

STATE FIRE PREVENTION COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 17, 2021

Members Present: Edward S. Tochterman, Chairman
 Kevin Simmons, Vice Chairman
 Douglas Alexander
 Mark Bilger
 Emily Devan
 Randy Sanger
 Daniel Stevens
 Stacy Welch

Members Absent: Michael Faust

The Fire Prevention Commission held a public meeting on June 17 , 2021, at 10:00 a.m. at the Taylor Avenue Fire Station, 620 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Tochterman welcomed Secretary of the Maryland State Police, Colonel Woodrow W. Jones III.

Colonel Jones presented Deputy State Fire Marshal Brad Childress with a Life Saving Award. Deputy Childress is assigned to the Upper Eastern Shore Region and was returning home on September 10, 2020, when he heard the sounds of a chainsaw being used in a nearby neighbor's yard. The sounds turned to those of screaming. He quickly responded and found the victim faced down, assessed the injuries, and called 911. The victim had a severed arm and a chest laceration. Deputy Childress utilized his agency-issued tourniquet and applied pressure to the arm to minimize blood loss. He assisted paramedics upon their arrival as the victim was going into shock. The victim was transported to a nearby hospital. The paramedics credit Deputy Childress for his quick response and providing life saving measures to mitigate the injuries. Deputy Childress thanked Colonel Jones for the award.

Chairman Tochterman suspended normal business and turned the meeting over to Colonel Jones. On behalf of the Commission, the Chairman thanked the Colonel for his support of the Commission, approving a line item budget for the Commission's expenses, and supporting the salary increase for the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Fire Protection Engineers.

Colonel Jones remarked he was pleased to be at the meeting and see firsthand how the Commission operates. Formerly the Police Chief at the Maryland Transportation Authority, Colonel Jones received a call from outgoing Colonel Pallozzi telling him the Governor wanted Chief Jones to take over the role of the Secretary of State Police. The first day he was sworn in at the State House, he and former Colonel Pallozzi went to the first State Police press conference on COVID. He remarked it has been an entertaining and wild ride since then and he is pleased to finally return to face-to-face meetings to interact and build relationships. A State Trooper all his life, he knew very little about the fire prevention and investigation side of things in the department and expressed the great job Fire Marshal Geraci has done to help him understand.

Chairman Tochterman reported that another issue the Commission is reviewing is the collection of fees that the OSFM is required by law to charge for various services. As a result of a recent audit, it was learned that OSFM employees are acting as bill collectors who are responsible for notifying parties when their invoices are 30, 60, or 90 days overdue before it gets sent to Central Collections. Colonel Jones has been supportive of the work Fire Marshal Geraci and Chief Deputy Fire Marshal Der have been doing in working with the State Treasurer's Office to come to an agreement on how these fees can be collected. Deputy Fire Marshal Joseph Walters, who is assisting in this process, provided a brief history. Originally the only method of payment was by checks sent to Headquarters and processed for deposit. Arrangements were then made to accept credit card payments through an on-line system called NIC. NIC has discontinued that section of their operations so they no longer have a contract with the State for credit card payments. The new statewide collection system that should be implemented in a few weeks will allow collection by credit card through an automatic clearing house system (electronic bank transfers), which will then do away with having to process paper checks. The problem still being worked on is the bill collection for parties who do not pay their invoices. Using a third party to pursue payment, as some State agencies already do, is being explored. Chairman Tochterman thanked Deputy Walters and all those involved for their efforts.

Colonel Jones offered any assistance he can if there are any issues or needs of the Commission or the OSFM.

Vice Chairman Simmons expressed his pleasure that the Colonel was in attendance and hopes to see him at other meetings if his schedule allows. Chairman Tochterman and the other Commissioners reiterated these sentiments as well as their appreciation for the cooperation and positive attitudes shared throughout State with the Commission, the OSFM, and the Department of State Police.

Commissioner Alexander expressed his appreciation for the cooperation the fire and emergency services receive from troopers and fire marshals at fires and vehicle crashes. Colonel Jones has recently created a traffic incident management team within the Field Operations Bureau which is going to focus on quick clearance of roadways after crashes. There will be multifaceted involvement—fire police, emergency services personnel, tow trucks, and the Department of Transportation. Commissioner Alexander remarked that the Maryland State Firemen's Association would more than welcome such a program. In conjunction with the annual seminar the Commission is mandated to hold, Chairman Tochterman offered to allot time for a training session on the program. Colonel Jones thought it would be a good idea to get everyone together and do some mock crashes.

FIRE MARSHAL REPORT

To date there have been 33 fire fatalities in the State, 27 occurring in residential properties, four of which were multiple fatality fires. Two vehicle collision fatalities involving fire are pending cause of death from the Medical Examiner. Last year there were ten deaths determined to be by fire in nine vehicle collisions involving fire.

The OSFM assisted Baltimore County with two major incidents. One a fatal fire set by the occupant who decided to stay inside. Neighbors tried to rescue her but she threw things at them and sicced her dog on them. It was a domestic issue and unfortunately she took this path. Deputy Walters used the agency's FARO equipment to do the 3D scanning of the scene. The other involved a multi-alarm fire with an active shooter. Responding to a report of an active shooter, the Baltimore County Police observed an armed man outside and a townhouse fire that quickly spread to adjacent structures. Once the scene was secured the fire department

extinguished the fire and found four shooting victims, one remains hospitalized and three succumbed to gunshot injuries. OSFM personnel were on the scene to provide assistance. The suspect had loosened the gas lines on the home appliances. The ignition source is unknown. The suspect was neutralized.

Per the Maryland Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS), there were a total of 12,487 fires in the State in 2020, a 9.4% reduction from 13,787 in 2019. Out of that total there were 5,509 structures fires, a 3.2% reduction from 2019; 4,318 of which were in residential structures, a 3.0% reduction from 2019. In 2020 there were a total of 109 fire related injuries, a 16% reduction from 2019. There were 396 fire service injuries which accounted for a 217% increase over the 125 injuries seen in 2019, apparently due to COVID. Estimated dollar loss was \$88,313,081.00, a 41.7% decrease from \$151,488,835.00 in 2019. Smoke alarms were present in 890 incidents and sprinklers were present in 145 incidents. Rock Hall Fire Department in Kent County did not submit reports for October through December. Delmar Fire Department from Wicomico County did not submit reports for April and May and September through December. Commissioner Bilger congratulated the OSFM for stepping up to encourage departments to submit their reports. At county association meetings he attends, members are almost always reminded to submit them. Commissioner Welch questioned the accuracy of the data if there were 4,318 residential structure fires but only 890 smoke alarms reported. Fire Marshal advised that is what is being reported, along with information about none being present or status undetermined for approximately 1,900 incidents. So obviously the status of some are not being reported at all.

Fire Marshal Geraci distributed a letter received from the National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board praising the OSFM maritime efforts with the bomb squad. Maryland is one of the leading states to start a dive team for maritime explosives. Vice Chairman Simmons congratulated Fire Marshal Geraci and Chief Deputy Der on this recognition. There currently are twelve certified bomb technicians with the agency, six are stationed at the BWI Office and the other six are located throughout the various regions. Five are maritime certified. A full complement is seventeen. An open house may be held at the bomb squad this year to try to recruit younger applicants and place them regionally to improve response times.

The Fire Marshal and staff met with the audit team and staff several weeks ago and had a good meeting regarding their findings and the OSFM responses. They are finalizing the audit and will issue a report which the Fire Marshal will distribute to the Commission.

The hiring process for vacancies is at various stages. The Western contractual inspector interviews have been completed and a background check is being done. The Northeast is in the process of interviewing contractual inspectors. Headquarters completed interviews for the public affairs/community risk reduction position last week and a conditional offer has been made. In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Devan related to recruiting college graduates, the Fire Marshal advised the engineer position is an on-going advertisement and will be updated after July 1st with the new increased salary. Chief Engineer Ken Bush reaches out frequently to Dr. Milke at the University of Maryland to let him know the status of recruitment. The OSFM has had a couple recruitment fairs at the University and OSFM staff posts information on social media and the blog page. In response to an inquiry from Vice Chairman Simmons, Fire Marshal Geraci and Chief Der stated there is some diversity in the applicant pool and there has been some difficulty in hiring minorities as the law enforcement field is experiencing difficulty in recruitment in general. The last Deputy hired was a female fluent in Spanish and is working out very well in the Southern Region. About half of the applicants come from the law enforcement side as those from the fire side are not interested in

carrying a gun and being a law enforcement officer. For the public affairs position there were two female and one male applicants.

In response to an inquiry from Assistant Attorney General Susan Baron, Fire Marshal Geraci advised his office was not involved with any investigation of a large fire on Stevenson Road a couple weeks ago involving Baltimore Gas and Electric working there. It took several hours to extinguish due to the gas needing to be shut off.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Alexander, Fire Marshal Geraci advised the agency vehicle situation is not good. No funds were budgeted to purchase vehicles this fiscal year. One was recently dead-line because of rust. There are a couple spares but many of the vehicles have very high mileage. Three trucks are in the process of being outfitted and should be ready in a couple months. Due to COVID, things are moving more slowly with some of the vendors. The contractual inspectors drive their own vehicles and are reimbursed mileage.

As a reminder, the Maryland Fire and Life Safety Information Exchange Program website is www.mdflifesafety.org.

CHAIRMAN REPORT

Commissioner Bilger reported to the Chairman that the September 28th virtual Mid-Atlantic Safety Conference is still on. The conference steering committee will hold a meeting June 29th to finalize some things. Deputy Walters has been a big help working on all the technology. Chief Engineer Bush will not be a presenter on the code updates this year as that work won't be completed by then. He will do a presentation next year. The conference program has been established as to what will be virtual and what will be live. It is hoped the conference can return to Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab in 2022 with a live format.

Chairman Tochtermann reported the Commission by law is mandated to review the fee schedule on an annual basis, which is different than the discussions on how the fees are collected. He asked Chief Engineer Bush if he felt the current fee schedules should remain in place. Chief Bush stated he felt that overall the fee schedule provides an adequate and equitable means to collect fees based on several different factors: 1) the type and complexity of the project; and 2) the size of the project. So based on who is required to pay a fee, this systems has been effective. The Chairman entertained motions to continue with the current fee system. Motion by Commissioner Alexander, second by Vice Chairman Simmons, and unanimously carried.

Chairman Tochtermann reported that CFPE Bush completed 45 years of service with the OSFM on June 2, 2021. Chairman Tochtermann presented CFPE Bush with a letter signed by all members of the Commission congratulating him on this accomplishment and expressing the Commission's gratitude for his guidance and expertise. Chairman Tochtermann noted to Colonel Jones that if he would open the NFPA 101 code book, CFPE Bush's name would be in the heading as participating on various NFPA committees. His participation in fire and building code on a national level is recognized widely. CFPE Bush thanked the Commission for the recognition, stating his tenure with the OSFM has been rewarding both personally and professionally.

CHIEF FIRE PROTECTION ENGINEER REPORT

Regarding FPE recruitment, CFPE Bush stated he is constantly in contact with the University of Maryland and spoke with Dr. Milke a couple weeks ago. Dr. Milke assured CFPE

Bush that he will keep looking for potential applicants but all the graduates from this year's class have already retained jobs. CFPE Bush also reaches out to professional and personal contacts through engineering associations and organizations. Currently there are two vacancies and hopefully the July 1st salary increase will help improve recruitment.

CFPE distributed the Code Update Committee proposal. Over the last four months the committee has met virtually eight times to review the current State Fire Prevention Code to update it to the newly published national model codes. Proposed revisions are indicated in red type in the proposal. The committee appointed by the Commission was very diverse with approximately 25 to 30 participants at each meeting representing various local jurisdictions throughout the State. Hopefully some of the changes will make it easier for not only professional designers to follow but also the general public and enforcement authorities. He thanked all the committee members for their participation. Chairman Tochtermann and Commissioner Welsh were active participants and CFPE Bush thanked them for their work and input. The committee did a commendable job to bring forth a document that is really a consensus document amongst all the participants. Two major references are to the 2021 edition of NFPA 1 Fire Code, a copy of which was distributed to the Commission members, and the 2021 edition of NFPA 101 Life Safety Code. Unfortunately NFPA sent the wrong edition but the 2021 edition will be forthcoming for each Commission member. CFPE Bush personally thanked the NFPA Mid-Atlantic representative Greg Cade for providing the books at no cost. Once everyone has these two books, reviewing the Code Update Committee's proposal will be more understandable. A lot of the current amendments are being retained. CFPE Bush highlighted some of the major issues and proposed amendments:

- NFPA 101 amendment DD on page 5 is an adjustment to the requirements for sprinklers in various assembly occupancies, changing it from 50 to 100. This was to correlate the fire code sprinkler requirements with those in the building code. The committee felt confident that the level of protection would be sufficient.
- NFPA 101 amendment FF on page 5 deals with the number of locks which are permitted to be installed on classroom doors in existing schools. The model codes for years restricted it to one operation. Maryland had previously recognized the need for extra security features to address issues such as active shooters and allowed two devices on the doors. The model codes picked up on the Maryland amendment. There have been several instances over the years where the model codes have recognized Maryland amendments and incorporated them into the model codes. Amendment FF maintains the previous language that the second device has to be distinguishable as locked; e.g. double cylinder deadbolts that have a window indicating whether it is locked or unlocked. The purpose for this is that as someone approaches a door in an emergency situation, they can readily distinguish if the door is locked or unlocked.
- NFPA 101 amendment JJ on page 5, there was a change in the 2021 model codes to require all new day care centers to be sprinklered. This conflicted with the Maryland building code requirements. The committee felt confident that the proposed amendment is more realistic where restrictions listed in items one through four apply, particularly for single-story day care centers where every room has an outside door and there are no more 300 clients. This amendment correlates the fire and building codes.
- NFPA 101 amendment RR on page 6, the wording may be a bit difficult to understand because it makes a reference back to Chapter 43 of the code, which is the chapter on building rehabilitation. The committee felt that when someone wants to convert an existing single-family dwelling into a family daycare home that it is different from day care centers in that the homes have limited clients.

The committee did not see the need for the home to be rewired to operate electric smoke alarms. The amendment adds an exception to permit the use of battery-operated smoke alarms that meet Maryland law, that is the 10-year sealed lithium smoke alarms.

- NFPA 1 amendment BB and CC on page 9 deal with the distance that is required between any kind of operation or refueling of a portable or vehicle mounted generator and any of nearby building's intakes with regard specifically to carbon monoxide hazards in occupied structures. There was a major change in the model codes that increased the distance from five feet to twenty feet based on some studies by the Occupational Safety and Health Act and the National Institute for Standards and Technology related to the effects of carbon monoxide on people who occupy these spaces. There was much committee discussion on this topic and ultimately it was decided to keep the 20 foot requirement but allow the local authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) to reduce the distance if sufficient levels of safety were provided. A note was added to the Annex material, which is not enforceable, but provides guidance for the AHJ.
- NFPA 1 amendment VV on page 10 changes the occupant load factor for sprinklers in assembly occupancies from 50 to 100 persons, as was done in NFPA 101.
- NFPA 1 amendment WW on page 10 deals with a new model code requirement for sprinklers in mini storage buildings. The amendment allows sprinklers to be omitted where the building is separated by fire walls to essentially make separate buildings. The committee felt that by installing a fire barrier, which deletes a requirement for structural stability, that the same level of protection would be attained. In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Alexander, CFPE Bush explained that the 2,500 square feet pertain to a single fire area without a fire barrier wall. The 2,500 square foot area is not necessarily one open area, it usually is divided into mini storage areas by non-fire rated partitions or chain link fences.
- NFPA 1 amendment EEE on page 11 addresses the smoke alarms permitted to be installed in homes converted to family day care homes, as amended in NFPA 101.
- NFPA 1 amendment UUU and VVV pertain to mobile food commercial cooking facilities. There was extensive committee discussion on this topic with a separate subgroup of committee members researching the topic. Headed by Mat Chibbaro from the National Institutes of Health Fire Marshal's Office, the subgroup developed several suggested amendments. Most notably one dealing with means of escape for the occupants of the mobile facility and one that allows the storage and transport of LP cylinders inside the vehicle provided the cylinders are secured in an upright position. This was not permitted in the model codes and the committee found this to be too restrictive. A current amendment that requires mobile cooking facilities to be inspected by a licensed gas fitter is proposed for deletion as the AHJs throughout the State found inconsistencies within the inspections and in some cases violations were still being found in vehicles that had been inspected. In a response to an inquiry from Commissioner Sanger, CFPE Bush advised that by adopting NFPA 70 National Electrical Code by reference, food trucks would have to comply with it.
- The remainder of amendments deal extensively with references to Chapter 65 of the 2000 edition of NFPA 1124 dealing with consumer fireworks. Since the current model codes no longer address consumer fireworks, the committee felt it necessary to keep these requirements in place.
- After discussing the explosive regulations with Bomb Squad Commander Duane Svites, it was recommended that the current regulations be retained.

- The model codes have added requirements that all non-sprinklered high-rise buildings, both commercial and residential, be posted with signage at the entrances indicating they are not sprinklered. There are no proposed amendments to change this requirement.

For newer Commissioners Sanger's and Stevens' information, Chairman Tochtermann explained that the State Fire Prevention Code is not applicable to existing structures unless the Commission determines there is an inimical hazard. Several years ago the Commissioners, with only one dissent, voted that within the State of Maryland, any non-sprinklered high-rise building is an inimical hazard. Although there are no amendments to the model code, there are provisions in the new model codes pertaining to non-sprinklered high-rise buildings. In Maryland a high-rise is any building higher than 75 feet.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Bilger, CFPE Bush stated he was not aware of NFPA looking at seven-year smoke alarms versus ten-year smoke alarms. However Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) 217 test requirements for smoke alarms effective July 1, 2022, incorporates requirements for nuisance alarm features (cooking especially), but does not address the low frequency alarms. UL is still unable to get battery operated alarms to produce the low frequency signal; therefore, they have established tests for it but have not made it mandatory. There are separate devices available that you can put on your night stand that will convert a high frequency alarm to a low frequency alarm to alert you, but to date it has not been incorporated into an actual smoke alarm.

Commissioner Welch thanked CFPE Bush for chairing the committee, stating he was a great leader in getting a thorough review of the NFPA codes completed in only eight virtual meetings. Secretary Ritchie did a great job of capturing all the discussions and necessary amendments. The Chairman and other members echoed similar sentiments.

In response to some inquiries from Commissioners related to mobile food trucks, CFPE Bush explained that many of these model code requirements were the result of a food truck explosion in Philadelphia. Jurisdictions throughout the State do inspect the trucks and the requirements are uniform so a truck that passes an inspection in Baltimore City or Montgomery County, for instance, should have no problem passing an inspection in other jurisdictions. The local AHJs conduct the inspections within their own jurisdictions. Fire Marshal Geraci added there is a statewide Fire Marshal Committee that meets routinely and there is a subcommittee for food trucks requirements to help ensure uniformity throughout the State. They are developing a checklist for all jurisdictions to use across the board. Food trucks are also required to be inspected by the health department.

Commissioner Sanger sat in on several of the Code Update Committee meetings and advised it was difficult to follow along but he learned a lot about the whole attitude of the committee. Being a contractor for 25 years, he knows the difficulty in keeping up with local codes but everyone on the committee had a mindset to make it less onerous while still being very careful to provide adequate levels of safety.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Sanger, CFPE Bush explained that State law covers the actual installation of smoke alarms in residential structures, particularly one- and two-family dwellings. The law supersedes any State regulation pertaining to smoke alarm installations. Basically it depends on the year of construction whether the house needs to have interconnected alarms and whether they have to be electric, have battery back-up, or just be the 10-year battery operated. Any home built before 1975 can have battery only alarms; after 1975 it would be some type of electric alarm.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Sanger, CFPE Bush explained there are two main factors in classifying buildings. One is the occupancy classification which defines the type of hazard based on its use. It could be based by people, contents, hazard of contents—all which may be different. Second, is the type of construction as categorized in NFPA 220 which has basically five different types of construction based on combustibility and protection of the structural members. It starts with type 1, a fire-resistant building constructed with all non-combustible material which is enclosed or somehow protected for fire resistance ranging up to three hours. Non-combustible is type 2, which may or may not be protected but is all non-combustible materials. Type 3 is ordinary construction, typically the type found in old downtown buildings. The exterior walls may be two-hour rated but the floors and roof are wood frame. Type 4 is the heavy timber, mill type construction. Type 5 is all others, mostly wood frame. The fire codes address building construction type for a very limited number of occupancies, basically buildings with high occupant loads or limited mobility occupants such as health care, assembly, educational, day care, etc. Construction types are typically addressed in the building code.

Commissioner Alexander noted that there are several amendments adding a reference to the AHJ. CFPE Bush explained that the model codes frequently refer to fire departments, fire chiefs, or other authorities. AHJ is added to ensure the fire code authority is included when it is necessary for them to be involved.

With the conclusion of CFPE Bush's Code Update Committee report, Chairman Tochtermann charged each Commissioner to review the codes as well as the amendments and be prepared to discuss any issues or present any questions and hopefully be prepared to vote on whether to proceed with the adoption process. Mr. Cade said the 2021 NFPA 101 books are being shipped today so the Commissioners should have them in the very near future. The code is also accessible on line at the NFPA website.

CFPE Bush noted that once a vote to proceed is passed, the regulations have to be reviewed by Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR) Committee, be published in the Maryland Register for a 30 day public comment period, a Commission vote taken to adopt, and then a final notice published before it can officially be adopted. So it depends on how fast it gets submitted by the Maryland State Police to the Division of State Documents/AELR and the timing of the publications. The goal is to have an effective date of January 1, 2022.

Commissioner Bilger, in his work with the Maryland State Firemen's Association, is preparing the new fire laws book for publication. Since that will be published in 2021, CFPE Bush stated it will still need to reference the 2018 NFPA codes and the currently adopted regulations.

CFPE Bush thanked Secretary Ritchie for her work. As late as yesterday afternoon there were still back-and-forth discussions on some last minute adjustments to various references. He thanked the Commission for their efforts and NFPA again for helping to get this accomplished and providing the code books.

CFPE Bush continued his report stating some questions had arisen pertaining to sprinkler requirements for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) certified manufactured homes (mobile homes), particularly in Allegany County with several persons inquiring how it would be enforced. CFPE Bush contacted the Maryland Codes Administration under the Department of Labor, who really are responsible for HUD requirements. They advised that although HUD would not supersede any requirements that state or local governments pass, HUD approved manufactured homes would not be required to be sprinklered under federal

standards. So basically if a manufactured home comes in the State and has a HUD certified sticker, the Maryland Codes Administration does not require it to be sprinklered. It is noted there are several local Maryland jurisdictions that have adopted requirements that all homes be sprinklered.

CFPE Bush reported that the process has already started for the 2024 editions of the model codes. He missed the April Commission meeting because he was attending the International Code Council's hearings on the 2024 editions. The hearings are completed and public hearings will be held in September in Pittsburgh. The NFPA 1 Fire Code 2024 edition first draft meetings of the technical committees are completed. The correlating committee, new for this year, will meet in October 2021. The first draft will be posted in December 2021. The comment period closes on February 24, 2022. The NFPA 101 2024 edition base chapters committees will meet in July 2021. The occupancy chapters committees will meet the second week of August. The first draft will be posted in March 2022 with the public comment period closing in February 2023.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Tochterman invited NFPA representative Gregory Cade to speak. Mr. Cade was acquainted with several persons in attendance, having been a part of the fire service in Maryland for 52 years. He is a life member of the Glenn Dale Fire Association (Prince George's County). He served there 24 years before retiring and joining NFPA for the last 11 years. He appreciates all the work the OSFM and Commission does on the adoption process. NFPA is proud to be part of it and appreciates being looked upon as a consensus code maker. This is NFPA's 125th year since originally starting for the purpose of standardizing hose couplings, which still has not materialized. When he started his recruit class in Laurel the fire hydrants were still the old mushroom topped type. He congratulated Ken, another Maryland University graduate, on 45 years of great work. He extended his and NFPA's support, noting that the Maryland fire service has a very warm place in his heart, since that is where he began, and hopes to continue to be a part of it.

The Commission discussed the locations and types of venues to hold the August and October meetings. It was not known if the Laurel Municipal Building, a very nice venue to hold public meetings, is allowing outside entities to use the conference room again. Fire Marshal Geraci said the fire house in Laurel has a very large room for meetings. Commissioner Alexander will secure a location, most likely the Mount Airy Fire Station. Invitees from other surrounding counties who were interested in attending the previously scheduled meeting in Mount Airy that was cancelled due to COVID will again be invited to the August 19, 2021, meeting scheduled to begin at 10:00 a.m.

The Chairman entertained motions to approve the April minutes. Motion by Commissioner Bilger, second by Commissioner Sanger, and unanimously carried.

The Chairman entertained motions to adjourn. Motion by Commissioner Bilger, second by Commissioner Alexander, and unanimously carried to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,
(as summarized from transcript provided by Hunt Reporting),



Heidi Ritchie, Secretary