

William Lothrop  
Chairman

Tim Schadt  
Vice Chairman

Dick Martinkovic  
Coordinator

Mary Ann Drobysh  
Secretary

### Sullivan County Fire Advisory Board

**Date:** January 28, 2008

**Meeting called to order at:** 7:30pm

**Pledge to the flag was held**

**Elections:**

**Nominations for Chairman:** Bill Lothrop, sole nominee, reelected

**Vice Chairman:** Tim Schadt, sole nominee, reelected

**Appointment of Secretary by Chairman:** Mary Ann Drobysh

**Attendance:** out of 15 members present

Bethel: Ed Lubniewski	P
Callicoon: Paul Hemmer	P
Cochecton: Gary Cochrane	P
Delaware: Bob Simon	P
Fallsburg: Bernard Deutsch	P
Forestburgh: Arthur Salomon	P
Fremont: Anthony Wayne	P
Highland: Tim Schadt (Joe Mellan)	P
Liberty: Don Sherwood	P
Lumberland: Charlie Fallon	P
Mamakating: William Lothrop	P
Neversink: Tom Matthews	P
Rockland: Michael Juron	A
Thompson: Gary Smith	P
Tusten: Michael Reuber	P

**Reading of minutes from previous meeting:** read and accepted as read

#### **Coordinators Report:**

All departments need to file inventories with the control center. Most of the records are old and outdated. This is important for both the County records and for NIMS.

Our percentage for filing fire reports in 2006 was not very good. The reports can be filed directly on the State's website, some departments are better than others about filing.

Copies are available for the Training Information Management System. Information on course taken, dates, etc needs to be filled out and filed.

Alex Rau wants to build a database for the State Emergency Management System that would allow for automatic phone alerts in the event of an emergency. Orange County and Broome County have already done this.

A report on the training classes from 2000 to 2007 was handed out. A brief outline of the procedure for fire training was given. Joe and Dick receive information from the chiefs and they request classes from the State. If the State budget is passed the classes become available. Classes are being cancelled for lack of attendance. Our biggest problem is with the pre-registration system. If people preregister than they need to show up for the classes. Class space is limited so no shows hurt everyone.

A report by Charles D. Fallon, Sr. Fire investigator for Fire Investigation Unit was handed out. There is a new member of the unit, a former NYC firefighter, Jim Beerman. Jim also has a dog trained for arson investigation. Dick praised Charlie for all of the hard work he has put into getting this unit running well.

Alex Rau is working on a report regarding fire calls.

Bob Theodore will be retiring on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. He is the Emergency Training Center Coordinator and has multiple responsibilities in the daily operation and maintenance of the facility. He also handles the County ID cards as well. Right now the County has put the job on hold for clarification.

The State Wireless Program is not shaping up to be what we need. Several counties that have it are unhappy. We may need to think about a Plan B. We should also involve our neighboring counties in our discussions. Westchester and Rockland counties have spent a tremendous amount of money on their systems; our expenditure could be less than theirs. We need to find an independent consultant to see what we truly need. Our trucks have excellent equipment, our tower system is lacking. We need to dispatch from the 911 center and talk at the same time. The solutions will probably be several hundred thousand dollars. This Board must take the lead and aggressively pursue our options. A committee could be appointed to come up with recommendations.

The Chief's Academy will feature Drew Dickenson as well as someone from the Sherriff's office. The academy will be from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm and **will not** include lunch.

The battalion meetings for this year have started.

The new classrooms are going out to bid.

There seems to be a growing problem with the mutual aid system, especially during the daytime hours. Many people who are volunteers in a department work outside the area in which they reside leaving a shortage of manpower, particularly for standby calls. Not all employers let volunteers go to standby calls during work hours. An answer needs to be found. Your department should only respond to these types of calls if the men and equipment are available. Do not leave your own area without coverage. If they are not you need to alert the appropriate parties so that additional departments can be contacted. Ulster and Orange County are also experiencing the same kind of problems. Dick will talk with the chiefs on this.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- 1) **Training Facility:** See Coordinators and New Business
- 2) **Tax Abatement:** For this year only, you can apply for the State Tax Credit and have a land tax exception as well.
- 3) **EMS:** No formal report, John Crotty is in the hospital, Dick will check on him. There was no provision for EMS Board in the 2008 County Budget and it is being looked into. There are some problems getting the board together. The FAB Board once again offers any assistance to help the EMS Board get up and running.

**Correspondence:** none

### **Old Business:**

They questioned changing Article 2 regarding EMS. It was discussed and agreed that EMS is not a voting member and no change will be made.

Tony and Mike recommended that in Article 4 the letter "F" in the first line be capitalized. Motion made and carried to accept their recommendation as to the change.

## **New Business:**

Each member should be discussing our meetings with the departments they represent. Everyone should take notes and discuss the relevant items with those departments, independent of the minutes that you receive.

An incident took place in the legislative hearing room while it was being used by another entity. We have been asked to respect the rooms we are using for a meeting place.

Committee Appointments:

Training: Joe Mellan

EMS: Will check on the status of John Crotty

Arson Investigation: There will be no committee, but Charlie Fallon will report on issues as they arise.

Radio Tower: Gary Smith, Don Sherwood, Tom Matthews, Mike Reuber, Anthony Wayne, Bill Lothrop, Bernie Deutsch, and Paul Hemmer.

A motion was made to fully support Dick and his efforts in getting our communications in order. There was discussion on the options and the state wireless plan does not appear to be the answer. The biggest problem is that of transmission rather than the individual radios. The motion was carried unanimously.

Paul made a motion to support any effort needed to get the County to replace Bob Theodore immediately. His job description carries a long list of duties that are vital to the training center. The County has talked about not filling the position right away. We need to let the County know that this job cannot remain open. The position was funded in the budget so the money is there. There was a great deal of discussion on this motion. It was proposed that a letter be written to the Public safety Committee that can be presented in the event they decide not to fill the position right away. The motion to draft a letter that is tactful rather than accusatory and that would only be presented if there is an issue was made, seconded and passed.

Bill will attend the meeting to present our side, Dick will see to it he is on the agenda.

**Good and Welfare: none**

**Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn      Time: 8:44pm**

**Next meeting March 31, 2008 at 7:30pm at the  
Sullivan County Government Center**