



April, 2020

B.O.C.O.N.E.O. Officers

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Daniel Spada
Geauga County

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Russell Rodic

Second Vice President

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Secretary/Webmaster

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Mike Girbino
Mayfield Village Fire Dept.
Retired

Past President

Michael Gero
Independence

President's Message

I hope this newsletter finds you all Healthy and Safe. The way that we all perform our jobs has changed over the last month. I know everyone is making the adjustments to keep our process going as smoothly as we can. There are restrictions for public access into our buildings, Video inspections, reduced work hours, and even some layoffs. Now is the time to use one of BOCONEO's greatest assets and one of the reasons for what it is really here for; each other. Reach out to the other members and find out what they are doing, how they are doing inspections, taking in applications, what inspections they are performing and which ones are being asked to be postponed or modified. I can say this is a first for all of us and we all need ideas of what works.

Because of the Governor's stay at home order, our next meeting and class scheduled for April has been canceled. The Board is constantly discussing and trying to stay as up to date as possible with every order and memo that comes from the Governor and/or the Board of Building Standards. With what seems to be new information every day the board is now set with new challenges and decisions to make on future continuing education classes and when and how we can get the hours we need for our members. Most all conferences from every organization has been cancelled or rescheduled, so make sure to visit the multiple organizations websites to see new dates.

Continued...

April meeting canceled.

B.O.C.O.N.E.O.

Building Officials Conference of North East Ohio



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Next month is the 40th annual Building Safety Month. This year's campaign, "Safer Buildings, Safer Communities, Safer World" highlights the importance of building codes. There are sample proclamations, free downloadable posters, pamphlets, and flyers, and ideas of things that we can all do to promote our industry on the ICC website.

As we get important information or make decisions on continuing education classes we will distribute as the board sees fit. In the meantime there are many websites and organizations that have good information out there and I encourage everyone to visit them. Most can be found on our website under links.

Until we all see each other again stay healthy, stay safe, and stay professional.



Daniel Spada
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First Vice-President's Message

As I write this article we as essential personnel, we are performing our duties in an environment never dreamed of or any preparation for which can distract from our ability to perform our duties sufficiently. As the pandemic continues to take a toll remind yourself of priorities of taking every precaution and using what personal protective equipment is available to protect yourself, this will pass and we want all of us to be around to share our stories.

On the business side, the Board will meet to discuss dates for Ohio Building Code Academy, consider a reasonable extension of certification renewal periods and interim certifications. The Board is aware of the cancellation of continuing education events due to limits on gathering size is affecting our ability to complete continuing education requirements. A notification from the Board will be distributed at such time dependent of ongoing conditions and directives from the Governor.

Stay safe and stay healthy!

Russ VP

Russ Rodic
1st Vice
President



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From Your Secretary

I hope this finds you and your families all well.

Membership fees and applications were due March 1. Thank you to those who have sent in their dues, if you still need to send in, please remit asap. Please remember we need an application each year for every member, including retirees, to keep up to date records of our membership.

If you need to check your status at any time, please email me, mferrante@seuclid.com and I will let you know if we've received your application/fees.

Stay safe and be well.



Monica Ferrante
Secretary

[Link to BOCONEO website](#)



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From Your Treasurer

March, 2020

Checking account beginning balance		<u>\$12,781.65</u>
Deposits:		
Membership	10,500.00	
		\$ 10,500.00
Less:		
Website	368.40	
Post Office Box rental fee	76.00	
Executive Board meeting	110.00	
	\$ 554.40	
Ending Balance		<u>\$ 22,727.25</u>
Scholarship Account Beginning Balance		\$ 9,386.48
Deposits:		
None		
Less:		
Scholarship Awards	\$ 4,750.00	
Ending Balance		<u>\$ 4,636.48</u>
Money Market Account Beginning Balance		<u>\$ 47,764.08</u>
Plus:		
Interest	20.24	
Ending Balance		<u>\$ 47,823.48</u>
TOTAL ASSETS:		<u>\$ 75,187.21</u>



Laura Heilman
Treasurer



April, 2020

Fire Marshal's Report

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The Covid-19 Pandemic has and, most likely will continue to change how we live and work well into the future. The work we perform and services we provide as building and fire officials, code specialists, construction design professionals and skilled trades truly is essential to the safety and welfare of the public.

Over the past weeks, we have had to alter the ways in which we provide services to our respective communities, and customers in order to protect our collective health and well-being without diminishing the levels of protection those services offer. Necessity, in this case truly has been the mother of invention and creativity.

There has recently been some question within the fire service regarding the need to apply the provisions of the fire code pertaining to the required inspection, testing and maintenance of fire protection and life safety systems during the pandemic. It has been suggested that temporarily extending or relieving the ITM requirements in closed or under used occupancies might not only help relieve the financial burden placed on business owners and property managers but also help protect personnel from unnecessary exposure to COVID-19 while performing testing operations, conducting inspections and witnessing tests.

While deemed essential and considered a "critical trade" in the Dept. of Health's Stay at Home order, some fire protection contractors have chosen to scale back or discontinue services as a means to protect staff and customers. Some fire service administrators and fire code officials have been considering and implementing similar measures.

Paragraph 10 of the Dept. of Health's Stay at Home order states with regard to the order as it relates to the pandemic, that "each government body shall determine its essential governmental functions". In this former fire service administrator's opinion, while this public health order provides administrators operational flexibility with the intent of protecting the health of their staff it falls short of amending the requirements of the Administrative and Revised codes with regard to performance of duty and application and enforcement of the Fire Code.

Chapter 1 of the Fire Code in sections 103.2, 104.1, and 104.1.1 establish the state fire code as a minimum statewide standard and further explains that no local jurisdiction may enact a fire code or authorize a variance or waiver by any means that provide a lower level of safety. In addition, it is established that only the State Fire Marshal or the Board of Building Appeals may authorize a variance to any provisions of the fire code. The fire code official is also empowered to render interpretations of the code and adopt policies, procedures, rules and regulations in order to clarify the codes provisions but is limited in that such actions must be in compliance with the intent and purpose of the code and shall not have the effect of waiving requirements specifically provided for.

Continued...



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Lastly, the Code requires fire chiefs of municipal corporations or townships having active fire departments to enforce all provisions of ORC 3781 and 3791 and any rules promulgated pursuant to those chapters relating to fire prevention. In my opinion these passages clearly establish our obligations and duties as fire code officials and fire service administrators with regard to the administration and application of the fire code, limit our authority to interpret it and prohibit us from arbitrarily reducing its requirements. As the State Fire Marshal has yet to issue any variance or technical bulletin specific to the application of the fire code during this pandemic, it should be assumed that until that happens we should be doing our best to uphold and apply the code while employing all means at our disposal to protect our staff and the public from COVID-19 including but not limited to the requirements for ongoing inspection, testing and maintenance of fire protection and life safety systems.

Recently, the National Fire Protection Association issued guidance on this subject recommending that fire protection and life safety systems be maintained in all buildings during the pandemic. They further recommend the required schedules for inspection, testing and maintenance be followed. These recommendations were made with the knowledge and understanding that many buildings are vacant or have reduced occupancy due to stay at home orders. Fire protection and life safety systems are also essential to the early notification of fire fighting crews and their added safety when fighting fires in protected structures, therefore maintaining these systems in accordance with the code requirements helps ensure the safety of our firefighters and emergency responders as well as the occupants. The North Eastern Ohio Fire Prevention Association's position on this issue is aligned with that of the NFPA. NEOPFA supports our fire and building officials during this challenging time and is there to help. Please visit our website for up to date information. Please click on the link below to visit NFPA's COVID-19 web page.

Be Well, Stay Safe.

<https://www.nfpa.org/Codes-and-Standards/Resources/Standards-in-action/NFPA-responds-to-the-coronavirus>

www.neofpa.org.



Assistant Chief Michael Girbino, Fire Marshal
Mayfield Village Fire, Retired
BOCONEO Cooperating Member



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Past President's Report

Well, here is April and things have changed dramatically. The State has issued a Stay-at-Home order except for essential business. The original guidelines were vague regarding home construction. Fortunately, the revised guidelines from CISA are clearer and include home building as an essential business. Many departments are operating with a reduced workforce. Some departments have gone to virtual inspections and other creative ways to do what needs to be done. Whatever situation you are in, please be smart, safe and cautious to keep yourself and your families safe and healthy.

The annual conference has been postponed until November 2020. The information from FBOA/OBOA stated that the intent was to have everything go as planned just in November instead of March.

March and April's BOCONEO meetings have been cancelled. If you are in need of hours for certification renewal, the BBS has suggested checking www.ohiobbseducation.com as an online course resource. The BBS is also accepting the online ethics course found at <https://www.ethics.ohio.gov/education/elearning/ecourses.html>. The course is one hour and you will receive a certificate. The BBS requires the certificate as proof of completion and there is no BBS approval number.

Please stay safe and healthy so we will be able to meet for the May BOCONEO meeting.

See you at that meeting,

Michael Gero



Michael Gero
Past President



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Mayfield Village Fire Dept.

Past President

James Decker
Mentor

OBOA Report

The Annual Building Official Conference presented by OBOA and FBOA has been re-scheduled to November 1-3, 2020 at the Fairlawn Hilton and DoubleTree Campus.

Visit <https://oboa.clubexpress.com/> for additional information.



James Decker
Past President