

# **Berks County Fire Service Working Group Meeting Minutes**

**April 28, 2011**

## **ATTENDANCE**

ZONE 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Schegan (46)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Yenser (21)
ZONE 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chuck Snyder (50)	Eric Schrack (41)      Ken Quell (37)
ZONE 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lester Feick (27)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Martin (47)
ZONE 4	Scot Landis (67)	Bruce Longenecker (79) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Hostetter (85)
ZONE 5/6	Matt Gehman (22) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Fox (34)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Schaeffer (20) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Stevens (17)
ZONE 7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kevin Kulp (RFD)	Ron Wentzel (RFD)
BERKS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Gottschall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Wanner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tony Flores
BERKS COUNTY FIREMAN'S ASSOCIATION	Roger Widenhammer	
BERKS COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leon Grim	
BERKS COUNTY FIRE POLICE ASSOCIATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Englebach	
OTHERS:		

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chris Stevens at 1818 hours in the Berks County Department of Emergency Services Conference room, located in the Direct Link Building, Bernville Road, Leesport, PA. The minutes of the March meeting were approved as posted with no additions or corrections.

## **DISCUSSION**

**Tony Flores:** DES Director Brian Gottschall introduced Tony Flores, Technical Services Manager. Tony comes from York County and will be heavily involved in the new CAD, P25 and phone system projects. WELCOME TONY!!!!

**Run Card Implementation/Update:** Craig Wanner provided WG with an update on the progress of run cards being entered into the system. Tony Flores reviewed the progress and what work stills needs to be completed. Tony has since revised implementation dates which can be found on the DES website. Tony also communicated they plan on updating the implementation progress weekly on the website.

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Dispatches:** Chairman Stevens was unable to attend the EMS WG Meeting due to work. Chris did send a formal letter to the EMS WG regarding the Fire WG proposition for 2<sup>nd</sup> dispatches and cover assignment to which the EMS WG declined. There will be no changes to 2<sup>nd</sup> dispatches and cover assignments at present time.

**P25 System:** Brian Gottschall stated he has completed radio workup spreadsheets for 12 fire departments to date. Fire departments are encouraged to contact Brian at work (610) 374-4800 x. 8202, or via email at bgottschall@countyofberks.com to set up a time to review their radio needs and spreadsheet workups. Brian also explained that DES is not ready to create fleet maps. Once proper resources and consultants are secured the process will begin.

**RCC:** Tony Flores reported on March 29<sup>th</sup> he received notice from RCC that they attended an AFG workshop and was told funding is expected for this years AFG. However it was not yet approved by congress due to the federal budget crisis. On April 14<sup>th</sup>, the federal budget was approved and there will be funding for the AFG but no set dollar amount has been authorized. The expected application period is June/July. RCC and DES will have a strategy meeting in the near future in preparation for the opening of the application period. Fire departments who want to participate in the county regional grant for radios should prepare by getting information together for the data entry application for RCC when it becomes available online.

**CAD:** DES has a tentative schedule to start uploading box alarms in the new CAD for the end of August.

**Portable Radio Testing:** Brian Gottschall communicated testing of the new portable radio for the P25 system is tabled, waiting for Motorola to re-schedule.

**County Fire Training:** Brian Gottschall explained that RACC has contacted the county and was told they want to drop its fire training program due to budgetary constraints. RACC stated they could continue to run fire training programs if they receive \$150,000 of financial assistance from Berks County. The county is looking into ways to help RACC continue the training program. If the county assists RACC financially, the county would need to try and recoup the money given to RACC and there are a few possible options being explored.

1. Open enrollment for classes - tuition is per person, per class - similar to what RACC does today. However, time limits will be set and enforced. For example, if enrollment ends 2 weeks prior to the class, there will be no extensions for enrollment. Also, if a student signs up for a class and does not attend, the student is responsible for the tuition, as long as the class is run.

2. Training Group - Similar to what Bucks has offered. A fire dept would pay a set fee for unlimited training for the year. Problem is there is no way Berks could

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be as competitive with Bucks, even with Bucks more restrictive and more expensive training group programs.

3. "Credits" - A fire company would have the ability to purchase "X" amount of training credits at the beginning of the year. For example, you could purchase 500 training credits at the beginning of the year and use them throughout the year.

WG members were asked to discuss with their respective zones on if they believe the county should step in and help RACC continue its training program or if the county should let RACC dissolve its fire training program.

**911 Advisory Board:** Brian Gottschall and the county commissioners will speak to the Berks County 911 Advisory Board and request amending the by-laws to include representation from the Berks County Fire Service Working Group. The Working Group, as a majority, was in favor of representation to the 911 Advisory Board. The WG, in preparation, recommended Leon Grimm to be a representative to the 911 Advisory Board. A second representative has been tabled until the May WG meeting.

**WG Representatives:** The WG welcomes Eric Fox from Ruscobmanor Fire Co as a replacement for Mike DeTurk for Zone 5/6. Roger Widenhammer from Kenhorst will be the Berks County Fireman's Association representative for the late Dick Trostle. WELCOME ERIC AND ROGER!!!!

Adjourned at 2046.

Next WG meeting will be held on Thursday May 26<sup>th</sup> 2011 at 1815pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Chuck Snyder, BFSWG Secretary