

Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association

Board of Directors - October 19, 2011

Presentation Prior to Meeting - Chief George Esbensen gave a presentation regarding the fundraising efforts for the firefighter's memorial. He asked the directors help in arranging presentations in their regions as they are the most effective way to solicit donations. George noted the \$216,000 is in the bank and \$140,000 is in the form of "rock solid" commitments.

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by President Marty Scheerer at 1:00 p.m. President Scheerer asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda as distributed, and there were none.

Attending - Nyle Zikmund, Jim Hansen, Arden Anderson, Bob Dahm, Bob Brown, Tom Cvar, Steve Flaherty, John Strongitharm, Bill Thoennes, Jena Noah, Steve Jurens, Jeff Juntunen, Tim Pohlman, Dan Nath, Mark Hovland, Bill Mund, Gary Conrath, Jeff Anderson, Bruce West, John Taylor, Brian Haugen, Randy Gust, Jay Wood, Dale Specken, Tim Butler, Tom Brace, Marty Scheerer, Randy Polzin, George Esbensen, Ulie Seal, Dan Roeglin, Shane Schmidt and Tim Farmer.

Unable to Attend - Alex Jackson, and Marty Dirnberger.

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of April 15, 2011 - *A motion was made by Bill Mund, and seconded by Gary Conrath, to approve the minutes as published and distributed. The motion passed.*

President's Report – Marty Scheerer noted that he purchased sweatshirts for the entire board in appreciation for all of the work the board members do which does not always get recognized. President Scheerer presented a leadership award to Ulie Seal in recognition for all of his work on behalf of the association. President Scheerer had emailed his report to the board prior to the meeting, and highlighted some current activities. Marty and other members of the board met with the Minnesota Fallen Firefighters Memorial Association to clarify roles and responsibilities in the event of a Line-of-Duty-Death after some problems in Cambridge.

Vice President's Report – Randy Polzin distributed his report via email prior to the meeting. The shared services study is resulting in discussions throughout the state, and Randy urged members to get involved early in these discussions or risk being left behind.

Executive Director's Report – Tom Brace noted that the audit is nearing completion and there are no major issues noted to this point. We are working on getting all conference certificates to the attendees via on-line internet access. The financial condition of the association was reviewed by Tom who presented and explained a number of spreadsheets for the various accounts within the association. The Minnesota Fire Chief Magazine is in a very healthy financial position, and Tom recognized the efforts of the Editor-in-Chief Jena Noah.

The cooking safety trailers are now in service, and there is a possibility of funding for a Bullex safety trailer in the future. The kitchen fire safety trailer training sessions were highly attended and the demand for the trailers and this training is very high.

Committee Action Requested

Nyle Zikmund, Chair of the Legislative Committee, detailed the proposed lobbyist contract for 2012 and noted that the Legislative Committee, and the MNFAC partners, is recommending that board approve the contact. *A motion was made by Jay Wood, and seconded by Tim Pohlman, to approve the 2012 contract for services with the association's current lobbyist. The motion passed.*

Communications and Policy Committee Update – Vice President Polzin noted that the committee met and are recommending a new policy which will allow members of the MSFDA Executive Committee, some who are not currently eligible for membership in accordance to the bylaws, to attend the MSFCA annual conference. *A motion as made by Bill Mund, and seconded by Jeff Anderson, to adopt Policy 500 - Executive Board Reciprocity Agreement at MSFCA and MSFDA Conferences. The motion passed.*

Pass The Boot Donations - *A motion as made by Jeff Juntunen, and seconded by John Taylor, to donate the monies collected during this year's "pass the boot" donations to the memorial fundraising cause. The motion passed.*

Minnesota Board of Fire Training and Education - Bruce West, MBFTE Executive Director, discussed changes in the distribution of money in "round four." The amount made available per firefighter was calculated by dividing the monies available by the number of firefighters in the state. Departments that did not report the number of firefighters in their departments were given credit for ten. Firefighter licensure is going well, and a large number of licenses have been issued. The MBFTE is working on a program to train "Live Burn" instructors which is design to produce curriculum and train 30 instructors by June 2012.

The MBFTE is working on a two and one-half hour program on gross decontamination which will be presented at every fire department in the state free of charge. Randy Polzin noted that there were past problems with the MBFTE which were resolved through discussions with administrators, rather than through a legislative solution. Marty Scherer asked how training funds which are not used are dealt with, and Bruce noted that they are carried over to the next year. Marty asked about reimbursements for EMS training, and Bruce announced that this was in process and should become a reality in the near future.

MSFCA Spring School Update – Mark Hovland discussed the "Fire Officer School" hosted in the western part of the state in the spring of 2012 which is an association goal. Mark distributed a report detailing the recommendations of the school planning committee. Bruce West noted that the MBFTE has some money available to assist with special schools and conferences, and noted that an application will need to be submitted for their consideration. *A motion was made by Bill Mund, and seconded by Jay Wood, to proceed with the Spring School as recommended by the planning committee. The motion passed.*

A motion was made by Tim Pohlman, and seconded by Steve Flaherty, to approve a budget for the school of \$10,000, and to direct Executive Director Brace to enter into negotiations with conference facilities in the Alexandria, Minnesota area. The motion passed.

Financial Investment Plan Presentation – John Rudi and Brian McKnight of the Parr McKnight Wealth Management Group, made a presentation to the board regarding longer term investing of the association’s reserve funds. The minimum investment is \$100,000, and the management fee is 1%. The Parr McKnight fund which was discussed is currently managing \$1.5 billion, and in the event of an urgent need, the association’s funds can be withdrawn in three days. *A motion was made by Dan Nath, and seconded by Bill Mund, to approve a \$100,000 investment with the Parr McKnight Wealth Management Group. The motion passed.*

Old/Unfinished Business

Website Update – Tim Farmer noted that the website needs to have some technical changes beyond his expertise which would provide a “members only” capability as a part of the site, the ability to provide conference certificates on-line, and pages with restricted access on the MSFCA website. The consensus of the board was to proceed with the updates.

Webinar Update – Randy Polzin and Jim Hansen have worked on the logistics and costs of providing webinars, and reported that this is a very cost effective method for providing training, and also a method of conducting meetings.

IRS 990 Issue – Nyle Zikmund gave a brief update on the legal actions being taken to clarify IRS reporting rules. Contact Nyle with specific questions regarding this issue.

New Business

Retreat Location for 2012 – There are a number of resorts whom are interested in hosting the board’s annual retreat. *A motion was made by Jeff Anderson, and seconded by John Strongitharm, to go to the Breezy Point Resort for the 2012 retreat. The motion passed.*

Bylaw Change Proposal – The proposed change deals with the status of past presidents on the board of directors, elimination of the State Director of Fire Service Training from the board, and clarifies that each region is entitled to only one vote. *A motion was made by Dale Specken, and seconded by Bill Thoennes, to make a recommendation that the membership approve the proposed changes. The motion passed.*

Life Members – Tom Brace presented a list of potential members for life membership including; Bob Brown, Tom Cvar, Jerry Pawelk, Jeff Swanson, Bruce West, Jerry Rosendahl, Richard Rock, and Mike Anderson. *A motion was made by Tim Butler, and seconded by Jeff Anderson, to approve the list as presented for life membership. The motion passed.*

A motion was made by Jay Wood, and seconded by Dale Specken, to approve retired Glencoe Fire Chef Bob Scheidt for life membership. The motion failed.

Legislative Committee Recommendations – Nyle Zikmund distributed a list of sixteen possible legislative initiatives and asked the board members to choose their top five issues for 2012. Nyle

then explained a Strategic Expenditures Plan for the Fire Safety Account Revenue which was prepared by the MnFAC members.

Legislative briefing for the 2012 Session – Lobbyist Sherry Munyon discussed how they have been encouraging and facilitating discussions with state legislators on a local basis, and have been having very good results. These meetings are extremely important as they help to educate the legislators on the real needs and issues of the local departments.

Fire/EMS/Safety Center - Dan Roeglin noted that the Fire/EMS/Safety Center no longer exists and the focus of MnSCU has changed. There have been great reductions in staffing but the regional colleges continue to provide fire training. Voucher dollars are no longer being issued, but there is about \$600,000 in credits still available to a number of departments, but all vouchers will expire in 2013.

Magazine Editor-In-Chief Report – Jena Noah encouraged every department to participate in the Fire Prevention Poster Contest. The conference directory is the largest ever with 100 pages. Jena is looking for ideas for articles, and fire service issues which could serve as the focus for an edition of the magazine (i.e. fire prevention, winter safety, etc.)

Great Lakes Division IAFC – Bill Mund is stepping down as the Minnesota Representative to the Great Lakes Division due to his campaign as vice president of the MSFCA. President Marty Scheerer noted that he plans to appoint George Esbensen, Eden Prairie Fire Chief, to fill the vacancy.

State Fire Marshal's Division - Bob Dahm gave a report on current activities at the division, and noted that the Fire in Minnesota Report will be distributed at the conference. The division has been offering a lot of training on a number of topics this year, and the large majority of the offerings are free of charge. The State Fire Marshal's Division is still hoping to host a conference in 2012, but is still in the planning stage. There were 39 fire deaths in 2010 and 39 this year as of today.

Department of Natural Resources –Brian Haugen noted that \$401,000 was distributed in grants this year. The Firewise Program is still being supported by the DNR.

Regional Director's Reports

The majority of directors submitted a written report prior to the meeting via email, and President Scheerer asked if there were any updates.

Randy Gust, Northern, Region 2 - American Crystal Sugar is still locking out their employees and this is causing issues for the local departments. Richard Rock's position is expected to be filled when he retires from the Crookston Fire Department.

Jim Hansen North Suburban, Region 8 – The region's executive committee is looking at changes in format and focus for their region.

Tim Pohlman, South Central, Region 14 – Tim noted the region met the previous night and he did not have a report prepared in time for the board meeting, therefore, he would email one once he got back home.

Ulie Seal, Minneapolis – Ulie informed the board that Minneapolis Fire Chief Alex Jackson could not attend the meeting due to pressing work regarding budget issues.

Tim Butler, St. Paul – Stated that they may have to take a rig out of service due to budget constraints.

John Strongitharm, Duluth – Noted they may also have to take a rig out of service.

Call for Adjournment – *A motion was made by Jim Hansen, and seconded by John Taylor, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:11p.m.*