

Crawford County



County Commissioners

Chairman

Eric Henry

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John Christopher Soff

Fire Commission Members

Allen Clark, Conneautville

Eric Coston, East Mead

John Fuller, Vernon Central

Robert Horvat, Vernon Township

Fire Commission

c/o Crawford County DPS

632 Pine Street

Meadville, Pennsylvania 16335

Fire Commission Members

Phil Koon, Saegertown

Joe Lamey, Titusville

Bob McCartney, Fallowfield

Maryann Menanno, Meadville

Jim Pratt, West Mead #2

Ryan Sekerski, Cochranon

Kris Simmons, Crawford DPS/911

Joe Smock, Meadville

Justin Sullivan, Townville

John Treacy, Conneaut Lake

Bob Wimer, Greenwood

Crawford County Fire Commission

Minutes

September 21, 2022, 7:00pm

- I. Commissioner's Welcome – Crawford County Commissioner Eric Henry welcomed those attending to the meeting.
- II. Roll Call of Commission Members – Attending were; Clark, Coston, Fuller, Horvat, Koon, Lamey, McCartney, Pratt (virtual), Sekerski, Smock, Wimer, along with Scott Schell and Don Bovard.
- III. Fire Commission Testifiers – Scott Schell is currently the Fire Chief at Cochranon Fire Department. He has been in the fire and EMS for 47 years in Mercer and Crawford Counties. He thanked everyone on the Commission for what they are doing to help the fire service in Crawford County. He noted that everyone in the room was up there in age and it seems that the younger generations are not interested in volunteering in the fire service. He said paid personnel in several locations during the day would be the first way to fix the system. Most people who belong to his fire department work out of town during the day and only 4 or 5 who work in town respond to fires. They do have a private club which provides for their financial income to purchase equipment and apparatus. They do have some good business minded people who have helped with their investing of funds. They also have a contract with all their municipalities which pay \$7,000 per year to the fire department plus the Foreign Fire Tax. Their personnel take the required HazMat, first aid, and CPR courses. He encourages firefighters to take Essentials of Fire Fighting but if someone is only interest in pumping, they take Pump Operations Courses. Some people only want to make coffee so there's a place for everyone. They train-in house three Tuesday nights a week.
- IV. Subcommittee Reports
 - a. Communications: Chair Kris Simmons, Jim Pratt, Joe Smock, John Treacy, Greg Beveridge, and Joe Lamey. John Treacy will now be the Chair of this Subcommittee. They Subcommittee has not met in-person but has e-mailed each other. Commissioner Henry reported that there will be two new communication towers built by the county, one near Sugar Lake and another near Dupont and Drake Hill Roads. The Greiser

Road Tower in Sadsbury Township is progressing. They are looking for space on other towers to reduce rent. Repeaters in Titusville will be moving to another location. It was noted that the Hartstown area has poor cell phone and UHF radio capabilities. Commissioner Henry said they will look into that area.

- i. I am Responding Software – A demonstration of the software was held last Friday at DPS. A five-year lease for county-wide implementation would cost \$100,000 dollars. Erie County currently uses it in their 911 Center. ATT First Net will be moving up some of their new cellular tower build out so this system can be used in more areas of the county. A discussion on I Am Responding versus Active 911 was held. An informal poll was taken in the room with 12 departments using IAR and 4 using Active 911. The Subcommittee would like a virtual demo of Active 911 and visit the Erie County 911 Center to see how they use IAR. Another suggestion was to add municipal employees to either system so that they know when and where there are trees down or other emergencies in their municipality in order to assist the fire departments.
 - ii. Fire In and Out of Service Board – another possible suggestion was to have an in and out board for fire departments similar to EMS departments so the 911 center knew what fire departments have staffing and which ones do not.
 - iii. Set Crews – some fire departments have crews established and take turns responding to trees and wires down and other low severity incidents.
 - b. Government: Chair Maryann Menanno, Rob Horvat, Eric Coston, Don Bovard, and Justin Sullivan. This Subcommittee did not meet but will schedule a meeting before the next Commission Meeting. Scott Schell will be added to this Subcommittee.
 - c. Operations: Chair Ryan Sekerski, Bob McCartney, Eric Cost, and Phil Koon. This Subcommittee did not meet but will schedule a meeting before the next Commission Meeting. Items for them to discuss are; List of terminology, SOG's, information on combination departments, training standards, engine, tanker, aerial and rescue standards.
 - d. Stakeholders: Chair Allen Clark, Eric Henry, John Treacy, and Phil Koon. The Subcommittee met on September 7th with representatives from PennDOT, electric utilities, investments, marketing, and retired individuals. The minutes from their meeting are attached to the minutes of this meeting.
- V. Other Items – Commissioner Henry mentioned that someday the FCC will give the county a five-year window to switch to digital frequencies from UHF. It can cost from \$10 to \$15 million dollars to replace all the repeaters, 911 equipment, bases, mobiles, portables, and minitors.
- VI. Training – It was mentioned that there is some good on-line training that public safety personnel can take. Those responders who are getting older and cannot pack up and go in like they used to are interested in other types of training. Allen Clark suggested coordinating training courses in the county so classes can meet the minimum number of students to have the class and so the same course isn't offered within close proximity.

Bob Wimer reported that there were 106 students at the Crawford and Venango Counties Fire School this year and they had to cancel three courses due to low enrollment. Years previously they had 190 students. It was suggested to have leadership classes, non-profit and fiscal management classes, and maybe the hoarder's class again. It was suggested maybe having classes one day but four times a year instead of a full weekend.

- VII. Action Items for Next Meeting – each subcommittee is to meet again prior to the November Commission Meeting. Allen will be working to put our agendas and minutes on the Crawford County web-site.
- VIII. Next Meeting, November 16, 7:00pm at Crawford County DPS
- IX. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned

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Crawford County Fire Commission Members

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