

St. Lawrence County Fire Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Thursday August 15, 2024

Meeting called to order at 6:23 pm by Chairman Joe Finnegan.

Present at the meeting: Chris Backus, Mark Bradish, Mark Bomyea, Kevin Crosby, Bob Crowe (Via Zoom), Larry Denesha (County Liaison), Matt Denner (Car 1), Edward Drake, Joe Finnegan (Chairman), Vinny Ferry (Car 5), Jeff Hammond (Car 4), Bob Kerr, John Lashomb, Steve Parker, Rick Rusaw (Car 2) & Larry Whitton.

Excused: Adrian Bush, Tom Conklin, Erick Johnson, Ken Stull & Chris Velez

Motion by Chris Backus to accept the minutes from the April 18, 2024 meeting.

Motion 2nd by Mark Bomyea.

Motion passed with all in favor.

SLC Legislator Liaison – Larry Denesha

Updated everyone on the construction project at the 911 center.

Cell phone surcharge tax bill passed.

Drafting a resolution opposing the proposed new OSHA mandates on fire brigades.

Thanked all the fire, EMS, Police, DPW Highway Dept.'s on all their assistance during the recent rainstorm as well as their continued assistance on the cleanup and rebuilding of roads.

Office of Emergency Services – Matt Denner

Report of fire, EMS and police calls

The following is a report of CAD Calls for:

	3/24	4/24	5/24	6/24	7/24	Year 2024
FD's Dispatched	349	392	417	545	511	3,328
EMS Dispatched	2,030	1,829	2,074	2,100	2,232	14,195
Local PD Calls to 911	429	351	435	386	410	2,987
NYSP Dispatched by SLC ES	244	320	395	439	445	2,454
Informational Call*	902	986	1,033	1,098	1,306	7,191
<u>Sheriff's Calls for Service</u>	<u>1,044</u>	<u>1,018</u>	<u>1,131</u>	<u>1,011</u>	<u>1,273</u>	<u>7,340</u>
Total Calls Dispatched in SLC	4,998	4,896	5,485	5,579	6,177	37,495

*Informational calls include pocket dials, hang up call and test calls

The following are law enforcement calls dispatched by their own dispatchers CAD cards created for the Law Enforcement Departments (From their Start Date)

	3/24	4/24	5/24	6/24	7/24	Year 2024
NYSP Dispatched by B-Com	1,298	1,526	1,451	1,450	1,328	9,172
Canton PD Dispatched	346	342	338	310	394	2,556
Massena PD Dispatched	910	820	953	864	741	5,887
Potsdam PD Dispatched	624	655	651	526	686	4,142
<u>Ogdensburg PD Dispatched</u>	<u>681</u>	<u>658</u>	<u>787</u>	<u>742</u>	<u>770</u>	<u>4,833</u>
Total Outside Law Dispatched calls	3,869	4,001	4,180	3,892	3,919	26,590

Phone Calls Handled in Dispatch Center incoming and outgoing by line:

Emergency Service Dispatcher handled:

	3/24	4/24	5/24	6/24	7/24
911	2,579	2,701	2,929	3,066	3,398
EMS	3,332	3,294	3,797	4,094	4,153
Text_2_911	34	114	157	139	167
NYSP	156	122	157	171	266

<u>Sheriff</u>	<u>2,701</u>	<u>2,601</u>	<u>3,077</u>	<u>3,117</u>	<u>3,255</u>
Total	8,802	8,832	10,147	10,587	11,199
YTD	32,187	41,019	51,166	61,751	72,950

Mr. Denner gave an update on the recent floods and damages caused by the flood. Representative Ken Blankenbush toured the area with Mr. Denner recently.

Mr. Denner gave an update of the new radio system and on new radio tower towers and what their status was. Atlantic testing has been hired to do soil testing for the remaining towers. Mr. Denner went over all of the talk paths the new system will have and who will have them. Mr. Denner went over what the departments requested for radios and what the county would supply. Mr. Denner also reminded everyone that the county will still dispatch on VHF. All pagers will have to be reprogrammed with a new frequency. Mr. Denner states that Matt McDonald is in Chicago doing programming and training for the new system. No update on the Star Lake and Cranberry Lake towers. Hopefully will be set by January 1, 2025. With Star Lake and Cranberry Lake so far behind the radio system will be done in two phases starting with the Ogdensburg tower. Expecting new system to be operational in June-July 2025.

Command unit has been used several times in the county. Decals will be installed soon.

911 dispatch is still in Massena, will hopefully be back in Canton by January 1, 2025. Carpet is installed in the DA's side and will be installed in dispatch side soon. Radios will be installed in October and the new phones will be installed in December.

Mr. Denner stated that the county has hired 4 new dispatchers and a new administrative assistance.

Mr. Denner states that there are four open positions at this time on the Fire Advisory Board.

Active shooter training will be on going with one scheduled for the SLC Court house in December.

MCI training is continuing, Mr. Denner states that more departments need to take this course.

New officer classes still highly recommended, NIFERS, scene preservation, on the job injuries/WC, LMS, when to call for stand by and mutual aid & disaster paperwork.

Mr. Denner states that the county will be switching to a new EMD program through APCO which will include EMD for fire, EMS & Law Enforcement.

Mr. Denner reminded all departments to track all expenses and equipment for possible FEMA reimbursement.

OFPC Report – FPS Matt Kroeger

I'm pretty sure most of the people on the FAB know me, or at least heard of me. I'm rather excited to be in this position having been born and raised in St. Lawrence County as I don't recall a time when our State Fire FPS has been from the area. I'm hoping to be able to be more present in the area than my predecessors and help however and wherever I can. My contact information is at the bottom of this email and if anyone needs or wants anything that's within my purview, I'm happy to help or direct them in the appropriate direction.

- The SFIs are having a scheduling meeting on the 26th to discuss the upcoming season of classes. Previously, the SLC SFIs only had one or two scheduling meetings a year, but I'd like to see us get up to three meetings a year if needed.
- Moving forward students need to have their Training Authorization Letters uploaded into LMS before they are enrolled by the SFIs. They can no longer bring their TALs to the first night of class or ask for a waiver from LMS. The option to do so is still in LMS but should not be used. If a student does not upload the TAL and brings it to the first night of class, they will not be able to participate. No exceptions. If they cannot get the TAL uploaded into LMS they need to reach out to someone who can help them (Fire Chief, SFI etc.) so that it gets done. Recently Oneida County got burnt with students not bringing the letter or forging their Fire Chief's signature.

On that note, students can digitally sign their Training Authorization Letters, but it MUST be the digital signature option and not simply typed into the box. We've run into issues in other counties where students are simply typing their names into the signature box and that's not allowed.

- For those that aren't aware, the Academy of Fire Science is going through a large-scale remodel so much so that most of the programs offered at the academy are now being offered in outreach until the construction is done. This is a good opportunity for the North Country students to get the academy classes a bit closer to home. I don't believe anything is currently scheduled for the North Country but there may be some stuff closer to home.

If any of you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out. I hope to see you all at the next meeting.

Training - Bob Crowe updated everyone on the status of upcoming training and that there will be a meeting with the training instructors on August 26th to go over the training requests. Fill out the google form requests and get back to Bob as soon as possible. Some fire fighters have received their NYS reimbursement for completing state classes. Bob reminded everyone to fill out the department demographic form.

Fire Training Center - Jeff Hammond updated everyone on the upcoming Youth in the Fire Service day at the training center for August 17, 2024. Recertification of the burn building has been received. New insurance policy is in for training center. New fence has been installed by Alpine Fence Company.

Jeff asked the status of the county buying a secondary alerting system. I.e. I am responding or Active 911. Matt Denner stated that some departments didn't want to change or like the other system they would get so he was instructed to stop looking. A discussion was held with the consensus being that not everyone will be happy but the county should go ahead with a secondary system if a department doesn't want to use it then they don't have to.

Fire Investigation Team – 45 investigations so far. 12 active members on the team. Blazestack software is working great. Some arrests made in a recent case.

SLC Hazmat Response Team – No report

Dive/Rescue Team – Dave Taylor – Several dive/rescue incident so far this year in the county. The air boat is not in service at this time.

Technical Rescue - Tyler Mulvanna - No report

Old Business – Discussion on minimum standards for officers and the need to really push departments to have their officer get these training classes.

Discussion held on district decontamination teams.

Matt Denner went over what it takes to look up and dispatch the tanker task force.

New Business - Motion Made by Kevin Crosby to recommend the SLC Legislators to appoint Leonard Bichelhaupt and Edward Drake to the fire advisory board. Motion 2nd by Mark Bomyea. Motion passed with all in favor. This still leaves two openings to the board and departments are asked to submit people who are interested to Matt Denner.

Motion to adjourn made by Mark Bomyea and 2nd by Chris Backus. Motion passed with all in favor.

Next Scheduled meeting is October 17, 2024.

Respectfully submitted by Kevin Crosby