

WV STATE FIRE COMMISSION MEETING

April 9th, 2026
Canaan Valley Resort
Davis WV

The official business meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Chairman Grant Gunnoe

ROLL CALL: by Kathryn L Burns

Commissioners Present

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-Ernest is in attendance as well.

Commissioners Absent

Steven Byers and Ted Shriver

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner White made a motion to accept and approve the minutes of February 6th, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

RECOGNITION

None

SFMO & DIVISIONAL REPORT:

Deputy Mark Stewart provided the Inspections and Plan Review reports, and Marshal Tyree gave the Services, Investigations Reports, and his Operations report to the Commission containing staffing, legislative, updates, and fire department funding loss updates.

Entertained Questions

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Fire Department Services Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 8th, 2026

Call to Order

Commissioner Mongold called to order the regular meeting of the Fire Department Services Committee at 10:00AM on April 8th, 2026 at Canaan Valley Resort.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Jim Oldaker
Brian Jones
Phil Hart
Doug Mongold
Grant Gunnoe

The following commissioners were absent:

Steven Byers

Unfinished Business

1. Consideration of submitted Boundary Areas for Boomer VFD and Montgomery VFD.

ASFM Bradley Scott noted that both Chiefs have agreed to the boundary maps and signed an agreement as such. Commissioner Oldaker inquired if Glasgow VFD's Chief had been involved in the discussion due to concerns raised at the February meeting, and ASFM Scott confirmed his concerns had been addressed.

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

New Business

1. Consideration/Report of Temporary Fire Officer Certifications.

- a) Gary Bendy (North River Valley)
- b) James Hartman (Blue Ridge Mtn)

Commissioner 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. Consideration of Fire Chief Applications

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

- a) Jeffrey Teter (Maysville)
- b) William Woods (Reedy)
- c) Timoth McFadden (Paden City)
- d) David Schoolcraft (Big Otter)
- e) Todd Gorham (Jefferson County)
- f) Johnathan Turner (Witmer)
- g) Stephen Marek (Chester)
- h) Gary Bendy (North River Valley).

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

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

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

- a) Newton VFD
- b) Matoaka VFD
- c) Bramwell VFD
- d) Montcalm VFD

No Action Needed.

4. Consideration of Fire Department Recertification

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

- a) Reedy VFD
- b) Gandeeville Harmony 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.

5. Consideration of Fire Department with Perfect Evaluations Recertification.

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

- a) East Bank VFD
- b) Bluestone Valley VFD

- c) Athens VFD
- d) Oakvale VFD
- e) East River VFD
- f) City of Princeton FD
- g) Green Valley Glenwood VFD
- h) Bluefield FD
- i) Bluewell VFD

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

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Oldaker moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:07am without objection. Meeting adjourned.

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

Legislative Codes Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 8th, 2026

Call to Order

Commissioner George called to order the regular meeting of the Legislative and Codes Committee meeting at 10:08am on April 8th, 2026 at Canaan Valley Resort.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Jim Oldaker
Brian Jones
Tom Keefer
Edward George
Doug Mongold
Grant Gunnoe

The following commissioners were absent:

Ted Shriver

Unfinished Business

1) Discussion/Consideration of WV Fire Prevention and Control Plan.

Marshal Tyree met Andy Malinoski with the Governor's office communication team at the suggestion of the Cabinet Secretary. Mr. Malinoski will confer with Marshal Tyree on April 23rd with an update after reviewing the document more thoroughly and noted that it was a big project. Mr. Malinoski did feel that it might need to be done in sections. Marshal Tyree requested a goal date of May 1st, 2026, for completion.

Marshal Tyree will present the data on the Fire Death Rate at the Full Commission Meeting the next day.

No Action Taken.

New business

1) Speakers, Discussion and Consideration of Building Code Sunset Date August 1, 2027.

Marshal Tyree addressed those in attendance updating them on the upcoming virtual Stakeholders meeting to be held on April 23rd, 2026, the planned follow-up stakeholders' meetings, as well as the legislative processes involved in updating the Building Code.

Michael Monaghan (VP WV Code Officials Association) spoke in favor of holding stakeholders' meetings. They plan to bring a lot of information to those meetings.

Darren Pervarnik (WV Code Officials Association) spoke in favor of having a State Building Code and that it works along with Fire Services.

Jason Stinespring (Code official City of Westover) spoke in favor of stakeholders' meetings as well.

Avi Smith-Rose (Mid Atlantic Regional Manager of International Code Council and the liaison for the WV Code Officials Association) spoke in favor of the extension of the WV Building Code and passed out a letter from the American Wood Council also in favor of the extension of the WV Building Code.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Keefer moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:28am without objection. Meeting adjourned.

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

Recruitment and Retention Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 8th, 2026

Call to Order

Commissioner Oldaker called to order the regular meeting of the Recruitment and Retention Committee at 10:29am on April 8th, 2026 at Canaan Valley Resort.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Jim Oldaker
Doug Estep
Phil Hart
Doug Mongold
Grant Gunnoe

The following commissioners were absent:

Steven Byers

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

1. General Discussion on Recruitment and Retention.

Commissioner Oldaker reported that two pieces of legislation that would have made meeting the participation threshold for the Volunteer Fire Fighter Tax Credit easier, did not make it through the legislative process and will not be moving forward.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Estep moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:32am without objection. Meeting adjourned.

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.

OSHA Emergency Response Standard Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 8th, 2026

Call to order

Commissioner Keefer called to order the meeting of the OSHA Emergency Response Standard Committee Meeting at 10:33am on April 8th, 2026, at Canaan Valley Resort.

Roll call

The following commissioners were present:

Tom Keefer
Virgil White
Edward George
Doug Mongold
Grant Gunnoe

The following commissioners were absent:

None

Unfinished business

1) Update on OSHA Emergency Response Standard.

Commissioner Keefer reported that OSHA is still looking at October 1st, 2026, implementation of the new rule. They have shared the latest revisions with the White House policy group. One of the recent changes to the rule in order to get a better buy in, is only applying the new revisions to areas that have a population greater than 5000 people. So, if your primary response area falls below that you will not be covered by the new standards, but they would be expected to follow the current OSHA regulations in effect. The biggest drive requires response plans for any structure or facility area that has hazardous substances per OSHA's definition and that those be updated annually. Comment period closed April 1st, 2026 and won't be reopened but they are still reviewing those comments.

New business

None

Adjournment

Commissioner George moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:37am without objection. Meeting adjourned.

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

Training Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 8th, 2026

Call to Order

Commissioner White called to order the regular meeting of the Training Committee at 10:38am on April 8th, 2026 at Canaan Valley Resort.

The following commissioners were present:

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

The following commissioners were absent:

None

Unfinished Business

1. Discussion/Consideration of NFPA 1010 Support Personnel Standard and Commission Approval.

Commissioner Keefer made a motion to recommend to the full Fire Commission to take back from the table the item of business, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker, with the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Steve Hines with WVU Fire Services Extension provided a comparison of the requirements for Support Personnel Chapter in NFPA 1010 versus the requirements of the Fire Fighter Training Modules. There are 3 items in the NFPA 1010 requirements for Support Personnel that are not in FF Module 1. Securing Utilities/Scene Lighting, Ropes and Knots and Fire Extinguishers, however those items are in FF 1 but in other modules. Based on that he felt items could be moved from one module into another and not increase the total number of hours. It would just be adjusted to where Module 1 would meet the Support Personnel Chapter. He didn't feel it would be a heavy lift, but Support would be a new level.

Robert Bailey of WV Public Service Training agreed with the assessment but did want to review the Driver Pump Operator program as well so it is properly aligned. One item they have found is that on a national level those that have become Support Personnel often make the decision to become Firefighters and the Support Personnel provides that path.

Currently neither WVU nor PST is prepared for curriculum submission, but both gentlemen answered numerous questions from the Committee. After a long discussion:

Commissioner Oldaker made a motion to take the item to the full Fire Commission for discussion, seconded by Commissioner Keefer. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

New Business

1) Consideration of WV PST New Testing Process

Commissioner Oldaker discussed a complaint he had received from Sissonville FD. During a recent training event sponsored by Sissonville and handled by WV Public Service Training, the normal process of holding written testing on the final day, following JPRs on the previous day was not used. Instead, they were tested on the day preceding the final JPRs. In turn, 9 participants that did not pass all 3 written tests were not allowed to participate in the JPRs on the final day. This change in procedure was not communicated in advance with those in attendance or their departments. At question is why the change in procedure was made.

Commissioner White did speak with the director who informed him that the decision was made based on safety concerns.

A long discussion was held about the changes being made, what the requirements are regarding written tests, the differences in classes and the leeway the training directors are given, so they can ensure the safety of all involved. Both Committee members and Training entities felt that better communication both before and after the training, done with the appropriate people, could have avoided or eased this situation.

No Action Taken.

2) Public Service Training Report.

Robert Bailey of WV Public Service Training noted that going forward they will present their yearly numbers on a fiscal year if that is agreeable with the Committee. The Committee had no objection to the request. He then presented their 2025 calendar year numbers on student numbers, dropout rates and pass/fail rates.

In PST's regular report Mr. Bailey spoke on the success of the Escape Conference with 246 attendees, changes in personnel at their office and the positives that came from the Sissonville training.

2. WVU-Fire Service Extension Report

Mark Lambert of WVU Fire Services Extension was not available but will have a report during the Full Commission Meeting.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Mongold moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:46am without objection. Meeting adjourned.

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

Disciplinary Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 8th, 2026

Call to Order

Commissioner Eastham called to order the regular meeting of the Disciplinary Committee at 12:02pm on April 8th, 2026 at Canaan Valley Resort, Davis WV.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Carl Eastham
Doug Mongold
Edward George
Grant Gunnoe

The following commissioners were absent:

Steven Byers
Ted Shriver

Unfinished Business

1) Consideration of FDC 2025-035 (Cabin Creek).

Deputy Stewart addressed the Committee bringing to their attention the letter received from William Stout the Cabin Creek VFD Board President regarding the Chief and his spouse being allowed to live in the Fire Department. The board has given the Chief until March 31st, 2026, to vacate the premises. At the time of the Disciplinary Committee meeting Deputy Stewart did not know if the Chief did vacate as required by the board.

Commissioner Mongold made a motion to recommend the Full Fire Commission to table the item, pending a further update, seconded by Commissioner George. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion carried.

New Business

1) Consideration of FDC 2026-002.

2) Consideration of FDC 2026-003.

3) Consideration of FDC 2026-004.

4) Consideration of FDC 2026-005.

5) Consideration of FDC 2026-006.

Commissioner George made a motion to enter executive session, seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Mongold made a motion to leave executive session, seconded by Commissioner George. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Gunnoe made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission that no Fire Commission action is needed on FDC 2026-002 through FDC 2026-006 and that the Fire Marshal's Office will handle the complaints, seconded by Commissioner George. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Eastham called to adjourn the meeting at 12:25pm. Having no objection, meeting adjourned.

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

FULL COMMISSION MEETING

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1) Consideration of Boundary Areas for Boomer VFD and Montgomery VFD. (Tabled in February)

See FDS Report

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to remove from the table, seconded by Commissioner White. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner George made a motion to approve the adjustment, seconded by Commissioner Jones. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

2) Consideration of FDC 2025-035 (Cabin Creek)

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to table the item until the June 2026 Fire Commission meeting, seconded by Commissioner George the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

3) Discussion/Consideration of WV Fire Prevention and Control Plan.

See Legislative and Code Report

Marshal Tyree reported to the Commission information on the WV Fire Death Rate for 2020-2024 and entertained questions regarding the report.

Chairman Gunnoe requested that updates to these statistics be made at Fire Commission meetings going forward. He also asked that additional information be added to the report: Whether the death occurred in an owner-occupied home or a rental home? Were there multiple deaths in the same fire? Were there smoke alarms present in the home? Was it in a rural location or municipality? Was the cause determined?

Chairman Gunnoe noted the importance of the Fire Death Statistics, so the Fire Commission can do their part to reduce the number of deaths in the State of WV.

No Action Taken.

4) Consideration of Discussion/Consideration of NFPA 1010 Support Personnel Standard and Commission Approval. (tabled in December)

See Training Report

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to remove from the table, seconded by Commissioner George. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

No Additional Action taken.

5) Update on OSHA Emergency Response Standard.

See OSHA Standard Report

No Action Taken.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) Consideration/Report on Temporary Fire Officer Certification.

See FDS Report

- a) Gary Bendy (North River Valley)
- b) James Hartman (Blue Ridge Mtn)

Commissioner Mongold 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) Consideration of Fire Chief Applications.

See FDS Report

- a) Jeffrey Tetter (Maysville)
- b) William Woods (Reedy)
- c) Timothy McFadden (Paden City)
- d) Davod Schoolcraft (Big Otter)
- e) Todd Gorham (Jefferson County)
- f) Johathan Turner (Witmer)
- g) Stephen Marek (Chester)
- h) Gary Bendy (North River Valley)

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

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

See FDS Report

- a) Newton VFD
- b) Matoaka VFD
- c) Bramwell VFD
- d) Montcalm VFD

No Action Taken

4) Consideration of Recertification of Fire Departments.

See FDS Report

- a) Reedy VFD
- b) Gandeeville Harmony VFD

Commissioner Mongold 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.

5) Consideration of Perfect Evaluation Recertification of Fire Departments.

See FDS Report

- a) East Bank VFD
- b) Bluestone VFD
- c) Athens VFD
- d) Oakvale VFD
- e) East River VFD
- f) Princeton VFD
- g) Green Valley Glenwood VFD
- h) Bluefield FD
- i) Bluewell VFC

Commissioner Mongold 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.

6) Consideration of FDC 2026-002

7) Consideration of FDC 2026-003

8) Consideration of FDC 2026-004

9) Consideration of FDC 2026-005

10) Consideration of FDC 2026-006

See Disciplinary Report

Commissioner George made a motion that no Fire Commission Action is needed and that the Fire Marshals office will handle the complaints FDC 2026-002-FDC 2026-006, seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

11) Consideration of Building Code Sunset Date August 1st, 2027.

See Legislative Report.

Darrin Pevarnik of WV Code Officials Association thanked Marshal Tyree for the upcoming Stakeholders meeting and asked that the Fire Commission does not let the Building Code Sunset. He shared that a good Building Code will help to reduce the numbers of fire-related losses and deaths.

Michael Monagan Vice President of the WV Code Officials Association provided a handout from the Scott Jolliff, President of the Code Officials that outlined the need to extend the WV State Building Code.

No Action Taken.

12) Consideration of WV PST New Testing Process.

See Training Report.

Chairman Gunnoe explained that this item was on the agenda due to a complaint/concern regarding testing procedures followed at Sissonville's fire school. After yesterday's discussion the Commission recognized that in part the issue was a result of lack of communication and that no action was needed. However, the Commission prefers the general policy of allowing all testing, both written and practical, to be completed following all training classes.

SPEAKERS:

None

CORRESPONDENCE:

Chief Robert Johnston Resignation Letter (Loup Creek VFD).

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Mark Lambert of WVU Fire Services Extension reported that FSE is partnering with the Fire Marshal's Office on a one-day Fatal Fire Investigation Class on May 29th, 2026, in Morgantown. The class will be led by Elaine Pope who is an expert in the field. Junior Camp is coming along and there are currently 46 campers signed up. WVU FSE is partnering with the State of Ohio to do a weekend at the National Fire Academy on June 26th-28th of June and currently have 52 registries. Lastly, he reported that July 29th-August 2nd will be the WV State Fire School.

Marshal Tyree noted that he is working with the NFPA for a WV Fire Safety Summit tentatively scheduled for September 29th, 2026. The location will most likely be in Charleston and once it is finalized, he will provide the information to the interested parties.

August Meeting location is yet to be determined.

TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING(S):

Committee Meetings - 10:00am Thursday, June 11th, 2026, and Commission Meeting 9:00am Friday, June 12th, 2026, at the TC Energy Building.

ADJOURN:

Commissioner White made a motion to adjourn at 10:38am without objection. Meeting adjourned.