



MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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MBFTE BOARD MINUTES

February 10, 2015

10:00 am

**Elk River Fire Station #2 – Upstairs Training Room
13073 Orono Parkway, Elk River, MN 55330**

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
A	Eric Hedtke Association of Townships	St. Michael	2018		A	Natasha Carlson MSFDA	Breezy Point	2018
A	Kelli Slavik League of Cities	Plymouth	2018		A	Matthew Ashmore Executive Committee Member at Large	Hibbing	2015
A	Sarah Larson MSFDA	New Hope	2015		A	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,	St Paul	
A	Mark Bergerson MSFDA	Alexandria	2016					
					P	Margaret Koele License Coordinator		
A	Steve Flaherty Executive Director				P	Kevin Sedivy Fire Training & Licensing Specialist		

- Call to order – Chair, Jim Fisher
 - a. Meeting called to order at 10:04 a.m.
 - b. Present at the meeting in person: Chip Lohmiller, Roger Ihrke, Gary Stevens, Jim Fisher, Brian Sjodin, Dean Wrobbel, Margaret Koele (staff), Kevin Sedivy (staff) and Marvin Calvin (guest).
 - c. Present via teleconference: Amanda MacDonell and Bruce West.
- Approval of Minutes
 - a. November 2014 Board Meeting minutes approved as written.
- Officers Reports
 - a. Chair, Jim Fisher, nothing to report.
 - b. Vice Chair, Chip Lohmiller, nothing to report.
 - c. Treasurer, Roger Ihrke, nothing to report.
 - i. FY Budget outlook for Licensing & Reimbursement, no comments from the Board.
 - d. Secretary, Amanda MacDonell, nothing to report.
- Reports
 - a. Executive Director – Steve Flaherty
 - b. Reported by Kevin Sedivy in absence of Steve Flaherty:
 - i. Update on Mass/Gross Decon
 - 1. This program is running strong with positive feedback from departments that have participated in the training.
 - ii. Update on Incident Safety Officer training
 - 1. ISO training is running strong with positive feedback from the departments that have participated.
 - iii. Leadership Development
 - 1. The second class of the Leadership Development course was held January 30-31 at Camp Ripley. This class ran in conjunction with the Human Resources module for the first group. There have been many positive comments regarding the training we are offering. We have plans for the next modules to take place May 30th. The first group will take their final module on June 20th. Should these dates come together for the two groups moving through the program, we will have a better understanding of the costs associated with providing this project for the upcoming budget.
 - iv. NFPA 1001 Project
 - 1. Reimbursements have been active coming in from the providers. We have been getting positive feedback regarding the data base being used for inputting and tracking students.
 - v. Training Reimbursements
 - 1. To date, there have been 180 requests for training reimbursements turned into MBFTE. Seven of the 85 departments that have never sought reimbursements in the past have sent in their requests this year. We have only received a couple requests

that have included backfill and overtime as part of the reimbursement expense.

vi. Conferences

vii. Live Burns

1. We have had approximately 20 of the 53 approved Live Burns submit for reimbursement to date. There are 30 more Live Burn requests on a waiting list for FY15 that have requested funding.
2. Gary Stevens asked what it was meant to be on a waiting list. Chip Lohmiller explained that if someone on the approved list is not able to get their Live Burn scheduled or completed in FY15 then another person on the waiting list can replace them for the funding.

viii. Rail & Pipe

1. HSEM's Rail and Pipeline Awareness Level training requests are slowly coming in slowly. As the program picks up momentum, we expect more requests to be submitted.

ix. Funding Allocations

1. The legislative session is underway and there is a potential for MBFTE to receive nearly \$6 million in allocations. With that in mind the Board should start considering the options associated with funding amounts for training reimbursements and project funding.

- c. Executive Committee - Chair Jim Fisher, nothing to report.
- d. Legislative Committee - Chair Sarah Larson, Chair is not present at the meeting. Margaret Koele, staff, mentioned our statutes are being carried to the capitol for signing. Chris Parsons will notify us as things progress.
- e. Licensing Committee – Chair Eric Hedtke, nothing to report, as the Chair is not present at the meeting.
- f. Training Committee, Matt Ashmore, nothing to report, as the Chair is not present at the meeting.

• Public comment

- a. Marvin Calvin, guest, wanted to comment on historical perspective. When the Board was set up the departments were not supposed to supplant their budgets with reimbursement funds. These funds were to be used for training as a supplement to their budgets. This Board started out licensing with about 4600, we have about 1800-1900 career people. Marv mentioned that Kevin made a good point, in previous discussion, regarding licensed firefighters, and that is why he licensed all his firefighters. Marv commented that if you had to testify for any reason, you want everyone to have all available certifications and be licensed.

It is encouraging to hear where things are going with this Board.

- b. Marvin Calvin, guest, commented that the Board may want to consider becoming an advisory Board rather than a Board that takes action. That would

allow you to let the Executive Director and staff make more of the decisions, which Margaret has mentioned they are already undertaking due to decisions having to be made daily for administrative purposes. This may take legislative action, but you may want to talk to Steve and the State Fire Marshal to discuss this option. Margaret Koele, staff, commented that you can become advisory on the reimbursement side, but by state law we are required to have a Board intact for licensing. Bruce West commented that you can go to being an advisory committee that meets once or twice a year, but licensing would need to remain a Board. Roger Ihrke, commented that in the past history there were some issues with what organizations and the number of people representing them are to be on the Board. He feels that could open up a lot of issues again by changing things. Roger mentioned that personally he suggests limiting the number of people on the committees and have an alternate if someone cannot attend.

- Old Business
 - a. Update on Fire Service Training and Licensing Specialist Progress – Kevin Sedivy
 - i. Kevin reported it would be beneficial to increase the NFPA1001 funding next fiscal year and to see all new hired firefighter's NFPA1001 training covered. Kevin was at Blooming Prairie Fire Department and they had spent all their award funds per firefighter sending recruits to the NFPA1001 training. This seems to be what the departments are saying as I am visiting them. It makes it hard on the departments when the seats are limited with the providers for the funding of the NFPA1001 training, so they have to rely on their award reimbursement funds to send the recruits to the training.
 - 1. Jim Fisher asked if a lot of people are waiting to go to NFPA1001 training. Kevin replied there is a lot of request for this training among departments. They are always recruiting and those new recruits need to be trained. The problem is they are eating up their training budgets for NFPA1001 training of these recruits and not able to do any other training. Kevin mentioned that the departments feel that the funds should be separate reimbursements for the NFPA1001 training, Live Burn training and then the \$97 per firefighter funding can be used of other department training.
 - a. Margaret Koele, staff, mentioned that as we go forward we should have the ability to report how many students that are going through NFPA1001 and how many we are not able to fund. The providers are entering full classes and only checking which are being reimbursed. This should help show the amount of students going through the training.
 - b. Dean Wrobbel commented that maybe the Board needs to be a little more creative with the funding, such has

paying half or $\frac{3}{4}$ funding per student. That would give more money to fund more students in the program. Dean would like to see the amount per firefighter increased.

- c. Jim Fisher asked Chip Lohmiller how many classes he runs in a year. Chip Lohmiller replied he has done 10 or 11 classes so far with an average of 20 students per class. Chip mentioned he only was given about 30 or 40 seats that were reimbursed. Chip commented he has a lot of departments paying out of pocket for the training.
 - d. Gary Stevens requested some sort of report on NFPA1001 training as to how many requests were sent in and how many were actually funded in the past. Gary feels this is a very important program to get more funding for departments based on the reports coming from the field to Kevin. Margaret Koele, staff, replied we can see if there is any information on past requests. Margaret mentioned we have changed data bases and not sure what reporting they did in the past.
 - e. Margaret Koele, staff, mentioned that the departments are starting to see the importance of licensing through the training and that it can benefit their department. Several applications are being submitted from paid on call, part time and volunteer firefighters as they want to eventually go to a career department or move up in positions within their own department through training. Kevin Sedivy mentioned that certification and licensing gives more credibility to someone that may have to testify regarding any issues while on the job, but also for the department to say they are certified and state licensed firefighters.
 - f. Dean Wrobbel mentioned that the reimbursement funds are not to be used for a department budget. The state money should be used over and above their city budget amount. Dean Wrobbel does not want the departments to depend on these funds for their budgets because if it goes away then they have no budget.
- ii. Kevin Sedivy reported that another area of concern with departments is Live Burn training. We were only able to provide funding for 53 live burns. We had many more requests than funding available. There is a need for more funding in this area.
 - 1. Gary Stevens asked what is meant to be on a waiting list. Chip Lohmiller explained that if a department on the approved list is not able to get their Live Burn scheduled or completed in FY15,

then another department on the waiting list can replace them for the funding.

- iii. Kevin Sedivy commented that conferences are also an area that should be considered for more funding. When there is a good speaker it would be nice to be able to share that with other areas' of the state. Jim Fisher mentioned teleconference of the presentation. Kevin Sedivy replied that it is more beneficial to be in person during a presentation.
- iv. Margaret Koele, staff, commented that Steve Flaherty's intent was to put the information out regarding the possible increase in funds to MBFTE so the Board can start considering funding options. Steve wanted to let the Board know in time for discussions to take place prior to August when the decisions are to be made regarding funding. Margaret Koele, staff, mentioned for the Board to also keep in mind that sometimes there are requirements of the funds when they are allocated to MBFTE and that request could be in the amount we set per firefighter. That amount could be set at \$200 per firefighter and the Board would have the remaining funds to consider where they should be allocated. This is all just speculation and out there for the Board to start thinking about how the funds should be allocated next fiscal year.

- New Business

- a. Legislative Activities

- i. Sherry Munyon called in via conference line to report:
 - 1. The Fire Safety Account initial recommendations have had some changes. They have completed the review of the changes and there is more money than originally budgeted for in the account. Appropriations were made to the account to allocate the increased funds. That bill to appropriate funds has been drafted. This bill will correct the problem that keeps reoccurring when the legislature appropriates the funds for the biennium and when the revenues come in. We have always had to go back for a supplemental appropriation in the second year of the biennium and this bill will correct that problem. This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Public Safety to appropriate any balance remaining after the first year of the biennium. This bill will be introduced Thursday February 19th in the House. The Fire Service Advisory Committee, Bob Johnson, Jim Fisher and George Esbensen will be making the presentation to inform several new members on the committee what the Fire Safety Account is all about.

- b. Reimbursement Data Base

- i. Update on process

1. Margaret Koele, staff, reported we are in the process of building online reimbursement that the departments can submit through the web site.

c. Licensing Data Base and Web Site

i. Update on process

1. Margaret Koele, staff, commented that we sent out a mass email to all the departments and they are able to login to see their departments licensed firefighters' information. Margaret mentioned we will have a link on the old web site to send everyone to the new web site. We have almost completed moving information over from the old site to the new site. Kevin Sedivy has been helping update information as we move forms over to the new site so we ensure they are updated and current.
Margaret Koele asked if the Board would let us know any reports that they would like to see run so we can get that programming built. Also, if the Board sees any changes or suggestions on the web site to please let us know.
2. Margaret Koele, staff, reported the License Committee wanted to add a "duty to report" to the web site. This would allow people to email MBFTE with any knowledge of wrong doing by a licensed firefighter through the web site. We will get this added to the new web site.

ii. E-Licensing

1. Margaret Koele, staff, reported that we are currently live with our new web site. The online application and renewal process are now available online and have been tested with four different departments. We have had several positive comments from departments on the process and the web site.

iii. Online Renewal Process

1. Margaret Koele, staff, reported the online process is working and the flow of funds through US Bank has worked out well.

d. Provider Data Base

i. Update on process

1. Providers are giving positive feedback regarding the data base. They are able to enter full classes into the data base and only check those being reimbursed for our tracking how many we are not able to fund during the year.

e. Rail/Pipeline Safety Training Update

i. Information included in data base

1. Margaret Koele, staff, mentioned we have maps and information regarding the departments on the rail & pipeline that can be accessed on the new web site.
2. Margaret Koele, staff, reported we have not had many reimbursement requests come in for the rail & pipeline training.

Steve Flaherty had sent out to all Board members the Rail & Pipeline FAQ sheet.

3. Bruce West commented that HSEM have completed about 50 training sessions to date, with approximately 50 more scheduled. They have to have a lot more completed by June 30, 2016.
- f. Live Burn Statutory Language
 - i. Margaret Koele, staff, replied the documentation is in your folder for review of what will be presented to legislation by DNR.
- g. Commitment and Attendance at Committee Meetings/ Vote Chair Position
 - i. Commitment of attendance
 1. Jim Fisher, Chair, commented that if people want to be on a committee or Board member they need to try to attend as this is a commitment they made when joining. Margaret Koele, staff, mentioned it is hard to conduct daily business when there is no quorum at meetings to get decisions made. Margaret mentioned the Board may want to consider giving Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, more authority to make more decisions on a daily basis, rather than waiting for meetings that may or may not happen. It is also an issue getting intent for meetings and if not enough replying intent we have to give proper notice of cancellation on the web site and publically posted.
 - ii. Discuss a possible limit of number of members on each committee
 1. There was discussion regarding the number of members on each committee. Margaret Koele, staff, mentioned it is very hard to get a quorum when you have too many committee members. Brian Sjodin commented it is very hard to accomplish anything when you have too many members on a committee. Margaret commented it is up to the Board to make a decision on limiting the number of people on a committee.
 2. This will be carried to next meeting.
 - iii. Sign up for any changes on committee's
 1. Margaret Koele, mentioned maybe the Board should consider combining committees, as the meeting agendas are similar and many members are the same on each committee. Margaret also commented the Board may want to consider if the committees or Board want to meet at different locations.
 2. Margaret mentioned that the Board may want to consider holding the meetings prior to the Board meeting. The committees could break out and meet prior to the Board meeting. Any business needing attention by the Board could be discussed that day verses waiting several months for decisions. This idea was adopted by the members present and agreed upon by vote.
 - a. Brian Sjodin motioned to have committee meetings prior to the Board meeting, Dean Wrobbel seconded the

motion. All Board members present agreed by verbal vote and the motion was carried.

3. Margaret mentioned that depending on the amount of committees meeting the staff would have to split up and record the meetings separately.
4. Gary Stevens would like to have the committee information decided when the new members are appointed.
5. More discussion on this subject next meeting.

iv. Vote Annual Chair and Vice Chair, per statute

1. This will be carried to next meeting due to lack of attendance at Board meeting.
2. Brian Sjodin suggested for voting in the second quarter meeting since appointments are up in January.

h. FY16 Funding Consideration

1. This will be carried over to next meeting.
 - a. NFPA1001
 - b. Conferences & Seminars
 - c. Per Firefighter Amount
 - d. Live Burn
 - e. CAT/ERT
 - f. Incident Safety Officer
 - g. Leadership Development
 - h. MART
 - i. Mass & Gross Decon
 - j. Rail & Pipeline Safety
 - k. Task Force 1

i. January 5, 2015 Appointments Up/ New Appointments:

1. Appointments have not been posted on the Governor's site yet. This may not happen for a few months due to legislation going on currently at the capitol.
 - a. Chip Lohmiller - MSFCA
 - b. Roger Ihrke – League of Cities
 - c. Matt Ashmore - MPFF
 - d. Greg Withers – Public Member
 - e. Gary Stevens - MSFDA
 - f. Sarah Larson – MSFDA
2. There was discussion regarding a Board member resigning. Margaret Koele, staff, commented that when a Board member resigns they need to do so in writing to their organization President and our Board Chair. Once that letter is received then they are no longer on the Board and we can send a request to the Governor's office for a re-appointment to be made. If a Board member is not electing to be reappointed, they need to continue

on the Board until a new person is appointed by the Governor's office to take their place. We, as a Board, conduct business as usual until new members are appointed by the Governor office.

Bruce West commented it could be June or July before appointments are done.

- j. Executive Director Annual Evaluation (Chair)
 - i. This will be completed by Bruce West and Jim Fisher, Board Chair. This is done for his annual review.
- Other Business
 - a. Gary Stevens suggested about having the other committee meeting minutes posted online.
- Adjourned the meeting at 11:23 a.m.