

Fire Prevention Fire Protection Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes – BBRS Fire Protection Fire Prevention Committee

In accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 30A § 20, the Board of Building Regulations and Standards Fire Prevention Fire Protection Committee convened a regular monthly meeting on:

Microsoft Teams Meeting May 13th, 2026

The topics shown below were discussed at the aforementioned meeting: 9:33 AM Chair Dave LeBlanc called the open meeting to order.

Informational note: All votes were taken by roll call. Where each member voted in favor, the vote will be reported as unanimous.

Board Members Present

- Dave LeBlanc, Fire Protection Engineer
- Tom Farland, Municipal Fire Official
- Carissa Lisee, DOL Appointee
- Luke McKneally, BBRS Member
- Steven Nocco, Municipal Building Official
- Jake Nunnemacher, BBRS Member

Board Members Absent

- Matthew Bourque, Developer
- Eric Svahn, Architect
- Michael Yanovitch, Building Contractor

DOL Staff Present

- Charles Kilb, Senior Board Counsel
- Andrew Chase, Associate Executive Director

1. Reviewed and Voted FPPF meeting minutes for April 8th, 2026
 - a. Jake Nunnemacher motioned to approve meeting minutes with noted corrections, seconded by Luke McKneally. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Code Tracker Form
 - a. Item not discussed.
3. Reviewed and Voted Assigned code sections
 - a. Chapter 4 IBC 2024
 - i. Members discussed revisions to Chapter 4 of the 2024 IBC, including Sections 416, 421, 425, as well as signposting language. Members discussed clarifying the delineation of authority between building officials and fire officials and restructuring code language so that Fire Code references would

be contained in standalone signposting sections rather than embedded within Building Code requirements.

- ii. Members discussed Jake Nunnemacher's proposal relative to section 416 to restructure provisions related to spray rooms and spray booths by separating "Operations and Equipment" into a standalone section referencing the Fire Code. Members discussed whether this approach better clarified enforcement responsibilities between building and fire officials. Members also discussed use of the word "also" in Fire Code references and whether that wording implied optional compliance. Board Counsel Charles Kilb commented that the proposed approach aligned with the intent of maintaining a clear jurisdictional separation between codes as it does not make the Building Official responsible for a non-building code requirement.
- iii. Luke McKneally motioned to approve Section 416 as presented, seconded by Carissa Lisee. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
- iv. Members then discussed Section 421 related to hydrogen fuel gas rooms. Discussion focused on whether the code section should be organized with a "Where Required" subsection preceding a "General" subsection in order to clarify that the triggering requirements originate in the Fire Code. Members discussed whether the proposed organization accurately reflected the relationship between the Building Code and Fire Code and whether further clarification was needed regarding when hydrogen fuel gas rooms are required. Board Counsel Kilb noted the Building Code can be silent as to if such a room is needed, the user, designer, or in this case the Fire Code can make that decision without consulting the Building Code, however once deemed needed, the Building Code can govern design and construction once the condition exists. Members generally agreed with restructuring the section for clarity while maintaining consistency with ICC formatting conventions.
- v. Tom Farland motioned to approve Section 421 as presented, seconded by Steven Nocco. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
- vi. Members discussed proposed new language for Section 429 related to transit rail stations and NFPA 130 requirements. Jake Nunnemacher explained that the proposal relocated language currently found in Chapter 1 into Chapter 4 so that transit rail station provisions would be addressed as a special occupancy condition rather than as a referenced standard. Members discussed conflicts between IBC provisions and NFPA 130, particularly regarding egress calculations and design criteria. Members discussed clarifying that egress calculations for transit rail stations are to be determined in accordance with NFPA 130. Members also discussed removing the existing Chapter 1

reference and adding the 2023 edition of NFPA 130 to Chapter 35 referenced standards.

- vii. Carissa Lisee motioned to approve the proposed transit rail station language and relocation into Chapter 4, seconded by Tom Farland. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
- viii. Members discussed revisions to Section 404 regarding atriums and decorative materials. Discussion focused on whether approval authority for decorative materials should rest with building officials or fire officials and whether such provisions belonged in the Building Code. Board Counsel Kilb raised concerns that certain decorative material provisions were not installation requirements but were attempting to govern the changing use of a space. It was noted that the Fire Code already governs these matters. Members discussed simplifying the section so that decorative materials and decorations by removing them from the building code since they are regulated directly by the Fire Code, there was no need cited to have overlapping approval language.
- ix. Jake Nunnemacher motioned to approve the revised Section 404 language, seconded by Tom Farland. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
- x. Members discussed provisions related to electric vehicle charging stations located within buildings. Discussion focused extensively on lithium-ion battery hazards, thermal runaway events, fire suppression challenges, and concerns associated with EV fires occurring within enclosed parking structures. Jake Nunnemacher discussed experiences with EV fires and the substantial amount of water required for suppression operations. Members discussed the increasing prevalence of EV charging stations, evolving industry standards, insurance company concerns, and the role of sprinkler systems in controlling fire spread. Members generally agreed that buildings containing EV charging stations should be sprinkler protected.
- xi. Luke McKneally motioned to approve the revised Section 406 language regarding EV charging stations and sprinkler protection, seconded by Steven Nocco. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
- xii. Jake Nunnemacher motioned to approved Section 406.9, seconded by Tom Farland. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
- xiii. Members discussed Section 425 related to hyperbaric chambers and hyperbaric facilities. Discussion focused on the growing use of hyperbaric chambers in non-medical settings such as spas and wellness facilities and the lack of clear code guidance applicable to those uses. Members discussed

concerns involving oxygen-enriched atmospheres, fire hazards, decompression issues, and sprinkler protection.

- xiv. Luke McKneally referenced information previously distributed by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society and related design guidelines. Members discussed requiring compliance with manufacturer recommendations and sprinkler protection for buildings containing hyperbaric chambers. Members agreed additional work was needed but supported placeholder language to begin addressing the issue.
 - xv. Steven Nocco motioned to approve placeholder language for Section 425, seconded by Tom Farland. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Chapter 9 IBC 2024
- i. Members discussed Section 913.6 regarding secondary power sources for electric fire pumps. Members discussed whether all electric fire pumps should require backup power or whether the requirement should remain limited to certain occupancy groups. Discussion focused heavily on Group R occupancies and concerns regarding occupant safety during power outages where sprinkler systems depend on electric fire pumps.
 - ii. Members discussed differences between sprinkler demand and standpipe demand and whether certain occupancies should be treated differently. Jake Nunnemacher discussed concerns about buildings remaining occupied without fully functional sprinkler protection during power outages. Members generally agreed that Group R occupancies should require secondary power for electric fire pumps.
 - iii. Carissa Lisee motioned to approve revised Section 913 language, seconded by Jake Nunnemacher. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
 - iv. Members briefly discussed Section 916.11 regarding gas detection system inspection and testing requirements. Members noted that previous Massachusetts language contained more detailed inspection and testing requirements than the current 2024 IBC text. Further review of this section was deferred for a future meeting.
4. Review/Discuss Homework assignments
- i. Members reviewed homework assignments and discussed maintaining a single tracked-changes master document for Chapter 4 revisions. Members discussed issues associated with editing documents directly through SharePoint and emphasized use of downloaded Word documents with tracked changes enabled. Luke McKneally stated he would continue preparing the tracking

document and summaries. Chair LeBlanc requested that members continue work on Chapter 9 review assignments prior to the next meeting and reminded members to maintain consistent formatting and signposting conventions throughout all proposed amendments.

5. Discuss matters not reasonably anticipated by the chair, 48 hours in advance of the meeting – None
6. Adjournment – The next meeting is on May 27th, 2026, at 9:30 AM.
 - a. Steven Nocco motioned to adjourn, seconded by Luke McKneally. A roll call vote was held, none opposed, none abstained. Motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Meeting adjourned at 12:17 PM.

Items Relied Upon During Open Meeting

- Agenda
- Meeting Minutes
- 2024 IBC Chapters 4 and 9 and related amendments to 780 CMR