



## MASSACHUSETTS FIRE DISTRICT 7

Chief Matthew R. Belsito, Sutton  
Chairman  
(508) 865-8737

Chief Robert P. Parsons, Spencer  
Vice Chairman  
(508) 867-8825

Chief William T. Kessler, Uxbridge  
Treasurer  
(508) 278-2787

Chief Richard P. Hamilton, Millbury  
Secretary  
(508) 865-5328

### **District 7 Chiefs Meeting Minutes October 8, 2020 - 6:30 p.m. Dudley Fire HQ, 128 W. Main Street**

**Call to Order – 18:45 by Chairman Belsito**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**18 in attendance from 17 Towns/Cities**

M. Belsito, W. Kessler, R. Hamilton, A. Lavoie, B. Hickey, M. Gauthier, L. McDonald, E. Knopf, D. Kochanowski, P. Konisky, K. Richard, M. DiFronzo, K. Vinson, R. Liard, G. Johnson, R. Wilson, D. White, P. Martell

**Treasurer and Secretary Report**

- M – Chief Gauthier: to accept both as emailed
- S – Chief Wilson
- V – Unanimous

**NEW WORCESTER DISTRICT CHIEF:** Chairman Belsito welcomed the new Worcester Special Operations, District Chief Kurt Richard.

**RETIREMENTS:** Chairman Belsito announced this would be the last meeting for Leicester Chief Bob Wilson, who served for 26 years as Chief in Leicester, and also for Bill Lock, who couldn't attend tonight. Bill has been Spencer's Deputy Chief for quite some time. The Chairman brought a cake in honor of the two.

**MEMA:** No report.

**DCR:** Roy Liard: Seasonal staff extended until October 17<sup>th</sup>. If it stays dry, they may be extended another two weeks. KBDI at 557 (scale of 0 to 800). State is in drought and severe drought, just not enough rain. They are trying to keep the towers staffed as much as possible. Continue sending him any excess property requests, with the COVID, there was not as much available. Total of 152 fires in the district this year for 76 acres. DCR set up a type 3 management during COVID to maintain services.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- *Training*: Chief Vinson: They haven't met recently.
- *Radio*: Chief DiFronzo: Homeland projects, they approved 14 new VHF portables and 14 new 800 mhz. portables, along with 20 batteries for the existing portables, as part of phase 1 of the request. Recording units for the Comm Trucks needs to be approved. Existing radios have had a lot of use. They are looking at improving the orange coverage from the Charlton Tower site. They are planning to run a test from each site. Discussion of some Southbridge Dispatch issues. They are working on some Rhode Island interop.
- *FCAM*: No report.
- *Homeland Security*: Chief Kochanowski: Comms have been approved to next level, Tech & Dive projects wrapping up. Extension on FY18 funds, there will be some leftover money. If you have projects that qualify, apply for it. Next fiscal year funds look promising. Cybersecurity a high priority. Gas calibration station replacements approved for \$131,000, all of them will be replaced. Chief Knopf stated they requested an active shooter project, going in November. It will be district wide, capacity of 50 people, police and fire, \$118,000. Chief Kochanowski replied the training has been approved, law enforcement has to get 25% of the money.
- *Tech Rescue*: Chief Belsito: Trench trailer delivered to Oxford, will be lettered soon. A few issues to be corrected and it needs to be fitting with equipment. Training for Tech & Dive teams going on. Teams have been very busy. Homeland equipment and training have paid off. Chief Kochanowski added that it was brought up at the Homeland meeting how successful these teams have been with the funded projects. They will send a letter to EEOPS about the successes of the teams.
- *State Mobilization*: Chief Wilson: The study was not done of the groups because of the COVID. He brought up his pending retirement and the need to send a name to FCAM for his replacement. Motion: Wilson seconded by McDonald; to send Chief DiFronzo's name, the current alternate for appointment and also Chief Normandin's name for the new alternate: unanimous. Chief Wilson also brought up a request to send a letter of support to FCAM for support of Joe Flanigan, from Boylston, as the new Region III Mobilization Coordinator. This covers Districts 7, 8 and 14. Motion by Wilson seconded DiFronzo: To support Joe Flanigan: Unanimous. Chief Hurlbut will be copied on both of these letters.
- *EMS*: Chief Normandin: Not much going on, urging remote classes.
- *Communications Team*: Chief DiFronzo: Comm Team has been busy with the Tech & Dive Teams and some Worcester activations. Jeff Wilson most likely not responding, will need help with FC1. They need people, anyone that wants to join send an application to any Comm Committee member where it will be reviewed and approved. Talk to your department members for any interest.

## OLD BUSINESS

**JEFF WILSON:** Chairman Belsito updated the group on Jeff Wilson. Things are not well; he is staying in ICU for treatment. He will keep the group updated.

**PIO CLASS:** No update

**DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Chief McDonald had done a presentation for the group at our last meeting in February on the Passport system. Information was also sent out to the district, waiting on feedback.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**DISTRICT 7 COOP PLAN:** Chairman Belsito explained how the D7 Chiefs Board of Directors met twice recently to discuss the proposed plan. The feeling was a plan should be put in place before a town has another issue. He explained Chief Parsons received a copy of the draft Agawam plan, which is a 2-page document. Chief Coleman took the District 14 plan, which is far more extensive, and modified it for our district. He sent out two drafts before tonight's meeting. Chief Normandin stated the plan fills in blanks of what ifs for many circumstances. The first thought was a pool of personnel available if they only needed a few people, but there was too much liability and licensing issues. Chairman Belsito said he understood the document will take a little to digest. You can call any E-Board member with questions. After some discussion, the Chairman asked if the group wanted to take time to read and digest it, and if an emergency hits then an emergency district meeting can be held. Chief McDonald felt there will be a need to involve Town Mangers, Town Council, etc. Chief Hamilton stated it is following the Strike Team agreements only for a longer period. Chief DiFronzo felt we should check with DFS and see if the town would need to declare a state of emergency. Chief McDonald questioned who would cover the costs of the crews, it's not something budgeted for. The Chairman stated during COVID, the costs may be reimbursable. Chief Kochanowski mentioned when the Governor declared the State of Emergency in March that might provide that. Chief Hickey stated it provides guidelines for the district and can be used as a tool as needed.

Motion: Kessler seconded by Kochanowski: To table it until the next meeting however the Chairman can use it as a guideline if something happens before then: unanimous

**STATION COVERAGE SURVEY:** Chairman Belsito explained the survey. The survey results had been sent out only to the Board of Directors, as they were discussing it. The Secretary will send it out to the district.

**AIR / LIGHT TRUCK SCBA BOTTLES:** Chief Wilson stated there are 58 bottles that are out of date and the district had decided not to test them. He wanted to know what to do with them. They weren't sure if they came from Homeland. Chief Kochanowski will check.

**AIR / LIGHT TRUCK PORTABLE LIGHTING:** Chief Wilson explained at some recent Dive & Tech calls there was a need for additional lighting. The D7 Board of Directors felt they should get some battery-operated LED lights. He was requesting some funding.

Motion: Normandin seconded by Johnson to spent up to \$4,000 for the lighting: unanimous

**SCENE BARRIERS:** There was discussion about barriers to shield sensitive situations at the calls where Tech and Dive Teams are. Chairman Belsito explained the ones the Fire Marshal had at there recent incident, on their rehab truck. He asked if the district should purchase some. It was believed that Mass DOT provided them to DFS. They are *MDI Compact Privacy Screens*. Chief Kochanowski suggested they get added to the next PJ for Dive & Tech. They could be stored on the Comm Trucks or in a Dive or Tech trailer.

**RETIREMENT TIME:** Chief Kessler brought up an issue going on with credited time being taken back by Worcester Regional Retirement. He asked if anyone gets a letter to forward a copy to FCAM.

### **GOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION**

**CHIEF WILSON RETIREMENT:** Chief Hickey congratulated Bob Wilson for his years of service and dedication to the district. Chief Wilson responded the district has done well. The Call/ Vol programmed that evolved into the Fire Academy and the Strike Team concept were started by District 7. The District has a great reputation and are run by great people.

**M** – Chief Kochanowski: To adjourn

**S** – Chief Normandin

**V** – Unanimous

**Adjourned 20:00 hrs.**

**Next Meeting:** December 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Oxford Fire Museum

### **Dates to Remember**