

Atlantic County Firefighters' Association

"In Union For The Safety Of All"



September 17, 2025

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Atlantic County Firefighters' Association was called to order at 19:35 on September 17, 2025, at the Hammonton Fire Department Station 1, by President Charles J. Mackintosh. The meeting was opened with a flag salute followed by an Invocation by the Chaplain of the Association, Deacon Rich Maxwell. Deacon Maxwell reflected on 9/11/2001 and asked that everyone remember and pray for those we lost directly from the attacks and those we continue to lose because of the many health issues affecting those that responded in the hours, days, and months that followed. President Mackintosh then pointed out the fire exits and asked that all electronic devices be silenced.

Introduction of Host Chief

President Mackintosh introduced Chief Sean Macri of the Hammonton Volunteer Fire Department. Chief Macri welcomed all to Hammonton.

In Attendance

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

Total Chief/Delegate Attendance – 50 of 172 Total Member Departments/Companies Represented – 23 of 43

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes of the August 20, 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 \$92,101.79, as read by Treasurer Jaime C. Mellon.

Bank of America / Bank of America / Parke Bank / Parke Bank / Parke Bank
Checking: \$4,235.19 / Savings: \$5,023.55 / Checking: \$50,170.85 / Money Market: \$1,027.54 / CD – 4.247%, matures 4/5/2026: \$31,644.66

Special Presentations

Sean Macri introduced Michael Bakuckas, a Hammonton local, who will be running "The Solo: AC to Cape – 82K Run" from Atlantic City to Cape May to support the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, which honors 9/11 by helping America's first responders and military heroes. Michael shared some of his background and how he became interested in long-distance running and eventually working with the Tunnel to Towers Foundation to add a fundraising aspect to his efforts. Michael shared a flyer with additional information and asked for support via donations or even joining him on the run scheduled for September 27th.

Howard Berchtold welcomed Vince Jones, congratulated him on his well-deserved retirement, and thanked him for his many years of service to Atlantic County as Director of Office of Emergency Management. Howard spoke of Vince's long history of supporting and advocating for the county fire service. Vince was presented with plaques from the Atlantic county Firefighters' Association and the Atlantic County Fire Chiefs' Association. The Atlantic County Fire Coordinator and Deputy Fire Coordinators presented Vince with a gift card for dining out.

(Plaque)
Presented To
Vince Jones, Director
Office of Emergency Management
In Recognition Of Your
Unwavering Support Of
Our Association And All Aspects Of
Our Goals And Objectives
Atlantic County Firefighters' Assoc.
June 2025

(Plaque)
Presented To
Vince Jones, Director
Office of Emergency Management
In Recognition And With
Sincere Thanks For Your
Dedication And Continuous Support
Of The Fire Service
Atlantic County Fire Chiefs' Association
June 2025

Vince thanked everyone for the recognition and expressed the gratitude that he has for the county fire service that worked with him during all those years and how he considers all to be friends and family for supporting him and making his work just a little easier over that time.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Chairman Howard Berchtold summarized the minutes from the September 5th meeting of the Executive Committee held in Absecon. Howard thanked the Absecon Fire Department for hosting the Executive Committee. The committee had received word that the county was budgeting \$78,000 for a new roof operations simulator and everyone is grateful that the county was able to make that happen. The committee discussed fundraising ideas including potentially hosting a golf tournament in 2026. Howard noted that he is working with Brian Middleton and they plan on meeting with CRDA (Casino Reinvestment Development Authority) leadership to discuss ideas on how they may be able to assist the county fire service. The committee continues to review the Association insurance coverage to ensure the Association remains protected. Most of the coverage is with VFIS. The committee is still seeking viable options for providing supplemental coverage for the fire instructors. The committee continues to seek additional health and wellness presentations and discussed mental wellness and the programs and resources available. An updated list of local mental wellness resources will be put together. The committee continues to review options for credit card acceptance and the associated costs. The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for November 7, 2025 in South Egg Harbor at 19:30.

Atlantic County Fire Training Advisory Board – Howard Berchtold reported that 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 there is forward progress with "Centralized Fire/EMS Dispatch Center Feasibility Study" and the "NG9-1-1 Cost Impact Analysis" reports submitted by ADCOMM Engineering LLC. Howard reported that meetings to review the reports have already taken place with the Atlantic County Executive and Administration. Representatives of the working group will attend the October 7th meeting of the County Commissioners to review the reports. Howard reviewed some of the NG9-1-1 requirements and noted that Atlantic County is the last NJ county without some form of central dispatch. Howard reviewed the potential NG9-1-1 implementation costs for both a central system and for the existing thirteen PSAPs in Atlantic County showing that a central system would cost several million dollars less for the initial upgrade costs and noted that there would still be ongoing costs involved to maintain or upgrade the technology. Howard reported that he will need everyone onboard to help sell the proposal to the municipal leadership in the county and to the public. Howard reviewed some of the technical notes and information from the "NG9-1-1

Cost Impact Analysis” report. Dale Conover reported on a recent Cape May County Herald article about the central dispatch in Cape May County.

Training – Director Brian Middleton reported that the County had received the sole provider bid from the vendor for the roof operations simulator. Brian reported on new procedures with the NJ Division of Fire Safety for Firefighter registration and certification. The state is moving to an all-digital format. All new recruits must have a myNewJersey account and a NJ DFS number before starting Firefighter I. The Fire Academy staff are assisting the current class with this new process; Fire Chiefs will be responsible for handling future recruits before the next Firefighter I class. NJ DFS certifications will no longer be mailed and will be sent via email and available online via myNewJersey account. Brian reported that the F&SS 2025 Road Rally is being held at the training center on October 9th. Those attending should register with Fire & Safety Services beforehand. Brian reported that the county is moving forward with the \$140k instructor gear room rebuild and that he is seeking suggestions for one day outside instructor classes.

Fire Marshal – Fire Marshal Dave Buzby reported that he is back after a leave of absence. Everyone welcomed Dave back.

Fire Coordinator – Fire Coordinator Clyde W. “Chip” Stockton Jr. reported that the NJ state firefighting foam take back plan is still on hold. Chip reported that he has sent all Chiefs and email requesting their biennial mutual aid updates due before 2026. Chip reviewed the information requested and noted that mutual aid plans need to utilize contiguous departments. Chip reported that he, and some of the Deputy Fire Coordinators, will be attending wildland urban interface training and that some of them have also already attending structural triage training. Chip reported that he is looking into getting the NJ Forest Fire Service to schedule a four-hour structural triage class in Atlantic County. Possibly on a Saturday in January or February. Chip recommended that any radios being serviced also be updated to the latest talk groups for the County. Chip has a list of talk groups for portables and for mobiles. Chip asked that he be informed of any new Chiefs that may be taking office in the coming new year.

NJ State Firemen’s Assn. – Executive Committeewoman Cindy Badger reported that the Atlantic County Caucus and the NJSFA Convention attendance reports are now available online. Cindy provided an update on when special and supplemental relief applications need to be received to be approved within the year 2025. Cindy reported that the new membership application is dated 9/2025 and includes the arson conviction question as approved by resolution at the convention.

NJ Firemen’s Home – Oscar Dutch reported that all is quiet at the home, and the Board of Managers will elect Officers at their October meeting. Oscar reported that the Board had requested plans on how to eliminate multi-guest rooms and convert the home into all single occupancy rooms. There have not been any meetings to review the submitted plans.

Atlantic County Fire Chiefs’ Association – Butch Kienzle reported that the ACFCA Wildwood parade trophy “Best Appearing Atlantic County Command Vehicle” was awarded to Farmington Volunteer Fire Company and that the next meeting of the Atlantic County Fire Chiefs’ Association is scheduled to be held at 20:00 on Wednesday, October 8, 2025 in Estell Manor.

Harold J. “Whitey” Swartz Valor Awards and Service Recognition – Billy Merola reported that four valor nominations have been received to date and that he is scheduling a meeting of the committee to be held in Dorothy at 6pm prior to the Association meeting. 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 in Wildwood totaling \$3,059 for the weekend. The total sales of 100th Anniversary merchandise to date is \$30,712.93, and the remaining merchandise will be marked down. Shirts for \$10 (261 remain), Challenge Coins for \$10 (40 remain), Pint Glasses are 2/\$5 (384 remain), Shot Glasses are 2/\$5 (59 remain), and Hats for \$10 (80 remain). Kim thanked everyone for the help in Wildwood and reported that next opportunity to sell is at the F&SS 2025 Road Rally on October 9th and volunteers are requested. Howard Berchtold reported that a thank you is for Rosenbauer providing the table/tent setup location at the NJ Fire Expo in Wildwood. Chip Stockton reported that Rosenbauer has already offered to provide the space again in 2026.

Communications

There were no communications to report.

Deferred Business

There was no deferred business to act upon.

New Business

There was no new business to act upon.

Bills

The bills, totaling \$1,593.00, were read by Treasurer Jaime C. Mellon. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to pay the bills from the proper funds.

Bills --- Chase Credit Card - \$1,477.95 (credit card) / Sam's Club Checks - \$95.05 (duplicate style checks) / Crown Trophy - \$20.00 (engrave trophy plates)

Good of the Order

Dennis Sharpe reported on the Atlantic County units that received trophies at the parade in Wildwood.

2025	BANDS	1st Place	
Wildwood	High School/Middle School	Egg Harbor High School	
Parade			
CATEGORY	APPARATUS		2nd Place
10	Best Appearing Pumpers - Any size pump		
A	0 - 5 Years		Germania 263
B	6 - 15 years		Northfield Engine 65
16	Best Appearing Straight or Tractor Drawn Tanker - 1,500 gallons or more		Sculville Fire Co #T1538
19	Best Appearing Motorized Antique Piece of Equipment Private or Dept. Owned (as per S.P.A.A.M.F.A.A Guidelines 1940'S		
C			Landisville Fire Co
	County Trophies		
Atlantic	Best Appearing Apparatus	Sculville Fire Co. T1538	
Atlantic	Best Appearing Command Vehicle	Farmington Fire Co #421	
Atlantic	Best Appearing Company Overall	Sculville Fire Co.	

Weekstown Volunteer Fire Company will be hosting an Inaugural Clay Shoot Fundraiser at Red Wing Sporting Clays on September 28th.

Dale Conover reported on a one-day seminar sponsored by the Burlington County Fire Chiefs Association to be held on November 15th at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center. "This House Rocks", learn five key areas that can turn any firehouse into the type of place that enables firefighters to thrive and fulfill their calling.

Elwood Volunteer Fire Company will be hosting Bags, Brews, & Bites Corn Hole Tournament at No 79 Restaurant on October 18th.

Bayview Volunteer Fire Company will be hosting a Beef & Beer Cornhole Tournament at McGettigan's 19th Hole Restaurant on October 11th.

Howard Berchtold reported on the news that five officers were shot with three killed while serving a warrant in York County, PA.

Thank you to the Hammonton Volunteer Fire Department for hosting the evening and providing refreshments.

Adjournment

Benediction was conducted by Chaplain Dcn. Rich Maxwell. There being no further business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 20:45. The next regular meeting is scheduled to be held at 19:30 on October 15, 2025 at the Dorothy Volunteer Fire Company, Weymouth Township.

Attested:

Robert A. Mellon, Secretary

Fire Department/Company/Association Events

Sat. Sep. 20, 2025	09:00	New Jersey Firemen's Home	Antique Fire Muster (09:00 - 14:00)
Sat. Sep. 27, 2025	18:30	Dorothy VFC	4th Annual Designer Bag Bingo (Doors Open 17:00)
Sun. Sep. 28, 2025	09:00	Weekstown VFC @ Red Wing Sporting Clays	Inaugural Clay Shoot Fundraiser
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. 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. 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

Wed. Oct. 8, 2025	20:00	Estell Manor VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Nov. 12, 2025	20:00	Bayview VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
Wed. Dec. 10, 2025	20:00	Sweetwater VFC	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs Association
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Tues. Jan. 27, 2026	20:00	Absecon VFD	Hosting Meeting of Atlantic County Fire Chiefs 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