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Massachusetts Fire Training Council*

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CHIEF CHRISTOPHER MADDEN
CHAIRMAN

**Massachusetts Fire Training Council
Minutes of the January 6, 2025 Meeting**

Chairman Chief Christopher Madden opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and began the meeting of the Massachusetts Fire Training Council at 11:10 am on December 4, 2024, in the Boards and Commissions Room, Stow Campus, 1 State Rd, Stow, MA.

Members attendance: Chairman Chief Christopher Madden, Chief Justin Alexander, Capt. John Bonadio, Capt. John Lombardo, Asst. Chief Jonathan Miller, Assistant Chief Kurt Ruchala, Chief Fire Warden David Celino, Capt. Drew Piemonte, Mary Clare Higgins and Acting MFA Director, Deputy Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier

Also present: State Fire Marshal Jon Davine, DFS General Counsel Glenn Rooney, Deputy Director of Operations David Clemons, MFA Deputy Director of Training Dennis Ball, Instructional Design and Curriculum Development Specialist Sara Pragluski Walsh, and Administrative Secretary Susan Mondy Sykes.

Not present: Firefighter William Cabral, Chief Francis Barresi, and Deputy Secretary Susan Terrey.

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chief Justin Alexander made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2024, Training Council Meeting, seconded by Capt. John Lombardo. The vote passed all in favor of the motion.

Chief Christopher Madden acknowledges the 25th anniversary of the Worcester Cold Storage fire that took the lives of 6 of Worcester Fire Dept's members.

B. Fiscal Affairs Report – Acting MFA Director, Deputy Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier

- **Trust Fund Report:** Trust Fund Analysis report shows current revenue of \$458,055.87 with a budgeted amount of \$572,965.86. We are still waiting funds to come in and do not see an issue with getting those funds.

EOPSS Update – Deputy Secretary Susan Terrey – not present.

C. Update of Affiliated Members - Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts

- Chief Madden – metro fire chiefs association meets every first Thursday of the month and is conflicting with some Senior Fire Officer Forum (SFOF) courses; asking if some of the SFOFs can be scheduled on a different day of the month so those Chief Officers can attend the trainings. Acting MFA Director Deputy Fire Marshal Fournier will look into it.
- Chief Barresi – not present
- Chief Justin Alexander – nothing to report
- Vacant (part call/part paid)—Chief Madden indicated that this position is awaiting the state appointment.

Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts

- Firefighter Cabral— not present
- Capt. Piemonte – nothing to report

Mass Call/Vol

- Assistant Chief Miller—nothing specific from the organization, but discussions with departments from the Western part of the state, after the busier than normal brush fire season, they are looking to get some kind of training for wildland fires; also from the Chiefs/EMD group looking for reunification training for no-notice events like ASHER situations, tornadoes or other big events. Deputy Fire Marshal Fournier indicated that MEMA would be able provide those services or assist communities for those events.
- Assistant Chief Ruchala— nothing to report

Massachusetts Institute of Fire Department Instructors

- Capt. John Bonadio – nothing to report

Fire Prevention Association of Massachusetts

- Lt. John Lombardo –met with Acting MFA Director Deputy Fire Marshal Fournier and to follow up briefly, the ProBoard certification for FPO is not achievable at this time.

Citizen of the Commonwealth – Community Action

- Mary Clare Higgins—Extending thanks to all involved in dealing with the wildfire in Northampton. Our organization provides fuel assistance, weatherization services and heating system repairs and replacements to people with low-incomes. Fire dept personnel are in houses where people use their stoves and other means to heat their houses and would like to find a way to get information out to those folks to let them know we can give them some help. Would like to bring a one-page document to a future meeting that tells what we can provide people across the state. There is a community action agency or another agency that does fuel assistance, weatherization, etc. for low-income people in every city/town. Providing this information is a form of fire prevention work and fire departments could bring that paper with them when respond to a home.

Bureau of Forest Fire Control -- Chief Fire Warden David Celino --

- It has been a busy brush fire season with the warm, dry temperatures, low dewpoints, low relative humidity and wind. YTD 1,250 wildfires across MA, which is average. YTD 4,575 acres burned, which is historic. From October 1, through Thanksgiving, half of those fires (662) occurred and 4,018 acres burned and 73% of them were under a half-acre and that's accredited to the depts fighting those fires. Approx. 480 residential homes threatened with about 4 homes

destroyed or heavily damaged; about 28 outbuildings were destroyed. Out of the fires, we had 8 large fires over 100 acres. All the state agencies were committed and well coordinated in monitoring and reporting the situations across the state with daily Situational Awareness reporting. Canadian air tankers were also on standby if needed through the Northeast Forest Fire Compact. A lot of training requests for wildland fire training from communities across the state.

Citizen of the Commonwealth

- Vacant

D. Legislative Update – DFS Counsel Glenn Rooney

- Yesterday we put out a quick reference guide for fire service on regulatory and statutory authority related to adverse weather conditions. It is also posted on the DFS website.
- Governor signed a Mass Leads Act – improvements to civil service system. MFTC is included in 2 of the sections 1) for the establishment of a permanent commission for the recruitment, hiring and retention of municipal police officers and firefighters which will include the Chairman of MFTC, the State Fire Marshal, President of FCAM and President of PFFM. 2) update to Chapter 31 allowing municipalities for police and fire to establish cadet programs and revamp the how civil service communities can hire new employees. MFTC will play a role in the approval process of the entry-level cadet programs in consultation with HRD. Not certain when first meeting will be. DFS Counsel will provide additional information on how the process will work as it will expand the work of the MFTC.
- Building code 10th Edition still running a concurrency period with the 9th edition through June 30, 2025.

E. DFS Update – State Fire Marshal Jon Davine –

- Doing an after-action meeting on 12/12 for the recent wild fire activity: to discuss issues of training on different levels for these types of incidents and how to use resources available to communities, and how DFS/MFA can provide training to all firefighters at all levels.
- Fire equipment grants submitted a couple of weeks ago; waiting to get them back from Governor's office. Looking to get another cycle of fire equipment grant especially since many departments don't have the proper gear to fight these wildland fires. Waiting to hear on that issue.
- Still working on the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution during the weekend of the Boston Marathon.
- JHRT team finished successful support mission on Nantucket with President Biden visiting. Received nice letter from the Deputy of Nantucket.
- White Powder symposium on 11/15 about 400 people attended. Planning to do another 10 regional trainings around the State.
- ASHER training is booked through winter and spring.

DFS and MFA Updates – Deputy Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier

- Certification reaccreditation--still waiting to hear from ProBoard for a specific site visit. It will expire on 12/31/24 but will extend until they do the site visit and don't anticipate any issues with obtaining the accreditation.
- Update on Bridgewater campus construction: 2 projects running simultaneously: 1) burn building infrastructure and water reclamation; working on electrical for pump house and changeover from old to new electrical service. 2) upcoming fire house and Crib project—selected architect and are in contract negotiations; will start study and design over winter months; still on schedule for September of 2025 to finish.

- Fall River call/volunteer classes will be slowly moving over to Bridgewater but will keep Fall River on contract for another 3 years in case something comes up.

F. MFA Update – Acting Director Deputy Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier

- Full time Program Coordinator position for Recruit has been selected and going through hiring process.
- Still working on backfilling several Program Coordinator and Assistant Program Coordinator positions.
- Call/Volunteer Program Coordinator position has closed and will start the interviewing process at the end of this month with 6 applicants. Will be posting Assistant Program Coordinator positions and hoping to have PC hired so can be part of hiring process for the AC.
- MFA Director is open until 12/20 and have 23 applicants to date.

G. Old Business – 2024 Annual Report review –

Capt. John Lombardo made a motion to accept the 2024 Annual Report of the MFTC, seconded by M. Clare Higgins. Voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

H. New Business –

- Capt. John Lombardo spoke regarding the Fire Prevention Officer Level 2 recredential process. Deputy Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier indicated that any questions regarding the process would need to be addressed to Alanna Malatos, Program Coordinator for that group.
- Chief Christopher Madden asked about transferring training credentials from Texas to Massachusetts. Town of Sharon is considering a hire and asked about whether the credentials would be acceptable to pursue further training in Massachusetts. Sara Praguski Walsh explained it depends on who the training was certified through. MFA can accept IFSAC and ProBoard certifications to fulfill prerequisite requirements if the curriculum is accepted by ProBoard.

I. Policy Presentation/Adoption – MFA Director -- none

J. Review of Correspondence – none

K. Determination of Next Date and Location

- The next meeting of the Training Council will be on Monday, January 6, 2024, at 9:30 am at the DFS Springfield Campus.

L. Public Comment -- none

M. Adjourn Meeting

- Capt. John Lombardo motioned to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Capt. Drew Piemonte. Voted unanimously to adjourn at 12:38 a.m.