



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

DATE: January 24, 2019

TIME: 9:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.

LOCATION: Safety Codes Council Office, Edmonton

PRESENT: *Sub-Council Members*
Michael Walker, Chair
Cameron Bardas
Allan Blatz
Michael Bos
Joe Davis (arrived at 9:30 a.m.)
Hunter Langpap
Gary Mayorchak, Vice Chair North
Grace O'Brien
Mario Poser
Jim Robinson
Mark Royer
Chris Taylor

Safety Codes Council
Allison Karch, Danielle Paradis, Kathryn Derkach, Charles Hallett

Alberta Municipal Affairs
Tina Parker, Liz Gillean

GUEST: Rick Gratton, BSC Liaison; Jason MacDonald and Emma Kartes, Alberta Health

REGRETS: Robbin Foxcroft, Vice Chair South; Cammie Laird; Stephen Suen

RECORDING SECRETARY: Sandi Orr

2019 MEETINGS: March 28, 2019, May 14, 2019, September 26, 2019, November 14, 2019

1. Meeting Opening

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:00 a.m. and a round table introduction was held.

1.1. Agenda Adoption

Chris Taylor / Cameron Bardas moved to adopt the agenda, as circulated, with a flexible order of business; CARRIED

1.2. Adoption of November 22, 2018 Minutes

Michael Bos / Gary Mayorchak moved to adopt the minutes of November 22, 2018, as circulated; CARRIED

2. Matters for Decision

2.1. Nomination of Brian Winter / Mark Heiderich to represent the Insurance industry segment for a term ending January 31, 2022, effective February 1, 2019

The review of the nominees and discussion of their qualifications were held in camera.

The nominations were included in the portal and reviewed. Both candidates were given due consideration based on their qualifications and experience.

Gary Mayorchak / Cameron Bardas moved to recommend to the Board the appointment of Mark Heiderich to the Fire Sub-Council, to represent the Insurance industry segment for a term ending January 31, 2022, effective February 1, 2019; CARRIED

2.2. Chair Election

The floor was opened for nominations for the Chair and Michael Bos was nominated. After 3 calls and no further nominations, ***Michael Bos was appointed as the Chair of the Fire Sub-Council, by acclamation.***

Michael Bos requested that a new liaison to BSC be appointed to allow him to focus on his role as Chair. It was suggested that consideration could be given to having multiple liaisons similar to what the BSC has recently done.

Chris Taylor expressed interest but would like the opportunity for assistance when needed. Mario Poser and Joe Davis advised that they could potentially assist if needed.

Joe Davis / Mario Poser moved the Chris Taylor be appointed as the liaison to the Building Sub-Council and further discussion will be held at the next meeting regarding adding additional representatives; CARRIED [Council Administration]

Brian Alford, President and CEO of the Safety Codes Council, was welcomed to the meeting and thanked Michael Walker for his dedication to Alberta’s safety system during his nine years of service on the Fire Sub-Council and his additional commitment in his role of Chair since 2014.

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	No update available
2.	Learnings from Grenfell Tower Fire	Ask whether findings of evaluation of high rises in the City of Edmonton may be shared with the FSC once complete	Sep 14/17	Bardas	Nothing new to report
3.	Code Adoption and Training	Look into possibility of drafting a brief statement for AUMA and RMA so they understand there will be no financial impacts to them with the upcoming code adoption as mandatory code update training will not be required.	Sep 13/18	Laird/Orr	No update available
4.	Building Code as it Relates to Fire Code Presentation	The proposed presentation will be condensed to only those items applicable to the fire discipline and will posted in the Member Portal.	Sep 13/18	Parker	In progress
5.	Draft STANDATA FCI Existing Fire Alarm Systems	Members were asked to provide feedback to the Administrator by January 2, 2019. UPDATE: Electrical discipline reviewing and providing comments	Nov 22/18	All	Completed, remove from action list
6.	STANDATA List	If a STANDATA is marked for retirement and a member doesn’t agree, feedback and rationale for why it shouldn’t be retired must be provided to the Administrator no later than January 2, 2019. When providing feedback, include initials in the comments so that the Administrator can speak to the member about the comments if needed. If a member wishes more discussion at the next meeting on a particular STANDATA, they are encouraged to ask for this.	Nov 22/18	All	Completed, remove from action list

4. Matters for Discussion

4.1. Rental Housing Safety – A New Approach to Collaboration

Emma Kartes and Jason MacDonald from the Alberta Health ministry were welcomed to the meeting. It was explained that this initiative is to create collaboration between Safety Codes Officers (SCO) and Health Inspectors/Executive Officers (EO). This initiative is voluntary in accredited municipalities but strongly encouraged.

The following documents were included in the portal as information:

- Link to the Housing Regulation
- Link to the Minimum Housing and Health Standards
- Rental Housing Safety Collaboration Guidance Document 2019-01-07
- Rental Housing Safety Presentation

Background was provided on:

- the Housing Safety Working Group that began in March 2017 with representatives from Municipal Affairs, Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services,
- the shared mandate to protect the public from health and safety hazards in rental housing, and
- the goal to provide landlords/owners with one consistent message about safety.

Highlights of the presentation included an overview of:

- Key messages, including the shared mandate, collaboration and local decision-making
- Each section of the guidance document
- The differences between maintenance, modification and alteration
- Emphasis on local communication between the EO and the SCO
- The consultation process and process charts
- How a consultation could change to a referral and who to determine who takes the lead
- The Housing Safety Consultation Template and the need for detail and rationale
- Changes to the Minimum Housing and Health Standards have been made to allow an EO to accept alternate provisions for emergency egress, handrails and ventilation after consultation with an SCO on a case-by-case basis
- How the templates and decisions will be collected by the Implementation Group and shared to help increased consistency
- The Implementation Group and their role to support implementation, evaluate approach and troubleshoot obstacles
- SCO and EO Training
- Review and evaluation processes

The floor was opened for questions and the following clarification was provided:

- It was recognized that more detail is needed if there is a request for a review of an alternative solution..
- It was suggested that wording be adjusted, as an SCO would not deem non-compliance a safe condition but rather that enforcement is not appropriate for the non-compliant situation.

- It was questioned regarding regular health regulation reviews to align with the codes (e.g. building and fire codes are revised every 5 years). It was recognized that gaps exist, but these can likely be addressed through the Minimum Housing and Health Standards as they are easier to change than regulations. EOs and SCOs need to work together to identify any major discrepancies between the Minimum Housing and Health Standard and the codes.
- This process is a formalization of what typically happens right now; however, it could be new for some EOs and SCOs.

Contact information was provided in case any new questions are brought forward.

4.2. Microdistilleries and Microbreweries – Classification and Potential Joint Working Group

The floor was opened for discussion on a path forward and it was suggested that there are too many variables to make a province-wide interpretation. An overview was provided on how Calgary is trying to address microdistilleries.

The liaison to the Building Sub-Council reported that the BSC adopted the following motion:

- That a joint working group be created to determine how the Alberta Building Code and the Alberta Fire Code would apply to Microbreweries and Microdistilleries

It was recognized that the working group mandate is very broad, and a working group may be the best approach for discussion to bring forward recommendations. General consensus is that if the BSC is going to create a working group, the fire discipline should also be involved. It was questioned whether clarification was requested from NRC regarding the term “micro” and it is believed that this has not occurred.

Cameron Bardas / Allan Blatz moved to support the creation of the joint BSC / FSC working group to determine how the Alberta Building Code and the Alberta Fire Code would apply to Microbreweries and Microdistilleries; CARRIED

Hunter Langpap, Cameron Bardas and Mohammadreza (Reza) Joodaki, a fire protection engineer with the City of Calgary, volunteered on behalf of the fire discipline. It was suggested that industry representatives should also participate.

4.3. Reference Standards

A round table discussion was held to find out whether any sub-council members are currently participating on code/standard committees. In future, members who are on committees have the opportunity to bring forward information or updates under this agenda item. The following information was provided:

- Michael Bos – CSA 282 Emergency electrical power supply for buildings. This group meets 3 or 4 times annual and Michael represents regulators.

- Gary Mayorchak – NFPA Urban Fire and Life Safety Task Force. This group meets once a year plus electronic communication.
- Tina Parker – CSA Working Group – JB130 Portable Fuel Containers. This group is looking at CSA documents that are quite old.
- Tina Parker – ULC Fire Alarm Systems Standard. Tina is waiting to hear back from this group about her participation (the previous Administrator, Kevan Jess, had sat on this group).

4.4. Escape Rooms

A news video about a fatal fire in a Poland escape room was shown on screen, and the question was raised about the safety of escape rooms and whether something like this could happen in Alberta.

An overview was provided on how various escape rooms work. Although most often the rooms are not locked, some still do keep the doors locked and restraints are used for some scenarios. There is often dim lighting or blacklights used for clues, etc. It is believed that there are already a lot of requirements in the code that would apply to escape rooms.

A discussion was held regarding when inspections would occur. It was clarified that a change of use application being received by the AHJ would trigger a permit and inspection. It was reported that Red Deer requires that a permit and inspection occur each time the room/game is changed so that all risks can be assessed. It was suggested that this sort of requirement could be linked to a business license, a special event permit or be a condition of the occupancy permit.

This led to a discussion regarding similar risks association with seasonal themed activities (e.g. haunted houses) and virtual reality experiences where you cannot hear or see what is occurring around you. It was suggested that OHS, Alberta Health Services and the insurance industry may have interest in these types of facilities.

The Administrator reported that the department has not received any calls in the last 6 months pertaining to escape rooms. It was suggested that research be conducted to see if anything is anticipated from the national level (NFPA or CSA Standard). [Parker]

This item will be left on the agenda to determine if any further discussion or action is required. [Bos]

4.5. Occupant Load Working Group Report

The Working Group Chair provided a brief report on the work currently being done by the Working Group.

The Occupant Load Joint Working Group Terms of Reference (v.3) was included in the portal. The updated draft includes recommendations from the Building Sub-Council to make this working group a Joint Fire/Building Working Group.

Cameron Bradas / Michael Bos moved to approve the revised Joint Fire/Building Occupant Load Working Group Terms of Reference; CARRIED

4.5.1. Appointment of Heath Wright to the Occupant Load Working Group

This item was addressed with the approval of the updated agenda.

4.6. BSC Liaison Report

The liaisons provided an overview of the following topics under discussion at the BSC:

- Inclusion in the Occupant Load Working Group
- Microbreweries and Microdistilleries
- Reviewed Draft STANDATA on sprinkler systems with antifreeze solutions
- Reviewed Existing Fire Alarm Systems STANDATA
- Confirmation was received that the Alberta Edition of the Building and Fire Codes is expected to come into force on April 1, 2019 if approved by Cabinet and a 6-month transition period will follow
- A discussion was held regarding doors being used for venting for fire fighting and it was clarified by the Fire Administrator that the response that sliding doors cannot be used to vent was a building code interpretation given by a building technical advisor from Municipal Affairs; Members of the BSC believe that sliding patio doors should be able to be used but they understand the concern regarding swinging doors.
- Alberta Health presentation was received
- Digital plans reviews
- Tiny homes
- SLALA

4.7. Administrator/AMA Report

The Policy representative reported that the regulation is still moving through the legislative process, but the department is hoping for adoption with an April 1, 2019 in force date. The codes will be referred to as the National Fire Code—2019 Alberta Edition and the National Building Code—2019 Alberta Edition.

Relative to the Fireworks STANDATA, members were advised of the Basic Principles of Bylaws guideline that is available to assist municipalities in creating bylaws.

<http://municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/documents/Basic%20Principles%20of%20Bylaws.pdf>).

Fire safety tips and resources are available on the Office of the Fire Commissioners website at: <http://www.ofc.alberta.ca/public-education>. One question that is asked frequently is where to place a fire extinguisher in a commercial business. This is addressed in a safety tip.

Spring regional meetings have been cancelled for all disciplines. It is hoped that regional meetings will occur in the fall and AMA will provide an update on this after the codes have been published.

An AGLC presentation was provided to the Fire Marshals Guild regarding changes to rules that would allow the patron to take alcohol purchased at a facility in a hotel through the lobby, hallways, or other areas. This has triggered hotels to request additional occupancy loads for corridors, etc., which was not the intent nor does the hotel require any additions to their occupant load. The idea is that a patron can purchase a drink in the hotel bar or restaurant (providing the restaurant or bar is owned by the hotel) and then be able to walk back to their room with the drink. Additional information is available on the AGLC website.

4.7.1. STANDATA

Fireworks STANDATA

The Fireworks Bulletin – Draft 6 STANDATA was included in the portal and reviewed. This will be published as soon as AMA is aware of the publication of the codes.

Upgrading of Existing Steel Underground Storage Tank Systems STANDATA

The Upgrading of Existing Steel Underground Storage Tank Systems – FSC STANDATA was included in the portal and reviewed. The Administrator was asked to hold off publishing the STANDATA as some members did not have an opportunity to review. This will be added as an agenda item for the next meeting. [Council Administration]

Existing Fire Alarm Systems STANDATA

FCI – Existing Fire Alarm Systems – Draft 4 STANDATA for FSC, ESC and BSC was included in the portal and reviewed. An overview was provided on the rationale for the revisions and clarification was provided. It was noted that the STANDATA is being revised to include references to the Commissioning STANDATAs and to include the Electrical and Building Administrators' signatures.

The draft, with the minor changes noted, will be brought to the ESC meeting at their February 2019 meeting. Members were asked to provide any feedback on the STANDATA to the Administrator by February 12, 2019. [All]

4.8. Council Updates

The following report was provided:

- Sub-council members were asked to submit expense claims to Gerry Letendre within 30 days.
- An overview was provided regarding upcoming training; all information is listed in the portal calendar.
- A brief update was provided on the Continuing Education for SCOs program; information is available at:
<http://www.safetycodes.ab.ca/SCO/ConEd/Pages/default.aspx>
- Members were encouraged to provide information about potential activities/seminars that might be suitable as continuing education for SCOs to Cammie Laird.

- Sub-council members were reminded of the Dr. Sauer Award nominations and that the deadline for submissions is March 29, 2019.

4.8.1. Code of Conduct and Ethics Revisions and Related Policies

A link was included in the portal to the revised Code of Conduct & Ethics and related policies. All sub-council members were asked to review all revisions.

5. Meeting Finalization

5.1. Meeting and Agenda Feedback

A brief update was provided regarding an NFPA presentation occurring in April 2019 in Lethbridge. The presentation is free of charge and open to anyone in the fire safety discipline. This information will be provided to the OFC's representative in the area.

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5.2. Next Meeting

The next meeting was reconfirmed for Thursday, March 28, 2019 at the Council office.

5.3. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the incoming Chair at 2:15 p.m.

--- NEW ACTION ITEMS ---

2.2. Chair Election

Joe Davis / Mario Poser moved the Chris Taylor be appointed as the liaison to the Building Sub-Council and further discussion will be held at the next meeting regarding adding additional representatives; CARRIED [Council Administration]

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