

MINUTES

Niagara County Fire Advisory Board

Date | time 12/21/2023 17:00pm Meeting called to order by Chairman Gurnett

Pledge to the Flag and Prayer

Arthur Kroening led the Pledge to the flag and Prayer.

Motion to suspend regular meeting for annual elections:

Motion by Ed Zimmerman, seconded by Jeff Dewart – Passed

Chad Shepherd conducted the Nominations for officers as followed.

Chairman – Paul Gurnett, no other nominations, Motion by Jeff Baes, seconded by Robert Walker – Passed, Secretary to cast one ballot.

Vice Chairman – Art Kroening, no other nominations, Motion by Jeff Baes, seconded by Jeff Dewart – Passed, Secretary to cast one ballot.

Secretary – Mike Kislack, no other nominations, Motion by Jeff Dewart, seconded by Jeff Baes – Passed, Chairman to cast one ballot.

Approval of Minutes

Previous Meeting Minutes 10/19/23 – Motion by Robert Walker, seconded by Nick Baes to approve the minutes - PASSED.

Correspondence:

Read email from Mickey Suiter.

Fire Coordinator: Jonathan Schultz

- Was for very Historical week for Niagara County, The NYSDOH had done its inspection of the County EMS program and we had passed, no issues other than two dome light's need a bulb. Also, on Sunday morning the County Ambulance service had started taking calls for the very first time. As of tonight's meeting, they have taken 23 calls and transported 17 patients.
- AMR and Twin City will continue to have one ambulance each in the County until the end of January 2024.
- An email has been sent to all Chiefs regarding the State Grant that was announced this week.
- The State Stipend program for training will be starting very soon.
- A chief only meeting will be held on January 3rd, 2024, at 6:00pm here at the training center.

Training: Dan Leven

- Dan introduced Chelsea Collett, she has started in the office and will be handling the items that Bill Perry was handling. Bill is moving over to work with the County EMS.
- We have done the interviews to fill the open position of State Fire instructor, we have requested two people but will wait to see what the State says.
- Coming up will be the annual 5-year tower inspections. We are also looking at the State Grant program to see if we can get to upgrade the towers.

Area 1: Edward (Kevin) Zimmerman

Area 1 report for December 2023

Calls to report:

Youngstown was called out on November 11, 2023 for a report of a working trailer fire at 999 Balmer Rd

On the scene were Youngstown fire, Ransomville fire and Lewiston 1 on standby. Niagara county fire investigation crew also on location.

The area 1 companies had a busy month responding to several mutual aid calls close to us in the county and I'm sure those calls will be reported in their respective area reports I'd like to thank everyone for all their effort on all these fire scenes.

From some of these fires we learned some things that worked, didn't work and that.

can be done differently, I know following a couple of them I was involved in a couple very productive conversations between fire chiefs regarding things we need to improve upon, and it was good to see everyone working together both during the incident and then following them.

Jeff Baes and I have been asked to handle the Accountability Tag update, it's a work in progress. and our goal is to get us all on a simple, unified program for us all to utilize on scene.

It's very good to hear the County EMS program up, running and ambulances on the road! I think this program will take off and become very successful for the residents of Niagara County. Thank you to everyone involved in making that happen.

Several fire company officer elections have taken place in area 1 so far, I'd like to congratulate returning Chiefs Jim Bos of Lewiston #2, Eric Weiland of Youngstown, and welcome newly appointed Chief John Guiher of Niagara Active.

Lastly, I would like to thank Mickey Sutor for all his years of representation on this board and welcome Jon Waggoner of the Lewiston No. 1 Fire Company who stepped up and filled his role.

Thank You all for your time, I appreciate the opportunity to work with you all this past year, I wish you all of you and your families a safe and happy holiday season I

Next Area 1 meeting will be January 18th, 2024, at Lewiston #2

Respectfully Submitted December 21, 2023,

Ed Zimmerman

Area 1 Deputy Fire Coordinator

Area 2: Robert Walker

- November 28th, 2023 Residential structure fire 2075 Mount Hope Rd. Tuscarora Indian Reservation. On scene 1 engine and 1 tanker from Sanborn, 1 engine from Pekin, 1 Tanker from Lewiston 2, 1 engine from Lewiston 1, 1 engine from St. Johnsburg, 1 engine from Bergholz, 1 engine from NF Air Base, 1 tanker from Wolcottsville, 1 engine from Upper Mountain, NC Cause & Origin, NC Sheriff, Town of Lewiston police, Tri-Community Ambulance, Town of Lewiston Highway, Car 32, 32a, 322, 326.
 - Standby: Adams and Shawnee at Sanborn, NT at St. Johnsburg to cover St. Johnsburg, Bergholz and Adams.
 - Fire is under investigation.
- December 8th, 2023 Residential structure fire 2253 Saunders Settlement Rd Tuscarora Indian Reservation. On scene 2 engines, 1 ladder, 1 rescue from Sanborn, 2 pumper tankers from Lewiston #2, 1 engine, 1 rescue from Pekin, 1 engine and FAST Team from NF Air Base, NC Cause & Origin, Tri-Community Ambulance, Town of Lewiston Police, car 32, 32a, 322
 - Standby: Bergholz, Shawnee and Tri-Community at Sanborn. Upper Mountain ladder at their hall.
 - Injury: Lewiston Police officer to Hospital
 - One Fatality at the scene
 - Fire is under investigation.
- Next area 2 meeting is February 27th, 2024 at Pekin at 7:00pm

Area 3: Jeff Dewart

- Structure fire in Wilson, on scene Wilson, South Wilson, Olcott, NC Cause & Origin, National Grid, NC Sheriff, Red Cross for 2 adults and 4 children. Wilson Asst. Chief called fire in; the address given was not correct.
 - Standby: Ransomville
- Next meeting will be March 6th, 2024 at Cambria.

Area 4: Jeff Baes

- All good.
- Next Area 4 Meeting will be February 20th, 2024, at Terry's Corners.

EMS Deputy: Chad Shepherd

- No responses to report.
- Multiple Trainings coming up.

NC EMS: Thomas Eggert

- No Report

Fire Investigations:

- No Report

Haz-Mat: Kevin Hodgson

- One call in Lockport, we did not get on scene before being called off.
- Re-cert has been done by the State and we are good for another year.

Fire Police: Mark Walter

- No Report

LEPC: Kevin Hodgson

- Wendell Engineering at the next meeting to discuss drinkable water.

Lockport City: Chief Luca Quagliano

- Excused
- No Report

Niagara Falls City: Chief Joe Pedulla

- Excused
- As this will be my last correspondence with the county in my current capacity, I would like to submit my updates to be read at the Fire Advisory Board on the 21st. Oh how I will miss these meetings as they always brightened my night.
- On Wednesday, November 22, 2023, a full assignment, Engine 4, Engine 8, Engine 3, Truck 1, Truck 2 and Car 80 were all dispatched to a call for an explosion on the Rainbow Bridge. While in route, the first arriving companies could already see the heavy smoke in the air. Dispatch informed the companies that a vehicle had jumped a barrier and exploded. Given the heightened terrorism alerts, and the heavy day of travel, the arriving companies suspected a possible intentional explosion. The crews were also cognizant of the possibility of secondary explosive devices, situated to harm first responders. Engine 4 and Truck 1 arrived on scene at the bridge with the remnants of a vehicle scattered everywhere, and a customs inspection building on fire. Engine 4 advanced an inch and three-quarter handline and used foam to begin extinguishing the fire. The crew of Truck 1 began searching the rubble and surrounding vehicles, through the thick smoke, for injured bystanders. Car 80 and Car 82 arrived at the scene and directed the balance of the equipment to remain at the perimeter. As Engine 4 extinguished the fire in the epicenter of the debris field, the smoke lifted, and the crews noticed an intact suitcase nearby. With the suspicion that the suitcase contained a secondary explosive device, the crews of Engine 4, Truck 1, and both Cars 80 and 82, took shelter behind Truck 1 until they were able to move to a safer distance.

- The NFFD will be switching over to a digital radio system. The equipment has been ordered and we are awaiting arrival. We expect this to be a 6-month project.
- We have sworn in our last 2 recruits on Thursday Dec 14th 2023. This fills all vacancies within the department. Future vacancies will be filled as they become available and in time for the next recruit training class schedule.

North Tonawanda City: Chief Joe Sikora

- Excused
- I will not be attending the FAB meeting tonight. I have not heard back from Jimmy on whether he is attending. I have no important information to report. If you could, would you please let all members know North Tonawanda cannot compete with the newsworthy incidents in Niagara Falls or the big words used by Lockport and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and safe Happy New Year.
Thank you,
Chief Sikora

Niagara Falls Air Base: Aaron McLaine

- No Report

Sheriff's Office: Mark Kasprzak

- Two new dispatchers started this past Monday.
- Monday closed the registration for the new test for dispatchers, 30 people signed up to take the test.
- The Barker site has now been turned up, so all sites are now up and running.
- Motorola is working on a coverage map, this would show us if a tower went down what areas of coverage we would lose.
- All interopt sites are turned up and National interopt repeaters.
- We are now looking at the next steps of what needs to be done.
- We are also exploring a microwave tower at the office.

State Chiefs:

- No Report

Legislators:

- No Report

Tower Committee:

- Lockport Tower: Everything is good, and the tower is being used.
- Wheatfield Tower: Everything was good.

Critical Stress Debriefing:

- No Report

Old Business:

- Chairman Gurnett, NT is no longer doing radio test, do we want to continue doing it?
- Area 3 said once a month would be good.
- Area 2 said not needed at all.
- Area 3 had no response.
- Area 4 said not needed at all.
- Ed Zimmerman made a motion, seconded Lowell Dickinson to have the research done to see if we can eliminate the test or not. - Passed

New Business:

-

Discussions:

- Jeff Baise asked if we should investigate Mickey Suiter's letter more.
- We will invite Catholic Health to come to a meeting so we can discuss.
- Radio and Procedures will be back on the agenda.

Good of the Organization:

- Next County Chiefs meeting will be January 11th, 2024, at Ransomville.
- Next County Meeting TBD

Next Meeting

February 15th., 2024 / 7:00pm, PSTF

Motion to adjourn was made at 7:51pm by Robert Walker and seconded by Art Kroening – Passed

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Kislack

Secretary

Niagara County Fire Advisory Board Meeting Attendance Record

Date: 12/21/2023

NC Volunteer Firemen's Assoc. (5)

John Voutour

Peter Smith

Arthur Kroening- Vice Chairman

Greg Robertson

Michael Kislack - Secretary

Signature

John Voutour
excused
Arthur Kroening
Greg Robertson
Michael Kislack

Niagara County Chiefs Assoc. (5)

Lowell Dickinson

Jim Mihalko

Nicholas Baes

Paul Gurnett - Chairman

Mickey Suitor - *Jonathan Waygon*

Lowell Dickinson
Jim Mihalko
Nicholas Baes
Paul Gurnett
Mickey Suitor

City of Lockport (2)

Luca Quagliano

Joseph Prica

City of Niagara Falls (2)

Joseph Pedulla

Bernard Lucantonio

excused (provided updates)

City of North Tonawanda (2)

Joe Sikora

Jim Diermyer Jr.

excused
Jim Diermyer Jr.

Legislators (5)

Richard Abbott

Dave Godfrey

Christopher Robins

Shawn Foti

Irene Myers

excused
excused

Ex-Officio Members (14)

Jonathan Schultz

Dan Leven

Ed Zimmerman - Voting Member

Robert Walker - Voting Member

Jeff Dewart - Voting Member

Jeff Baes - Voting Member

Chad Shepherd

Dennis McAvoy

Mark Hain

Les Myers

Mark Walter

Marc Kasprzak

Richard "Red" Kennerson

Kevin Hodgson

Jonathan Schultz
Dan Leven
Ed Zimmerman
Robert Walker
Jeff Dewart
Jeff Baes
Chad Shepherd
Dennis McAvoy
Mark Hain
Les Myers
Mark Walter
Marc Kasprzak
Richard "Red" Kennerson
Kevin Hodgson

Here

Kevin Hodgson