



MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

445 MINNESOTA STREET, SUITE 146

SAINT PAUL, MN 55101

TELEPHONE: 651-201-7257 FAX: 651-215-0525

EMAIL: fire-training.board@state.mn.us

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MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 12, 2014

ELK RIVER, MN

P	Jim Fisher <i>Chair</i> Association of Townships	Zim	2017		A	Amanda MacDonell <i>Secretary</i> MSFDA	Cohasset	2017
P	Dean Wrobbel MSFCA	Annandale	2017		P	Chip Lohmiller <i>Vice Chair</i> MSFCA	Cross Lake	2015
A	Eric Hedtke Association of Townships	St. Michael	2018		P	Natasha Carlson MSFDA	Breezy Point	2018
P	Kelli Slavik League of Cities	Plymouth	2018		P	Matthew Ashmore Executive Committee <i>Member at Large</i> MPFF	Hibbing	2015
P	Sarah Larson MSFDA	New Hope	2015		P	Greg Withers Public Member	Coon Rapids	2015
P	Roger Ihrke <i>Treasurer</i> League of Cities	Dover	2015		P	Gary Stevens MSFDA	Hastings	2015
P	Brian Sjodin MPFF	Ogilvie	2016		P	Bruce West Dept. of Public Safety, State Fire Marshal	St Paul	
P	Mark Bergerson MSFDA	Alexandria	2016					
P	Steve Flaherty Executive Director				P	Margaret Koele Licensing Coordinator		

1. The meeting was called to order at 1006 hours by Chair Jim Fisher.
 - a. There was a quorum present.
 - b. Guests present were: Marvin Calvin - MNSCU, Ken Gilliam - St Paul Fire Department, Charles Brynteson - Minneapolis Fire Department, Dan Bucholz - St Cloud Technical College, and Ulie Seal - Bloomington Fire Department Task Force 1.

2. Approval of May 13, 2014 Board Meeting minutes.
Motion was made by Mark Bergerson to approve the meeting minutes; seconded by Matt Ashmore. Motion carried.

3. Officers Reports



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- a. Chair Jim Fisher - nothing to report.
- b. Vice Chair Chip Lohmiller - nothing to report.
- c. Treasurer Roger Ihrke - nothing to report.
- d. Secretary Amanda MacDonell - not present at the meeting.

4. Reports

- a. Executive Director Steve Flaherty - report was sent out to each Board member prior to the meeting.
 - i. Update on Mass/Gross Decontamination Training
 1. Contractor F.I.R.E. Inc. delivered 221 classes throughout the state during the fiscal year (FY) 2014.
 2. October marks the start of the fourth and final year of the Federal grant for this project through Homeland Security and Emergency Management.
 - ii. Update on Incident Safety Officer Training
 1. MnSCU Fire Consortium held 167 classes during the FY14, compared to 250 in FY13.
 2. The minimum number of classes delivered was met by the contractor.
 3. The contract with Advanced MN has been renewed and executed for FY15.
 - iii. Leadership Development Project
 1. This project was completed prior to June 30, 2014 and the contractor has been paid.
 2. The final complete version is being distributed today to all Board members on a flash drive for review.
 3. The Training Committee met this morning regarding how to roll this program out and will be continuing the discussion at the next meeting.
 - iv. Live Burns
 1. We had \$117,000 allocated to reimburse Live Burn training, which funded 80 separate live burns in FY14.
 2. MBFTE continues to work closely with the DNR, State Fire Marshal's office, training providers, and the fire departments on open communication between all parties, and ensuring that these training opportunities are being done appropriately and with proper documentation being provided.
 - v. NFPA 1001 Project
 1. This project was in high demand for FY14.
 2. Funding was available to provide nearly 825 students the NFPA 1001 training and certification, which is about half of what was provided funding in FY13.
 - vi. Training Reimbursements
 1. We had 511 departments take advantage of their \$80 per firefighter award in FY14, compared to 469 in FY13.
 2. There were 270 redistributions awarded to the departments, totaling nearly \$570,000.
 3. There was a carryover into FY15 from this fund of just over \$50,000.
 4. We had 32 departments submit for reimbursement that have never requested in the prior years.
 5. The total number of departments not taking advantage of the reimbursement award project is now down to 85 in FY14 from 117 in FY13.



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6. Our goal is to bring that number down to less than 50 in FY15. We will have a new staff member on that will be able to address those departments that are not participating and educate them on the program.
- vii. Conference/Seminars Reimbursements
 1. There were 10 conferences, seminars and workshops that were funded in FY14. Several more that requested funding did not receive any.
 2. We only had funding in FY14 to fund about half of what was requested.
- viii. License Renewals
 1. Nanci processed 3,155 completed renewals for FY14.
 2. Nanci was hired on a part time temporary basis and we plan to transfer the duties over to Margaret around the first part of September.
 3. Nanci has done a tremendous job working full time and fulfilling our part time need during the transition of hiring Margaret.
- ix. Rail and Pipeline Safety Update
 1. In FY15 the Department of Public Safety will begin rolling out the Rail and Pipeline Safety training to fire departments and first-line responders throughout the state.
 2. MBFTE has been involved in several meetings with the Commissioner of Public Safety, HSEM, State Fire Marshal and Office of Pipeline Safety, since the legislative session began about the delivery of this project.
 3. MBFTE role will be to work with HSEM to reimburse the departments for DPS approved training.
- x. Administrative Update
 1. Our new Licensing Coordinator, Margaret Koele, was hired two months ago. She has been working closely with Terri Zikmund from the Certification Board and some of the training providers on developing a new data base for tracking the NFPA 1001 students.
 2. Margaret has been working with Nanci Libor and a potential vendor to prepare making a transition, with Board approval, to e-licensing in the near future.
 3. The Fire Service Training and Licensing Specialist position has closed and according to Human Resources, they received 53 applications. They are in the process of evaluating the applications and will be providing a list of viable candidates to review for the interview process.
 - a. This new staff person will provide an important connection for both licensing and training side of the MBFTE with the fire service.
- b. Executive Committee, Chair Jim Fisher
 - i. Nothing to report on meetings.
- c. Legislative Committee, Chair Jim Fisher
 - i. This committee has only met once since Jim has been on the Board.
 - ii. We see the need to resurrect this committee to discuss some legislative statute changes. Steve Flaherty (Executive Director) and Margaret Koele (Licensing Coordinator) have met with the Attorney General office to discuss some of these statutes and how to move forward legislatively with these changes.
 - iii. Do we need regulations or a policy on physicals for departments on annual or biannual basis?
 1. This would be in a city best interest to require physicals.
 2. OSHA requires physicals and has that requirement in place.



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3. The Board does not feel this should be a regulation that the Board should pursue. It should be up to the city to mandate the requirements in their best interest.
 - iv. The Board needs to keep in mind for FY15 session that the Legislature agreed two years ago to change the factor from .65 to .50, that started July 1, 2013. The funding that was going into the general fund \$2.368 million is not supposed to go back into the general fund FY16 and beyond. Any legislature can make a change, but if that money becomes available to the fire service that would benefit funding to any of the MBFTE programs. That is something to keep on track of at the legislature to make sure that money does not go back into the general fund.
 1. Bruce West gave an update on the fire safety account for FY14 the collections were 13.20 million dollars.
 - a. What comes out to the Fire Marshal office, MBFTE, CAT Teams, Task Force Teams, ERT Teams, etc., is 10.2 million dollars. So there will be funding available again for supplemental appropriation just as there was this year 1.3 million dollars.
 - b. There should be over 3 million for potential supplemental appropriation in legislative session 15.
 - c. The funding should be stable or potentially increase, as you do not see many homeowner insurance rates going down.
 - v. The Board needs to verify who is on the committee since it has not met for a long period of time and verify all the committee or Board information is correct for each member.
 1. Sarah Larson requested to be on the Legislative Committee and volunteered to be the Chair.
 2. Chip Lohmiller and Natasha Carlson requested to be members of the Training Committee.
 3. Mark Bergerson requested to be a member of the Licensing Committee.
 - d. Licensing Committee, Eric Hedtke
 - i. Eric was not present at the meeting to discuss.
 - e. Training Committee, Matt Ashmore
 - i. Task sheets are still being created.
 - ii. Concentration with the Training Committee has been on the Leadership program.
 - iii. The different types of programs should be up on the web site, in the near future, for departments to access.
5. Old Business
- a. Introduction to Margaret Koele, License Coordinator
 - i. Steve Flaherty mentioned Margaret has been an asset to the office. She was hired with a great background in licensing and hit the ground running from day one.
6. New Business
- a. FY15 Allocation Discussion
 - i. See attached document option #1 for budget proposal.
 1. Recommendation from the Training Committee is option #1 for proposed balanced budget.
 - a. Total budget appropriated for FY15 is \$2,700,000.00.
 - b. \$1.3 million supplemental budget \$450,000.00.



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- i. FSAC recommendation with that supplemental.
\$450,000 to be used to increase the per fire fighter award to \$100 from \$80.
 - c. FY14 carryover is \$402,231.20.
 - ii. It was recommended by the Training Committee to try and increase the funding for the core values of the MBFTE being the NFPA 1001 program, Certification tests and the Training reimbursement program. It is important to try to fund these core programs at 100% or close to 100% as we can with available funding.
 - iii. The other programs are just as important for training and will be funded with what the committee feels the available funds would appropriate best.
 1. Live burns were decreased based on available funding this year.
 2. Conferences & seminars were decreased and it was limited up to \$5,000 per event. This will help fund more requests, just at a lower reimbursement amount due to available funding.
 3. NFPA 1001 Program was questioned if the Board should elect to move that money back to the departments rather than try to budget for only 700 seats.
 - a. The departments like to send their fire fighters to a course and not have to pay for that training.
 - b. There is about 10% turn around within departments annually, so entry level training is essential to be offered.
 - c. The mission of the Board is to provide Fire Fighter Training for the entry level fire fighter.
 - d. Most departments do not want to use their reimbursement award amount for NFPA 1001 Training. They rely on this program to enhance the Training in their department.
 - e. City budgets are being cut and these programs give departments options to offer more training.
 4. Fireline Leadership is a DNR program. They will most likely make a presentation at the FSAC meeting to get funding to run this program again this year. It was a program well received by the FSAC group last year, which Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, is positive it will be again.
 - a. This program will most likely be approved and the funding will pass through the MBFTE.
 5. Leadership Development is a new project that the Board invested \$30,000 to own the program and will need to fund rolling that out to the public.
 - a. Training Committee discussed having a complete pilot course with the Training Committee members and select Fire Service members.
 - i. The start would be the Strength Finders portion and continue in order of the Leadership courses. The pilot group would take each portion first, evaluate and then roll out to the public by sections.
 - ii. There would be four complete components. We would offer two sections this fiscal year and two sections next fiscal year budget.
 - iv. Discussion regarding the public, private academy providers distribution of seats was not discussed in full by the Training Committee as time had run out. Matt Ashmore explained the information to the Board based on Steve's recommendation.



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1. Private and Public providers are the schools that provide the 1001 program to departments.
 2. A structured Academy is multiple departments or a single large department holding in- house training options not using the private provider options.
 3. It was discussed that the seats not used in a class would go back in the pool to be distributed on first come first serve basis.
 4. The new data base will be able to provide information regarding the seats used and how many are left un-used.
 5. With the new data base the paperwork from the provider will need to be submitted right away to get reimbursed and that will show us how many seats they are using.
- v. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, is proposing to do a reallocation tier for funding to use up the funds that cannot be carried over in FY16. This will consist of adding reallocation tiers for those departments that have submitted more invoice training requests than could be met by the per fire fighter award amount. We would reallocate \$200, \$300, \$400, etc., until all the funds are depleted so there would be no carry over to the FY16 budget.
1. Funds left in the other projects will be allocated into the reimbursement project and drop the funds down until they are depleted.
 2. Last year we had \$277,000 more in requests than we had in funding.
- vi. Explanation was given regarding the license budget is separate from reimbursement budget. They are two separate programs.
- vii. No further discussion on the budget, motion to vote on the budget was carried forward.

Resolution 2014 08.1

Resolution to approve the proposed FY15 fiscal year MBFTE budget:

Training Reimbursement Award set at \$97.00 per firefighter (based on 20,600 firefighters) for a total budget of \$1,998,200; NFPA 1001 Program with 700 seats at \$1,250.00 each (FF 1, FF2 and Ops) for total budget of \$875,000; Certification Tests for 1400 at \$100.00 each for a total budget of \$140,000; MBFTE Board Budget \$245,000; Task Force 1 Funding for a total budget of \$45,000; Incident Safety Officer for a total budget of \$100,000; Live Burn Program for 53 live burns at \$1,500 each for a total budget of \$79,500; Seminars and Conferences for a total budget of \$50,000 and the Leadership Development Course total budget of \$19,531.20.

Total proposed MBFTE programs amount \$3,552,231.20.

Total Budget appropriated for FY2015 \$2,700,000.

\$1.3 million Supplemental Budget \$450,000.

FY14 Carryover \$402,231.20.

Total Budget for FY15 with FY14 Carryover Funding \$3,552,231.20.



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*Motion made by Dean Wrobbel; seconded by Matt Ashmore.
Resolution approved.*

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ashmore	X			
Bergerson	X			
Carlson	X			
Fisher	X			
Hedtke				X
Ihrke	X			
Larson	X			
Lohmiller	X			
MacDonell				X
West	X			
Sjodin	X			
Slavik	X			
Stevens	X			
Withers	X			
Wrobbel	X			

b. Board Appointment

- i. Congratulations went out to Natasha Carlson who was re-appointed to the Board.

c. Define Committees

- i. Verify members of each committee.

1. Every member of the Board was asked to review the list of committees and current information for accuracy.
2. It was opened up by the Chair Jim Fisher if anyone would like to change or add to a committee.
3. A master list was sent around for corrections to be made regarding member information. Each Board member was asked to put their initials next to their information if everything was correct or to make changes as necessary.
4. Natasha Carlson asked to be part of the Training Committee.
5. It was mentioned not more than six on the Training Committee.
6. Sarah Larson wanted to be added to the Training Committee and the Legislative Committee.
7. Chip Lohmiller requested to be on the Training Committee.
8. Mark Bergerson requested to be on the Licensing Committee.
9. It was suggested by Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, that the Chair Jim Fisher should appoint a Chair of the Legislative Committee.
10. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, suggested the appointed Chair of the Legislative Committee contact Sherri Munyan (Legislative Lobbyist) or George Esponson (Eden Prairie) is the Chair of the MNFAC group and coordinate with them some of the initiatives from the Fire Service for Legislative 15. Check in with the Legislative group to see what is on the agenda. They will be meeting again after the IFSAC meeting.
11. Sarah Larson volunteered to Chair the Legislative Committee.

- ii. Licensing Review Committee.



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1. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, distributed the Licensing budget to all Board members. - document attached.
 - a. \$372,249.10 will be carried over into the Licensing budget for FY15; this includes \$216,035 from license renewals in FY14.
 - i. It was brought up by Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, that the license fee could be changed by statute.
 1. This money, by statute, has to stay in the License budget.
 - ii. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, reminded the Board that with an additional person being hired, the payroll will come out of both budgets.
 - iii. The Reimbursement budget will have \$402, 231.20 carried into FY15.
 - iv. It was suggested by the Board to move more of the operating expenses from Reimbursement side to Licensing side.
 1. Payroll is split 50/50 for Steve, 75/25 for Margaret and 50/50 for the new person, based on work done between both sides.
 2. The data base was split 50/50 based on a data base being created for both sides.
 - a. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, brought up the fee for e-licensing. The Board needs to make a decision if they want to change the fee to cover the e-license extra charge through the web site.
 - i. It was discussed to cover the fees by MBFTE and not add it to the \$75 fee.
 - b. It was mentioned to remember that we just did 3,155 renewals in FY14 and FY 15 we will only have about 130 renewals and maybe fewer the next two years. 1422 have expired or non-renewed. This will limit any funds coming into the License budget for the next three years.
 - i. More accurate figures can be gained at the end of the next three year period of what operating costs will be with the License budget when there is little revenue going in. The new data base will be able to report this information for the Board.
 - c. The new data base will give us a better look at how many active fire fighters we have. Currently the data base does not monitor the status of retired or terminated fire fighters for accurate numbers. The current data base shows over 5000 firefighters, but we cannot



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guarantee how many are still active firefighters.

- i. 10% of the applications are being re-handled so they are being sent back incomplete. This also prevents us from accurate figures and adds a cost to the budget for returning these documents for completion. The new data base e-license system will not let the applications flow through incomplete.

- d. The License budget funds can be carried over, but Legislation could look at why there is an abundance of funds in an account when carried over.

- e. Licensing operating budget is \$183,450.

f.

2. Review of "Felony Convictions" for revocation.

Motion to send the two felony conviction cases back to the License Review Committee. They will need to review these two cases and make a recommendation to the Board regarding a revocation decision.

*Motion was made by Matt Ashmore; seconded by Mark Bergerson.
Motion carried.*

- a. Margaret Koele, License Coordinator, mentioned that the Attorney General office suggested that when you have a "felony conviction" that you need to have a rationale link between the conviction and why they should have their license revoked as a licensed firefighter.

- d. Reimbursement and Licensing Data Base

- i. The Staff had a meeting with the License Committee via conference call from our St Paul office, with Eric Hedtke present. The discussion was to move forward with the data base. Research was done on the vendor and what the data base can do for us. The Committee approved to move this forward to the Board for final approval with the vendor chosen to create the data base vision for Licensing and Reimbursement for MBFTE.

1. This data base will be more user friendly and efficient for our Board use.
2. Monica Correll of Correll Corporation submitted a bid for \$5,000 to create a data base from a vision list we had created and approved by the MN IT department Supervisor.
 - a. She has no overhead cost.
 - b. No employee payroll.
 - c. Monica does this on the side from her full time fire fighting position.
 - d. She has created data bases for several other companies.



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- e. Monica has purchased the tools and programs from the other data bases she has created to use for future programs she creates, which saves the cost for each client.
- f. We do not need IT approval through the State of MN and bid out the work to several other companies that may not understand what we do or need to operate. The cost being \$5,000 or less was able to be contracted through our own DPS fiscal department without having to open up bidding for the project.
- g. Monica has created the Certification Board data base and web site, which works similar to what we are working toward with e-licensing features.
- h. Monica has created a Provider Data Base, which Margaret Koele our License Coordinator has already helped develop and roll out to the Public and Private Providers. This data base will put the data entry on the Provider and the reimbursement paperwork cannot be submitted until they have it completed and uploaded. Once they have their classes entered and the paperwork uploaded after completion, it will send an automatic email to Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, to retrieve and then reimbursement can be done immediately. We have made that program electronic submission. This is for State of MN audit purposes as currently several reimbursements come in missing some of the documentation and we are reimbursing before the completed forms are sent in. This is not acceptable to the MN State auditor process. Now the paperwork will need to be completed before it will submit to the Board electronically.
- i. Monica will be creating a Reimbursement data base. This will consist of all the spreadsheets for each project we financially support through MBFTE.
 - i. This data base will be shared with DPS Fiscal Department for entering payments on their end.
 - ii. This data base will now be able to reconcile the fiscal reconciliation from SWIFT (the State of MN financial system). They did not have any reconciliation in place for our program spreadsheets and SWIFT. Since this has never been done to prove accuracy of entry error by anyone, we had to spend two days doing this by hand to verify accurate payment entries were made between our spreadsheets and fiscal entering into SWIFT program. This had to be done for getting the budget numbers accurate to bring to the Board. This new data base will be set up to do this on a weekly or monthly basis automatically.
 - iii. This data base will be by authorization only and set up by the administrator for rights of what can be entered or changed. Fiscal will have one user that will be given authority to enter only into the DPS fiscal columns. They will not be able to change or edit any other information. If they make a mistake they will need to contact the administrator to delete that mistake. This will eliminate any formulas being deleted or wrong columns being



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- entered into. If information is not saved each time then it would be lost and there is no accounting for individual entry or accountability of information on the spreadsheets.
- iv. Currently only one person can be in the spreadsheets at a time. This caused problems during our final weeks of reimbursements before the fiscal year end cut -off date. Steve could not do any entry if fiscal had the sheet open or vice versa. The new data base is real time so anyone that needs to be in will be and it will save as you enter. Everyone will be able to view the changes as they happen.
 - j. The License Data base will be set up with new features also. Currently the access data base is not set up for more than one person to be in at a time. It is emailed back and forth and the information only guaranteed as good as the person it is in front of. If they do not save the information it would be lost. If they do not send the correct data base last updated to everyone it gets confused on what is the current one updated when so many copies exist. This new data base will work with everyone able to view real time. Changes would be seen real time and saved as entered.
 - i. This data base will be able to track status of retired, terminated, etc.
 - ii. E-License will connect directly with the data base for applications and renewals.
 - iii. This new data base e-license system will take check or credit card.
 - 1. The system will research if funds are available for those applying, if not they will be declined. This will save on issuing licenses to people that submit non-sufficient checks, as there is a 15 day waiting period for that information to return to us from the bank.
 - 2. The fee should only be about 10% or less than \$3.00 per transaction. This fee will be picked up by the MBFTE and not added to the \$75 fee.
 - iv. Application has been changed to one page rather than two. The portion for the Chief to complete will be set up for them to access and verify before it will let them submit the information. This will ensure they are the person that is supposed to be completing the information.
 - k. Both data bases we will be able to set up any type of reporting that the Board, Departments, Fiscal or anyone would like to see.
 - l. We should be able to get the data bases up and rolled out in the next couple months.
 - m. Charter Solutions put in a bid for \$110,000 and they said our vision was not very realistic to accomplish.



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- n. We tried several times to meet with the State of MN OET on the e-licensing program and they would not return our emails or calls.
- 3. A contract has been set up and reviewed by the MN IT department Supervisor that commented that we had a wonderful vision and the contact was done properly. They in turn sent the contract to Paul Mathe of DPS Fiscal Department and he approved the contract. It has been signed by all parties and waiting on final Board approval to implement.

Resolution 2014 – 08.02

Resolution to approve moving forward with the Licensing and Reimbursement Data Base, as well as updating a web site for online renewal and application processes.

***Motion to amend this resolution brought up by Roger Ihrke to change the budget on the cost of the Data Base fee to be paid out:
80% from the License Budget and 20% from the Reimbursement Budget.***

Motion was made by Matt Ashmore; seconded by Dean Wrobbel.

Resolution approved.

Matt Ashmore withdrew original motion and Dean Wrobbel seconded the withdrawal.

Motion made to include the amendment with the budget change made by Matt Ashmore; seconded by Dean Wrobbel.

Resolution approved.

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ashmore	X			
Bergerson	X			
Carlson	X			
Fisher	X			
Hedtke				X
Ihrke	X			
Larson	X			
Lohmiller	X			
MacDonell				X
West	X			
Sjodin	X			
Slavik	X			
Stevens	X			
Withers	X			
Wrobbel	X			

- e. Rail & Pipeline Safety Training Update
 - i. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, provided the update.
 - a. The status update on the Bakken Crude, along with the railway safety training, which went through on the bill by Representative



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Hornstein and Senator Dibble has the Department of Public Safety entering into a contract with the management analysis division, commonly called MAD.

- i. They will do a need assessment study that will be completed by January 2015. It is a GAP analysis of where we are today and do they believe we should be and what are the GAPS to get there.
- ii. They will look at training and the equipment.
- iii. Training has been developed by the Railroads and HSEM (Homeland Security Emergency Management) through the Department of Public Safety, which will be available to the fire departments. HSEM will coordinate this training that will be offered to the departments.
 1. The 300 plus departments along the pipeline and rail line will be offered this training by June 30, 2016.
 2. That training for the departments will be free.
 3. Backfill and overtime costs are eligible for reimbursement under this training as an acceptable expense.
 4. MBFTE will again be the pass through for the funding of this project, which is in statute. They will receive funding from the 2.5 million that will be part of this funding.
 - a. 1.25 million from pipeline and 1.25 million from railways. We do not know how much will be distributed to the Training Board for reimbursement, as that has not been confirmed yet.
 - b. Once MBFTE is allotted funding there will be a purchase order assigned to the project.
 - c. The departments will send in their costs for the training and the funds will be reimbursed to the department.
 - d. There will not be a set provider appointed to this training. The railway or HSEM will do the training or be coordinating the training. If the railroad deems they cannot do all the training they can contract the training out, which would be reimbursed training. We will be reimbursing for all backfill and overtime. There could be some costs for the training also, if any supplement training is needed.
 - e. No decision has been made on backfill and overtime regarding departments that want to take over and above awareness training.



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- i. The Commissioner office, along with others, are looking at initial training first and then will review if it is necessary to eventually send firefighters out to Pueblo, Co for additional awareness training. That will come out in the needs analysis. It has been discussed with the rail and pipeline to potentially use Camp Ripley as a similar "Pueblo, Colorado" of the Midwest. They are looking if we can do the training here rather than take the extra day of travel to send firefighters to Colorado. This is in discussion with Burlington Northern and the Commissioner office.
- f. Backfill and Overtime
 1. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, had some Chiefs requesting this to be brought up again on the agenda, as it has been brought up in the past with the MBFTE. They would like to discuss if backfill and overtime could be an eligible expense for their training reimbursements.
 - a. Public comment from guests: Ken Gilliam, Ulie Seal and Charles Brynteson.
 - i. Overtime has been an allowable expense for task force training.
 - ii. Backfill is important to be used to send firefighters out for training and have someone fill that shift during that training time. We cannot pull people off shift to train so then we cannot train those people.
 - iii. Most departments do not want to mandate overtime to bring fire fighters in on their days off to do training. We will offer it, but it is difficult to mandate because of contractual issues or they have things going on in their life other than work.
 - iv. We would like to request that the Board consider letting departments use backfill and overtime as an allowable expense under the reimbursement program allocated funding. The department can make the decision how to best use those funding dollars based on need of training.
 - v. This will increase the number of people we can get through training by being able to use backfill as an allowable expense.
 - vi. This same issue holds true for the hazmat teams.
 - vii. \$10,000 was given per Task Force Team, \$120,000 total, and that is not eligible for backfill and overtime at this time.
 - viii. This was a policy decision and not Legislative decision. The department Chiefs would like to see that decision



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reversed on backfill and overtime as an eligible expense for the reimbursement program allocated funding per department.

1. This recommendation for backfill and overtime is for Task Force dollars and Department allocation award dollars under the reimbursement program.
- ix. Training has to be cut back due to overtime budget cuts.
- x. This is for a public service for the communities to provide them adequate safety. There is a need for this recommendation to help provide the necessary training for the firefighters to be able to attend. Also to let the departments make the decision how to best use their training dollars to carry out this task.
- xi. Additional training requirements are difficult to obtain when trying to keep the fire rigs staffed at all times and meet the public demand for services, plus keep the fire fighters safe during this process. We have only so much staffing hours and time to meet all the requirements needed for training.
- xii. We are asking for flexibility to use that money we are allotted for tuition or to manage our staff by pulling them off a shift for training and hiring another fire fighter to work that shift to cover that person for training.
- xiii. Last year we were trying to spend HAZMAT money given by FEMA around one million dollars. The fire fighters wanted to do the training but we could not afford to let them off shift to cover for the training. This would provide an overage, which you do not want to see, in excess dollars not being used. It is not that we do not want to use the funds, but we need flexibility to use the funds to backfill spots to allow the firefighters to go to training and also protect the public as we are a public service.
- xiv. Question arose from the Board on Task Force money. The Fire Safety account gives us money through the committee to funnel to the departments. Why do we have any control of this decision?
 1. The Training money for the Board cannot be used for backfill, according to previous discussions by the Board from the Attorney General office. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, commented that opinion came from Joe Newton from the Department of Public Safety not the Attorney General Office.
 2. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, stated the \$45,000 was set aside by the Board a few years ago specifically for Task Force One. This funding comes from the Fire Safety Advisory Committee, but they did not stipulate that money was for Task Force One. It was the Boards decision to give the money to Task Force One.



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- This has continued on every year since that decision.
3. The money is dispersed by reimbursement with supporting documentation and invoices submitted to the MBFTE.
 4. This program reimburses for training, equipment needs and payroll dollars used to provide the training.
 5. Gary Stevens, Board member, commented regarding Joe Newton from the Department of Public Safety stating the money is not to be used for backfill or overtime, but only training. Would this incur any legal issue if the Board changes that decision?
 6. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, commented that he is not a lawyer. This has come before the Board before. He also stated that backfill and overtime is an allowable expense for railway and pipeline training, which has been cleared by law.
 7. The Chiefs there for public comment stated that backfill and overtime is part of federal grants. That is how the Task Force was able to be put together originally, was by using backfill and overtime through the grant program to form and train the groups for this program.
 8. Jim Fisher, Chair of the Board, commented what does the Attorney General office recommend on this decision?
 - a. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, commented that Fiona from the Attorney General office would look at statutes as law. We do not believe there is anything in statute that restricts this option.
 - xv. It is difficult for all departments involved in Task Force Training to get the fire fighters trained and keep the department staffed for public protection without the backfill option for reimbursement.
 - xvi. Matt Ashmore, Board member, asked how many hours per year does the Task Force do for training. It was answered by Chief Seal, three days of training every quarter for core training. We have not been able to reimburse the cost except for a few times. We also try to do specialty trainings as well as the core training. We try to use the MBFTE dollars for the specialty trainings. We have a staff of Task Force One members in the different departments as follows: approximately 75 Minneapolis, 23 Dakota County, 23 Rochester, 75 St Paul, 20 Edina and they are all trying to make training work.
 - xvii. All of the overtime and backfill costs that would be submitted would be for the ones pushing the tools, which



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are the firefighters in the core counties, volunteer and career firefighters.

- xviii. Matt Ashmore, Board member, expressed concern on the backfill and overtime being considered for the \$97.00 per firefighter reimbursement award dollars use is not considered training in which the Board intended the money to be funding.
 1. Chief Seal commented; we cannot do training without expending dollars, part overtime, materials, facility, instruction and supplies. This is all part of training dollars, not just paying backfill and overtime wages.
- xix. Natasha Carlson, Board member commented is there a way to correlate the two dollar amount of \$45,000 and the \$97.00 per firefighter award amount. They are given both to use for backfill and overtime for training, but on the form show the percentage used for backfill and overtime for training or replacement staff.
 1. Chief Seal commented that the more restrictive the more difficult to manage the documentation, with specialty training they may take the firefighters off for a 40 hour week and run the class. Then they would only draw a little bit of overtime and then the backfill may be for that person to work the normal shift during that week. There is not a one to one correlation and each department runs different shifts.
 2. If you are giving them all the same amount of dollars they will maximize those dollars the best way they can for training.
 3. The documentation is already being supplied now to the Board through the paperwork process for the reimbursement program. They would supply the same documentation on backfill and overtime to show it was used toward training with the same forms they supply now to the Board.
- xx. Matt Ashmore, Board member, asked if the Board is considering this option that it be considered for all departments, not just for Task Force One departments. He expressed that his department supplies the same type of specialty training as Task Force One, but are not considered a Task Force One group by the State. Their department absorbs all the cost of the training supplied to their firefighters. They do this training for public safety, as they do not want to wait six hours for a Task Force Team to arrive in a situation that needs attention right away and they would have the training to handle it within their department immediately.
 1. Would his department or any other department in the state be able to use their allocation award



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- dollars per firefighter toward backfill and overtime for training purposes?
2. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, commented that if the Board approves backfill and overtime as an eligible expense for training purposes using the \$97.00 per firefighter reimbursement allocation dollars, documentation would need to be submitted to the Board for approval showing the training, backfill and/or overtime used for this submission. This submission would be what your allocated funding was used for if approved by Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, as eligible expenses under the program guidelines.
 3. It was brought up by a Board member as to how this would look to the Legislators? The reply was that several other federal programs have included backfill and overtime. The costs are related to training.
 - a. One of the Board members would like the opinion of the Attorney General office to clarify that we are not doing anything against a statute for training dollars used in reimbursement.

Motion to approve all Fire Departments and Task Force One to use their per firefighter allocated award amounts for backfill and overtime with correct documentation showing it was used for approved eligible training purposes.

This vote is pending the opinion of the Attorney General office.

A call was placed to the Attorney General office during the lunch break for advisement of this issue, The Attorney General office, Fiona, verified to Steve Flaherty, the Executive Director, based on the mission of the Board and the Board feels that the decision goes toward the mission of the Board in assisting the fire service in training and that includes those costs for backfill and overtime, there is nothing in the statute that prohibits this decision. It is strictly a Board decision and the decision meets the Boards mission.

Motion was made by Matt Ashmore; seconded by Sarah Larson.

Motion carried.

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ashmore	X			
Bergerson	X			
Carlson	X			
Fisher	X			
Hedtke				X
Ihrke		X		
Larson	X			



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Lohmiller	X			
MacDonell				X
West	X			
Sjodin	X			
Slavik	X			
Stevens	X			
Withers	X			
Wrobbel	X			

g. Promotional Items

- i. The staff would like to have approval to purchase some give-away items with the MBFTE logo for Conferences, State Fair and Provider booths.
- ii. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director and Margaret Koele, License Coordinator, will be attending the State Fair booth with the State Fire Marshal division and MNOPS.

Motion to approve the purchase of promotional items, with the MBFTE logo, to give away at events.

*Motion was made by Dean Wrobbel; seconded by Matt Ashmore.
Motion carried.*

7. Other Business.

- a. Bruce West, State Fire Marshal, made note to the Jim Fisher, Chair of the Board that the FY15 operating budgets need to be approved by the Board.
- b. Jim Fisher, Chair of the Board, put a call out for a motion to approve the budget as proposed by Steve Flaherty, Executive Director of MBFTE.

Motion to approve the FY15 Operating Budget for Reimbursement and Licensing. This motion will include the Board recommendation for the outside vendor costs on the data base split 80% Licensing and 20% Reimbursement.

Amendment made to this motion to have the Executive Director to adjust the costs in the budget as necessary for Reimbursement and Licensing operating budgets.

*Motion was made by Matt Ashmore seconded by Dean Wrobbel.
Amended motion made by Mark Bergerson, seconded by Chip Lohmiller.
Motion carried.*

8. Public Comment

- a. It was suggested by the Board to move the public comment suggestion to the beginning of the meeting rather than the end.

Motion to move the public comment section to the beginning of the meeting rather than the end.

*Motion was made by Matt Ashmore, seconded by Dean Wrobbel.
Motion carried.*



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9. Matt Ashmore made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Dean Wrobbel. Meeting was adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Margaret Koele, License Coordinator

Reviewed by Steve Flaherty, Executive Director and Jim Fisher, Chair of the Board

Option #1**MBFTE Fiscal Year 2015**

NFPA 1001

NFPA 1001 Program	700	\$1,250.00 FF1/2 OPS	\$875,000.00
Certification Tests	1400	\$100.00 per test	\$140,000.00
Training Reimb.	20600	\$97.00 per FF	\$1,998,200.00
MBFTE Bd Budget			\$245,000.00
Task Force 1 Funding			\$45,000.00
Incident Safety Officer			\$100,000.00
Live Burn Program	53	\$1,500.00	\$79,500.00
Seminars, Conferences			\$50,000.00
Leadership Development Course			\$19,531.20
L-380 Fireline Leadership			\$0.00
Total Proposed MBFTE Programs Amount			\$3,552,231.20
Total Budget Appropriated for FY 2015			\$2,700,000.00
\$1.3 million Supplemental Budget			\$450,000.00
FY14 Carryover			\$402,231.20
Total Budget for FY 15 with FY 14 Carry Over Funding			\$3,552,231.20
Amount needed to balance			\$0.00
FY 14 Total Funds Carried Over to FY15			<u>\$402,231.20</u>
Training reimbursement Account		\$51,993.35	
From All Other MBFTE Accounts		<u>\$350,237.85</u>	
Total		\$402,231.20	