

BERKS COUNTY FIRE SERVICES WORKING GROUP
Meeting Minutes – February 27, 2014

ATTENDANCE:

Zone 1		Matt Brett		Ethan Kunkel	x	Scott Yenser (alt)
Zone 2	x	Eric Schrack	x	Ken Quell	x	Dean Dalious (alt)
Zone 3		Bob Martin		Corey Houser		Lester Feick
Zone 4		Scot Landis		Bruce Longenecker		
Zones 5/6	x	Chris Stevens	x	Chris Schaeffer		Matt Gehman
	x	Eric Fox				
Zone 7	x	Stephen Serba		Tom Rehr		
BCFA	x	Roger Weidenhammer		Leon Grim		
BCFPA	x	Bob Englebach		J. David Bossard (alt)		
Training	x	Bob Snyder				
Berks DES	x	Brian Gottschall	x	Tony Flores		Matt Stairiker
		Craig Wanner	x	Todd Boughter	x	Christina Wood
Forestry 17		Joe Sherman		Ron Minnich (alt)		

Other attendees: None.

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.

There was one correction to the January 2014 meeting minutes. Under Zone 5&6, the third bullet-point should read "Inquired about the ability to assign non-like fire apparatus to **relocates**" as opposed to "staging/standby". The minutes were approved as corrected.

DISCUSSION

East-Central Task Force: No report

BCFA: Progress.

BCFPA: Bob Englebach relayed to the Working Group concerns about returning to using fire company numbers for fire police, as opposed to municipality numbers. Bob states it is previous policy of the BCFPA to use muni numbers on their radio system. A poll was taken by Chairman Stevens of all the zones in attendance as to what the wishes of their zones were regarding this issue. Zones 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are all in favor of fire police using their company/department number. Zone 3 was not in attendance. **The Zone representatives are now tasked with going back to their respective zones and choosing a date to make the change countywide. Reps will be bringing their zone's wishes back to the April Fire Working Group meeting.**

Forestry: Dean Dalious reports that a PA130 class has started at the Berks Fire Training Site despite low enrollment. A suggestion was made by Chairman Stevens to have Forestry training announcements added to the Berks Fire Training Committee's Facebook page and website.

911 Advisory Board (Chris): No February meeting. Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 6th.

Training (Bob Snyder):

- Jon Fritz has taken a career firefighter position and is no longer the Superintendent of the Berks Fire Training Site. The County is actively searching for a replacement. Staff are working very hard to accommodate all facility requests, but some cancellations may be inevitable. Additionally, the annual engineering survey of the burn building evidenced some damage to the structure that needs to be repaired before burning next season. This is not unusual and is something we accommodate every year. The difference is that this year the weather has not allowed us to do this work in the off-season. We requires structure surface temps over 40 degrees round the clock for at least 48-72 hours after the repairs are made. This means that we will likely be cancelling burns out into AT LEAST April to allow this work to be done. Staff at the Center are communicating directly to agencies that are impacted.
- Essentials class is currently underway.
- Due to an initial lack of enrollment, the Managing Company Tactical Operations 4-part series has been pushed back. Sessions 1, 2, and 3 have been moved into the Sessions 2, 3, and 4 dates. There WILL be a 4th.
- A reminder that checks for regular classes scheduled and run by the Fire Training committee should be made out to the Fire Training committee, and checks for certification classes MUST be made out to the County of Berks.
- The new Essentials program from the State Fire Commissioner's office has been realigned. The order is as follows: Mod 1, Haz-Mat Awareness, ICS 100 (online completion by each student, Mod 2, Mod 3, Haz-Mat Operations, Mod 4, and SBS. Mod 1, Haz-Mat Awareness and ICS 100 are pre-requisites to continue to Mod 2. Mod 3 and Haz-Mat Ops are pre-requisites to continue to Mod 4. Berks includes Haz-Mat Awareness with Mod 1, and Haz-Mat Ops with Mod 3.

CAD (Tony): There are only four fire companies/departments that need to meet with Christina. The target cut-over date from the current Access run card format to the CAD run cards is April 2014.

DES (Brian):

- A letter and ordinance establishing maximum weight limits for bridges owned by Berks County was distributed to the Zone reps. (attached separately to these minutes).
- A list showing who has and has not completed and returned the signed/executed system user agreements was distributed to the Zone reps.
- Delays continue to occur with the new P25 radio system due to weather. At this point in time an August turnover is scheduled, with "train-the-trainer" sessions in June. Trainers are then tasked with training their personnel on using the new mobiles and portables in July.
- There is continued expectation to build a tower at the North Albany site. Progress.
- Backup paging sites: A countywide map was distributed to the Zone reps showing the best server for the backup paging system. The backup system will be taken down, moved to new tower locations (with additional sites), re-installed and narrowbanded. Following this, there will be an approximate 2-4 week period where the Comm. Center will be operating exclusively on the upgraded backup paging system; during this period the main paging system will be taken down, moved to new tower locations with additional sites, re-installed and narrowbanded. Dates TBD. **NOTE: While the paging system is on backup your company/department will be getting dispatched only off the tower that is geographically closest to your station (much like the old 33.94/155.295 paging pre-simulcast high-band paging).**

- Minitor V/ Minitor VI: Since production of the Minitor V pager is scheduled to cease at the end of February 2014 it is possible that the programming cradle may be decommissioned. All of the end-user high-band pagers will need to be narrowbanded at the company/department level. This will need to coincide with the move of the backup and main paging network (dates TBD). DES encourages all companies/departments to consider purchasing a Min V programming cradle if you don't currently own one and/or are unable to borrow/use one from another company/department.

Zone 1: Nothing to report.

Zone 2: Discussion regarding the recommendation of a "PAR check" every 20 minutes. Reps from Zones 5/6 relayed that Montgomery County used a "20 minute mark", where an announcement from the dispatcher to IC is made stating "You're at your 20 minute mark". This allows the IC to look at how things are proceeding operationally and whether changes in tactics should be made or additional resources requested. Zones 5/6 endorses this concept over the "PAR check". **All Zone representatives are tasked with returning to their respective zone to get a recommendation for the April 2014 Working Group meeting.** At the current time the "20 minute mark" announcement would only apply to WSFs and MVA-ENTRAPMENTS.

Zone 3: No representative in attendance.

Zone 4: Nothing to report.

Zones 5/6:

- Discussion among the group regarding recalls from incidents. It should be relayed back to every company that when an assignment is recalled that it is assumed that all recalled apparatus/companies/departments are available.
- Requested that notification of utilities be made by dispatchers on all working structure fires.

Zone 7: A new academy class started on Monday, February 24th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2026 hours. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 27, 2014 at 1815 hours in the Direct Link conference room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Stevens, Chairman