillance version of backup cameras. Yes, we got along without them for years, but look how much better we can now see exactly where we are in relation to our surroundings. Current technology is already leading drones to identify obstacles and, in many ways, operate independently. I see this as primarily "hands-off" technology rather than requiring a separate drone operations team. For future apparatus, it would just be a normal part of on-scene situational awareness,

with screens available not only for the incident commander but for the apparatus driver-operator and others working in the area.

A natural extension of this would be thermal imager cameras or other optics, as well as possible tethered options to provide scene lighting from directly overhead.

FIREFIGHTER AARON ZAMZOW: COMPARTMENTS, CABS AND ALERTS

My wish list for the perfect apparatus starts with compartments size and height. We need to lower the chassis and compartments to take the stress off our knees and shoulders when stepping up to the rig and reaching for heavy equipment in the compartments.

I would also love to see a cleaner-cab design that still gives quick access to SCBA and tools.

Finally, I believe there needs to be a better alarming system besides lights and sirens that alerts the surrounding traffic of an operating emergency vehicle. We need to utilize mapping apps and technology to control intersections and alert traffic to yield to our vehicles.

THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Interests, Conflicts Of Interest And Disclosures

AFDSNY Fire District Affairs

Fire districts and their officers are governed by Article 18 of the General Municipal Law and the rules it sets for avoiding conflicts of interest. These statutes and the Code of Ethics which they require your district to adopt will set a framework for fire district officials to follow to avoid engaging in an illegal conflict of interest. Three aspects of the avoidance of conflicts are deciding whether an official has a conflict, making a determination if a conflict is prohibited and making a determination when an official disclosure is required. We must also remember that the written Code of Ethics which your fire district has adopted and will amend from time to time can set stiffer requirements for your officials than the statutes provide for. In this article we will focus on the disclosure requirement. The matters that will raise the conflict issue are called "interests". The statute defines an interest as;

"Interest" means a direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit accruing to a municipal officer or employee as the result of a contract with the municipality which such officer or employee serves. For the purposes of this article a municipal officer or employee shall be deemed to have an interest in the contract of (a) his spouse, minor children and dependents, except a contract of employment with the municipality which such officer or employee serves, (b) a firm, partnership or association of which such officer or employee is a member or employee, (c) a corporation of which such officer or employee is an officer, director or employee and (d) a corporation any stock of which is owned or controlled directly or indirectly by such officer or employee. N.Y. Gen. Mun. Law § 800 (McKinney)

Again, we must emphasize that this is the basic statutory definition of an interest. Your Code of Ethics may expand, but not diminish that definition. For example, many Codes of Ethics expand the list of relatives that may create an interest for a municipal official. You must review your Code to make certain which rule applies to you. You need to know which relatives create conflicts for you so you can avoid the conflicts and know that the interest is one that must be disclosed. One aspect of the concept of the interest is that it relates to contracts and the statute also defines "contracts";

"Contract" means any claim, account or demand against or agreement with a municipality, express or implied, and shall include the designation of a depository of public funds and the designation of a newspaper, including but not limited to an official newspaper, for the publication of any notice, resolution, ordinance, or other proceeding where such publication is required or authorized by law. N.Y. Gen. Mun. Law § 800 (McKinney)

The statutory scheme then defines when an interest can be defined as a "conflict of interest" which is prohibited; *Except as provided in section eight hundred two of this chapter,*

(1) no municipal officer or employee shall have an interest in any contract with the municipality of which he is an officer or employee, when such officer or employee, individually or as a member of a board, has the power or duty to

- (a) negotiate, prepare, authorize or approve the contract or authorize or approve payment thereunder*
- (b) audit bills or claims under the contract, or*
- (c) appoint an officer or employee who has any of the powers or duties set forth above and*

(2) no chief fiscal officer, treasurer, or his deputy or employee, shall have an interest in a bank or trust company designated as a depository, paying agent, registration agent or for investment of funds of the municipality of which he is an officer or employee. The provisions of this section shall in no event be construed to preclude the payment of lawful compensation and necessary expenses of any municipal officer or employee in one or more positions of public employment, the holding of which is not prohibited by law. N.Y. Gen. Mun. Law § 801 (McKinney)

Clearly, fire commissioners have the powers described in the statute and cannot delegate those powers. Thus, interests that they have in contracts of the fire district will create a prohibited conflict interest unless the particular interest is covered in one of the exceptions listed in General Municipal Law § 802.

We now know what an interest is and we also need to understand our disclosure requirements under the law. General Municipal Law § 803 explains the disclosure requirement;

- 1. Any municipal officer or employee who has, will have, or later acquires an interest in or whose spouse has, will have, or later acquires an interest in any actual or proposed contract, purchase agreement, lease agreement or other agreement, including oral agreements, with the municipality of which he or she is an officer or employee, shall publicly disclose the nature and extent of such interest in writing to his or her immediate supervisor and to the governing body thereof as soon as he or she has knowledge of such actual or prospective interest. Such written disclosure shall be made part of and set forth in the official record of the proceedings of such body.*
- 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision one of this section, disclosure shall not be required in the case of an interest in a contract described in subdivision two of section eight hundred two hereof. N.Y. Gen. Mun. Law § 803 (McKinney)*

Let's keep in mind that it is a best practice that when you identify a potential conflict of interest as a municipal official to follow the process and disclose the interest. Most of you are not attorneys and may not be certain as to whether or not an interest is a prohibited interest or whether or not it is covered by an exception under the statute that creates a disclosure exception. If you disclose the interest, you have complied with your duty to disclose it if it is in fact a mandatory disclosure item. The rules on disclosure are not onerous for fire district officials because under General Municipal Law § 812 fire district officials are not required to file annual financial disclosure forms. That statute lists certain local governments whose officials and employees must file financial disclosure statements. Fire districts are not on that list of local governments to which this form of financial disclosure applies. Financial disclosure form filing can be a trap for many local government officials and employees since a mistake can place them in a precarious position.

Remember that certain violations of the provisions of Article 18 can be a misdemeanor (crime). That means some discrepancies on financial disclosure forms can result in criminal prosecution.

So let's look at how you will comply with your disclosure requirement.

However, before we do so let's also remember one important rule. If an interest is a prohibited interest for you as a fire district official and the interest is not covered by a statutory exception disclosure of the interest does not eliminate the fact that it is prohibited. Filing your disclosure and even abstaining from voting on the matter does not change the fact that the contract is prohibited and that you and fire district cannot move forward to approve and process the contract.

Another important concept to remember when it comes to prohibited interests that are covered by no statutory exception is that they cannot be cured by competitive bidding or the performance of a request for proposal process. Offering the best price or the best terms to the fire district will not cure the conflict. Maintaining public confidence in the integrity of the purchasing process is deemed more important than obtaining the best price or the best terms.

The other commissioners cannot ignore your prohibited conflict and approve the contract.

Of course, they may not know about the conflict unless you disclose the conflict and that is why the law requires you to do so.

So here is what you do in order to disclose your interest;

- 1. You identify that you have an interest in a potential contract of the fire district as soon as you learn of the interest;*
- 2. You publicly disclose the interest in writing to your supervisor (if an employee or officer who reports to a supervisor) and to the governing board of the fire district;*
You make certain that the written disclosure is read off at an official meeting of the Board

of Fire Commissioners and made a part of the minutes of the meeting;

4. You make certain that the written disclosure is appended to and made of a part of the minutes of that meeting; and

5. If you are a member of the Board you verify inclusion in the meeting minutes when you review the draft of the official meeting minutes and vote on approving same. If you miss that meeting where the minutes are approved review the approved minutes later and verify the inclusion of your disclosure. If it has not been included make a motion at a subsequent meeting to amend the minutes and include your prior written disclosure.

If you prefer not to disclose interests that are excluded as prohibited conflicts under General Municipal Law § 802, note that only the exceptions listed in subparagraph two of the statute are protected from disclosure. Those listed in subparagraph one still must be disclosed even if they are not prohibited conflicts due to a subparagraph one exception. The subparagraph two exceptions which are interests that do not have to be disclosed are;

2. a. A contract with a corporation in which a municipal officer or employee has an interest by reason of stockholdings when less than five per centum of the outstanding stock of the corporation is owned or controlled directly or indirectly by such officer or employee;

b. A contract for the furnishing of public utility services when the rates or charges therefor are fixed or regulated by the public service commission;

c. A contract for the payment of a reasonable rental of a room or rooms owned or leased by an officer or employee when the same are used in the performance of his official duties and are so designated as an office or chamber;

d. A contract for the payment of a portion of the compensation of a private employee of an officer when such employee performs part time service in the official duties of the office;

e. A contract in which a municipal officer or employee has an interest if the total consideration payable thereunder, when added to the aggregate amount of all consideration payable under contracts in which such person had an interest during the fiscal year, does not exceed the sum of seven hundred fifty dollars.

f. A contract with a member of a private industry council established in accordance with the federal job training partnership act¹ or any firm, corporation or association in which such member holds an interest, provided the member discloses such interest to the council and the member does not vote on the contract. N.Y. Gen. Mun. Law § 802 (McKinney)

Hopefully, this article will provide you with an understanding of your obligation to disclosure interests you may have in potential contracts of your fire district. As noted above our recommendation for a best practice is that when in doubt disclose. Disclosure benefits you, your fellow fire district officers and the community you serve. Please also keep in mind that you must read, review and have a working understanding of your fire district's Code of Ethics in order to cover all of your bases when it comes to conflicts, ethics and complying with your duty to make disclosures.

For information only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. The opinions expressed are the opinions of the individual author at the time the facts were presented and based on the law then applicable. The information contained in these opinions is not guaranteed to be up to date. The information provided is not legal advice. Since legal advice must be tailored to the specific circumstances of each case, and laws are constantly changing, nothing on this site should be used as a substitute for the advice of competent legal counsel. The authors assume no responsibility to any person who relies on information contained herein and disclaim all liability in respect to such information. You should not act upon information in this publication without seeking professional counsel from an attorney admitted to practice in your jurisdiction.

STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE:

Have You Forgotten? A Call To Chiefs To Remember Who They Serve

Chris DelBello

Let me use the word "forgotten" in a few sentences for you:

- "Firefighters are very often forgotten."
- "Citizens' needs are often forgotten."
- "Some chiefs have forgotten where they came from or have forgotten why they became firefighters in the first place."
- "It's unfortunate and concerning how the past sacrifices of firefighters and lessons learned at the cost of firefighters' lives are so soon forgotten."

In my 31 years of service, I have seen the reality of these sentences all too often and, recently, with alarming regularity. It's like an epidemic with no cure.

As firefighters climb the ranks, it seems like part of the process includes forgetting what it's like to be a line firefighter – the challenges of the job and what it takes to get the job done.

With this in mind, I'd like to offer a reminder to the chiefs who have forgotten why they started this career and what it is that firefighters working under their command really expect.

SERVICE TO OTHERS FIRST AND FOREMOST

Service to our community is our primary mission. Without the proper budget and equipment, your firefighters can only do the best with what they have, often at great peril to our citizens.

Don't forget that it is your job as the fire chief to fight for the budget needed to provide this service. You are literally the only person that can do this. It is your job to sell our needs to the number-crunchers, not reduce the budget from some other division.

SACRIFICE – NOT AT THE COST OF FIREFIGHTER SAFETY

Sacrifice should not occur at the cost of firefighter safety because you, as the fire chief, were not willing to fight for and provide the budget needed for equipment or training. Poor equipment and inadequate training get firefighters injured and killed.

If you think that today's initial recruit certification process in any way prepares the new recruit for reality, you are sadly mistaken and out of touch with just how low the standards have become.

If you fear injuries to your firefighters, it's likely because you have not trained them well enough nor provided them with the very best of every piece of equipment they need to do their job.

Don't forget that training is the No. 1 priority of a good leader. And don't forget that it is your job to secure a budget that includes realistic and useful training.

Further, do not let your members be the only people sacrificing. Real chiefs make change. Real change. Positive change. Effective change. And they do it for the members and citizens at the sacrifice of possibly losing the rank of chief as part of the good fight.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER: "COURAGE TO SERVE AND SACRIFICE"

So many have worn those words on their chest. Let me remind you, though, that it wasn't for or about serving politicians. It wasn't about finding ways to cut budgets and needed programs.

As a firefighter, you signed up because you had the courage to serve in a dangerous profession. To help people in danger. To bring calm to chaos.

In your position now, courage is shown in how hard you fight for your firefighters and provide them with the necessary programs to improve the department and morale.

Your members have that courage. Let them use that courage. Allow your members to do their jobs. Do not handcuff them or stifle them with weak and watered-down guidelines in an effort to protect them. Have the courage to get them the proper training so that they are educated. Then allow them to vent that roof, make the push and make the grab.

If you do not have the courage to fight for what your members need, you are not a chief, you are a politically appointed management tool.

LOVE OF THE JOB

Chiefs, do you remember that feeling – the love of the job? Do you remember station life? Can you recall the feeling after a good working fire where you and a crew made a big impact on the outcome? Do you remember the camaraderie that came with working long hours with the crew – the feeling of accomplishment after a job well done?

Some tips to keep in mind:

- Don't forget to love this job so much that your members see it and it makes them love the job.
- Don't forget everything about this job that made you love it.
- Don't forget that department morale is your responsibility.

WHERE CHIEFS FAIL THEIR MEMBERS TOO MANY TIMES

Too many times, I see that chiefs have forgotten that it's not the chief who makes a department extraordinary. They forget that it's the members who make the department what it is. The members are the ones who, too often, are pushing

through bad management decisions, budget cuts, limited resources and continually failing equipment. They are the ones pushing to make the grabs, pushing themselves to be better, training on their own time and dime, purchasing superior personal equipment with their paychecks, only to have a chief send out a memorandum stating policy against such action. Really, chief, what's the alternative?

Too many times, I see chiefs concerned only about padding their resume, another feather in their hat or medal on their chest. If it wasn't impacting so many lives, it would be comical. Don't get me wrong, a good resume is important, but not at the expense of firefighters and citizens' safety.

Too many times, I see unnecessary programs initiated often at the expense of truly needed and appropriate programs within that same department.

Too many times, I see antiquated programs remain active long after they've failed or outlived their usefulness, even when this glaringly obvious point is reinforced with statistics and studies. Too many chiefs hate to say they were wrong. Please be humble enough to recognize and admit when you are wrong – and that sometimes means shutting down a bad program that you implemented. The senior members of your department will respect you a little more, if it's not too late.

THE PROBLEM WITH POLITICALLY APPOINTED CHIEFS

A politically appointed chief is the one who can unwittingly destroy everything good about your department. He is the one who comes into office, never makes any real improvements for the members. She is the one who denies that there are problems or sugarcoats them to the public, or worse, puts the responsibility on the backs of the members. He's the one who does not put up much of a fight about the budget cuts. She's the one who does not have the courage to stand up for her members. He's the one who does not have a single original idea to bring to the department or, worse yet, tries to initiate a program that worked for his last department in your much-different department. And the worst thing of all, he takes the job knowing that there was no budget to work with in the first place or that the budget was getting cut.

Now, if I was offered a job, I would need to know what is expected of me. What is my operational budget? What is my payroll budget? What is my training budget? What is my equipment budget? What are my capital expenditures? And, of course, I would insist on and want to improve on every one of those budgets before agreeing to take such an important position.

You would think every chief taking a job would care about those things before accepting the position. That's just not the case. Too many times, I see chiefs taking these jobs, and they are nothing more than an inexperienced politically appointed puppet for some mayor or city manager. They speak when only spoken to and say only what they've been told to say – and are usually way in over their heads.

This is becoming the accepted norm for chiefs! Why work so hard during your career to get a job that will be so unrewarding or even damage your future reputation?

TO THE ASPIRING CHIEFS ...

If you aspire to be a fire chief, please take this advice:

- NEVER FORGET the ones who sacrifice!
- NEVER FORGET where you came from!
- NEVER FORGET the chiefs who you lost respect for, and at all costs, avoid being THAT CHIEF!

If you cannot take this advice, on behalf of all of the members and all of the departments that you could potentially set back years of progress, with as much respect as I can muster, I implore you to not accept a fire chief position. Stay at your current rank and do the best you can there. But don't promote and infect the next generation of firefighters and destroy their morale, aspirations and vision of the fire service.

TO THE CURRENT CHIEFS ...

If any of this feels like I'm talking to you, you may still have a chance to turn it around and earn some respect back. It's not going to be easy. It's going to take courage on your part. It may even take some sacrifice as well. The important thing is that you are showing the firefighters that you haven't forgotten them, their sacrifices or the love of the job.

THE LIGHTER SIDE!

There is a garden in England dedicated to plants that are deadly. It's the most dangerous garden in the world, holding over 100 plants that can kill.

One visitor asked if there was a gift shop!!!!

OFFICERS OF THE CAPITAL AREA ASSOCIATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS

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The Capital Area Association represents fire district officials from the fire districts in Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Warren, Washington, Saratoga, Fulton and Montgomery Counties

Fire District Officials include Commissioners, Treasurers, Secretaries and Chief

All are invited to participate in all of the Capital Area Activities

The Capital Area Association wants to take this opportunity to thank all the Fire Districts who continue to support the local Capital Area Association as members for 2023.

FIRE DISTRICT RESOURCES --THE BACK PAGE -- FOR YOU TO FOLLOW UP!

What are the duties and responsibilities of a Commissioner?

The Answer is posted on our web site at www.AFDCA.org

Vital Statistics on the State Association Regions – the break out is on our web site.

Get a copy of the 2022 ELECTION SCHEDULE HERE: <https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-Election-Schedule-1.pdf>

CAPITAL AREA BUSINESS PARTNER'S

PLEASE SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT US!!

Business Partner Applications Available At: WWW.AFDCA.ORG

[Welcome Back all of our Business Partners for 2022](#)

We invite our business partners to submit educational information to be included in this Bulletin for district commissioners and chief officers

Write me at tom@rinaldi1.com

Please Support Those Who Support Us!!

If you have information on new products you wish to showcase or is educational and informative for fire districts, please submit it and we will use it in this Bulletin under the appropriate heading.

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The Capital Bulletin is reaching well over 400+ fire district members and now other members of the fire service on a regular basis. Since the Capital Area Association covers an area the size of Connecticut it is difficult to meet in person to exchange information and ideas.

This is a service of the Capital Area Association through the effort of Tom Rinaldi who can be reached at tom@rinaldi1.com for comments or content contributions are always welcome.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS OF THE CAPITAL AREA

Would you like to join the Association of Fire Districts of the Capital Area and join 75 members in 8 counties? Both fire protection districts and Village departments are eligible for membership.

The yearly membership dues (January 1st to December 31st) shall be as follows and shall be based on the annual budget of the Fire District/Organization;

To take effect January 2023:

\$0 to \$200,000: \$50

\$200,001 to \$400,000: \$100

\$400,001 to \$600,000: \$200

\$600,001 plus: \$300

Business Partners: \$100.00 annual member fee



association of fire districts
OF THE
CAPITAL AREA, INC.

2023 Events Calendar

Date	Time	Type	Location
Saturday, January 7, 2023	9:00 AM	Organizational Meeting	Clifton Park
Thursday, February 9, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Saturday, February 11, 2023	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Averill Park
Saturday, March 4, 2023	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Clifton Park
Thursday, March 9, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Saturday, March 11, 2023	6:00 PM	Officer Installation & Reception Dinner	Embassy Suites, Saratoga
Saturday, March 25, 2023	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Berkshire
Thursday, April 6, 2023	7:00 PM	Board Meeting	Clifton Park
Thursday, May 11, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Thursday, June 8, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Thursday, July 13, 2023	7:00 PM	Board Meeting	Clifton Park
Thursday, September 14, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
October 2023	NO MEETING		
Thursday, October 12, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Saturday, November 4, 2023	8:00 AM	Fall Workshop	TBD
Thursday, November 9, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
December 2023	NO MEETING		
Saturday, January 6, 2024	9:00 AM	Organizational Meeting	TBD