

Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education
Meeting Minutes of October 16, 2006, Maple Grove, MN

The Minnesota Firefighter Training and Education Board (MnFTEB) was convened at 10:00 a.m. in Maple Grove, MN by Vice Chairman Marv Calvin.

P	Marvin Calvin MSFCA	Willmar	2009		P	Joanne Myrvik League of Cities	Minneota	2007
P	Wayne Durant MSFDA	Brainerd	2009		P	Tom Pressler MSFDA	Bloomington	2009
P	Jim Fisher Ass'n of Townships	Zim	2009		P	Jerry Rosendahl Dept of Public Safety	St Paul	N/A
A	<i>Vacant</i> Ass'n of Townships		2010		P	Kelli Slavik League of Cities	Plymouth	2010
P	Alina Granholm MSFDA	Esko	2007		P	Judy Smith Thill MSFDA	Maple Grove	2008
P	Doug Holton MSFCA	St Paul	2010		A	John Wiskocil MSFDA	Montgomery	2008
A	Margaret Larson Public Member	Lakeland	2007		A	<i>Vacant</i> MPFF		2008
P	Kathleen Mullen MPFF	Minneapolis	2007					

MPFF = Minnesota Professional Fire Fighters MSFCA = Minnesota State Fire Chiefs' Association
MSFDA = Minnesota State Fire Department Association

Also in attendance was Mike Stockstead, President, MPFF; Rob Pearson, *Maple Grove* Fire Department; Scott Anderson, *Maple Grove* Fire Department; Rick Loveland, Moorhead Fire Department; Dan Winkel, President, MSFDA; John Hultquist, Governor's Staff.

After introductions around the room, Board Members from the past were asked for comments pertaining to the Board:

Jim Fisher

- Centered on training needs in the state
- Improve state instruction
- Reviewed curriculum and course content
- Discovered inconsistencies in ways of teaching various courses

Wayne Durant

- Recalled being a part of the Firefighter Training Task force that had regional meetings to ascertain problems and possible solutions
- Discovered that all Vo-Tech systems were not training the same
- Also discovered that at least one fire department did no training at all
- Many departments were lacking in funds for training and relied on various methods for raising funds to keep their departments running.

Tom Pressler

- Also mentioned the history of the Training Task Force and the subsequent legislation
- Cited that intent was to have consistency of the courses given throughout the state and that those courses would be given by qualified instructors
- Indicated that legislation forming the Board was a matter of give-and-take. Some of that was that the Board was established, but no moneys were allocated for its operation.

Jerry Rosendahl

- Distributed Goals as gleaned from his files (*concern that the Goals were internal working documents and not of public record – will determine by the next meeting*)

Comments were solicited from visiting attendees:

John Hulquist welcomed the new members to the Board and stressed the importance of the Board.

Mike Stockstead had no comments at this time.

Dan Winkel also cited the Training Task Force and background of the forming of the Board.

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The Powers and Duties were reviewed as described in the legislation establishing the Board. The re-establishment of the Board ratified all previous actions of the Board.

Fire Safety Account

Mike Stockstead reviewed the legislation that captures the Fire Marshal tax and allocates it to the Commissioner of Public Safety. It will become effective July 1, 2007 when collections will start. An Advisory Committee to the Commissioner will make suggestions for expenditures.

Dan Winkel expressed hopes that the Fire Safety Account would be a resource for moneys to the Board

Other Discussion

Chief Holton asked what accomplishments the Board had made.

Tom Pressler answered:

- An Operating Procedure was adopted and reviewed by the State Attorney General.
- A review was made of the costs of training firefighters for basic firefighting operations
- A review was scheduled of the Operating Procedure on an annual basis
- An activity was in process to review and establish the goals of the Board
- Application was made to the Thomas Moore Foundation for funds to hire a fund-raiser for the Board
 - An award of \$5,000 was received and deposited in a dedicated fund within the State Fire Marshal's Office, the fiscal administrator for the Board.
 - Unfortunately, the hiring of a fund raiser did not come to fruition because of current hiring restrictions within the state.
 - Those funds are still in the dedicated fund
- Terrorism emphasis resulted in the Board approving the Terrorism Awareness Course (4 hours) as being required for every firefighter in the State.
- The Board also reviewed and approved the Advanced Terrorism Course as developed by Minneapolis Fire as being required for those personnel that had a greater propensity to face advanced terrorism activities.
- The Board reviewed the instructor qualifications of MnSCU FIRE/EMS Center and used them to select the qualified instructors for the above approved courses. It should be noted that those qualifications were being further reviewed with plans to work with MnSCU to update the requirements.

Discussion was directed at training today and some comments were:

- There is more departmental internal training taking place today – this creates new problems in assuring that the courses are taught consistently with qualified instructors.
- Some people believe that curriculum/courses/qualified instructors are not as important as final passage of the Certification Tests
- On-line training is becoming more prevalent

Question was raised whether a person can serve on both the Fire Service Advisory Committee (for the Fire Safety Account) and the Minnesota Board of Fire Training and Education. Some people had evidently been told that they could not. Mike Stockstead indicated that there was no prohibitive language, but cited incidents of possible Conflict of Interest on specific allocations.

Question about whether the moneys that may be given to the MnBDFT&E would be contingent. If funds, any funds are available to the Board, the distribution of those funds would be decided by the Board – if contingencies would possibly exist that was not in concert with the intent of the Board, the funds may have to be refused.

Recruitment and Retention – Report given by Jim Fisher and Rob Pearson

A report was given about the meetings of the Task Force that needs to respond to the Commissioner of Public Safety by December 15, 2006. There have been surveys through the League of Cities and Public Meetings (4) held around the State (Mountain Iron, Monticello, Albert Lea, and Marshall). There seems to be a common

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theme – Lack of consistency, Availability, Cost of Training. Also mentioned was that courses required for some areas may not be needed in the smaller communities.

Concern about businesses permitting volunteers to respond from work without penalty seems to vary throughout the state. All businesses seem to have cut back to essential personnel and therefore cannot permit absences as they may have in the past.

References were made to the fact that 4 of 10 State Fire Schools were cancelled because of lack of adequate registration. Also mentioned was that the cost of basic training varies between schools.

Officers

Re-affirmed that Secretary and Treasurer positions can be combined as previously enacted by the Board.

Something was mentioned or a motion made about Marv continuing as Chairperson of the Board and filling the Vice Chair Spot.

Election will take place in accordance with the Operating Procedures.

Next Meeting

“Interested parties” such as the FIRE/EMS/Safety Center should be informed of the Board Meetings.

There was discussion as to Board members allowing for non-voting replacement to sit in on if a member could not make it.

Discussion on future meetings established that ideally they would be held four times a year, but in order to get the Board restarted, they would be held more frequently in the near future. Discussion of timing resulted in consensus that the meetings would be held during the day (10 am – Noon) on the 3rd Monday of the month.

The next meetings will be on Monday, November 20, 2006 and Monday, December 18, 2006.

The next meeting will be held in the Mayor’s Conference Room – Maple Grove City Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Pressler, Secretary

Corrections added from the discussion at the November 20th Board Meeting.