



President  
**Paul Fazzino**  
Essex Fire Engine Co. No. 1

Vice President  
**Clark Maxson**  
Old Saybrook Fire Dept.

Secretary - Treasurer  
**Steve Biasi**  
North Madison Vol. Fire Co.

## Minutes of the March 23, 2009 VSMAI meeting in Westbrook, CT.

The meeting was called to order by President Fazzino at 19:45 hrs with a salute to the flag.

### Attendees – February 23, 2009

- |                                  |                               |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Mike Jenkins – Westbrook      | 8. Bob Gerard - Madison       |
| 2. Brian Manware – Clinton       | 9. Sam Baber - Haddam         |
| 3. Jim Long – Westbrook          | 10. Harry Hall - Durham       |
| 4. Dave Jewett – Old Lyme        | 11. Steve Biasi – No. Madison |
| 5. Charlie Herrschaft – Guilford | 12. Paul Fazzino – Essex      |
| 6. Bob Kytte – Madison           | 13. Scott Wright - Durham     |
| 7. Dave Thomas - Madison         |                               |

### Special Presentations:

NONE

**Approval of the previous meeting minutes:** MMS (Hall/Budney) to accept the February 23, 2008 minutes as distributed. Motion passed unanimously.

**Reading of communications:** None

**Treasurer’s report:** The Treasurer reported an opening balance of \$6,184.89, with no income and an expense of \$200.00. Ending balance is \$5,984.89. MMS to accept the Treasurer’s report as presented (Long/Hall). Motion passed unanimously.

### Bills to be paid:

Old Saybrook Fire Co. #1	\$200.00	Service Award-JT Dunn
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### Committee report(s):

Statewide Disaster: NO REPORT

### Old Business:

1. Chief Long of Westbrook presented the VSMAI mutual aid agreement to President Fazzino. Pres. Fazzino informed Chief Long that the department name was not inserted into the document and the agreement was returned to Chief Long for modification.

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2. Chief Hall of Durham opened discussion concerning the Valley Shore frequency list and introduced Scott Wright to explain some of the concerns with the frequencies and some ensuing problems. President Fazzino explained that the frequency list was circulated to all the valley shore towns for verification purposes. President Fazzino acknowledged that he was aware of the frequency interferences between the Valley Shore Water Supply channel and Guilford's frequencies and explained that the problem had been brought to Tactical's attention for troubleshooting.

Mr. Wright also explained that the Valley Shore RIT channel is assigned to Old Saybrook and information is missing as to whether it's a wide band channel. Mr. Wright explained that it interfering with other towns.

A general discussion ensued concerning the use of the statewide channels and the use of the repeaters.

Chief Long inquired as to where all the frequencies and PL list originated from. President Fazzino explained that the list is a combination of every town's frequencies in use. President Fazzino explained that many towns have their own licenses and that the Valley Shore organization does not oversee the licensing for many channels that various departments use. President Fazzino added that there was an attempt to put the frequencies under Valley Shore but it did not materialize.

Deputy Chief Manware inquired as to who is licensed to use the Valley Shore channels. The group explained that they are licensed to the Valley Shore organization. President Fazzino explained that the channels are low powered and were licensed to be used in such manner.

Chief Hall of Durham asked if the Valley Shore organization has a consulting group for the frequencies, radios and licensing information. President Fazzino explained there has been a group of individuals working on the issues but it has been ongoing for years.

Scott Wright explained that there is currently a movement to transition to "T" channels or frequencies.

Chief Long of Westbrook inquired as to initiating a committee to work on the ongoing problems, recently discovered concerns and issues to be resolved concerning the frequencies and possible licensing problems.

Scott Wright added that departments operating in and around Durham using the Valley Shore Water Supply channel should not test or use the channel because of the interference with Guilford's channels especially if Guilford is operating at an incident.

Chief Gerard asked about the FCC's involvement in the use of frequencies and licenses. President Fazzino explained that the Valley Shore channels are licensed to be used between 2.5 to 5 watts – low powered.

Chief Herrschaft explained the interference problems with Guilford and explained that when he travels east neither he nor his personnel know which channel to talk on. Chief Herrschaft explained that it was previously 46.26 but is now uncertain. Chief Herrschaft explains that his department has no issues or



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problems operating with Branford but adds that he does have problems with Durham and is not sure if the PLs are correct.

President Fazzino looked to establish a committee to work on and hopefully correct many of the previously discussed issues. The committee was established with the following attendees volunteering to be on the committee:

1. Deputy Chief Manware of Clinton
2. Scott Wright of Durham
3. Chief Charlie Herrschaft of Guilford
4. Gregg Provost of Westbrook
5. Chief Bob Gerard of Madison
6. A designee from Old Saybrook

President Fazzino explained that all Valley Shore towns operating under different communication centers need to have representation on the committee.

Chief Herrschaft of Guilford explained that there needs to be a uniform structure to the frequencies, licensing and PL's. Chief Herrschaft explained the importance of RIT, which is a special operation, and that it needs to be addressed. Additionally, Chief Herrschaft explained that there needs to be a uniform policy on responding to various towns.

Scott Wright added that everyone needs to be on the same page.

President Fazzino nominated Deputy Chief Manware of Clinton to be the chairman of the committee.

3. President Fazzino stated that he distributed an e-mail containing the Tender Strike Force attachment. President Fazzino advised everyone to review the attachment (Tender Strike Force document) for accuracy. Upon completion of its review, please forward any changes to the VSMAI Secretary for updating. Upon completion and revision of the Tender Strike Force document, all dispatch centers will be notified of the changes. President Fazzino also explained that contained within the e-mail, also as an attachment, was the Valley Shore SOG's.

4. Deputy Chief Budney of Deep River explained that Deep River Fire Department will be hosting an Aerial Operations class on Saturday, May 2, 2009 and Sunday, May 3, 2009. Chief Budney was looking for possible number of attendees. Chief Gerard of Madison stated he had six attendees and President/Chief Fazzino of Essex had ten attendees. Chief Budney explained that Deep River planned on closing Main Street in their town and utilizing the old piano factory building and Silgan Plastics building for training locations. Chief Gerard added that Madison Hose will provide their ladder for the class.

5. Chief Jewett of Old Lyme explained that his department was planning on hosting an Aerial Operations course in late Summer/early Fall.



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### **New Business:**

1. Chief Long of Westbrook handed out his department's dispatch protocols and mutual aid response protocol. Chief Long explained that their protocols have been loaded into the Valley Shore dispatch center.

2. Chief Hall of Durham opened discussions concerning individuals from Truckie Production arriving on fire scenes. Chief Hall explained that he has heard of a number of instances where individuals from this organization arrive at fire scenes wearing turn-out gear and subsequently start taking photographs in close proximity to the fire scene. Chief Hall explained that these individuals are getting close to the fire scenes because they are wearing turn-out gear and are not stopped the way plain-clothed individuals are because they are wearing turn-out gear. Additionally, Chief Hall explained that instead of providing assistance at the fire scenes they are taking photographs and in many cases immediately posting them to their website. Chief Hall inquired as to how the other members of the organization felt concerning this situation and were there any legal concerns/issues. Chief Herrschaft of Guilford explained that fire tape could be established surrounding the fire scene preventing them from entering too close. The group in attendance discussed various incidents where the production company has obtained video and photos that were posted on their website. The group discussed establishing fire lines and having these individuals report to the incident commander. Some departments explained that there were incidents where photos were posted to the website prior to their departments returning into service following the incident.

President Fazzino suggested the organization look to developing an SOP through the VSMAI to address to ongoing issue and problem.

Chief Long of Westbook recommended establishing a policy that nobody enters within the fire line to take video or photographs except authorized personnel such as fire marshals.

Chief Gerard of Madison explained that fellow fire personnel taking these photographs and videos are creating potential problems whereby these photos and videos can sometimes show moments, especially during initial size-up and initial fire attack, that departments do not want displayed.

President Fazzino explained that posted photos and video can be viewed by regulatory agencies, attorneys and other interested parties looking to take action(s) against the fire departments based upon the material(s) posted.

Chief Long of Westbrook and Chief Hall of Durham were nominated to draft a policy concerning the issue of photos and videos being obtained. Upon completion of the policy, the production company will be advised of the policy. Chief Hall of Durham added that the photographs taken during last Summer's motor vehicle incident and posted on the internet have been subpoena by legal counsel.

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3. Chief Long of Westbrook inquired as to whether there were any more banquets coming up in the near future since one of his photographs from their department's trophy case is missing.

### **Interest to the Organization:**

1. Chief Hall of Durham inquired as to whether there were any Q classes being put together in the near future. Chief Long of Westbrook explained that they were looking to put a Q class or CDL class together. Chief Budney of Deep River explained that they started a CDL class last Tuesday and can take two to three more attendees. Currently, the class is only conducting classroom training and there is no cost, however, each student must pay for the cost of the CDL permit and the testing cost will be split between the participating towns.

2. Chief Hall of Durham inquired as to whether there were any departments currently performing fit testing. Chief Hall explained that his department is upgrading to Scott 4.5 SCBAs. If anyone that could provide assistance please contact Chief Hall. Chief Hall explained he had a couple of individuals in need of fit testing.

MMS to adjourn at 20:45 hours (Manware/Budney).

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Biasi  
Secretary / Treasurer

Next meeting will be Monday, April 27, 2009 in Chester at 7:30 PM.

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