

Meeting Minutes

Present: Chief Walters, David Barefoot, Chief Mizell, Jan Chamblee, K.C. Ray, Mike Legeros

Location: Station 28

2012 Anniversary

- Our 100th anniversary as a paid-department is in 2010. The anniversary month is December.
- It's also the 150th anniversary of RFD (re)organized as a volunteer department.
- Chief McGrath requests formation of a steering committee with representatives from all three shifts.
- Wants in place by mid-year, with committee starting to generate ideas. The committee will report to command staff, and they will approve plans.
- We should start pre-planning early, so formal planning can start in 2011, and execution of plans can start in 2012.
- The anniversary might be a good "primary focus" for RFDHS, with perhaps 60/40 or 70/30 of energies spent in that direction, versus other RFDHS goals.
- The anniversary will draw a lot of attention and interest, both inside and outside the department. RFDHS can perhaps successfully "piggy back" on those efforts, and work in parallel forward.

The field is wide open for ideas for the anniversary year. Things casually talked about at the meeting include:

- Birthday parties
- Open houses
- Giant, fire truck-sized cake
- Parade, muster, competition downtown
- Anniversary emblem or uniform patch
- Firemen's Ball
- Honor roll, list of all personnel who have served
- Press coverage
 - Such as invitations to public to submit materials or artifacts.
 - Mike Legeros notes, there are 1,500 some people who have been employed with RFD since 1912.
 - That translates to thousands of family connections.

2012 Yearbook

- Andy Meier and Mike Legeros have met and exchanged ideas as a committee two.
- They've identified a couple of initial steps:
 - Solicit personnel interest, and identify the other committee members.
 - Identify an executive sponsor, ideally Bat. Chief rank or higher.
- They've contacted Chief Mizzell, to inquire of his interest as executive sponsor.
- They've drafted a solicitation message to all personnel, which could be sent at any time.
- They've crafted a rough timeline, which works backwards from a spring 2012 delivery date. That would allow books to be sold at, say, the August Fire Expo, and at other events.
- Discussion of yearbook ideas:
 - Should the yearbook be published in 2013 instead of 2012, which would allow anniversary events to be included? As well as photos or other materials that will likely surface during anniversary publicity?
 - Should two books be published? An anniversary book in 2012, designed for all audiences, and a yearbook in the following year, designed for personnel?

Incorporation

- For the last year, a small committee has worked on documents for incorporating RFDHS as a non-profit: Gary Amato, Tim Henshaw, Mike Legeros, Chief Walters, and Andy Woodall (retired).
- The latest and hopefully final version of the incorporation documents can be viewed at <http://raleighfirehistory.org/temp/bylaws/>
- The above committee plans to proceed and get incorporation rolling early this year. Funding for the cost, which will amount to around \$700, will come from the \$900-\$1000 that RFDHS has.
- The officers named thus far are President Mike Legeros, Vice President Chief Walters, and Secretary/Treasurer Tim Henshaw.
- The group had no additional comments or input.

Storage space – Station 23

- The upstairs storage area at Station 23 is being utilized storage of log books, paper records, and a small (but growing) collection of hardware artifacts. Shelves have been installed along one wall, for log books. See pics: <http://legeros.com/temp/sta23/>
- A log book library now exists, with books collected from nearly every station. Couple still left to do. There are also gaps, including early decades at Station 1, 2, 3. Mike Legeros is working on an indexing plan, which would label each book, and have a cross-reference index that would allow easy finding of particular books.
- Further work on the space is planned, with 23-B personnel willing to building shelves and other work. Also needed is a secure area, within the space, for older or sensitive materials. Mike Legeros has drawn some designs: <http://legeros.com/temp/space/>
- Mike Legeros and K.C. Ray last year discussed the need for acquisition and retention policies, notably with regard to obtaining artifacts from retirees and families, and how to properly record,

securely store, and present those artifacts. Those will be needed as artifacts are collected from private parties.

Display space – Keeter Training

- A classroom trailer at KTC has or will be provided to RFDHS, for a display area. Particulars are not known.
- It was discussed that, with Retiree Day planned for May 8, that having a “first version” of the display area would be good.
- Having the classroom space ready and rolling for Retiree Day would also be a physical invitation to retirees, and perhaps prompt awareness and participation in artifact collecting. They might see what’s displayed and think “hey, I have some of that at home, that I could donate.”
- Mike Legeros indicated that his previous Retiree Day “history room” work can easily be repeated, with visual aids, digital slideshows, and film footage already available.
- **Mike Legeros took the action to contact Chief McLaurin**, and indicate RFDHS goals for having the classroom space ready by late April.

Storage space – Other

- Battalion Chief Ronny Mizzell has secure storage space available in Wendell. He can provide the space, and RFDHS would possess the keys. It is available at any point in the future that such space is needed.

Public Involvement

- We’ve talked about inviting citizens to participate in the historical society. Heck, there are already citizens who are long-time participants with RFD, including Legeros, Wilson, Jeff Harkey, and the late Bob Biggs. Extending the historical society concept to the general population is a needed action, especially as it may bring additional expertise and skill sets to the table, and perhaps from people with foundation experience.
- Proposed is the goal of 2011 for announcing the historical society to the general public, and extending invitations therein. That gives the rest of this year for RFDHS to “get its infrastructure in further order.”
- The group thought that sounded good.

General Updates

- Incoming Materials.
 - They continue to arrive. Tim Henshaw and Ron Campbell, for example, found some slides and videotapes the other day at Admin.

- Some slides were scanned and posted on Mike Legeros' web site, showing older apparatus and station pics. Video included tapes of RFD puppet shows.
- Retiree Day.
 - As noted, it's planned for May 8. That's the Saturday after the Fallen Firefighter's Memorial ceremony on Saturday, May 1.
- Retiree Outreach.
 - Mike Legeros talked about recently befriending a 96 year-old widow. He noted that everything we're discussing here is just one half the historical picture.
 - The retirees, and their widows and their families, represent the other half. They are the living history. We should all reach out to retirees, and as much as possible.
 - Mike Legeros pays a visit to their monthly breakfast on most months.
 - He's also still conducting oral history interviews, lately with retiring firefighters. He recently interviewed Rubens, Lewis, Wall, and Holden.
- Oral Histories
 - K.C. Ray has talked with Mike Legeros about also conducting interviews.
 - The format is easy. Just sit down with a tape or video recorder, and ask them basic questions.
 - Good starter questions are listed at <http://www.legeros.com/ralwake/raleigh/history/oral-history/>.
 - Maybe in the future, RFDHS can transcribe the interviews, or play excerpts in presentation settings.
 - Mike Legeros mentioned he wants to use video instead of audio for recording interviews.
- Newsletter
 - Mike Legeros mentioned the newsletter, which he produces for RFD on a quarterly basis.
 - He has received much positive feedback from retirees, notably older retirees.
 - They feel "included" in what's happening with RFD, and much more than at prior times.
- Photography Club
 - Chief Walters has suggested that a project or affiliation for RFDHS could be a future photography club.
 - The club could further expand upon the services provided by Lee Wilson and Mike Legeros.
 - The club would be open to photographers interested in documenting RFD.
 - It could offer retirees an opportunity to stay somewhat involved.
 - It could perhaps lead to formation, years later, of a formal department photo unit, or roles therein.

- The group thought the idea sounded good.
- Other
 - Mike Legeros noted that even as RFDHS works on building its infrastructure and organization, the “work of history” continues to get done.
 - And there’s still more, so many different pieces. Such as, say, meeting with Capt. Amato and transferring his knowledge of how to operate the 1926 LaFrance into a document. It’d be easy. Write down everything he knows. Take pictures of controls and parts of the truck, to annotate the instructions. And voila!

Fundraising

- Some ideas for fundraising were discussed.
- This is still early in the process of thinking about funding. And we don’t have answers to questions such as “what does membership or donation buy someone?”
- Perhaps ask personnel to donate \$1 per paycheck, as general contribution toward efforts
- Life net story told
 - Chief Walters found a \$20 life net on a government auction site, for sale near Charlotte.
 - He attempted to contact seller, but couldn’t have auction pulled before others bid.
 - Mike Legeros had offered to contribute half.
 - Chief Walters bid until about \$120, then stopped.
 - The net sold for about \$300.
 - The group discussed such purchases, and noted that such acquisitions would be one of the goals of RFDHS.
- Evangelizing via video was suggested
 - Could Mike Legeros record five or ten minutes of what he/we talked about tonight?
 - Show video to personnel, perhaps during EMT training.
 - Best timeframe might be April, when classroom at KTC is ready as display area.
 - Video could be shown to personnel, who could then go view the display.
 - Video could include footage of others speaking about RFDHS, maybe a couple lines from Chief McGrath, Chief Walters, members at this meeting, etc.
 - **Actions for Mike Legeros**
 1. Contact Ron Campbell, as about video studio/taping availability.
 2. Draft a script of a 5 to 10 minute message.

Next Meeting

- Monday, March 15, at 7:30 p.m., at KTC
- Unless problems arise.