

WV STATE FIRE COMMISSION MEETING

Stonewall Resort

Roanoke WV

June 7th, 2024

The official business meeting was called to order at 9:02am by Chairman Grant Gunnoe

ROLL CALL: by Kathryn L Burns

Commissioners Present

Steven Byers, Dave Camp, Carl Eastham, Doug Estep, Edward George, Grant Gunnoe, Phil Hart, Tom Keefer, Brian Jones, Doug Mongold, Jim Oldaker, and Virgil White.

It is noted that Counsel Brandolyn Felton-Earnest is in attendance as well.

Commissioners Absent

Ted Shriver

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner White made a motion to accept and approve the minutes of the April 5th, 2024, Fire Commission meeting, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

RECOGNITION

Moment of silence in memory of David Lee Tolliver.

SFMO & DIVISIONAL REPORTS:

Deputy Mark Stewart presented the Inspections/Plan Review and Fire Department Services report, and Deputy Chief Bailey gave the Services and Investigations Report, and Marshal Tyree's Operations report to the Commission containing staffing, legislative, updates, and fire department funding loss updates.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The Disciplinary and Legislative Committees did not meet.

Fire Department Services Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

June 6th, 2024

Call to Order

Commissioner Byers, called to order the regular meeting of the Fire Department Services Committee at 10:04AM on June 6th, 2024, at Stonewall Resort Park, Roanoke WV.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Steven Byers
Jim Oldaker
Phil Hart
Brian Jones
Dave Camp
Doug Mongold
Grant Gunnoe

The following commissioners were absent:

None

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

1. Consideration of Fire Chief Applications.

Assistant State Fire Marshal Bradley Scott presented the following applications for approval.

- a. John F Vincent (Bruceton Brandonville)
- b. Michael Cannon (Keyser)
- c. Mark Howe (Ellamore)
- d. Augustus Taylor (Loudendale)

Commission Oldaker made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission to approve the applications as listed, seconded by Commissioner Hart. With all the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

2. Report on Fire Department Receiving 180 Days to Achieve Compliance.

ASFM Scott briefed the Committee on the Departments receiving 180 days.

- a) New Cumberland VFD
- b) Tyler Mountain VFD

No action needed.

3. Consideration of Fire Department Recertification

Assistant State Fire Marshal Bradley Scott presented the following departments for Recertification.

- a. Chapmanville VFD
- b. Logan County #2 VFD
- c. Salt Rock VFD
- d. Walkersville VFD

Commissioner Hart made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission the recertification of the listed departments, seconded by Commissioner Jones. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

4. Consideration of Fire Department with Perfect Evaluations Recertification.

ASFM Bradley Scott presented the following Departments with Perfect Evaluations for Recertification.

- a) Lawrenceville VFD
- b) Newell VFD
- c) New Manchester VFD
- d) Chester VFD
- e) Oakland District VFD
- f) City of Weirton FD
- g) Tri County VFC
- h) Clintonville VFD
- i) Williamsburg VFD
- j) Rupert VFD
- k) Rainelle VFD
- l) Quinwood VFD

Commissioner Hart made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission the recertification of the listed departments, noting their perfect evaluations, seconded by Commissioner Camp. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

5. Consideration of Updated FO Equivalency/Temporary Application.

Deputy Chief Robert Bailey presented the new application to the Committee and answered any concerns.

Commissioner Oldaker made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission the approval of the updated application, seconded by Commissioner Hart. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

6. Information on Potential Closure of Fire Department.

Deputy Chief Bailey notified the Committee that Rhodell VFD in Raliegh County has been temporarily closed and will most likely remain that way. The Fire Marshal's Office received a letter of resignation from the Chief and there are not any qualified members to take the position. The department's assets have been secured while the legalities of where those assets will go are being worked out. A neighboring department has taken over their area currently.

In addition, he noted that the Mason VFD was temporarily closed due to a Worker's Comp administrative issue, but it has since been resolved and they are back in operation. Dunlow VFD was also closed over a Worker's Comp administrative issue and remains closed at this time.

A discussion was held about how the Fire Marshal's Office and departments receive notifications regarding the renewal of Worker's Compensation and per the discussion it appears to be more than adequate.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Mongold moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:24am, seconded by Commissioner Jones. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to accept the report as written, seconded by Commissioner White. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote the motion passed.

Training Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

June 6th, 2024

Call to Order

Commissioner White called to order the regular meeting of the Training Committee at 10:25am on June 6th, 2024, at Stonewall Resort, Roanoke WV.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Virgil White
Jim Oldaker
Doug Estep
Tom Keefer
Dave Camp
Doug Mongold
Grant Gunnoe

The following commissioners were absent:

None

Unfinished Business

1. Update on National Qualifying System for Emergency Responders.

Brent Burger (State Training Officer with Emergency Management) came before the Committee to relay the most current information on the National Qualifying System (NQS) and to provide clarity, dispel rumors, answer questions, or seek the answers that the Commission might have about NQS. NQS is mandated by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is required for anybody who receives Emergency Management Performance Grant monies, but he does not believe this will affect the Fire Service. Commissioner Estep asked if it would affect the Assistance Firefighter Grant program. Mr. Burger stated that he hasn't seen anything that states it will, but he will verify that information with FEMA. He answered additional questions on how the credentialing would work if sought and what would be required. He noted this is being done in stages and they have until 2025 to get the local level issued task books. Per Mr. Burger, he will research the questions the Commission has and will continue to attend the Commission meetings to relay information as it progresses.

He then spoke about the training that Emergency Managements has available and noted that if it is NIMS, Hazmat or Swiftwater they can provide training at no charge. They have started providing the Fire Marshal's Office with this information and in turn the Fire Marshal's Office is pushing that information out via email.

New Business

1. Consideration of WV Professional FF Master Firefighter Program.

Commissioner White explained that the purpose of this program was put together with the intent of furthering education and helping to get an associate degree in Fire Science. It is basically a second Journeyman program.

Commissioner Gunnoe has some concerns as to some wording that appears to suggest the WV State Fire Marshal's Office would be responsible for verifying that individuals in the program are getting their CEUs each year and feels that should be at the department level or elsewhere. He would like a representative to come to the next meeting to answer questions for clarification.

Commissioner Keefer made a motion to recommend to the full Commission to table the item until a representative can attend and discuss with the Commission, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker. With the ayes and nays having been taken by a voice vote, the motion passed.

2. Consideration of PST Curriculum Update – Fire Apparatus Drive Operator.

(see item 3 a)

3. WVU FSE Informational Update

a) Consideration of Curriculum Update – Fire Apparatus Driver Operator

After discussion and clarification, it was determined that items 2 and 3 were not actual updates but rather an informational report on the current courses being taught.

Commissioner Oldaker made a motion to accept the information as presented, seconded by Commissioner Keefer. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passes.

Mark Lambert of WVU FSE updated the Committee on the upcoming Junior Camp, plans for another WV Weekend, a survey to be sent to all WV chiefs on Recruitment and Retention needs, two weekends planned for National Fire Academy Juvenile Fire Setter Trainings, a six-day National Fire Academy on the Administration of Public Assistance for Community Recovery through FEMA, that Ms. Mason, who presented at the last Commission meeting is still researching and following OSHAs proposal for Emergency Responders and per concerns raised at the April meeting by a citizens group over a solar farm being built in the Ransom WV, he was able to contact the company building the farm and they wish to be good neighbors and will work with WVU FSE on training the local departments.

4. Consideration of Trilogy Emergency Vehicle Operations Course.

Deputy Bailey presented the request to the Committee, explained the course, and answered the Committee's questions.

A discussion ensued regarding the necessity to approve the training entity prior to any approval of programs. The Committee asked that Counsel investigate the legal side of the training entity approval question and that Staff get additional information from Trilogy on how their trainers are certified.

Commissioner Keefer made a motion to recommend to the Full Commissioner to table until the August meeting, seconded by Commissioner Estep. With the ayes and nays having been taken by a voice vote, the motion passed.

5. Information on 87CSR8.

Deputy Chief Bailey presented a draft for review of the proposed changes to 87CSR8 noting the additions and strikethroughs so it will be in line with current training policies. The Committee in turn requested some additional language to be added. Deputy Chief Bailey will make those changes for review at the Full Commission meeting.

Commissioner Keefer made a motion to move the Information on 87CSR8 to the Full Commission, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Keefer moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:35pm, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to accept the report as written, seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote the motion passed.

FULL COMMISSION MEETING

87CSR8 Follow-up.

In the June 6th, 2024 Training Committee meeting, proposed changes were reviewed for 87CSR8 and it was determined more review is needed.

In today's Commission meeting Chairman Gunnoe noted as this is a critical document he will be putting together a work group to be led by Commissioner Oldaker, with Counsel, and staff to do a thorough review of any proposed additions or deletions. Should the Commission decide to move forward with changes there will be a Special Full Commission meeting held. If the work group determines more review is needed it will be held over until next year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1) Update on National Qualifying System for Emergency Responders.

There was no additional discussion on this item.

See Training Report.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) Consideration of Fire Chief Applications.

See FDS Report.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to remove consideration of Augustus Taylor's application from the table, seconded by Commissioner White. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

- e. John F Vincent (Bruceeton Brandonville)
- f. Michael Cannon (Keyser)
- g. Mark Howe (Ellamore)
- h. Augustus Taylor (Loudendale)

Commissioner White made a motion to approve applications as listed, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

2) Report on Fire Departments Receiving 180 Days to Achieve Compliance.

See FDS Report.

- a. New Cumberland VFD
- b. Tyler Mountain VFD

No Action Needed.

3) Consideration of Recertification of Fire Departments.

See FDS Report.

- a. Chapmanville VFD
- b. Logan County #2 VFD
- c. Salt Rock VFD
- d. Walkersville VFD

Commissioner White made a motion to recertify the listed departments, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

4) Consideration of Perfect Evaluation Recertification of Fire Departments.

See FDS Report.

- a. Lawrenceville VFD
- b. Newell VFD
- c. New Manchester VFD
- d. Chester VFD
- e. Oakland District VFD
- f. Weirton FD
- g. Tri County VFC
- h. Clintonville VFD
- i. Williamsburg VFD
- j. Rupert VFD
- k. Rainelle VFD
- l. Quinwood VFD

Commissioner White made a motion to recertify the departments noting their perfect evaluations, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

See FDS Report.

5) Consideration of Update Fire Officer Equivalency/Temporary Application.

See Training Report.

A discussion was held regarding clarification on whether the applicant is listing their current rank or the rank they are trying to obtain, and it was determined that additional work is needed on the application.

Commissioner Mongold made a motion to carry over to the next meeting, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

See Training Report.

6) Consideration of WV Professional FF master Firefighter Program.

See Training Report.

Commissioner White made a motion to carry over to the next meeting, seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

7) Consideration of PST Curriculum Update Fire Apparatus Driver Operator.

See Training Report.

Chairman Gunnoe noted that both training entities provided the current training material as a review and that no changes had been made. Going forward there will be reviews to confirm the contents of the programs being taught, removal of those no longer needed and curriculum updates to those that require changes.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to approve the reviewed curriculum noting there were no changes necessary, seconded by Commissioner Estep. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

8) Consideration of Trilogy Emergency Vehicle Operator Course.

See Training Report.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to carry over to the next meeting and requested a representative attend to answer any questions, seconded by Commissioner White. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

SPEAKERS:

Chris Collins, the Secretary/Treasurer of the Fire Marshal's Association of WV introduced the group to the Commission. He presented the mission statement of the association to the Commission and explained the goals of the group. *See attached introduction.*

CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter to Senator Manchin.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Meeting location proposal for October – Flatwoods has been proposed. Administrative Secretary Burns will check on the availability.

TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING(S):

Committee Meetings - 10:00am Thursday, August 1st, 2024 at Oglebay Resort in Wheeling WV, and Commission Meeting 9:00am Friday, August 2nd, 2024, Oglebay Resort in Wheeling WV.

ADJOURN:

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to adjourn at 9:50am, without objection meeting adjourned.

Fire Marshal's Association Introduction

The Fire Marshals Association of WV is a state affiliate of the International Association of Fire Marshals.

The mission of the International Fire Marshals Association and the WV Chapter is to aid in the preservation of life and property by advocating, promoting, and providing leadership in the prevention or mitigation of fire, explosions, and other related hazardous conditions.

To do this we continually look at national best practices using 6 key strategies:

- *Advocacy*
- *Outreach and education*
- *Culture*
- *Technology*
- *Codes and standards*
- *Model performance and evaluation*

We advocate at a local, county and state level for fire/life safety codes that are consistent national best practices, accountability, and resources needed and supported by law in order to allow us to be proactive in our respective fields

Our association members actively engage the public in outreach and education at local levels. We find it best to focus at the local level because the varying demographic and topographic areas in our state create localized hazards that may be unique to their respective areas. In order to fully reach our citizens at a local level, we are going to strive to also use outreach and education to members of the fire service and gain more members locally in volunteer departments, building construction, local building departments, along with other stakeholders. Much like the diversity of the commissioners on this body benefits from different perspectives and backgrounds, the FMAWV will benefit from the various perspectives and expertise.

In order to be effective in community risk reduction, which at its core is being proactive in preventing emergencies from occurring, rather than accepting them and focusing solely on mitigation, we will work on embracing a cultural shift, not only for the public, but also for emergency services. Nationally, we have seen the tremendous life and property saving

benefit of developing and supporting a culture of community risk reduction through proactive efforts, and want to bring that culture to WV.

Technology plays a major role in not only preventing disasters, but also in mitigating, and lessening the impact when disasters occur. Consider the simple single station residential smoke alarm. As I'm sure you all know; WV has over DOUBLE the per capital fire death rates at the national average. This year, we are on pace to have even more. According to the US Fire Administration we had a total of 26 fire deaths last year. This year we already have 33. I have studied many of the reports. Most of the West Virginians who die in fires did not have working smoke alarms. Embracing a simple technology like smoke alarms and encouraging local AHJ's to have a smoke alarm program can result in life saving benefits, just imagine how beneficial it will be when we can embrace technology such as home fire sprinklers, limited combustible building materials for residential housing, not to mention the many other technologies available to improve life safety!

In order to take full advantage of technology, and use national best practices, our association (obviously by our very name implies) works hard to learn, and implement codes and standards. Not only by using what is in the books, but learning from what we see in the field, from what our members in fire dept operations witness on calls, and our investigators determine on calls. We work to determine what codes work, what codes have an element of fallacy and what codes should exist in order to prevent future occurrences of identified trends.

This last general guideline is perhaps our most challenging and why we need member partners from every level and many disciplines....model performance and evaluation. We can have the best advocacy, the best outreach and education, a cultural shift to CRR, improved technology and smoke alarms in every home, strong codes and standards...however if we do not continuously evaluate our model and performance, we can never be effective. That is why many of our members are working to develop a Community Risk Assessment. This provides detailed, historical and projective data on objective topics our focus should be. That focus can and will shift season to season, sometimes month to month, which means continuous evaluation at a local level in order to be most effective. I myself am going to a class in SC this October sponsored by Vision 20/20, a national CRR group to learn how to develop and implement a CRA. When that happens, I plan to bring what I learn back to WV and use it to help other jurisdictions do the same.

The aforementioned mission and strategy may seem challenging...however all challenges can be overcome with the right group of professionals. The FMAWV members range from municipal and state fire marshals, Fire department operations, local building department authorities, architects, engineers, stakeholders in private industry, along with partners at a national level who provide resources to help carry out our core mission of making WV a safer place to be! With this group of professionals, we're excited to identify, and face these challenges head on and overcome any obstacle. We look forward to keeping this commission updated on progress and working together to make WV an example of proactive prevention and community risk reduction success.