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FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 27: 7TH ANNUAL NFPA MEETING-1903 (AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION/ INTERNATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION CONGRESS)

By Richard Schulte

The seventh annual meeting of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) was held in Chicago in late May 1903. Among the topics of discussion at this meeting were an invitation to attend the annual conference of the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and attendance at the International Fire Prevention Congress to be held in London in July 1903. The following is the text of the letter from the AWWA and a letter from the office of mayor of Philadelphia regarding the International Fire Prevention Congress:

“AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION.

The Secretary read the following letter from C. A. Campbell, President of the American Water Works Association.

Elmira, N. Y., May 11, 1903

Mr. Charles Hexamer, President National Fire Protection Association.

Dear Sir:

The American Water Works Association extends to you and the members of the National Fire Protection Association a most cordial invitation to attend the annual convention of this Association and to take part in the discussion of the question of the proper regulation of private fire services, to which one session of the convention will be devoted.

We think and believe that some means of controlling such services can be devised that will be satisfactory to all concerned, and it is with this object that we invite you to take part in this debate.

Our convention will be held at Detroit, June 23-26; the headquarters will be at the Cadillac. All of the passenger associations have granted us the rate of a fare and a third for the round trip, on the certificate plan, to which you as visiting delegates will be entitled. The special agent of the passenger associations will be in attendance to sign the certificates Thursday, the 25th, and it is probable that the afternoon of that day will be set aside for the Private Fire Service session.

Sincerely yours,

C. H. Campbell, President
J. M. Diven, Secretary

The President. It seems to the Chair that it would be a good idea to appoint delegates from this Association to attend the meeting. I believe there has already been some conference, has there not?

Sec. Crosby. There has been no conference between the American Water Works Association and the National Fire Protection Association, but this subject of Private Fire Service has been up particularly of late in the New England Water Works Association, where for something like a year and a half there has been more or less active discussion. Mr. Fiske, of Boston, has been present and participated in that discussion, but no conclusion has yet been arrived at. It seems that the view point of the Underwriters and of the Water Works men is not the same; but it has been felt, even by those who have entered into the discussion, or at least many of the gentlemen, that some way would be found for reconciling their differences. The New England Water Works Association people have been invited to attend the Detroit conference, with the idea that a full expression of their opinion will be brought out at that time.

The President. It seems quite important, in view of the explanation which our Secretary has made, that we should appoint delegates to attend the Convention.

Sec. Crosby. I would suggest that some care will need to be exercised in selecting the delegates, because we want to get men who will be there, and I would therefore suggest that the matter be referred to give time to the selection of the proper persons.

On motion of Mr. Fiske, it was voted to accept the invitation and to request the President to appoint delegates to represent the Association at the Convention of the American Water Works Association.

THE INTERNATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION CONGRESS.

*Sec. Crosby. There is no place on our programme, Mr. President, for any remarks relative to the delegation which we are to send aboard to the London Conference. The President has mentioned it briefly and modestly in his remarks, and it is very fortunate that **the delegates so far as we know, President Hexamer, Captain Stratton and Mr. Merrill, are going to be able to attend.** Besides the honors which have been given them in the assignment of committees, the chairmanship of sections, the assignment of committees, the chairmanship of sections, and invitations to present important papers, we now have the following from the Mayor of Philadelphia, under date of May 14th address to our President:*

Office of the Mayor of Philadelphia.

May 14th, 1903

Mr. Charles A. Hexamer, 414 Walnut Street, Philadelphia

My Dear Sir:

By direction of Mayor Weaver I have sent your name as the name selected for *the delegate of the United States Government to the International Fire Prevention Congress* to be held in London July next. Your appointment has been sent to the Hon. William T. Harris, Commissioner of Education at Washington, with the request that Mr. Harris communicate with you in reference to your appointment.

Very respectfully yours,

Robert Grier.

Mayor's Secretary

Under instruction from the Executive Committee, invitations to attend this annual meeting of our Association have been directed to *the American Institute of Architects*, who were presented at the Philadelphia meeting last year; also to the American Water Works Association, the *New England Water Works Association* and to the *Society of Fire Chiefs*. Thus far we have received word from Mr. W. L. B. Jenny, of Chicago, will be the delegate from the Architect's Institute, and that he will be with us tomorrow morning when we take up the discussion of the subject of fire proof construction. If other delegates come in during the session, I trust that they will make themselves known at the platform so that we may confer with them.

The President. We are ready now to take up the regular order of business, and we will hear first from the Committee on steam fire pumps."

Source: *NFPA Proceedings*, Volume 1901-1903

The invitations to attend the American Water Works Association annual meeting in Detroit and the appointment of an NFPA member as the representative of the U. S. Government at the International Fire Prevention Congress show the expanding influence of the NFPA.

Along with the expanding influence, attendance at the NFPA meeting by a representative of the American Institute of Architects shows an increasing recognition of the NFPA in the building industry.

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