

Atlantic County Firefighters' Association

"In Union For The Safety Of All"



August 20, 2025

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Atlantic County Firefighters' Association was called to order at 19:35 on August 20, 2025 at the Weymouth Volunteer Fire Company by President Charles J. Mackintosh. The meeting was opened with a flag salute followed by an Invocation by Howard Berchtold. Howard noted that Deacon Rich Maxwell was unable to attend but he asked that we remember those that have recently passed including Chief (Ret.) Bertram Sabo Jr. from the Ventnor Fire Department, Richard Crowell from the Minotola and Landisville Fire Companies, Howard Willetts Jr. from Farmington Fire Company, and Atlantic County Commissioner Ernest Coursey. President Mackintosh then pointed out the fire exits and asked that all electronic devices be silenced.

Introduction of Host Chief

President Mackintosh introduced Chief John Carrigan of the Weymouth Fire Company. Chief Carrigan welcomed everyone Weymouth in Hamilton Township.

In Attendance

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

Total Chief/Delegate Attendance – 42 of 172 Total Member Departments/Companies Represented – 22 of 43

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2025 meeting, as sent to the member companies.

Report of Treasurer

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the report of the Treasurer, totaling \$85,719.14, as read by Treasurer Jaime C. Mellon.

Bank of America / Bank of America / Parke Bank / Parke Bank / Parke Bank
Checking: \$4,265.14 / Savings: \$5,023.49 / Checking: \$43,761.73 / Money Market: \$1,024.12 / CD – 4.247%, matures 4/5/2026: \$31,644.66

Special Presentation

Howard Berchtold reported that Vince Jones was assisting a neighbor experiencing an emergency medical condition and was unable to attend the meeting. Howard reported that Vince will be attending the September meeting in Hammonton and will then be recognized by this association, the Atlantic County Fire Chiefs' Assoc. and the Atlantic County Fire Coordinator for his many years of service with Atlantic County Public Safety and Emergency Management.

Committee Reports

Firefighter Health and Wellness – Howard Berchtold reported that the July meeting minutes documented his report on cancer related to the HPV virus very well and in detail. Howard asked everyone to take the time to read it.

Executive Committee – Chairman Howard Berchtold Jr. reported the next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled to be held at 19:30 on September 5, 2025 at the Absecon Volunteer Fire Department.

Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board – Howard Berchtold reported on the meeting of the Fire Training Advisory Board held on July 21, 2025 at the Anthony “Tony” Canale Training Center. Howard reported that Michael Steinman, Atlantic County Emergency Management Coordinator, was in attendance. The County is working on funding for a new roof operations simulator and installing a drop ceiling in classroom four, the old library, to reduce the echo. The project to refurb the instructor gear room has been put out for bid. The next meeting of the Fire Training Advisory Board is scheduled for October 20, 2025 at the Anthony “Tony” Canale Training Center.

Atlantic County Radio Communications – Howard Berchtold reported that the additional report from ADCOMM has not yet been received and that the working group will review once it is received. The next steps after review will be to schedule a meeting with the Atlantic County Commissioners followed by meetings with municipal leadership.

Atlantic County 4H Fair – Howard Berchtold reported that the 4H Fair went well with excellent weather. Howard reported that the ACFFA tent was set up and the county fire service was well represented on Saturday since the car show utilized the available space on Friday. Howard thanked Kim Feinstein, Cindy Badger, Kenny Badger, Chip Stockton, and Joe Hartman for manning the tent and selling ACFFA 100th Anniversary merchandise. Howard reported that the 2025 NFPA fire prevention theme is “Charge into Fire Safety™: Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home” and that they had many informative discussions with members of the public. Howard thanked the Somers Point and Egg Harbor City Fire Departments for donating child fire helmets to be handed out along with an anonymous donor who supplied three hundred child fire helmets. Howard offered special thanks to the 4-legged star of the show, Maui the Fire Safety Dog, and Joe Ward, Maui’s companion. Howard thanked Germania, Buena Boro, and NJ State Forest Fire for attending with apparatus.

Training – Director Brian Middleton reported that the Firefighter I class has started with thirty-four students, seven of which are from out of county. The Firefighter II class will start in September and currently has seven registrations. Brian reported that the 2025 Pierce Road Rally apparatus show is scheduled to be held on Thursday, October 9th from 4pm to 7pm at the training center. They are expecting 150-200 people to attend and noted that the ACFFA could setup for sales of remaining 100th Anniversary merchandise. Brian reported that the County is planning to cover the cost of just under \$80k for a new roof operations simulator. Brian reported that “The Art of the Company Chauffeur Class”, presented by Brian Edwards, was well received with forty-six in attendance. President Mackintosh noted that he attended and reported that it included excellent subject matter and it was good to see someone who started here in Atlantic County achieve so much including becoming a touring instructor. Brian reported that he will be looking for additional topics and speakers for future classes.

Fire Coordinator – Fire Coordinator Clyde W. “Chip” Stockton Jr. reported on the plan to add additional channels to the radios and the recent passing of Chief (Ret.) Bertram Sabo Jr. from the Ventnor Fire Department. Chip also reported that assistance is still available for those that are still working on reimbursement paperwork, as the deadline is approaching, for the Jones Road Wildfire in Ocean County last April.

NJ State Firemen’s Assn. – Executive Committeewoman Cindy Badger reported that the Atlantic County Caucus was held on August 12th in Egg Harbor City. The convention is scheduled for September 12th and 13th in Wildwood. The memorial service followed by the meeting is at 11AM on September 12th with registration from 7AM until 11AM. There will only be registration and voting on September 13th from 7AM until 11AM. Howard Berchtold congratulated Cindy for being reelected and continuing to represent Atlantic County.

NJ Firemen’s Home – Oscar Dutch reported that summer BBQs have been ongoing at the home and that they are very much enjoyed by the guests of the home. Oscar noted that Camden County will soon host one of the BBQs. There are currently eighty-seven guests in the home. Oscar reported that an Antique Fire Muster is scheduled to be held on September 20, 2025 at the home from 9am until 2pm. Clayton Tucker congratulated Oscar for being reelected at the Atlantic County Caucus and continuing to represent Atlantic County.

Atlantic County Fire Chiefs’ Association – Butch Kienzle reported that the next meeting of the Atlantic County Fire Chiefs’ Association is scheduled to be held at 20:00 on Wednesday, September 10, 2025 in Nesco.

Harold J. “Whitey” Swartz Valor Awards and Service Recognition – Billy Merola reported that he is expecting nominations of valor related to a recent Galloway Township incident and that he will schedule a committee meeting when those, or other, nominations are received. President Chuck Mackintosh reminded everyone that nominations for valor and submission for service recognition (50 years of service completed) are due no later than January 31st for the following April recognition ceremony.

Fundraising – Kim Feinstein reported on recent sales of 100th Anniversary merchandise including \$391 at the Atlantic County 4H Fair and \$258 at the Atlantic County Caucus. Kim reported that he is in conversation with Rosenbauer to get a table/tent setup at the NJ Fire Expo, coinciding with the NJSFA convention in Wildwood, and continuing to sell the association 100th Anniversary merchandise. Kim will be seeking volunteers to help in Wildwood if this gets scheduled. Howard Berchtold reported that the association tent was damaged by wind at the ACUA Earth Day Festival in April and that they had been making do with it patched and bent back together since then. Howard recommended that the Association approve the purchase of a reasonably priced replacement that also includes side panels and weights to protect against the wind.

Communications

Two donations were received in the remembrance of Richard Crowell, past member of Minotola and Landisville Fire Companies. Howard Berchtold noted that the family had included in the obituary a request to please consider donating to the Atlantic County Fire Academy in memory of Richard.

Deferred Business

There was no deferred business to act upon.

New Business

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the purchase of a reasonably priced (estimated to be less than \$250) tent with side panels and weights.

Bills

The bills, totaling \$23,520.97, were read by Treasurer Jaime C. Mellon. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to pay the bills from the proper funds. Jaime reported that she spoke with Suburban Propane representative about the increased rate on recent bills and that credit will be forthcoming for the overcharges incurred from the incorrect rate.

Bills --- Chase Credit Card - \$9,911.76 (credit card) / Brian Edwards - \$1,000.00 (one day seminar) / Instructor Payroll Taxes - \$6,287.04 (federal payroll taxes) / Brown & Brown - \$3,374.00 (Auto & General Liability insurance policies) / AmGuard Insurance - \$380.00 (final worker's comp insurance audit) / DiVal Safety Equipment - \$2,404.00 (supplies) / NJ Dept of Labor - \$55.96 (assessment) / Howard Berchtold Jr. - \$108.21 (reimbursement Atl Co 4H Fair supplies)

Good of the Order

Billy Merola reported that the Weekstown Volunteer Fire Company will be hosting an Inaugural Clay Shoot Fundraiser at Red Wing Sporting Clays on September 27th.

Howard Berchtold reported that new plaques would be ordered to recycle unused 100th Anniversary trophies for use in Wildwood this year.

Oscar Dutch reported that Arnold Liepe, Past, and First, Chief of Cologne Volunteer Fire Company passed on August 10th.

Oscar Dutch and Clayton Tucker reported on a recent lithium-ion battery fire in Absecon where it was discovered that the scooter battery was being charged via alligator clips and not utilizing an original manufacturer charger. Oscar noted that manufacturers recommend only original chargers and replacement batteries opposed to any aftermarket options. Clayton noted that manufacturers recommend that extension cords not be utilized when charging batteries.

Thank you to the Weymouth Volunteer Fire Company for hosting the evening and providing refreshments.

Adjournment

Benediction was conducted by Howard Berchtold. Howard reported that Dcn. Maxwell requested that we all pray for those in harm's way as storms move across the country and to remember those lost to the 9/11 attacks along with those still dying from related illness. There being no further business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 20:20. The next regular meeting is scheduled to be held at 19:30 on September 17, 2025 at the Hammonton Fire Department Station 1.

Attested:

Robert A. Mellon, Secretary

Fire Department/Company/Association Events

Thurs. Sep. 11, 2025	08:30	Wildwood Convention Center	NJSFCA Wildwood Convention Training Seminar
Thurs. Sep. 11, 2025	13:00	Wildwood Convention Center	New Jersey State Fire Chiefs' Association Meeting
Thurs. Sep. 11, 2025	18:00	Cattle 'n Clover, Wildwood	Annual Wildwood F.O.O.L.S. Gathering
Fri. Sep. 12, 2025	08:00	Wildwood	Five Mile Beach Vol. Firemen's Assoc. hosts NJ Fire Expo (Tents & Exhibits)
Fri. Sep. 12, 2025	11:00	Wildwood Convention Center	New Jersey State Firemen's Association Annual Convention & Memorial Service (Reg. 07:00-11:00)
Fri. Sep. 12, 2025	16:00	Seaport Pier, North Wildwood	NFFF Fire Hero Beach Bash
Sat. Sep. 13, 2025	07:00	Wildwood Convention Center	New Jersey State Firemen's Association Annual Convention (Voting Only 07:00-11:00)
Sat. Sep. 13, 2025	08:00	Wildwood	Five Mile Beach Vol. Firemen's Assoc. hosts NJ Fire Expo (Tents & Exhibits)
Sat. Sep. 13, 2025	14:00	Wildwood	Five Mile Beach Vol. Firemen's Assoc. hosts NJ State Firemen's Convention Parade
Sat. Sep. 20, 2025	09:00	New Jersey Firemen's Home	Antique Fire Muster (09:00 - 14:00)
Sat. Sep. 27, 2025	09:00	Weekstown VFC @ Red Wing Sporting Clays	Inaugural Clay Shoot Fundraiser
Sat. Sep. 27, 2025	18:30	Dorothy VFC	4th Annual Designer Bag Bingo (Doors Open 17:00)
Sun. Sep. 28, 2025	09:00	NJFM, 4 Polhemustown Rd, Allentown, NJ	NJ Fire Museum Annual Open House (09:00 - 15:00)
Sat. Oct. 11, 2025	11:00	Bayview VFC @ McGettigan's 19th Hole	Beef & Beer Cornhole Tournament
Tues. Oct. 14, 2025	20:00	Collings Lakes VFC	Facebook Live Drawing for Tailgate Package Raffle
Sat. Oct. 18, 2025	12:00	Elwood VFC @ No. 79 Restaurant	Bags, Brews, & Bites Corn Hole Tournament
Sat. Oct. 18, 2025	15:30	Port Republic VFC	Roast Beef Dinner (15:30 - 19:30) *TAKE OUT ONLY
Sat. Nov. 8, 2025	15:00	Oceanville VFC	Baked Ham or Fried Oyster Dinner
Sat. Dec. 13, 2025	19:00	Hammonton VFD	Hammonton VFD Christmas Parade (lineup 18:00 & parade 19:00)
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Sat. Jun. 6, 2026		Germania VFC	Germania Vol. Fire Co. 100th Anniversary Celebration

ACFFA Meetings**Atlantic County Firefighters' Association**

Wed. Sep. 17, 2025	19:30	Hammonton VFD Sta. 1	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Oct. 15, 2025	19:30	Dorothy VFC	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Nov. 19, 2025	19:30	Somers Point VFD Sta. 2	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
Wed. Dec. 17, 2025	19:30	Bargaintown VFC	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting
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Wed. Jan. 21, 2026	19:30	Egg Harbor City VFD	Hosting ACFFA Annual Reorganization Meeting and Annual Memorial Service
Wed. Feb. 18, 2026	19:30	Longport VFD	Hosting ACFFA Monthly Meeting

Atlantic County Firefighters' Association - Executive Committee

Fri. Sep. 5, 2025	19:30	Absecon VFD	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting
Fri. Nov. 7, 2025	19:30	South Egg Harbor VFC	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting
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Fri. Jan. 2, 2026	19:30	Pomona VFC	Hosting ACFFA Executive Committee Meeting (Annual Reorganization)

Other Atlantic County Organization Meetings**Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board**

Mon. Oct. 20, 2025	19:00	Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center	Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board
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Mon. Jan. 12, 2026	19:00	Anthony "Tony" Canale Training Center	Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board

Atlantic County Fire Chiefs' Association

Tues. Sep. 10, 2025	20:00	Nesco VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chief's Association
Wed. Oct. 8, 2025	20:00	Estell Manor VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chief's Association
Wed. Nov. 12, 2025	20:00	Bayview VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chief's Association
Wed. Dec. 10, 2025	20:00	Sweetwater VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chief's Association
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Tues. Jan. 27, 2026	20:00	Absecon VFD	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chief's Association
February 2026-----	-----	-----	NO MEETING-----

Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Assoc.

Thurs. Nov. 20, 2025	19:30	Sweetwater VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association
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Thurs. Feb. 26, 2026	19:30	Elwood VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association
Thurs. May 28, 2026	19:30	Bargaintown VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association
Thurs. Aug. 27, 2026	19:30	Somers Point VFD Sta. 1	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association
Thurs. Nov. 19, 2026	19:30	***TBD***	Hosting Meeting of Atl. Co. Firefighters' Death Benefit Fund Association