



MBFTE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: February 10, 2026

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

LOCATION: Elk River Fire Department
13073 Orono Pkwy NW
Elk River, MN
Teams/Teleconference

Board Member	In Person	TEAMS	ABSENT
Vance Bachmann – Assoc. of Townships		x	
Dean Wrobbel – League of Cities		X	
Jesse Buhs- League of MN Cities		X	
Chip Lohmiller - MSFCA	x		
Thomas Schulte- MPFF	x		
Kate McKay - MSFDA	X		
Jason Low – Public Member		X	
Michael Shwankl - MSFDA			X
Chad Vermeersch			x
Jim Fisher – Assoc. of Townships			X
Gavin Peterson – MSFDA	X		
Mike Warner - MSFCA		X	
Jason Forshee - MSFDA		x	
Dan Krier – SFM - DPS	X		
Jennifer Elleraas – MSFDA	x		

Staff:

Steve Flaherty (Executive Director, MBFTE) Allison Marcus (Licensing Coordinator MBFTE) Ross Hoernemann (MBFTE)

Guests: (In person) Tom Popsun (Century College), Jard Rozeboom (SFMD), Patrick Heinen (SFMD), Butch Inks (MFSCB), Scott Carriveau (Customized Fire), Korbyn D'Ambrogio (Blue Fire Training), Jeremie Baker

- I. Call to order at 10:31 am – Dean Wrobbel, Chair
 - a. Roll call attendance listed above
 - b. Agenda additions –Roles and duties for new Fire Training and Licensing Specialists
- II. Approval of the agenda with additions (Motion by: McKay / Second by: Lohmiller)
 - a. Agenda approved
- III. Approval of minutes from November 12, 2025 (Motion by: Forshee / Second by: Bachmann)
 - a. Minutes approved as written via roll call vote
- IV. Reports
 - a. Treasurer Report –Tom Schulte
 - i. Reviewed financial report and budget balances
 - b. Executive Director, Steve Flaherty
 - i. Conditional offer for Training and Licensing Specialist accepted by Ed Hoffman
 - 1. Start date March 3, 2026
 - ii. Ramping up travel, attending meetings and fire schools
 - iii. Leadership Program has started
 - 1. 2 cohorts
 - c. Executive Committee Report, Dean Wrobbel, Chair
 - i. Discussed role for new Fire Training and Licensing Specialist position
 - ii. Voted to approve Executive Director’s signing authority
 - iii. Discussed potential 299N language change
 - d. License Update – Allison Marcus
 - i. 4211 active licenses closed out 2025
 - ii. License renewals opened in January
 - 1. 4284 current active licenses
 - iii. One applicant with felony conviction
 - 1. Will convene License Review Committee
 - e. Fire Service Specialist –Patrick Heinen
 - i. Expressed gratitude for relationship with MBFTE
- V. Old business
 - a. MNIT Update—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. Presented to Governance Committee

1. Agreed project should move forward
 - a. Concerned about MNIT time constraints
 - i. MNIT estimates project to take 2 years
 - ii. Project monies must be encumbered and contract executed by June 30, 2027
 - iii. Allison to be Project Manager for database project
 - iv. Project will require stakeholder engagement
- b. Committee Appointments—Dean Wrobbel, Chair
 - i. License Review Committee requires meeting
 1. Current committee: Kate McKay, Tom Schulte, Dan Krier, Dean Wrobbel
 - a. Need additional member
- c. Wildfire Academy Discussion—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. Had meeting with Todd Manly and Bart Johnson from Minnesota North to discuss ability to sustain program
 - ii. Federal funding grant for structural firefighters has ended
 1. Academy is eligible for MBFTE reimbursement
 - iii. College can no longer support admin costs
 1. Admin costs approximately \$130,000
 - iv. Potentially will make a request to FSAC for admin funding
- d. Fire Service Assessment Update—Dan Krier, SFM
 - i. Project Manager- Jared Rozeboom
 - ii. RFP contract awarded to Citygate Associates
 - iii. Will host in-person and virtual listening sessions
 1. Committed to 5 listening sessions
 - a. Dates TBD
 - iv. Need to identify missing, incomplete or inaccurate data
 - v. Periodic assessment updates to be reported on by Executive Director
- e. Terms Expiring January 2026—Dean Wrobbel, Chair
 - i. New appointments will be made in April
 - ii. Expiring members:
 1. Vance Bachmann
 2. Chip Lohmiller
 3. Dean Wrobbel
 4. Gavin Peterson
- f. NFPA 1010 and NFPA 470 update—Dean Wrobbel
 - i. NFPA 1010 to replace NFPA 1001
 - ii. Standalone certification for awareness operations and mission specifics

- iii. Will have separate certification for each Hazmat test
 - iv. Certification test pricing increase
 - v. New certification for “Support Person”
 - 1. Eligibility for reimbursement to be determined at August Board budget meeting
 - vi. Reviewed Statute 299N
 - 1. 299N refers to NFPA 1001
 - 2. Licensing requirement NFPA 1001 FFII now will be NFPA 1010
 - 3. Executive Committee discussed opening statute to address language
 - a. Committee determined to leave language and not open statute
 - i. NFPA 1010 Ch 6 and Ch 7 references NFPA 1001
 - 4. Motion to not open statute 299N and leave language as is (Peterson/McKay)
 - a. Motion carries
- g. Fire Training and Licensing Specialist Position—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
- i. Reviewed position description
 - ii. Will have a 3rd Training and Licensing Specialist position by end of 2026
 - iii. Position duties to include auditing records, verifying documentation and educating departments on record keeping and best practices
 - 1. Board needs to determine what authority the Board has if record or licensing discrepancies are found
 - a. Currently Board has no policy or procedure to address anomalies or discrepancies
 - i. AG Rep suggested Board come up with ideas for policies to address issues
 - 1. AGO will provide feedback regarding Board authority
 - 2. Board discussed and reviewed reimbursement process and desired documentation requirements
 - a. Currently process includes verifying training was conducted, provided by qualified instructor and proof of payment to training provider
 - 3. Training Committee to put together policy suggestions for AGO
 - a. Policy suggestion to be sent to AGO and feedback received by May meeting for Board to adopt
 - 4. Board to determine how many departments to be reviewed annually upon feedback on capacity from Fire Training and Licensing Specialists

VI. New business

- a. Authorization of Executive Director’s Signature—Dan Krier, SFM
 - i. Executive Director’s job classification updated to managerial level classification
 - ii. Executive Committee recommends giving delegated authority for Steve Flaherty to sign and execute contracts

1. Motion to give Steve Flaherty signing authority on behalf of MBFTE (Schulte/McKay)
 - a. Motion carries
- b. Leadership Program—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. Program in process
 1. 2 cohorts
 2. 350 students since 2014
 3. Waitlist up to 75
 4. Board members welcome to join classes in St. Cloud
- c. OLA Response—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. Working with Dan Krier and DPS Internal Controls officer on response to audit findings
 - ii. OLA requires close out report of what steps MBFTE/DPS took to address findings
- d. Training Provider Complaint—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. Steve Flaherty and Dan Krier received anonymous letter of complaint
 1. Complaint included Crow Wing County Summons & Complaint which identifies MBFTE
 - a. Regarding Mission Township and Blue Fire Training
 - ii. Ross and Steve met with Mission Township to review records
 1. Verified trainings occurred
 - a. Provider made copies of Mission Township Clerk signatures on reimbursement forms
 - i. Direct payments to provider
 - iii. AGO determined issue is between Eric Makowski and Crow Wing
 1. No need for Board to take action at this time
- e. License Cards and Zebra Printer—Allison Marcus, Licensing Coordinator
 - i. Zebra printer no longer functioning
 - ii. Proposal for Board to cease production of physical license cards
 1. Motion to cease printing and sending physical license cards (Bachmann/Lohmiller)
 - a. Motion carries
- f. FDIC—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. Ross Hoernemann and Steve Flaherty will attend FDIC
- g. Elections—Dean Wrobbel, Chair
 - i. Treasurer and At-Large positions up for election
 - ii. Chip nominates Tom Schulte as Treasurer

1. White ballot vote for Tom Schulte for Treasurer (Elleraas/Lohmiller)
 - a. Motion carries by voice vote
- iii. Tom Schulte nominates Gavin Peterson for At-Large position
 1. White ballot vote for Gavin Peterson for At-Large position (Elleraas/Schulte)
 - a. Motion carries by voice vote

VII. Public Comment

- a. Butch Inks, new Executive Director introduced himself
 - i. Expressed gratitude to Dean Wrobbel for his help during transition

VIII. Next Meeting date:

- a. Scheduled for May 12, 2026

IX. Motion to Adjourn at 1:06 p.m. by: Lohmiller / second by: Bachmann

- a. Motion carried

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