



MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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MBFTE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 18, 2014

10:00 am

Elk River Fire Station #2 - E.O.C.

13073 Orono Parkway, Elk River, MN 55330

1. Call to order - Chair Jim Fisher

a. Meeting called to order at 10:01 a.m. with a quorum.

i. Present in person: Jim Fisher, Eric Hedtke, Roger Ihrke, Matt Ashmore, Amanda MacDonnell, Greg Withers, Brian Sjodin, Mark Bergerson, Kelli Slavik, Marvin Calvin (guest), Steve Flaherty (staff)

P	Jim Fisher <i>Chair</i> Association of Townships	Zim	2017		P	Amanda MacDonnell <i>Secretary</i> MSFDA	Cohasset	2017
P	Dean Wrobbel MSFCA	Annandale	2017		P	Chip Lohmiller <i>Vice Chair</i> MSFCA	Cross Lake	2015
P	Eric Hedtke Association of Townships	St. Michael	2018		A	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
A	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		A	Bruce West Dept. of Public Safety, State Fire Marshal	St Paul	
P	Mark Bergerson MSFDA	Alexandria	2016					
					A	Margaret Koele License Coordinator		
P	Steve Flaherty Executive Director				P	Kevin Sedivy Fire Training & Licensing Specialist		
Guest: Marvin Calvin, MNSCU								

and Kevin Sedivy (staff).

ii. Present via teleconference: Chip Lohmiller, Dean Wrobbel and Gary Stevens.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. August 12, 2014 Board Meeting minutes.

i. Motion to approve the minutes by Mark Bergerson and seconded by Kelli Slavik.

ii. Motion carried for approval of August 12, 2014 meeting minutes.

3. Officers Reports

- a. Chair, Jim Fisher
 - i. The training seminar held at Camp Ripley was very good. Everyone there thought it was well worth the time.
- b. Vice Chair, Chip Lohmiller
 - i. Chip did not have anything to report.
- c. Treasurer, Roger Ihrke
 - i. FY Budget outlook for Licensing & Reimbursement.
 - 1. Roger did not have anything to report and would like to have Steve report the financial information.
- d. Secretary, Amanda MacDonnell
 - i. Amanda did not have anything to report.

4. Reports

- a. Executive Director - Steve Flaherty
 - 1. Steve sent out a letter to all the Board members with updates of MBFTE updates. If there are any questions he will be happy to address them. No questions were asked by the Board.
 - ii. Update on Mass/Gross Decon
 - a. We have the contracts all completed now for the new Federal fiscal year. There are always issues with the State fiscal year and Federal fiscal year not on the same schedule.
 - b. Chip has several classes set up going forward with the program during October and November. There are no classes set up in December because of the cold weather. Classes pushed out to April.
 - c. Chip currently has 94 classes set up for this fiscal year.
 - d. We are in the fourth and final year of this project.
 - e. Margaret and I met with Grainger, which we wish we had done sooner when we first came on board with the program. We have had issues with internal billing problems with them. We were invited to their warehouse to take a tour and they also wish meetings had been done earlier in the program regarding the shipping. Now being in the fourth year of this program everyone is just meeting and figuring out how things are working and best ways to ship the materials. We were able to help them understand the budgeting piece of the program through the grant and how many classes we could do in a year. This information was very helpful to them to know how much stock to keep on hand for shipping in the local warehouse. This was a great experience to know in the future that everyone will need to communicate and take the time to share

information regarding the program and what is expected of everyone involved. It was a very positive and informative visit with this vendor.

iii. Update on Incident Safety Officer training

1. This program contract is underway in the third year of a four year project. The vendor is making a strong push for contacts with the departments. We have asked them to start tracking all the departments contacted and note whether they are taking part in the training or not taking part in the training. This is great documentation for reporting to track those departments not taking part in the program, but the training was offered. We are hoping that all 785 departments were offered this training by the end of the four years.

iv. Leadership Development

1. Matt Ashmore reported that we already had the first module class, in which some members of the Board were present. We will be kicking off the second group starting the first module the end of January. The first group will also meet at the same time doing the second module.
 - a. The Training Committee discussed we would like to limit to two classes, consisting of four modules each, per calendar year and make sure the content is staying consistent with high quality instruction. This would be trying to implement a module every quarter. Our plan is to keep holding the classes at Camp Ripley.
 - b. We would like to see if the Board would like to continue funding the project in the future for these classes to be held at Camp Ripley.
 - c. We would like to keep the class sizes 16-18 per class.
 - d. We are hoping this will be a high end training class that people would like to get into and hold only a couple times a year.
 - e. We are hoping to keep it consistent with the same group of people starting and completing the course together.
 - f. We are showing that the interest for this class is from all over the state in each of the regions being represented. The interest is from all different ranks of the fire service, which is beneficial to us offering the training.
 - g. Eric Hedtke, asked if there is any criteria or rank to be met to be eligible for this class. Matt replied there are no requirements currently, but it may come down in the future with waiting lists, as it will benefit those more as officers wanting to be moving toward Chief level at some point, rather than a fire fighter with no

rank. There was no discussion on priority on the waiting list of who may benefit more than someone else. That will be left to Steve at this point as he is trying to disperse state wide for representation from all the regions. The next class we have ten regions represented with four on the waiting list that are in regions already represented in this next class. We are also asking the MPFF, MSFDA, and MSFCA regional directors to provide us with nominations from their regions. So far we have gotten great response from the Chief Association.

- h. Eric Hedtke would like to see priority Fire Chiefs and departments that have not had someone go through it before. He would like to see the knowledge spread out among other departments that have not had anyone through the course yet. Jim Fisher mentioned smaller departments do not have a lot of ranked officers, but make sure to keep those departments involved also, if interest is shown to go through the course.
- i. Matt Ashmore mentioned the course was developed for rural Fire Chiefs, new Chief Officers and upcoming Chief Officers. If we want to have a rank structure we can always watch for that and run down the list based on the status. Steve Flaherty (staff) mentioned in the first group we had eleven Chiefs, one Training Officer and a Captain. We also had Jim Fisher (Board Chair) and myself there. It was brought up by the Board it might not be beneficial for Chiefs that will be retiring. Steve (staff) mentioned that most Chiefs that are retiring are known by the Regional Directors and then they are nominating the upcoming replacements for this course. We are already getting calls regarding those situations.
- j. It was also discussed to have some Board or Committee member present in each class.
- k. We are also making sure when starting a class that they are all committed to going through completing the class.
- l. It was brought up by Gary Stevens (Board), if this is one class only to be held at one facility or will it be branched out to other educational facilities throughout the state? Steve Flaherty (staff) mentioned currently Camp Ripley is our best value to hold the class for lodging, food, training facility and instructor cost. The discussion was brought up with the first group and they felt Camp Ripley was a central location for everyone that came from all different areas of the

state. Gary mentioned that it would be nice to have this offered at the educational institutes around the state if enough interest is in those areas. Jim Fisher (Board Chair) mentioned that the first class is twelve hours long and the other classes are six to eight hours each. It was brought up by other Board members that keeping it at Camp Ripley was to ensure that the content was being instructed consistently with the qualified instructors selected to teach each module. If we hand this program to other Providers we are not sure who the instructors would be or how they would be teaching the modules. Mark Bergerson mentioned that we want to keep control of how each module is instructed and who is instructing them. We can expand the courses offered through the year, but at this point we can only budget for what we have funds for to offer and how much interest we have in the program.

v. NFPA 1001 Project

1. Steve mentioned that the project is going well. We were awarded two extra grants through Homeland Security for HazMat ops so we were able to put that toward additional seats. This opened up four more seats system wide. The second grant expired the day after we received it so we had to contact Providers with classes going on current and use the funds for those before the grant expired. That was a \$46,000 grant.
 - a. We had 700 seats available with an additional \$100,000 given to us which gave 4 additional seats to the programs. Now an additional \$46,000 we probably have been able to fund another additional 116 seats with both grants.
 - b. The Board mentioned this is a very high demand program and would like to see a report next year on how many applied for this and how many we were actually able to fund. We would like to increase the budget next year if we are able to fund more into this program.

vi. Training Reimbursements

1. Steve reported currently that we have had 100 fire departments request reimbursement on their \$97 per fire fighter. At this time we have had no back fill and overtime expenses that have been submitted for reimbursement. Task Force One has submitted for a portion of their backfill and overtime reimbursement. We should see more submissions after the first of the year. Kevin Sedivy (staff) added that we have five departments that have not used before that I just

met at Freeborn County meeting and I will be meeting again with them after the first of the year and they will be submitting reimbursement forms for training this year. Kevin will be meeting more at other meetings he is attending in the next few months.

vii. Conferences

1. Steve reported we were able to fund 15 projects this year from funding available. The funding was between \$1500 and \$5000 for a total of \$50,000 the Board had budgeted. There was \$120,000 in requests for conferences & seminars this year from 25 different organizations. Steve expressed the Board should consider for FY16, the want verses the availability for helping fund more requests. The Board asked how many we were not able to fund. Steve mentioned that some requests from departments were similar to other neighbor departments and let them know we only have so much funding and could they split the cost and work together putting on the event as one. We have had good feedback with that and promoted working together between departments.
2. We also put in a request that they acknowledge the MBFTE for the funding recognition at their event. That request was also received well by all departments.
3. The question was arisen by the Board if the conferences are open to everyone throughout the state or only by department. Matt Ashmore thought they were all open to anyone and we can certainly put the information on the web site for everyone to see. Steve mentioned that we can add this to the new web site. We can have contact information, what it is, where it is and information regarding the conference being held.

viii. Live Burns

1. Steve reported we had \$79,500 funding available and we were able to fund 53 live burn programs. We have 23 on waiting list after the 53 have been spoken for already.
2. The Board asked if any of the live burns were at training facilities and the reply from Steve was they are not.

ix. Fire Department Reimbursement Program

1. This was discussed previously with the reimbursement information in NFPA 1001 program.

b. Executive Committee - Chair Jim Fisher

- i. Jim has nothing to report.

c. Legislative Committee - Chair Sarah Larson

- i. Sarah is not present to discuss, but will be discussing later in agenda.

d. Licensing Committee - Eric Hedtke

regarding training, recruitment and retention Steve shared the positive feedback on the customer service we are providing them with Kevin.

- b. Kevin mentioned that we have to be careful on auditing records, so he is just asking to review the records and offer any suggestions. If they do not have a system he has sent them suggestions on programs to use for tracking.
- c. Kevin mentioned his focus is currently on the departments not utilizing the reimbursement program. The response he is getting is they did not have enough information regarding the program, it was too difficult to do the paperwork process, they do not have time, and the money goes to general fund and not to the department and other different replies. It is an educational meeting and we can talk to the administration of the city regarding how important it is for this money to get to the departments for training reimbursement. We are here to educate, help and inform.
- d. The Board asked if there has been any discussion on licensing. Kevin replied that licensing and certification is a tough sell as it is why should they do it, what is in it for them and if they are certified then why should they get licensed. I try to express about accreditation and ISO ratings. We want to sell ourselves as trained and certified. It is important part of the process.
- e. The Board asked about the auditing piece of the program to keep track of the 72 hrs. that we are responsible for in the licensing portion of the program. We want to make sure they are doing the requirement and it is early but has anything been discussed on this aspect. Steve replied, it has been discussed and Kevin is checking on the records when he has been in the departments.
- f. Kevin mentioned that part of his salary comes from the Certification Board so we are in the field educating on both aspects of certification and licensing. Both require 72 hours of training. Matt Ashmore was not aware we were responsible for the Certification Board information. Steve explained that prior to Kevin's hiring, the job description was written with their involvement as paying for portion of the salary to educate on certification in the field on their behalf. It was agreed the Certification Board will be contributing 10% to the position's wage/salary and benefits. We figure it to be about \$6000 this year for Kevin's

position. They will be taking that off invoicing for certification to MBFTE. Matt Ashmore wanted to make it clear that it is understood in the field that firefighters have to be certified to get licensed, but they do not have to keep the certification once licensed. They do have to keep up on the 72 hrs. of training per the statute.

b. Budget Update

- i. Steve sent out budget information prior to meeting. The financial report is several pages long and do you as a Board want to receive the whole report or a portion of the report. Roger Ihrke (Board member) mentioned he looks at the whole report to check reimbursement, expenses paid and where the money is going. That is his job as treasurer. Steve explained it is broken down by the licensing and reimbursement side. In the future he will send the whole report to Roger and short recap version to all the rest of the Board members. The Board agreed that would be fine to do.

c. NFPA 1001 “funding”

- i. This was already discussed in previous section.

7. New Business

a. Resolution to approve grant gift funds

- i. In the last meeting Margaret had addressed that there was some money left over in the budget and the Chief Financial Officer for DPS Fiscal was wondering what that money was for, Margaret researched history of that money and found it was set aside in the early days of MBFTE for grant writing only, as a gift donation for that purpose. There has not been any activity on that money in several years. It needs to be used for that purpose only with an amount left of \$3500. We would like to put it toward grant research on behalf of MBFTE through administrative time by Kevin.

MBFTE Board

Motion to approve \$3500.00 that was set up in a special “gift” fund in 2002 from the Thomas Moore Foundation, specifically for grant writing purposes, to cover administration costs for research and grant writing through the MBFTE.

Motion approved by the Board and carried.

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ashmore	X			
Bergerson	X			
Carlson				X

Fisher	X			
Hedtke	X			
Ihrke	X			
Larson				X
Lohmiller	X			
MacDonnell	X			
West				X
Sjodin	X			
Slavik	X			
Stevens	X			
Withers	X			
Wrobbel				X

b. Legislative Committee

1. Statutory Changes

- a. Jim Fisher (Board Chair) mentioned there are changes we need to make for Legislative changes as we have not been doing things according to our current statutes. Sarah Larson is the Legislative Committee Chair, is not present but discussion will go on with other committee members that were present at that meeting.
- b. Matt Ashmore commented about the Chief designee being able to sign off on documentation and is that going to be legal or how do we know who that should be. Is this a warranted discussion and are we worried whoever signs off is doing so without the Chief authority, was brought up by Eric Hedtke. Steve Flaherty (staff) mentioned that the past documentation that has been coming through being signed by anyone other than the Chief, ranked officer or Training officer. There was no sign that a firefighter was having another firefighter or themselves signing the paperwork. Personally we do not think that will be an issue. Eric Hedtke mentioned that as Kevin Sedivy (staff) goes into verify the training records, he will be checking with the people that signed those documents approving the training and if there is a problem of who completed the form we will ultimately be going back to the Chief as it is their responsibility.
- c. Grammar, bold print and hyphens will be corrected in final version.
- d. Obtaining a firefighter license will be changed to have everyone on the same three year renewal cycle. All

licenses will expire June 30, 2017, for example, and any applications or renewals issued within the three year period will be pro-rated. All licenses will be issued for a three year period.

- i. Board asked why we are doing it this way, Eric discussed that it was for ease in the departments or municipalities financially to issue one check for all the renewals at the same time. According to administration most departments are renewing all their fire fighters at the same time and this helps for budgeting
 - ii. Eric also mentioned that most training records are for a three year period and helps for administrative purposes and auditing.
 - iii. Kevin Sedivy (staff) mentioned that he has heard in the field that certification is going to the same type of thing with a single date renewal period. He also mentioned it will be a lot easier to verify training records when everyone is on the same renewal cycle for records.
 - iv. Eric brought up with the online licensing the administrative work will be a lot less. He explained Margaret has to keep track of licensing plus all her other duties. It is not like she only has licensing to keep her busy waiting for every three year period, she has a lot of other duties that keep her busy day to day besides the licensing piece.
 - v. It was brought up by the Board why we do not do it by department rather than individual. Steve mentioned that would be difficult as they are individual licenses and it is easier to track them all renewing at the same time, rather than staggering departments across renewal periods and trying to track over 785 department renewals. Steve mentioned this is better consistency for budgeting purposes and administratively to have everyone at the same time frame rather than staggered through the year.
 - vi. The Board wanted to clarify that the three year period is determined by the Board, if this passes Legislation.
- e. 299N.05 the grandfather clause will be removed. Eric mentioned that this will mean that in order to get

licensed as a firefighter they will need to be certified if this is adopted by Legislation.

- i. If the license expires everyone can get reinstated, even if they were grandfathered.
- f. If the changes are approved by the Board, Steve will contact MPFF to get them on board with these changes since they started this program. Eric mentioned as the Legislative Committee this is what we suggested for changes, as a Board what we approved and then take this out to the fire service for their feedback. Eric believes the Licensing Committee will meet again once Steve meets with them and follow up if there are any issues. Most of this is just clean-up.
- g. Matt Ashmore asked if the Board was going to discuss rule making authority. Eric Hedtke mentioned we don't want to tackle that at this time. The Attorney General also advised rule making is a lot to take on at this time.
- h. Roger Ihrke brought up subdivision 6 regarding felony convictions, that he would like "department" removed from that statute. Eric mentioned this was a discussion we had at our meeting as well and we understand Roger's point on putting obligation on the departments, but the discussion if you left it as the applicant or licensee to notify us if they have been convicted of a crime or felony they would not have incentive to do so. The question is do we rely on them if we stumble across it or do we enlist another entity to help us find out when these things have happened. Roger mentioned that the Attorney General states that if the department does not notify then they are in violation. Roger stated that in many cases the department may not know. Roger mentioned most departments do not know this language exists. Another Board member shared that the statute reads each applicant, licensee "or" department, we can add "if knowledge". Steve mentioned that if you do not know then you are not obligated. Matt Ashmore mentioned we still want the department to have some responsibility if they have knowledge to let us know. If they hear of something they can research and then let us know within the ten day time frame. Eric asked if the consensus of the Board is in favor of adding "with knowledge" to the statute. The Board is in favor of adding the extra language.
- i.

*MBFTE Board
Resolution 2014 11.1*

*Resolution to approve the statute re-write as presented
and move forward with Legislation to implement the
changes.*

Motion approved by the Board and carried.

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

c. Reimbursement Data Base/ License Data Base / Provider Data Base and Web Site

i. Update on process

1. Steve Flaherty (staff) explained to the Board to go to www.mbfte.org. This is the new web site which includes the new data base. We are extremely happy with this process at this time. It is not complete, but we have a lot going on that is up to date. The data base is under the site log in, we can go into the Provider data base, reimbursement data base, project data base and licensing.

- a. The Providers go in and log in all their students for each class, once they upload all the required documentation it sends automatically to Margaret and me for processing. We are able to track the students in the classes if they are NFPA1001 students or not.
- b. We can track all reimbursements for each program.

- c. At the end of the year we will be able to go in and compile a lot of reporting based on the information we have input into each of these data bases.
- d. We have maps done for Legislative districts which we can show which departments are using the program in each district. We also have rail and pipe lines maps that will be added to this web site showing all departments along those routes.
- e. We have taken all the spreadsheets and put it into the data base in one spot.
- f. We have the license data base to show each licensee information.
- g. This has created a lot of efficiency within our department and fiscal department.
- h. The web site will have the online application and renewal process. Our mission statement is listed. It will host a lot of information with interactive stuff.
 - i. We have made links to other resources through our new web site.
 - ii. This will be made available to work on phone, IPad, computer and different type of devices.
 - iii. Staff information is here for easy access to email each of us.
 - iv. We are still working on it but you can see all the information we will have put on this web site as we get it loaded.
 - v. This is a great step forward from the other site with more interaction.
- vi. We should be able to be live when Margaret returns back from leave. We are hoping by Christmas to be live online renewal.
- d. Rail/Pipeline Safety Training Update
 - i. Information included in data base
 1. Steve relayed to the Board that the training is being provided by HSEM and we have not yet received any reimbursement requests for that as of yet.
 2. We do not know of how may classes that have been done, but some have been done. That is at the awareness level and where it grows from here is yet to be determined.
 3. The Board asked what reimbursement is MBFTE responsible for if there is a fund assessed to those utilities already. Steve replied there is a specific fund set up that has 2.5 million dollars, which was set by the Legislators, that there be no cost to the departments for awareness level training. The fund is channeled through MBFTE for reimbursement as HSEM is set up for grants not reimbursement. There is a gap assessment being done to fund equipment and then the remaining funds for training.

- e. Live Burn Statutory Language
 - i. Each member has a copy of the statute. We were approached by MNSCU, Don Beckering and Vice Chancellor Yolitz, in which the discussion came about regarding the wording in the statute. It is actually the DNR legislation, but it is on permission to start fires or live burns. This addressed the document part that was from the MN Technical College system which is basically now obsolete. They want to change to the MBFTE live burn plan that Hennepin Tech did for us a couple years ago. That is the document being used now and they would like to change the language to that. The State Fire Marshal, Kevin and I met with them and do not see a problem with them replacing the MNSCU with MBFTE just to reference the document being used. We have had input with the Fire Marshal Division, also we met with Tim Oland and Todd Manley from the DNR, and Bruce Roed to make sure we were all on the same page with the wording. They will be replacing the wording with the current edition of the NFPA 1403 standard live fire training evolutions and with more input from the Fire Marshal Division the PCA permits and DNR permits which are addressed in our live burn plan. They want to address the specifics to Minnesota, so we would like to add the documents to our live burn plan and address that statute and where it fell into. The DNR will be pushing this through Legislation.
 - 1. Eric motioned to approve the suggested DNR change to the statute.
 - 2. Mark Bergerson seconded the motion to approve the DNR change to the statute.
 - 3. Motion carried.
- f. Commitment of attendance at committee meetings
 - i. If anyone wishes to drop from a committee due to commitment issues please advise the Board so that a decision of replacement or to not replace that member on a committee can be made.
 - 1. Jim Fisher conferred we have had several discussions regarding the committee meeting attendance. People are saying they will come and do not show then there is no quorum for that meeting. We need to have enough for a quorum at these meetings. Some people are not responding if they will or will not be at the meeting. You are on this Board and representing the different groups and it would be nice to have the representation at these meetings. Everyone has things to do and are busy, but we need to have better communication for these meetings.
 - 2. Steve mentioned it makes it very difficult to plan for the meeting and Margaret gets frustrated with people not replying to the attendance intent. We assume we have a quorum for a meeting, but when we arrive people that sent intent to show do not and the meeting ends up being

discussion only. This makes it hard to conduct administrative business decisions with no quorum

- ii. Discuss a possible limit of number of members on each committee
 1. This was not discussed at the meeting.
- g. January 5, 2015 appointments up:
 - i. Chip Lohmiller - MSFCA
 - ii. Roger Ihrke - League of Cities
 - iii. Matt Ashmore - MPFF
 - iv. Greg Withers - Public Member
 - v. Gary Stevens - MSFDA
 - vi. Sarah Larson - MSFDA
 - a. Steve mentioned the applications are in their folders and it can also be done online. It needs to be completed by your organization. It is suggested to get them in as soon as possible.
8. Other Business
 - a. Banner display approval (lighter & smaller display for shows, schools, conferences, etc.)
 - i. Steve went over the pictures in each Board member folder. The old display is showing signs of wear and tear. It is very cumbersome to put up.
 1. Amanda MacDonnell motioned to approve the banner purchase.
 2. Eric Hedtke seconded the motion for approval of the banner purchase.
 3. Motion Carried.
 - b. Steve wanted to remind the Board that Margaret was going in for her surgery today. It was to be at noon for four hour surgery and sounded to be pretty extensive. She will be off work for a couple weeks and be able to work at home periodically after December 2nd. I will keep the Board up to date as her progress is, but I ask that you keep her in your thoughts and prayers as she moves through this very difficult time.
9. Adjourn
 - a. Motion to adjourn at 12:17 p.m.