

# Atlantic County Firefighters' Association

"In Union For The Safety Of All"

President  
Amor "Skip" Portale  
Vice President  
Ellsworth Ott  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Charles "Chick" Kisby



Secretary  
Robert A. Mellon  
Treasurer  
Jaime C. Mellon  
Asst. Sect./Treasurer  
Cindy L. Badger

April 15, 2015

## **Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Atlantic County Firefighters' Association was called to order at 20:15 on April 15, 2015 at the Atlantic County Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center by President Amor "Skip" Portale. The meeting was opened with a flag salute followed by an Invocation by the Chaplain of the Association, Reverend Thomas Sweeny. President Portale then pointed out the fire exits and asked that all electronic devices be silenced. President Portale welcomed all to the meeting which serves as the twenty-fourth annual Valor Awards presentation and the sixth annual recognition of firefighters with fifty or more years of active service.

## **Opening Remarks and Introduction of Host Chief**

The meeting is being hosted by the Margate City Fire Department. President Portale introduced Chief Anthony Tabasso who welcomed everyone to the annual valor awards and expressed how much of an honor and a privilege it has been for the Margate City Fire Department to have been hosting the meeting and awards these past few years and honoring fellow brothers and sisters in the fire service. Chief Tabasso noted that he has been serving Margate for thirty-seven years, since April 10, 1978, and that his son is now a Lieutenant with the department.

## **In Attendance**

Roll call was taken by Secretary Robert A. Mellon who reported a quorum was present.

Total Chief/Delegate Attendance – 56      Total Member Departments/Companies Represented - 23

## **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2015 meeting, as sent to the member companies.

## **Bills**

The bills, totaling \$4,659.54, were read by Treasurer Jaime C. Mellon. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to pay the bills from the proper funds.

Bills --- Staples - \$81.35 (training office supplies) / SJ Welding - \$13.46 (rental) / South Jersey Electric Vehicles LLC - \$170.00 (repair golf cart) / AtlantiCare - \$460.00 (CPR cards) / Suburban Propane - \$384.11 (propane usage to be reimbursed by Cologne VFC) / Good Enoughs - \$900.00 (150 bales straw) / Mays Landing Golf & Country Club - \$2,003.76 (ACFFA dinner) / Whitey Swartz - \$62.98 (valor award supplies) / Nat Alexander Co. - \$353.30 (ACFFA fire photographer helmet) / Jaime Mellon - \$130.58 (reimburse for office supplies) / Atlantic County Fire Chiefs' Assoc. - \$100.00 (forward dues paid to wrong assoc.)

## **Dispensing of Business**

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to dispense with the remainder of regular business for the evening.

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## **Introduction of Awards**

President Portale welcomed all to the awards presentation and "50" year service recognitions and apologized for the late start. President Portale thanked all valor award recipients for having the courage to do what needed to be done and also thanked the "50" years of service recipients for having the dedication and commitment for all those years. President Portale also thanked the valor awards committee for the tough job of reviewing the nominations. President Portale introduced the invited guests; Robert Geist on behalf of Congressman Frank LoBiondo, NJ State Assemblyman: Vincent Mazzeo, Atlantic County Freeholders: John L. Carman, John W. Risley and Will Pauls, Atlantic City Mayor: Don Guardian, Atlantic County Sheriff: Frank Balles, and New Jersey State Fire Warden: Bill Edwards. All invited guests offered words of gratitude for the local fire service and the honored award recipients. Executive Committee Chairman Howard Berchtold thanked all of the invited guests for attending, the association officers and executive committee for all of the work that they do, all county firefighters, and their families that support them, for serving, tonight's valor award recipients for being in the right place at the right time, and all of the "50" years of service recipients for their dedication to the fire service.

## **Valor Awards**

President Amor "Skip" Portale and Executive Committee Chairman Howard Berchtold Jr. presented each of the Valor Award recipients with their awards from the Atlantic County Firefighters' Association. This is the twenty-fourth year of the Valor Awards presentation and two hundred twenty-eight recipients have been honored since the program was initiated. Recipients have included firefighters, police officers, medical personnel, and civilians. All honorees also received a certificate of special congressional recognition from Congressman Frank LoBiondo, an assembly commendation from NJ Assemblyman Vincent Mazzeo, a certificate of recognition from the Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders, a certificate of recognition from Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson, and a certificate of recognition from Atlantic County Sheriff Frank Balles.

Acting Chief Vincent Granese, Atlantic City Fire Department, highlighted the details surrounding the incident that earned recognition for four Atlantic City firefighters.

Awarded to members of the Atlantic City Fire Department for a rescue at 31 Lighthouse Lane on November 27, 2014. After making entry to the apartment, the occupant was found unconscious and was immediately removed and administered CPR by the firefighters before being transported to the hospital for further treatment.

### **Meritorious Valor Award:**

Captain Kurt Marron, Rescue 1  
Firefighter Joel Sparano, Rescue 1  
Firefighter Khalif Bennett, Rescue 1  
Firefighter Shay Steele, Ladder 1

Chief Scott Feldman, South Egg Harbor Volunteer Fire Company, highlighted the details surrounding the incidents that earned recognition for four first responders.

The South Egg Harbor Volunteer Fire Company No. 5 received a report of a structure fire at 602 County Boulevard on October 15, 2015. A NJ State Forest Fire Warden, who was in the area, responded first along with three firefighters who helped knock the fire down. Upon arrival of the South Egg Harbor Fire Company, entry was made where an occupant was found, removed, and taken to the hospital.

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## Meritorious Valor Award:

Section Warden Russ Fenton, NJ Forest Fire Service  
Chief Butch Kienzle, Egg Harbor City Fire Department  
Chief Shawn Vallauri, Cologne Volunteer Fire Company  
Former Captain Keith Mullineux, Egg Harbor City Fire Department

Acting Chief Vincent Granese, Atlantic City Fire Department, highlighted the details surrounding the incidents that earned recognition for four Atlantic City firefighters.

Awarded to members of the Atlantic City Fire Department for a rescue at 3615 Winchester Avenue on April 26, 2014. The occupant was trapped at a window on the fourth floor. Firefighters extended a 35-foot ladder and removed her to safety.

## Unit Valor Award:

Acting Captain Andrew Hunt, Ladder 2  
Firefighter Bruce Martin, Ladder 2  
Firefighter Daniel Geraci, Ladder 2  
Firefighter Thomas Higbee, Ladder 2

Chief Gene Sharpe, Bargaintown Volunteer Fire Company, highlighted the details surrounding the incidents that earned recognition for two first responders.

On November 26, 2014, a member of Bargaintown Volunteer Fire Company observed a vehicle leave the Atlantic City Expressway, turn over several times, and go into the marshes. He immediately went to the vehicle. Because the mud was so deep, he had to crawl to the vehicle where he promptly removed the occupants. In doing so he received minor burns on his hands from the exhaust system. He was then assisted by another person who had stopped to help.

## Letter of Commendation:

Captain Jason Rouse, Bargaintown Volunteer Fire Company  
Fred Maccarelli Higbee, Civilian

## "50" Year Service Awards

The presentation of the "50" Year Service Awards was made by Executive Committee Chairman, Howard Berchtold Jr. and President Amor "Skip" Portale. All honorees received a uniform bar, gold life member card, and framed certificate from the association. All honorees also received a certificate of special congressional recognition from Congressman Frank LoBiondo, an assembly commendation from NJ Assemblyman Vincent Mazzeo, a certificate of recognition from the Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders, a certificate of recognition from Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson, and a certificate of recognition from Atlantic County Sheriff Frank Balles.

## "50" Year Service Award Recipients:

Robert J. Gibney, Dorothy Volunteer Fire Company  
Donald G. Milne, Egg Harbor City Fire Department  
James Sanford, South Egg Harbor Volunteer Fire Company No. 5

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President Portale congratulated all 50 year service award recipients and thanked all of the families that supported them for all of those years.

## **Special Presentation**

President Amor "Skip" Portale reported that Harold J. "Whitey" Swartz retired from the position of Atlantic County Fire Marshal in December of 2014. Whitey has served over sixty years in the Atlantic County Fire Service in West Atlantic City, Pleasantville, and as County Fire Marshal. President Portale introduced David G. Buzby who has been appointed as the new Fire Marshal by the County of Atlantic.

President Amor "Skip" Portale and Executive Committee Chairman Howard Berchtold Jr. officially appointed Whitey Swartz as the Fire Photographer of the Atlantic County Firefighters' Association and presented him with a fire helmet reflecting the same. Howard Berchtold reminded all that just last year a plaque was presented to Whitey recognizing his many contributions to the fire service. Howard noted that, among many things, Whitey is responsible for the valor awards, "50" years of service recognition, fire expo, and the annual memorial service every January. To further honor Whitey's retirement, a copy of that plaque has been placed into a frame with the patches of the fire service agencies that Whitey has served surrounding it.

Presented  
to  
H.J. Whitey Swartz  
In Recognition, Admiration and Thanks  
Firefighter, Fire Officer, Fire Coordinator, Fire Marshal, Fire Photographer,  
Fire Historian....  
Mention firefighting in Atlantic County and undoubtedly the discussion  
will turn to countless contributions, years of incredible service and  
dedication of H.J. Whitey Swartz.  
No one, no one has impacted the fire service community in Atlantic County  
– past, present and future – more than H.J. Whitey Swartz.  
And no one, no one could be more humble and unassuming in doing so  
than our dear friend Whitey.  
On behalf of the entire fire service community, The Atlantic County  
Firefighters' Association thanks, honors and salutes  
H.J. Whitey Swartz

Howard also thanked Whitey's wife, Joy, for all of the years of support she has provided Whitey. Whitey also thanked Joy for all that she had to "put up with" and his three sons, one of which is now retired from the Northfield Fire Department. Whitey reported that he has a grandson who just started with the Bayview Volunteer Fire Company and is continuing the fire service tradition through the generations.

## **Good of the Order**

President Portale thanked everyone for coming out for the presentations and thanked the Margate City Fire Department for hosting the evening and providing the refreshments.

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## Adjournment

Benediction was conducted by Chaplain Rev. Thomas Sweeny.

There being no further business at hand, the meeting and awards presentation was adjourned at 21:25. The next regular meeting is scheduled to be held at 20:00 on May 20, 2015 in Pomona, Galloway Township.

Attested:

Robert A. Mellon, Secretary

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**Date Clearing**      [http://www.atlanticcountyfireassoc.org/ACFFA\\_Date\\_Clearing.htm](http://www.atlanticcountyfireassoc.org/ACFFA_Date_Clearing.htm)

## Fire Department/Company/Association Events

Sun. Apr. 26, 2015	07:00	Landisville VFC	Annual Breakfast (07:00 – 11:00)
Sat. May 2, 2015	16:00	Germania VFC	Turkey Dinner
Tues. May 5, 2015	08:30	Neschanic Valley Golf Club	New Jersey Firemen's Home 2015 Golf Outing
Sat. May 16, 2015	10:00	Historic Smithville, NJ	Oceanville VFC @ Mayfest (Foot Long Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, French Fries)
Sat. May 16, 2015	11:00	Hamilton Twp. VFCs @ Hamilton Mall	Public Safety & Awareness Day (11:00 – 15:00)
Sat. May 16, 2015	15:30	Port Republic VFC	Roast Beef Dinner (15:30 - 19:30)
Sun. May 17, 2015	10:00	Historic Smithville, NJ	Oceanville VFC @ Mayfest (Foot Long Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, French Fries)
Sun. Jun. 7, 2015	12:00	Dorothy VFC	58th Annual Chicken BBQ (12:00 - 20:00)
Sat. Jun. 13, 2015	12:00	Cologne VFC	Annual Chicken BBQ (12:00 - 18:00)
Thurs. Aug. 6, 2015	12:30	Atlantic County 4H Fairgrounds, Rt. 50	ACFFA at Atlantic County 4H Fair w/ Fire Prevention Booth & Apparatus Display
Fri. Aug. 7, 2015	12:30	Atlantic County 4H Fairgrounds, Rt. 50	ACFFA at Atlantic County 4H Fair w/ Fire Prevention Booth & Apparatus Display
Fri. Aug. 7, 2015	19:00	Atlantic County 4H Fairgrounds, Rt. 50	ACFFA at Atlantic County 4H Fair w/ Firefighter Competition
Sat. Aug. 8, 2015	12:30	Atlantic County 4H Fairgrounds, Rt. 50	ACFFA at Atlantic County 4H Fair w/ Fire Prevention Booth & Apparatus Display
Tues. Aug. 11, 2015	19:30	Egg Harbor City VFD	New Jersey Firemen's Association Atlantic County Caucus
Fri. Sep. 18, 2015	13:00	Wildwood Convention Center	New Jersey Firemen's Association Annual Convention
Sat. Sep. 19, 2015	10:00	Wildwood Convention Center	New Jersey Firemen's Association Annual Convention
Sat. Oct. 3, 2015	10:00	Historic Smithville, NJ	Oceanville VFC @ Oktoberfest (Foot Long Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, French Fries)
Sat. Oct. 3, 2015	16:00	Germania VFC	Turkey Dinner
Sun. Oct. 4, 2015	10:00	Historic Smithville, NJ	Oceanville VFC @ Oktoberfest (Foot Long Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, French Fries)
Sat. Oct. 10, 2015	08:00	Elwood VFC @ Mays Landing Country	14th Annual William Kennedy Memorial Golf Tournament
Sat. Oct. 17, 2015	15:30	Port Republic VFC	Roast Beef Dinner (15:30 - 19:30)
Sat. Oct. xx, 2015	09:00	South Egg Harbor VFC	Fall/Christmas Craft, Art, & Home Show
Sat. Nov. 14, 2015	16:00	Oceanville VFC	Baked Ham & Fried Oyster Dinner - HamAndOysterDinner.com
Sat. Dec. 5, 2015	11:00	Cardiff VFC	Open House with Santa Claus (11:00 - 15:00)

## Regional Drills/Training

Sun. Apr. 19, 2015	07:30	hosted by West Tuckerton VFC, Ocean Co.	Tender Task Force – Alpha (TTF-A) Spring Drill (staging @ Pinelands Regional High School)
Sat. May 14, 2016	07:30	Atlantic City Int'l Airport	Triennial Emergency Preparedness Drill

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## ACFFA Meetings

### Atlantic County Firefighters' Association

Wed. May 20, 2015	20:00	Pomona VFC	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Jun. 17, 2015	20:00	Milmay VFC	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Jul. 15, 2015	20:00	Linwood VFD	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Aug. 19, 2015	20:00	Laureldale VFC	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Sep. 16, 2015	20:00	Hammonton VFD Sta. 1	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Oct. 21, 2015	20:00	Port Republic VFC	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Nov. 18, 2015	20:00	Somers Point VFD Sta. 2	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Dec. 16, 2015	20:00	Bargaintown VFC	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
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Wed. Jan. 20, 2016	20:00	Egg Harbor City VFD	Hosting ACFFA Annual Reorganization Meeting and Annual Memorial Service
Wed. Feb. 17, 2016	20:00	Longport VFD	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting

### Atlantic County Firefighters' Association - Executive Committee

Fri. May 1, 2015	19:30	Fire Museum of Southern New Jersey	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting
Fri. Jul. 3, 2015	19:30	Landisville VFC	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting
Fri. Sep. 4, 2015	19:30	Absecon VFD	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting
Fri. Oct. 30, 2015	19:30	South Egg Harbor VFC	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting
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Fri. Jan. 8, 2016	19:30	Pomona VFC	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting (Annual Reorganization)

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## Other Atlantic County Organization Meetings

### Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board

Mon. May 4, 2015	19:00	Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center	Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board
Mon. Jul. 6, 2015	19:00	Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center	Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board
Mon. Sep. 14, 2015	19:00	Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center	Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board
Mon. Nov. 9, 2015	19:00	Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center	Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board
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Mon. Jan. 4, 2016	19:00	Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center	Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board

### Atlantic County Fire Chiefs' Association

Wed. May 13, 2015	20:00	Northfield VFD	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Jun. 10, 2015	20:00	Collings Lakes VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Jul. 8, 2015	20:00	Estell Manor VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Aug. 12, 2015	20:00	Laureldale VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Sep. 9, 2015	20:00	Nesco VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Oct. 14, 2015	20:00	East Vineland VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Nov. 11, 2015	19:30	Linwood VFD	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Dec. 9, 2015	20:00	Sweetwater VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
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Jan. 2016	20:00	Absecon VFD	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Feb. 2016	20:00	Scullville VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association

### Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Assoc.

Thurs. Jul. 23, 2015	19:30	Dorothy VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association
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Thurs. Jan. 28, 2016	19:30	Somers Point VFD Sta. 1	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association
Thurs. Jul. 28, 2016	19:30	Oceanville VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association