



**MINUTES OF THE  
FIFTH FIRE SUB-COUNCIL MEETING OF 2019**

**DATE:** November 14, 2019

**TIME:** 9:00 a.m. to 3:25 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Safety Codes Council Office, Edmonton

**PRESENT:** **Sub-Council Members**

Gary Mayorchak, Vice Chair North  
Robbin Foxcroft, Vice Chair South  
Mark Heiderich  
Hunter Langpap (via Conference Call)  
Jim Robinson  
Marc Royer  
Stephen Suen  
Chris Taylor

**Safety Codes Council**  
Allison Karch, Kathryn Derkach, Peter Thomas (item 4.2), Kris Schmaltz (item 4.1)

**Alberta Municipal Affairs**  
Tina Parker, Cindy Yan, James Orr

**GUEST:** Rick Gratton (BSC Liaison)

**REGRETS:** Michael Bos (Chair), Cameron Bardas, Grace O'Brien, Cammie Laird, Allan Blatz, Joe Davis, Mario Poser

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Sandi Orr

**2020 MEETINGS:** January 23, March 26, May 13, September 10, November 19

## **1. Meeting Opening**

The meeting was called to order by the Vice Chair North at 9:04 a.m. A round table introduction was held. Members were reminded that the primary duty of all Council Members is to act in the interest of safety in the built environment for the benefit of all Albertans.

### **1.1. Agenda Adoption**

The following items were added to the agenda:

- 2.2 – Nominations for Accredited Corporations Industry Segment
- 4.10 – AGLC Request for Occupant Load Cards

**Marc Royer / Jim Robinson moved to adopt the agenda, as amended, with a flexible order of business; CARRIED**

### **1.2. Adoption of September 26, 2019 Minutes**

**Robbin Foxcroft / Chris Taylor moved to adopt the minutes of September 26, 2019, as circulated; CARRIED**

## **2. Matters for Decision**

### **2.1. Skills Matrix Review**

The redrafted Skills Matrix document was included in the portal. It was requested that each occurrence of “Able to commit for the term of appointment by attending meetings and contributing to other FSC activities” be removed, as the focus of this document is on technical skills.

A discussion was held regarding whether membership of the nominating organization was a given for each representative and recognized that in some cases that may not apply.

Each of the industry segments was reviewed, members’ input was discussed, and further changes were made to some industry segments.

**Robbin Foxcroft / Chris Taylor moved to accept the Skills Matrix, as revised; CARRIED**

Proposed revisions for Municipal Districts and Counties were deferred to the next meeting.

### **2.2. Nominations for Accredited Corporations Industry Segment**

Resumes of Suzanne Smith, John Penzo and Michael Bradford were included in the portal. The discussion regarding this item was held in camera and all candidates were given due consideration.

**Marc Royer / Robbin Foxcroft moved to recommend to the Board the appointment of John Penzo to the Fire Sub-Council to represent the Accredited Corporations industry segment for a term ending January 31, 2023, effective February 1, 2020; CARRIED**

### 3. Review Matters Arising/Action List

	Item	Action	Date	Responsible	Status/Update
1.	Qualified Persons Registry (E.2.06.11)	Communicate status of registry	Nov 23/16	Orr	Ongoing
2.	CSA B52 Clarification	There is uncertainty about which discipline is responsible for enforcement of maintenance provisions in CSA B52 and it was requested that this be brought to the inter-department working group.	May 14/19	Orr	Ongoing
3.	Exiting to a Public Thoroughfare	The Fire Administrator consider reviewing the matter with the Building Administrator to gain clarity on the definition of clear access to a public thoroughfare.	May 14/19	Parker	Item 4.3 on agenda

#### **Qualified Persons Registry**

The Director of Codes of Standards reported that a Qualified Persons Registry will not be created by Government. Although a registry is supported, concern was expressed regarding voluntary registries, especially if it relates to life safety. However, this does not preclude the creation of such a registry. An overview was provided on examples of member-driven requirements (e.g. land surveyors, home builders, etc.). Further discussion will be held internally and with the Council to discuss options for a mandatory registration system in the future.

It was reported that in the interim the Alberta Fire Safety Association has chosen to rebuild a registry database of Qualified Persons, on a voluntary basis, that will be available on the AFSA website. This will at least provide its members with the ability to show a client their credentials on a photo ID issued by the association.

#### **CSA B52 Clarification**

It was reported that no further action on this topic has been taken by the cross-ministry working group. It was recognized that ABSA would enforce the parts of CSA-B52 that pertain to pressure equipment, which does not include maintenance of alarms. The gap exists regarding which jurisdiction should be verifying that maintenance was completed. Regardless of jurisdiction, ultimately the owner is responsible for ensuring maintenance is done to ensure safe operations. No recommendations have been received from the cross-ministry working group, however Municipal Affairs will look into the matter further.

### 4. Matters for Discussion

#### 4.1. Sub-Council's Role in Certification and Training

Kris Schmaltz, Administrator of Certification at the Council, was welcomed to the meeting and provided an update on the generic competencies being created for all SCOs in the construction disciplines. There has been strong support for the initiative. The next phase will involve adding discipline specific competencies for each construction discipline. Once completed, all of the entry qualifications and training would be reviewed against the established competencies to ensure there are no gaps.

The goal is to gather input from the sub-councils regarding certification and training much earlier in the policy and training development processes and at every level. A group of volunteers will be gathered to help ensure that each of the competency profiles are consistent across construction disciplines.

It was suggested that mentorship plays an important role in a new SCO being confident in doing the work as an SCO. It was recognized that one of the gaps in the Fire discipline is that some areas don't have someone available to supervise and mentor an SCO during their first few inspections. Discussion is being held regarding whether the Council could offer the practicum component. Currently, there is no one in house at the Council to provide the review of the practicum so they rely on the Fire Administrator.

Specific to the Fire SCO training, it was noted that some students have difficulty finding a practicum placement. The Council currently assists students in finding a practicum supervisor on request and is looking into other program delivery models for practicums including a practicum course option delivered by the Council. It was noted that there is a lot of paper work involved for those taking on practicum students which could be the reason it's difficult for students to find practicum placements. The Council is looking into this issue and various options to enhance the process.

#### **4.2. QMP Template Changes**

Peter Thomas, Administrator of Accreditation at the Council, was welcomed to the meeting and provided a presentation on Quality Management Plan Revisions. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Background on the QMP templates—the current template was released in July/August 2016
- An overview of the reasons for the current review
- An overview of the ages of QMPs currently in place and progress made to transition QMPs to the current templates

Upcoming changes to the QMP Template include:

- The requirement for municipal councils to approve minor updates to the QMP was removed and in 2020 this will also include scope changes (i.e. adding or removing a discipline from the QMP), but municipal council approval is still required for new accreditation.
- A "Duly Authorized Individual" rather than a specific official may now sign off on updates and scope changes.
- Changes were made to Inspection Service Delivery Standards, including terminology, inspection timelines, and addition of project classification.
- In the Corporate QMP, changes were made to the process regarding disagreements on corrective action and non-compliance.
- The requirement that background documentation be submitted when registering variances with the Council was removed.
- Municipal and Corporate QMP templates were changed to allow jurisdiction-wide variances, in accordance with a recent notice on variances from Municipal Affairs
- Timelines regarding written notice for cancellation of accreditation, change in municipal status, or change in corporate ownership, structure or status have been removed.
- A Joint Municipal Accreditation QMP template was created.
- Cancellation of Accreditation section was revised to include the organization's responsibility to close outstanding permits and orders.
- Annual Internal Reviews section was revised to include standardized submission dates and requirements.
- Wording was added to clarify that an SCO does not have to accept a Verification of Compliance.
- General reorganization, formatting, and updates to references.

The revised templates will be rolled out on the Council website in January 2020 and QMP Managers will be contacted directly. To ensure consistent rollout of the information, members were asked to refrain from reporting this information to any outside organizations until after the rollout.

This led to a discussion regarding variances and it was reported that moving forward, a review is being done to clean up the data that is being recorded by the Council. When the Safety Codes Act was revised, there was a provision to allow for an appeal of a refusal of a variance. However, that section has not yet been proclaimed as there are several factors that need to be considered, including the capacity of the sub-councils to hear such appeals. Once proclaimed, a province-wide variance cannot be appealed as this is deemed government policy.

It was questioned regarding the term “jurisdiction-wide” variance and explained that the variance would apply throughout the boundaries of their accredited jurisdiction.

The presentation will be added to the portal.

[Council Administration]

#### **4.3. Exiting to a Public Thoroughfare**

Wording for inclusion in a Safety Tip Bulletin was included in the portal to emphasize that in order to facilitate the safe evacuation of building occupants, owners should do the following:

- Ensure all paths remain wide enough for emergency personnel to access the building and for occupants to leave the building
- Ensure that the entire length of the thoroughfare is clear and not blocked by fences, gates, or any other landscaping feature
- Ensure that the path continues a sufficient distance away from the building where the occupants can safely wait for help
- Ensure that all tripping hazards are removed, particularly in the winter months when snow and ice can accumulate and prevent safe passage
- Ensure the path is well lit and easy for people to navigate

Concern was expressed that the Safety Tips talk about maintenance and blocked paths, but doesn't talk about when paths don't exist. It was recognized that ensuring the pathway exists is the responsibility of the building discipline. It is believed that there may be an educational opportunity to clarify understanding among Building SCOs about exiting to a public thoroughfare. It was recognized that if an effective pathway does not exist, an order can be written by the Fire SCO. However, it would be better if the problem is addressed at the development stage or by the Building SCO before approving occupancy.

This led to a discussion regarding the definition of Public Way as defined in the National Building Code. Building SCO education was supported. The Fire Sub-Council supported the issuance of a Clear Path of Egress Safety Tips document and suggested minor wording changes.

The Building Liaison will bring this item to the Building Sub-Council at their next meeting and request that a response be provided from the BSC Chair.

[Taylor / Gratton / Council Administration]

#### **4.4. Code Review**

The proposed changes to the National Fire Code published by the NRC in their Fall 2019 Public Review were reviewed in detail by the working group and presented to the sub-council. The sub-council's comments on each change were documented in "Summary table of NFC Proposed Changes 2019 Public Review FSC Comments FINAL".

**Chris Taylor / Robbin Foxcroft moved to present AMA with the Fire Sub-Council's recommended comments on the National Fire Code proposed code changes for submission to NRC; CARRIED**

#### **4.5. Cannabis Extraction**

It was reported that Calgary is creating a cannabis inspection guide and will forward this to the Fire Administrator when completed.

It was reported that a presentation will be made to the sub-council in January. If anyone is having any issues with cannabis extraction, please get in touch with the Fire Administrator.

#### **4.6. Working Group Reports**

##### **4.6.1. Breweries / Distilleries**

The report was included in the portal. The goal is to have recommendations ready for presentation at the January 2020 meeting.

##### **4.6.2. Occupant Load**

It was reported that a meeting was held about 6 weeks ago. The working group is doing code comparisons but this continues to be a challenging subject. The next meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2019.

#### **4.7. BSC Liaison Report**

An overview was provided of the last BSC meeting:

- 76 proposed code changes were reviewed
  - Proposed Change 1312 – regarding Building Fire Safety and Proposed Change 733 – Building Importance Categories were highlighted as potential interest of the Fire Sub-Council
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  - Proposed changes 1314, 1325 and 1493 are others that may affect the fire discipline
- Second round of other proposed changes will be reviewed in January
- Anyone can provide feedback to NRC directly through their online public review process

#### **4.8. Administrator/AMA Report**

The Director of Codes and Standards reported the following:

- Red Tape Reduction initiative goal is to reduce regulation and redundancy and to have programs make more sense
- The NRC is reviewing variations between the national codes and codes adopted by the provinces/jurisdictions as part of an initiative to reduce trade barriers under the Canadian Free

Trade Agreement. This will be an ongoing project as strategy is developed around red tape reduction.

- Red Tape Reduction is also looking at internal duplication
- The Permit Regulation will be reviewed
- Departments are being asked to be efficient relative to travel within the province
- An update was provided on the work done by PTPACC regarding reducing free trade barriers, transforming the national code system to be more responsive, and positioning the provinces and territories to drive changes to national codes

It was questioned regarding out of province travel to participate in national code committee work. It was clarified that staff will be able to apply to go and if travel expenses are paid by the code writing body, approval would be anticipated.

A draft Qualifications of Service Providers for Fire Protection Equipment STANDATA was included in the portal and the Fire Administrator provided background regarding P tickets and qualifications of people who can install, inspect, test, and maintain fire and life safety systems. Journeypersons for electrical fall under the Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta and electrical engineers fall under APEGA. There are currently several individuals in the province that have a P ticket. The goal is that these individuals could challenge the Canadian Fire Alarm Association (CFAA) courses but a reasonable amount of time needs to be provided so that it does not create a burden. If this is not agreed to by CFAA, then an additional review will be needed. This is not yet included in the Qualifications STANDATA.

The floor was opened for questions and the following was noted:

- Further clarification is also being done to potentially allow for other training means
- Work is being done through municipalities and industry to influence the change of sprinkling to be a compulsory trade

This led to a discussion regarding what to do when AHJs are asking for more qualifications above and beyond what the code requires. An overview was provided on the manufacturer certification which is only valid when working with the manufacturer. But it was noted that the knowledge doesn't go away just because someone no longer works with the manufacturer. This item will be address with the municipality offline.

It was further questioned about how to evaluate competency when an individual has taken a 2-day manufacturer's course. If an investigation was held, there are mechanisms to deem someone incompetent. There are no requirements to report a failure and the challenge is that failures are typically remediated by the manufacturer.

The Administrator reported that the goal is to publish the Qualifications of Service Providers for Fire Protection Equipment STANDATA in February 2020 and sub-council members were asked to provide feedback by December 1, 2019. [All]

#### **4.9. Council Updates**

Grace O'Brien's letter of resignation, effective January 31, 2020, was included in the portal as information. As the member of the public, this is a Ministerial Appointment and a replacement appointment will be handled by government.

Some suggestions for conference subjects were provided. It was suggested that other subjects besides fire alarms would be welcome such as insurance and how they evaluate their risks or how they do their inspections.

The Council written report was included in the portal and the following highlights were provided:

- All Members are required to complete online FOIP training by December 31, 2019
- Open House – Friday, November 29
- An overview was provided of the changes to the Expenses Policy and new expense form
- The Board has approved the change to add the Accredited Corporations industry segment to the matrix and the nominations were reviewed under Matters for Decision

#### **4.9.1. Appeal Consultation**

Feedback was sought on whether the sub-council would like to see regular reporting of appeals statistics, and if so, what information would be most valuable. There was no objection to this information being presented and it was suggested that notification when appeal decisions are posted would be appreciated.

#### **4.10. AGLC Request for Occupant Load Cards**

It was reported that AGLC has agreed that occupant loads for theatre lobbies are not required. It is likely that the subject of outdoor events will come back prior to outdoor festival season. The Administrator will reach out to see if anyone from AGLC could participate in a future Fire Marshal Guild meeting. [Parker]

### **5. Meeting Finalization**

#### **5.1. Round Table**

A round table was held and the following noted:

- Insurance industry getting into a hard market, some have stopped writing policies for certain instances, Mark Heiderich was accepted for a position on NRC Fire Committee
- Fireworks – going through city council debates, Edmonton has created a committee
- Edmonton bar owner appealed a decision regarding occupant loads
- Fire QMP for the City of Edmonton has been submitted to the Administrator of Accreditation
- PTMAA is the AHJ for petroleum tank installation and removal. While their registry program for tanks is mandatory, it is believed there may be some tanks in existence that are not currently registered with PTMAA, which could cause challenges for municipalities as well as potential safety risks. The provincial fire administrator reported that PTMAA is the DAO of Municipal Affairs and any inquires or complaints are to be made directly to the provincial fire administrator. This topic will be added to the January 2020 agenda for further discussion. [Bos/Council Administration]
- An update was provided regarding the current Calgary court case

It was reported that as of January 1, 2020, the Council has made the business decision to do all sub-council administration in house. Sandi Orr was thanked for 19+ years of service as a contractor of the Council.

#### **5.2. Next Meeting**

The next meeting was reconfirmed for Thursday, January 23, 2020 at the Council office.

#### **5.3 Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.



--- NEW ACTION ITEMS ---

**4.2. QMP Template Changes**

The presentation will be added to the portal. [Council Administration]

**4.3. Exiting to a Public Thoroughfare**

The Building Liaison will bring this item to the Building Sub-Council at their next meeting and request that a response be provided from the BSC Chair. [Taylor / Gratton / Council Administration]

**4.8. Administrator/AMA Report**

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--- MOTIONS ---

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**Robbin Foxcroft / Chris Taylor moved to accept the Skills Matrix, as revised; CARRIED**

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