

ADAMS COUNTY BOROUGHS ASSOCIATION
Adams County 911 Center ▪ 230 Greenmyer Lane ▪ Gettysburg, PA 17325
ACBA MEETING ▪ SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

ATTENDANCE

BOROUGH REPRESENTATION PRESENT:

Abbottstown:	Dale Reichert
Arendtsville:	David Laughman
Carroll Valley:	Richard Matthews, Gayle Marther, Ron Harris
East Berlin:	Cindy Smith, Stephanie Haley,
Fairfield:	Susan Wagle
Gettysburg:	Rita Frealing
Littlestown:	Sandy Conrad, David Westcott, Jennifer Beskid,
York Springs:	Nina Tipler

TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATION PRESENT:

Cumberland:	David Blocher
Franklin:	Susan Plank, Henry Crushong, Jr., Jr Crushong
Mt. Joy:	Christine Demas
Oxford:	Sam Taylor

REPRESENTATIVES FOR STATE GOVERNMENT

Rep. Dan Moul:	Chirs Kimple
Mt. Joy:	Christine Demas
Oxford:	Sam Taylor

REPRESENTATIVES FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Biglerville #6:	Chris MacBeth, Eric Bowmaster
Bendersville:	Dustin Cramer, Tyler Weikert, Shawn Bobo
Carroll Valley & Fairfield:	William Jacobs
Cashtown Fire #4:	Jeff Bowling, Bruce Strasbaugh
Fountain Dale #3:	Dave Martin,
Gettysburg:	Ken Kime
Heidlersburg:	Christina Anders, Brandon Huff
United Hook & Ladder #33:	Kevin Moul, Steve Rabin
York Springs:	Kristen Leer, Alfred Leer, Marke Wolf, Dustin Walters

GUEST PRESENT:

AC Department of Emergency Services:	Warren Bladen
AC Commissioner:	Randy Phiel

GUEST SPEAKER(S)

PA State Fire Commissioner:	Thomas Cook
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CALL TO ORDER

The Adams County Boroughs Association meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Nina Tipler and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Carroll Valley Borough, Gayle Marther and seconded by Littlestown Borough, David Westcott, to approve the February 19, 2024 minutes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Littlestown Borough, David Westcott and seconded by Carroll Valley Borough, Gayle Marther to approve the May 20, 2024 minutes. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer Gayle Marther stated that there has been no activity in the account and the bank assessed a dormant charge of \$10, which is being disputed and a \$20 donation has been deposited to take care of the dormant account.

A motion was made by Carroll Valley, Richard Matthews and seconded by Littlestown Borough, David Westcott, to approve the Treasurer Report as of August 31, 2024. Motion carried.

ROUND TABLE

The round table discussion was about all the unfunded mandates that were being passed down through EPA and DEP. Municipalities are concerned about the mandates because the costs, unfortunately, need to be passed on to the residents.

It was suggested that the EPA and DEP be required to go through the legislative process to have these mandates passed and become law. EPA and DEP should not be able to have full control and be able to mandate municipalities to comply with rules and regulations developed by them.

GUEST SPEAKER

Mr. Thomas Cook is the Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner with more than 36 years of experience in emergency services, and an extensive background in public and nonprofit administration.

“Since his nomination, under Cook’s leadership the Office has sought to:

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- Modernize and streamline training opportunities to improve access to the State Fire Academy, expand recruitment and retention outreach from the Office of State Fire Commissioner, and provide stakeholders with professional and timely service.
- Better inform first responders and the communities they operate in of the operational challenges posed to fire service including declining volunteer rates, rising expenses coupled with funding scarcity, and an increase in operational tempo that has driven exhaustion, injuries, and fatalities.
- Make fire prevention/community risk reduction a priority for the office going forward. Keeping the public actively engaged and informed will reverse the trend of deadly fire incidents, and ultimately make firefighters and citizens safer.”¹

Mr. Cook emphasized that a lot of the fire departments are still trying to support the 1950’s through the early 1970’s business model, which is to have fire stations on every street corner, due to response time and the type of equipment that was used. In today’s world that model does not work nor is it feasible.

Individuals in communities need to realize that the Borough or Townships are responsible for providing fire protection to the residents, not the fire department. It is very important that the municipalities and the Fire Companies have open communication and a good working relationship. There needs to be cooperation and collaboration. This is important because there is a lot of mistrust, lack of cooperation, lack of collaboration, and no communication between the entities. Most fire companies only communicate with their municipalities when they need money or a piece of equipment.

Municipalities that are giving money do expect the fire companies to be transparent. Municipalities want to know where the money is going and if there is a fire tax the residents also want to know where the money is going.

Mr. Cook has also talked to some departments about legislation that will not only keep a \$30 million grant

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program going for departments but possible double it when pared with the governor's new budget proposal. This is very important because we don't want a gap when the existing program expires. There needs to be a replacement. The current \$30 million funding is extremely critical to keep the doors open, the lights on, and the fire trucks on the road.

There is some other legislation in the works that is geared towards passing partial training reimbursement for new members.

In addition, to funding there is also staffing issues. Many departments are struggling to recruit and retain firefighters. There was a recruitment and retention program developed to identify the secrets of the fire departments that are having success in recruiting and retaining firefighters. The goal is to replicate their formula in the areas of the state that are having problems attracting talent.

The conversation ended with Mr. Cook stating that people can agree to disagree, but the bottom line is that we all have to work together to make decisions that will protect our communities.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:25pm.

Submitted by:

Sandy Conrad

Sandy Conrad

¹ <https://www.media.pa.gov/pages/office-of-the-state-fire-commissioner-details.aspx?newsid=97>