

**NASSAU COUNTY FIREFIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION**  
**GENERAL AND ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**BELLMORE FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**MAY 15, 2024**

President Kevin McElynn called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM. Salute to the Flag was led by Sergeant-at-Arms John Wicks. President McElynn asked for a moment of silence in honor of those members who have passed as well as our service men and women serving either overseas or at home, which was followed by the opening prayer given by Father Christopher Costigan.

President McElynn introduced Chief of Department Brandon Conway who welcomed us to the Bellmore Fire Department. President McElynn thanked him and his crew for the meal tonight.

Roll Call of the Officers, Past Presidents, Directors, and Committee Chairs was taken, and excuses noted. Motion made by Past President Otto Kohlmier, Jr., seconded by Past President Walter Frame, and carried to accept the Roll Call of Officers with the excuses noted.

Motion by Paul Yura, seconded by Past President Thomas Gaffney and carried to accept the minutes of the January meeting as posted to our website.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKERS:**

1. President McElynn introduced FASNY Director Mike Caron who spoke on his qualifications for the office of Second Vice President of FASNY.
2. President McElynn then introduced John Alcina from Comparion Insurance Company who discussed why he is no longer with Liberty Mutual Insurance as well as the state of insurance in New York State.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

**Awards:** Past President Richard Messina gave the following report:

We do have an award recipient this year from the Freeport Fire Department and will be having a cocktail party honoring him at Oceanside Fire Department Headquarters on June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM. Tickets are \$25 per person – fliers for this event are on the dias.

**Burn Center:** Past President Gaffney gave the following report:

1. We had our first firefighter transported to NUMC with burn injuries for the year 2024 last week, when an Ex-Chief from the Westbury Fire Department was injured in an incident at the Fire Service Academy, where he is an instructor. He was treated in the ER trauma center, moved up to the Burn Center, and subsequently transferred to the Burn Center at Cornell/New York Hospital.
2. Regarding the financial situation at NUMC, the State released its 2024/2025 Budget, which included no additional funds for NUMC. Accordingly, our next step is to take the fight to the Nassau County Legislature. We have been in touch with several individual legislators, Democrat and Republican, with mixed results. Each has been advised that it is our intention to appear at the regularly scheduled meeting of the County Legislature on Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM. The Legislature meets in the Old Country Courthouse, 1550 Franklin Avenue, at the corner of Old Country Road.
3. The tenor of the presentation is that we have suffered six consecutive years of unexplained budget cuts from the State to NUMC. During this period, we have not been aware of any actions taken by the County Legislature to defend Nassau's safety net hospital and our Burn Center. It has been suggested by persons within NUMC leadership that these cuts are motivated by a desire to close the Hospital down and to sell the land to developers. We have no direct proof of any such intention, but we need to pose the question to our elected officials – do they intend to save this Hospital or to close it? In either case, why have they allowed nearly half a billion-dollar debt to accumulate rather than take action in any manner?
4. The Burn Center is of paramount importance to the Fire Service, and to victims we save at our own peril. The Level One Trauma Center at NUMC is an essential asset. The public safety net serves a significant population that has nowhere else to turn. For these reasons, we are calling on Fire Service personnel and other first responders to turn out at the Legislative meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup> in Class "A" uniforms. We will meet in front of the building at 12:30 PM. We are **NOT** looking for a public demonstration with air horns or sirens.

**Dinner:** Junior Past President Leon Tucholski reported that there will be no dinner this year and that the 2025 Installation Dinner will be at the Crescent Beach Club in Bayville in June.

**EMS:** John Scalisi reported that the NYS EMS Memorial is scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup> - 9 people from FDNY are getting placed on the Memorial Wall.

**Executive Council:** Secretary Juan Batta reported that the next scheduled meeting is Thursday May 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Albertson Fire Company.

**Exempts:** Junior Past President Tucholski that the FASNY 2% Forum is scheduled to be held on Friday August 9<sup>th</sup> during the FASNY Convention in Niagara Falls – time will be known once the Convention schedule is finalized.

**Explorer/Junior Firefighters:** Jerry Presta introduced some of the Nassau County Junior Firefighters Association Officers that are in attendance tonight: President Khadeejah Memon, Second Vice President Audrey Sasso, and Sergeant-at-Arms Justin George. Jerry Presta then gave the following report:

1. Our last meeting was held on April 21<sup>st</sup> at the Nassau County Fire Marshals Office, we had 157 Juniors present. After the meeting, we were given a tour of multiple stations: Wet & Dry Decon, K9, Robot, Drone, and Propane Burn Off. A great day was had by all.
2. We had our first 2024 Hands-On Training at the Nassau County Fire Service Academy, Car and Building Fires on April 14<sup>th</sup>. We had 40 Juniors participate in this training, which was raised from 30 originally due to the overwhelming response. A great day was had by all.
3. The Training Committee met with Chief Wilders and spoke about an online Essentials Class. It would be available to all 16- & 17-year-olds. We currently have 25 Juniors from 13 Nassau Fire Departments signed-up, which started on Monday May 13<sup>th</sup>. Good luck to all.
4. The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Camp Fahrenheit 516 applications went out last week. The camp will take place from July 22<sup>nd</sup> to July 26<sup>th</sup>. We met with Chief Wilders today and spoke about the number being raised to 4 squads, 60 participants. Sign up ASAP.
5. On April 28<sup>th</sup>, we had our Female Juniors in the Fire Service Training and Seminar. We had 96 girls signed up from 34 Fire Departments/Companies throughout Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester Counties. It was a huge success; we would like to thank all of our supporters and sponsors.
6. The Nassau County Juniors have been awarded the FASNY Recruitment & Retention Award for 2024. We are waiting to hear back from FASNY on our request to receive it at our Annual BBQ lunch meeting on June 9<sup>th</sup> at the Hicksville Fire Department Station 3. Also, the FASNY Mentor of the Year for 2024 is Phil LoNigro from the Farmingdale Fire Department Juniors, and the FASNY Youth Group of the Year for 2024 is the New Hyde Park Fire Department Juniors.
7. The next meeting is on Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup> at the Hicksville Fire Department Station 3 at 11:00 AM. All are welcome.

**Fire Police:** Sergeant-at-Arms Wicks reported that the next meeting of the Nassau County Volunteer Fire Police Association is scheduled for Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Uniondale Fire Department Van Ness Station – lunch is served at 1:00 PM with the meeting starting after.

### **Fundraising:**

1. Financial Secretary Tony Tripp gave the following report:  
The Lotto Committee is moving ahead on selling our Lotto Ticket Raffle. It will be held in the month of August. The winners will be determined by the NYS Lotto Numbers Game in the evening. All winning tickets must be straight only. Weekday winners receive \$50 and weekend winners receive \$100. Only 1,000 tickets will be sold. Tickets are \$5.00 each and are good for the entire month of August.
2. Treasurer Stephen Goodman reported that his company, Bounce, will send 10% of the price of admission to the Association. All that is required is for the person to say that they are a member of a fire department.

### **Health & Wellness:** Mary Jo Stuparich gave the following report:

1. We need to manage our physical health beyond the Fire Department Physicals. While they have been known to save people's lives due to their findings, they are not likely to find any physical ailments that we may have.
2. Musculoskeletal injuries are quite common to first responders - mainly because we tend to ignore pain. If we do not take care of ourselves physically, we can end up unfit for the job we do and not even know it – potentially causing more harm to ourselves.

#### **Some things we can do to protect ourselves:**

- a. While we cannot stretch before strenuous work that is so unpredictable in our world, making sure we are stretching and exercising in our down time can help prevent injuries.
- b. Make sure you are using your legs and arms when lifting, not your back.
- c. Do not attempt to lift more than you can safely carry and without undue strain. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Contrary to popular belief, we are not invincible or superheroes.

#### **If you do have musculoskeletal pain, here are some treatment options:**

- a. Acupuncture
- b. Chiropractic Adjustment
- c. Orthopedic Care
- d. Occupational Therapy
- e. Therapeutic Massage
- f. Anti-Inflammatory Pain Relievers

Do not ignore your pain, it hurts for a reason, ignoring it can only lead to the chance that your problem might become worse.

3. Fire Responders are prone to hearing loss due to exposure to loud noises from sirens, air horns, using chainsaws and other equipment to cut through metal, using power fans for smoke removal, shouting to communicate with civilians and other firefighters, etc. Be mindful if you are experiencing trouble hearing. Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) is often accompanied by tinnitus (ringing noise in the ears), don't ignore it.
4. May is Mental Health Awareness Month. An estimated 1 in 5 adults experience a mental health disorder each year. Many of these conditions are treatable, but many suffer in silence because of stigma or shame. **Please remember that there are resources out there for every member. Don't hesitate to reach out. It's Okay not to be Okay!**

#### **Stress Management Techniques**

- a. **Breathing Exercises** – Breathe in for 5 seconds, hold your breath for 2 seconds, then breathe out for 5 seconds.
- b. **Exercise** – Doesn't have to be intense, just go for a walk.
- c. **Mindfulness** – Meditation, Yoga, Tai-Chi.
- d. **Be nice to yourself** – speak to yourself the way you would to your best friend.
- e. **Keep a journal** – Write down how you are feeling, how you spend your days, and what you are grateful for. Seeing a list of what you're grateful for can help you feel less stress, and it can improve your sense of well-being.

**Legislative:** Sergeant-at-Arms Wicks reported that the budget was passed late. We were looking for all life safety equipment be tax-free throughout the year, we only got a sales tax exemption for the month of October. As for the income tax credit, it passed through the state senate, but failed to get out of committee in the assembly. Secretary Juan Batta reported that he saw on an email from Firehouse Newsday, that NYS government is debating a series of bills for EMS and one of them is the income tax credit – he will forward it to the committee.

**Meeting Sites:** President McElynn reported that our next meeting is scheduled for July 17<sup>th</sup> at Hicksville Fire Department Station 3 – this will be a BBQ meeting so we need volunteers to help out – jackets & ties are not required for this meeting for Officers. The October meeting is scheduled for October 16<sup>th</sup> at the Bethpage Fire Department. The January 2025 meeting is scheduled for January 15<sup>th</sup>, location to be determined.

**Museum:** Second Vice President reported that the museum has had 17,220 visitors to date. He also reported that if any Fire Department is getting rid of any old equipment, contact the Museum.

**Muster:** Peter Galvas gave the following report:

1. The committee is meeting regularly, but if you want to be involved, please let him know – we are always looking for help.
2. Donation forms have been mailed out to fire departments/companies. If you haven't heard, find out why.
3. If you want to participate with your antique apparatus, fill out the form.
4. All forms and information are on the website.
5. Remember, this is a fundraiser for the Museum.

**Nassau Day at the Home:** Jose DaRocha gave the following report:

1. Long Island Day is scheduled for Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup> – hoping for a good turnout as the residents really look forward to it.
2. There will be a bus leaving from Alberton, cost is \$15 per person. If interested, see him.
3. Letters for donations for this event will be sent out soon. Donations are used to purchase gifts for the residents that are given that day.

**State Campaign & Hospitality:** Past President Steve Klein reported that the committee will be meeting Tuesday May 21<sup>st</sup>. There is another two candidates running against Robert Ottaviano, Jr. to replace Jose DaRocha as FASNY Director – it's important that you attend the FASNY Convention and stay until you can vote.

**State Chiefs:** Financial Secretary Tripp gave the following report:

1. The NYS Chiefs Convention is June 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> in Syracuse. If you haven't registered and/or gotten a hotel room, you must act ASAP.
2. There will be a joint Nassau/Suffolk Hospitality Room.
3. The incoming President will be Anthony LaFerrera from North Babylon Fire Department.

**United Memorial:** Junior Past President Tucholski gave the following report:

1. The 2024 United Memorial Service was held at Holy Name of Mary RC Church in Valley Stream. There were 845 people in attendance, which was more than last year, but under the 4-year average from 2020/2021 – 2024.
2. The 2025 United Memorial Service will be held on May 4<sup>th</sup> in Uniondale, location to be announced.
3. The 2026 United Memorial Service will be held on May 3<sup>rd</sup> in Glen Cove, location to be announced.

4. The 2027 United Memorial Service will be held on May 2<sup>nd</sup> in Oceanside, location to be announced.

Motion made by Past President Messina, seconded by Gary Ward, and carried to accept the reports of committees.

## **REPORT OF DELEGATES**

### **FASNY**

**DIRECTOR JOSE DaROCHA:** had no report.

**DIRECTOR MIKE KRUMMENACKER:** reported that the FASNY Convention will be held in Niagara Falls on August 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>.

**HOME TRUSTEE JAMES INTERDONATI:** was excused for the meeting.

**HOME TRUSTEE WALTER FRAME:** gave the following report:

1. There are currently 88 people in the Home. There is a waiting list to get in.
2. If you know of anyone who might be interested in the Home, contact himself or Home Trustee Interdonati and have them start filling out the necessary forms.

### **SOUTHERN NY**

**PRESIDENT JUAN BATTA:** gave the following report:

1. The next meeting, which is the Annual Meeting, is scheduled for Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Hilcrest Fire Co.1 located on 374 N Main St., Spring Valley. The Memorial Service will start at 4:00 PM.
2. The Annual Installation Dinner will be held on Friday May 31<sup>st</sup> at the Nassau County Bar Association in Mineola – tickets are \$85 per person. We also have raffle tickets, which Past President Robert Ottaviano is selling tonight, and a journal. Please be generous as this is Southern NY's only fundraiser.

**SECOND VICE PRESIDENT STEVE KLEIN:** had no report.

**SECRETARY KEVIN McELLYNN:** had no report.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** The following were received and read by the Secretary:

1. A notice for the Nassau County Fire Museum's Annual Golf Outing being held on Monday June 24<sup>th</sup> at the Rockville Links Country Club in Rockville Centre.
2. A delegate form from FASNY for their Convention.
3. A copy of the Executive Council's March 28<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes.

The following was sent by the Secretary:

1. A journal ad for the Southern NY's Installation Dinner Journal.

**BILLS:**

|                              |  |            |
|------------------------------|--|------------|
| Kevin McElynn                | Reimbursement for Soda   | \$69.23    |
| Spano Abstract Service Corp. | Corporation Search   | \$103.20   |
| NCFA                         | Transfer to Muster Account   | \$250.00   |
| Leon Tucholski               | 50-Year Certificate  | \$20.00    |
| Tony Tripp                   | Daily Number Raffle Tickets  | \$81.51    |
| Freeport Chamber of Commerce | Ray Maguire Ad & Dinner  | \$400.00   |
| Leon Tucholski               | 50-Year Certificate  | \$20.00    |
| Leon Tucholski               | 6 50-Year Certificates   | \$90.00    |
| FASNY Credit Union           | Bank Fee   | \$25.00    |
| Craig Yanantuono             | Website Maintenance  | \$250.00   |
| Stephen Goodman              | Filing Name Change, Secretary of State - \$65.00;<br>User Fee for 501C3 Application - \$550.00<br>(\$275.00 returned to NCFA);<br>Postage - \$412.85;<br>Office Supplies - \$28.20 | \$1,056.05 |
| Tony Tripp                   | Financial Secretary Stipend  | \$400.00   |



|                 |                    |                   |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Juan Batta      | Secretary Stipend  | \$400.00          |
| Stephen Goodman | Treasurer Stipend  | <u>\$400.00</u>   |
|                 | <b>Total Bills</b> | <b>\$3,564.99</b> |

Motion made by Past President Messina, seconded by Pete Prudente, and carried to pay the bills.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. John Scalisi reported that he has donated over \$1,000 from his book titled From Disabled to Enabled to various charities including \$500 to this Association. He received a round of applause from the members in attendance.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Junior Past President Tucholski reported that there will be a meeting of the Steering Committee following this meeting.
2. Past President Frame reported that NUMC houses a Veteran's Clinic and if the hospital closes, so does the clinic.
3. Carl Thughe thanked the officers both past and present for making this Association what it is today.

## **REPORT OF OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT KEVIN McELLYNN:** gave the following report:

1. Thank you to the Bellmore Fire Department for hosting tonight's meeting and the meal.
2. Please, if your committee is making a report at the meeting, please provide a written report. It makes the Secretary's job easier.
3. I attended the LI Legislative Committee meeting in Lakeview last month. Of course, there are a number of hot topics they are discussing. The new proposed OSHA rule was a priority. Our deadline to submit viable comments has been extended to June. No "general comments" are being looked at. Comments with REASONS will be the only ones considered. **WE NEED TO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THIS!**
4. Winter was kind to us this year, but summer is just around the corner – start thinking REHAB.
5. I will be attending the Suffolk County VFA Meeting in Holbrook on May 28<sup>th</sup>.
6. Thank you for your continued support! We could not do this without you! Please feel free to contact any Officer if you need assistance of any kind.

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT EDMUND SCHMIDT:** gave the following report:

1. Looking forward to the upcoming year.
2. Thanked John Scalesi for his donation.

**SECOND VICE PRESIDENT FRED ROBINSON:** gave the following report:

1. Thanked the Board and the membership for your support this past year. Looking forward to the upcoming year.
2. Thanked all the members who give reports. Keep up the good work, they are paramount to the Association.

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS JOHN WICKS:** gave the following report:

1. There are 46 people in attendance.
2. Collected \$176 for the Dark Horse – besides the prizes, we will have 4 - \$20 prizes with \$90 going to the Association.
3. Collected \$210 for the 50/50 with \$105 to the winner and \$105 to the Association.

**TREASURER STEPHEN GOODMAN:** gave the following report:

1. He reported on the financials of the Association, which is on file.
2. He reported that he has filed the paperwork with the state and we are now known as the Nassau County Firefighters Association.
3. He also reported that the paperwork has been filed with the IRS and we are now a 501C3 organization.

President McElynn then thanked Treasurer Goodman for all his hard work in these two endeavors and he received an ovation from those in attendance at the meeting.

4. He also attended the following:
  - A. NCFA General Meeting on January 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - B. NCFA Museum Muster Committee Meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>.
  - C. Executive Council Meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - D. LI Benevolent Association Meeting on January 26<sup>th</sup>.
  - E. NSFA Steering Committee Meeting on February 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - F. NCFA Fundraising Committee Meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - G. North Shore Fire Council General Meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup>.
  - H. LI Antiques Fire Apparatus Association BOD Meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - I. NCFA BOD Meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup>.
  - J. CIST Activation – Plainview FD on February 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - K. NCFA Museum Muster Committee Meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - L. Executive Council Meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup>.
  - M. CIST Activation – Wantagh FD on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

- N. Nassau County Fire Commission – Emergency Management Committee Meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup>.
- O. NCFA BOD Meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup>.
- P. NCFA Museum Muster Committee Meeting on April 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Q. CIST – Nassau County Fire Commission – Annual Awards Ceremony on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

**SECRETARY JUAN BATTA:** gave the following report:

1. Please keep the written committee reports coming -they are greatly appreciated.
2. As was talked about before, please submit viable comments regarding the proposed changes to OSHA 1910.156.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY TONY TRIPP:** gave the following report:

This month I have turned over to the Treasury the sum of \$1,590.00 in dues. Of the 555 members, 301 have paid their dues this year for a total of \$5,855.00.

Dues bills will be mailed out for the current year at the end of June.

There are 16 out of the 101 Departments and Companies that owe their dues for the year beginning May 1, 2022. There are 30 out of the 101 Departments and Companies that owe their dues for the year beginning May 1, 2023.

If you are a delegate for a Department or Company, you still have to pay dues. That designation is only for voting purposes.

Status of the Membership:

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| Dues paying members | 555        |
| Dept./Co. members   | <u>101</u> |
| Total membership    | 656        |

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Members not paid     | 246 |
| Depts./Cos. not paid | 30  |

Financial Secretary Tripp then read off the names of Departments and Companies that owe their dues.

Motion made by Past President Messina, seconded by Larry McGovern, and carried to accept the Reports of Officers.

## **GOOD & WELFARE:**

1. Al Hoyte reported that the next scheduled meeting of the North Shore Holy Name Society is June 25<sup>th</sup> at Albertson.
2. Pete Prudente reported that the Billy Moon Foundation will be having a fundraiser on May 19<sup>th</sup> at Mulcahy's in Wantagh – tickets are \$85 per person at the door.
3. Don Holupka reported that the next scheduled LI Exempts Association meeting is scheduled for July 26<sup>th</sup> place to be determined.
4. Don Holupka also reported that the 2% monies should be given out by July 1<sup>st</sup> – keep a lookout for that.
5. President McElynn reminded everyone that Memorial Day is coming up – please take a moment that day to remember our fallen heroes. He then asked all current and former military personnel to please stand up and be recognized. All who stood were given a round of applause from those in attendance.
6. John Scalesi reported that the Cricket Tournament is coming next month to Eisenhower Park.

**DARK HORSE & 50/50:** Prizes for both were given out.

**CLOSING PRAYER** was given by Sergeant-at-Arms Wicks.

**MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT:** made by Jose DaRocha, seconded by Treasurer Goodman, and carried. **TIME: 10:11 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Juan Batta, Secretary