



MBFTE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: February 12, 2019

TIME: 11:30 AM

LOCATION: Elk River Fire Department
EOC Room Lower Level

Board Member	PRESENT	ABSENT	TELECONFERENCE
Reno Wells			X
Dean Wrobbel		X	
Rick Loveland - MPFF			X
Jonathan Kahnke - MSFDA		X	
Chip Lohmiller - MSFCA			X
Roger Ihrke – League of Cities			X
Chris Ford - MPFF			X
Greg Withers – Public Member			X
Gary Stevens - MSFDA			X
MSFDA – Vacant Seat			
Jim Fisher – Assoc. of Townships			X
Christine Patrick - MSFDA	X		
Becki White - MSFCA			X
Natascha Hennen - MSFDA			X
Bruce West – SFM - DPS	X		

Guests: Nyle Zikmund (MFSCB), Theresa Zikmund (MFSCB), Mike Nelson (South Metro FD), Tom McDonough (St Paul FD), Jovan Palmieri (St Paul FD), Steve White (SFM FSS), Anthony deSamLazaro (Attorney General Representative), and Mark DuCharme (EBFD)

Staff: Steve Flaherty, Executive Director and Margaret Koele, License Coordinator

I. Call to order – Jim Fisher, Chair 11:35 a.m.

a. Accept agenda

i. Agenda additions

1. Provider Audit – Margaret Koele, License Coordinator

2. Leadership Development Course – Steve Flaherty, Executive Director

a. Reno Wells motioned to accept the agenda with additions, Rick Loveland second the motion, motion carried

II. Approval of minutes from November, 2018

- a. Rick Loveland motioned to approve minutes as written, Reno Wells second the motion, motion carried

III. Reports

- a. Treasurer, Becki White
 - i. Financials are in order
 - ii. FSA balance, Marshal West
 - 1. \$8,076,833.15 includes the firework sales tax revenue to date, which were \$38,374.52 of the total
 - iii. Larry Freund, DPS Chief Financial Officer, on long range financials for license revenue account
 - 1. The license account does in fact carry over year to year (answer from last meeting question)
 - a. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director commented that Larry Freund had a conversation with Margaret Koele, License Coordinator and this will be just an administrative move of funding from the reimbursement account to the license account
- b. Executive Director, Steve Flaherty
 - i. Leadership course is finishing up two cohorts, more discussion later in agenda
 - ii. EMS invoices \$82,000 which is an increase from last year
 - iii. We are a bit ahead of last year with reimbursements
 - iv. Sourcewell funding is going well in region five
 - v. NFPA 1001 program has picked up and we are at capacity of students
 - vi. We have surpassed the Instructor I and II funding that was budgeted
 - vii. We have had a couple submissions from the Conference & Seminar funding
 - viii. 40 live burns are on the wait list for this fiscal year
 - ix. Margaret Koele, License Coordinator, has been working with the programmer on the online qualified instructor program and it should be ready to go, except for testing as we roll it out
 - x. Margaret Koele, License Coordinator, has completed the provider audit which will be discussed later in the agenda
 - xi. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, will be meeting again with each board member to keep communication open
 - xii. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director is coming up on five years with the MBFTE and would like to thank the board for the support, as the Executive Director, it has been the best fire service experience in his career and looks forward to continuing the good work the board has done
- c. Executive Committee, Chair Jim Fisher
 - i. We had a productive meeting with the AG representative
 - 1. Certification verses examination in statute language, the Executive Committee would recommend staying with the current language in statute “certification examination”
 - 2. Leadership Development issues discussed, with regard to the location we currently use for the course
 - 3. Timeline for the RFP for the online learning management program
- d. Licensing/License Review/Legislative Committee, Chair Natascha Hennen
 - i. Legislative update on MBFTE and DNR statutes
 - 1. Discussion on terminology changes for “full time” and “non-full time” firefighters for more clarity
 - 2. There was a meeting with the MFSCB and the AG office representative regarding terminology of certification examination or examination to get certified
 - a. The AG representative did not see any difference in statute intent using either language
 - 3. License Committee is recommending that all revisions be approved by the board to move forward with legislation
 - a. **Rick Loveland motioned to move forward with the legislative changes as recommended by the License Committee, Roger Ihrke second the motion, motion carried**

- a. Rick Loveland motioned white ballot, Natascha Hennen second, motion carried
 - ii. Vice Chair
 - 1. Rick Loveland nominated Jim Fisher
 - a. Greg Withers second Rick Loveland nomination, Rick Loveland motioned white ballot, Becki White second the motion, motion carried
 - iii. Secretary
 - 1. Natascha nominated Christi Patrick,
 - a. Rick Loveland second motion, Rick Loveland white ballot, Greg Withers second motion, motion carried
- b. The new Chair will assign members to the committees according to bylaws
 - i. Board members are to email Margaret Koele, License Coordinator if they wish to be on the License/Legislative or Training Committee
- c. Leadership Development – Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. Proposed to the Training and Executive Committee to move the leadership training away from Camp Ripley, due to logistical issues meeting there
 - 1. Issues with cancellation of hotel rooms last minute, contracts not being upheld due to military precedence and meeting rooms being changed last minute
 - a. Had to book rooms at the hotel off base day of the course when the room reservations at Camp Ripley were deleted by accident
 - b. Had to move to six packs from the hotel rooms due booking issues at the time we were contracted to be there
 - 2. Currently we have two classes of 16 students
 - a. Proposal is to have one class of 24 students
 - 3. \$8000 savings to move offsite from Camp Ripley
 - a. Savings in the instruction cost from M-State having instructors come to a location twice for the courses, now would only need to come once
 - b. Makes the program portable to do classes regionally
 - 4. Logistically it will make it easier to administer the program
 - ii. Would like this proposal considered at the August budget meeting, if the Leadership Course is approved for funding by the board
- d. Provider Audit – Margaret Koele, License Coordinator
 - i. \$853,732 (17%) total student figure that have not complete the program, per our database information
 - 1. Students dropped, transferred, deployed or incomplete
 - a. Paid for student prior to the course completion and the scenarios listed above occurred
 - i. The board no longer has this process in place going forward
 - 2. Pre-bills of students we paid, but students did not finish the program
 - a. The board has changed the program and no longer pays providers or MFSCB before the course or certification takes place
 - i. Reimbursement is to departments only after the student completes the course and passes the certification
 - 1. The providers and MFSCB are to enter in the information to the data base for tracking the students completing the course and passing certification
 - a. Programming has been implemented to report students that have completed the course and passed certification to get reimbursed:
 - i. Based on the entry being completed by the provider and MFSCB

- ii. Providers enter student information, check boxes for completion of courses and enter live burn dates
 - iii. MFSCB enters pass/fail dates and incompletes or missing of certification requirements to complete
- 3. Providers not completing the information in the data base, as required
 - a. We cannot prove the students finished if the data was not entered
 - b. A provider would not complete the information on the course, as they allow the students to take the exam, even though they did not complete the course
 - c. Providers did not enter live burn dates as required
 - d. MFSCB had students that did not complete all the requirements for certification
 - i. Going forward: providers and MFSCB will need to complete the student data entry in order for the departments to get reimbursed for completed students that have gone through their NFPA1001 course or certification
 - 1. Checking off they courses are complete and dates entered
- 4. Students paid for twice to different providers or the same provider different fiscal years
 - a. Programming fixed to identify any duplicate students entered, so we can follow up if the names are the same person or not
 - b. If we see the same person entered the provider will be contacted and that student not reimbursed twice for this program
 - c. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, will talk to those providers, we have found that were paid for duplicate students found from this audit
- 5. The audit help uncover some inefficiencies and if state audited, the board has done their due diligence to fix or change processes, so these inefficiencies do not happen again going forward
- 6. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, commented that Margaret Koele, has worked many hours with the providers, certification board and going over data to get this information gathered
 - a. Some of these numbers for the providers is simply the fact they were not being as diligent about updating the data base records as we had requested them to do
 - b. This is a snapshot of the last three years we audited
 - i. Gary Stevens would like to see this as to number of students rather than the financial piece
 - 1. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director replied total students through the program were: 1088 students FY16; 1236 FY17;919 FY18
 - ii. Reno Wells asked what are the boards options
 - 1. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, commented that the board could ask for the funds back, but that could promote some negative backlash from the fire service
 - a. The board could acknowledge that the process we were doing did not account for the issues that arose, but the program has been fixed to address those issues moving forward
 - 2. Jim Fisher commented it is a learning curve and we can only make things better
 - 3. Reno Wells has an issue of individuals that did not do anything and we were billed, this is a lot of money. What is the board's liability with all this? Also, the board needs to convey to the vendors we use that this will not be tolerated again
 - 4. Greg Withers agrees with Reno Wells comment, and would like a written report with this information from the Executive Director, as well as the recommendation of the Executive Director. I agree with the

recommendation to not do anything this time, but we point out in the report that 17% of the money was lost and this will not happen again in the future

- a. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, agreed to write up a written report based on Margaret Koele, License Coordinator's, findings, for the board and knows in the future the number will be zero as we have changed our processes so that it cannot happen again
- iii. Natascha Hennen would like included in the written report of what the issues were and how MBFTE changed programming to fix the issues that occurred, also do another audit in another year or two
- iv. Reno Wells would like the vendors put on notice of what was found during this audit, it is not a forgiveness, if we get audited by the state and the state decides to take any action we may go back to the providers on this issue
 1. Anthony deSamLazaro commented he could look into this issue if the board so chooses, he is not aware of the statutory agreements as to the reimbursements
 2. Margaret Koele, License Coordinator, commented that is being specified in this legislation session, per Michelle Owens the last AG representative we had
- v. Chris Ford commented if there is a form or variance that we could send to the departments on the students as to why they did not complete the course or certification
 1. Margaret Koele, License Coordinator, commented that is between the providers and the departments, as the departments hired the provider to do the course for their students
 2. Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, commented that there would be a large amount of excuses and the amount of work to go back to all the students that my no longer be with that department any longer
- vi. Rick Loveland commented this has now been addressed and the processes fixed in order to move forward
- vii. Reno Wells commented that we identified the problem, we have put safeguards in place to correct it, but also identified a lot of money paid out for something that did not meet what the board had set forth, my concern is what authority do we have to move forward without taking any action on this situation
- viii. Roger Ihrke commented that any education cost money, part of it is our education, this was spent on individuals that did not complete and they may have attended a class, so they learned something. Also many are volunteers, how can you go back to the individual or department for a person that quit, or did not attend classes. It is a concern, but we need to move on from this, as the process has been fixed
- ix. Gary Stevens commented this has been a learning curve for the vendors and the board, should also be a learning curve for the departments of who they select to go through the program
- x. Natascha Hennen commented that Margaret Koele has done a great job identifying the issues and Rick Loveland has commented that the providers are aware of this issue we need to move on, the funds are gone, we are not going after the money and we have a process in place to not let this happen again

VII. Adjourn 1:07 p.m.