

Iowa Fire Service & Emergency Response Council

Meeting Minutes

March 24, 2022

Fire Service Training Bureau

Council Members Present:

Justin Adams – Chairperson - *IA Fire Chiefs Association*

Jeff Kling – Vice Chairperson - *Public Member*

Pam Kenkel – *Public Member*

Scott Kovarna – *IA Professional Firefighters*

Ray Reynolds – *IA Professional Fire Chiefs*

Deb Krebill – *IA Fire Chiefs Association*

Brian Platz – *IA Association of Professional Fire Chiefs*

Council Members Present Via Zoom

Lonnie Koch – *IA Firefighters Association*

Megan Wichmann – *IA Professional Firefighters*

State Fire Marshal and FSTB Staff Present:

Dan Wood – *State Fire Marshal*

John Kraemer – *FSTB Bureau Chief*

Russ Grossman – *FSTB Field Programs Coordinator*

Gary Howard – *FSTB Certification/Accreditation Coordinator*

Absent (Excused):

Thomas Craighton – *IA Emergency Medical Services Association & IaSFSI*

Joseph Mullen – *OSHA, Division of Labor, Ex-Officio member*

Guests:

Kim Fensterman – *Kirkwood Community College*

Vacancy:

President Jason Barrick and the IFA Board are attempting to identify members that would represent the IFA on the Council.

Call to Order:

Chairperson, Justin Adams, called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve Agenda by Jeff Kling; second by Ray Reynolds. Approved.

Approval of Minutes:

Meeting Minutes from July 21st & November 21st, 2021. Motion to approve the Minutes at the next meeting by Jeff Kling; seconded by Scott Kovarna. Approved.

IFSERC Membership Update:

- Chief Ray Reynolds has been approved to serve another term on the Council by the Governor's Office.
- Lonnie Koch is willing to serve another term on the Council and is awaiting approval by the Governor's Office.
- Chief Deb Krebill is retiring on April 30, 2022 and she and/or the IFCA will update the Council on her status.

Community College Report (Kim Fensterman):

- A meeting with the community colleges is scheduled at the end of April, 2022.
- Peosta, Eastern Iowa, Hawkeye CC, Iowa Valley, Southeast CC, Southwest Iowa, Western Iowa Tech, all of which are not offering Firefighter 1 & 2 classes.
- DMACC (not using TS1's) & Iowa Central (uses some TS1's) are offering the Firefighter 1 & 2 classes.
- Indian Hills is offering Firefighter 1 (uses some TS1's).
- Iowa Lakes is offering Firefighter 1, but needs Instructors (uses some TS1's).
- NIACC is offering Firefighter 1 (not using TS1's).
- Northwest Iowa is offering Firefighter 1 & 2 (not using TS1's).
- Kirkwood is offering Firefighter 1 & 2 (uses only one TS1).
 - Plans are to schedule a Community College meeting at FSTB.
 - The question was asked by Justin Adams the reason some colleges are not offering the classes and Kim directed him to Russ Grossman.

Discussion continued about others offering classes such as Anthony Gaul. Justin Adams was concerned if the needs are being met and who is providing. Per Russ Grossman, he mentioned that with the changing of new instructors at the Community Colleges, they are still in the process of learning the system. John Kraemer requested numbers on how many classes were offered at the Bureau, excluding in-house classes. Russ stated since 2015, that on average across the state the FSTB offers between 45 - 50 FF1/FF2 classes. 2019 was the record year, maybe due to the transition of Essentials 6 to 7. Ray Reynolds stated that his department is using PRI to instruct some classes at his station in order to limit the miles traveled by firefighters to attend classes.

laSFSI Report:

Thomas Craighton was not present to give report. Update provided by John Kraemer. Plans are to coordinate a Society workshop in December at the FSTB and bring in instructors from outside of Iowa. The goal of the Society is to find more individuals that want to be instructors, as current numbers of **ACTIVE** instructors are low.

SFM Update (SFM Dan Wood):

- Arson Explosive Bureau has had another near record year, but not as busy as the year before. What they are finding is that they are not reaching enough or the right people to educate them on things like careless smoking, and smoking while on oxygen. Ways that they have reached out in the past include PSAs, commercials, offering information online... but still there is a feeling people are still not being reached.
- Explosive calls continue to be high.

- Fire Prevention Bureau is still recovering from the pandemic and trying to get back to where they need to be.
- Electrical and the Building Code Bureaus have both had record years with permits, plan reviews, and inspections.
- Budget of the State Fire Marshal's Office was status quo with additional money given to help cover raises. The current budget lacks the ability to buy things such as equipment.
- Firework's licensing is "pouring in" since opening February 1st. Work is being done to get 4 contractors hired to review the plans.
- No firework changes from the legislature this year.
- The legislative session discussed the state wide building codes with a few amendments with nothing at the present being passed.

FSTB Update (Bureau Chief Kraemer):

- In the process of filling the Special Program Coordinator's position. Interviews were done last week and waiting on background checks at this time.
- There have been a lot of retirements within DPS with large vacation payouts and it has caused us to hold open our vacant Information Specialist II position. It was held previously by Dawn Beisner who was offered a new position within DPS. In the meantime, Bureau Chief Kraemer has begun utilizing PowerPoint to its fullest, keeping information disbursement afloat until FSTB can fill the position.
- Fire School planning is taking place for July 22-24 in Ames. Vendors will be present for our firefighters this year, along with Food Trucks with great prices and great food. All Council Members are welcome. (This got rescheduled to February or early March 2023). The goals are to offer fire-related leadership, hands-on, EMS, technical rescue and hazardous materials classes.
- ProBoard and IFSAC have each awarded the FSTB re-accreditation! Pro Board was impressed with our Iowa system such as the support from the fire service organizations and the amount of certification testing opportunities provided across the state.

FSTB Update (Field Programs Coordinator Russ Grossman):

- Russ Grossman informed the Council on how FF1 and FF2 curriculum is reviewed and how the number of training hours for such were determined (Item A).

FSTB Update (Certification Coordinator Gary Howard):

- Reciprocity for certifications earned from another state was explained by Gary Howard.

Division of Labor Update (Joseph Mullen):

- Nothing discussed.

Old Business:

- The Fire Service Training Bureau Burn/Training Building Project has a designated committee that will start meeting once the funds are available. 3 acres of land has been given to us by Camp Dodge to build concrete pads and structures for training. \$200,000 was to be added to the Volunteer Firefighter Training Fund specifically to help cover annual maintenance costs to

maintain the grounds, purchase supplies such as Propane, electricity, etc. There is a potential for \$2.1 million dollars to be placed into a RIIF to help accomplish this project.

New Business:

Item A

- HazMat Operations/Firefighter 1, 160 training hours.
 - 3.5 years ago, a committee of about 14 people was formed to determine if hours should be increased with the new IFSTA Essentials 7 curriculum. ICS was incorporated into the program, as well as HazMat Awareness and Operations, more up-to-date fire dynamics, cancer awareness and VEIS to name a few. An increase the amount of training hours was identified to cover this new and relevant material. The 160 hours came from making each of the 8 units taught 20 hours in length to cover material. Any time left over should be used for review, skills or using the web-based IFSTA program “Resource One” to enhance students understanding of material.
 - The question that is being asked of the FSTB: Is 160 hours too many hours to teach FF1?
 - Kim Fensterman made the point that firefighters are not trained to the test. They are trained to make them better firefighters so they are safe on the fire grounds or to keep personal property and/or people safe. Her point was that they can challenge the test at any time. They are not required to sit through the 160 hours of training. She also pointed out the misconception that students think that everything on the test was taught in the 160 hours; which is just not possible.
 - According to the feedback Bureau Chief Kraemer obtained from the Council, the consensus was that more hours are needed to teach the material. In Iowa, FF1 can be challenged (i.e. one can study on their own or not take a class to take the certification exam), classes can be taught in-house by a fire department’s own certified instructor, or students can take a FF1 class offered and taught by FSTB instructors. FDs have options at their disposal to complete FF1 training, so as long as each firefighter is **TRAINED to the NFPA 1001 Standard, at a minimum and as required by law.** In addition, certification is not required by the state.
 - A motion was made by Ray Reynolds: The Firefighter 1 curriculum process the FSTB recommends for achieving certification shall remain 160 instructional hours. Nothing precludes other training processes, less hours, or other approved means to seek certification. Motion seconded by **Lonni** Koch. All approved. Motion carries.

Item B

- Regional Test Sites/Cancellations
 - Discussion was held about the concern over canceled test sites and the reasons for them being canceled. The reason for cancellation was because the numbers for these test sites were too low. John Kraemer mentioned that we adjusted by making sure a test site wasn't canceled twice in a row for the same region. Moving forward according to John Kraemer and Gary Howard, The FSTB will not cancel a test site regardless of the amount of students who have registered.
 - There was some discussion about the Regional Testing locations and their benefit to everyone. It was well accepted by the Council to continue to follow current certification test site procedures. Algona and Storm Lake FDs were added as additional Regional Testing locations to help fill in some larger geographical holes.

Item C

- Certification Patches
 - John Kraemer mentioned concern existed from some firefighters regarding when a firefighter is granted reciprocity for their fire certifications, that they do not receive Iowa patches. This has become an issue with regard to some fire department's uniforms.
 - Iowa certification patches are only given to those who went through Iowa's certification process and passed. Ray Reynolds is of the opposite opinion where if they are certified through IFSAC/Pro Board, they should be allowed to buy an Iowa patch. Discussion was made to possibly change FSTB policy. Deb Krebill was in agreement with John Kraemer that the FSTB keep the current policy the same. This would instill with our firefighters a sense of pride and hard work/study ethic and would also encourage others to go through the certification process in Iowa to earn such a patch. John Kraemer reminded the Council that firefighters earning an Iowa certification and patch do not get patches when they move and are granted reciprocity in another state, because that firefighter did not go through that state's certification process. Reciprocity "recognizes" one's certification. Kraemer reminded Council members that the certification patches represented one has successfully completed **Iowa's certification process** for a particular level. If one wants an Iowa certification patch, they should be earned by completing Iowa's certification process. Chairperson Justin Adams made the recommendation to table this issue for now and take the discussion back to each Council member's respective associations.

Item D

- Legislative Updates
 - Fire/EMS Legislative Workgroup was created with the Presidents from each of the major fire and EMS associations and their respected lobbyists. Legislation discussed included a potential change to the Firefighter Minimum Training Standards, Length of Service Award (LOSAP), emergency vehicles and use of lights and sirens at parades, fire protection districts, and tax abatements for volunteer firefighters, to name a few. Some of the mentioned legislation is to help with recruitment, retention and sharing of resources. The big questions is: What are fire departments and their communities offering to its citizens to help recruit and/or retain their firefighters?

Additional Business:

- Scott Kovarna mentioned that our state's USAR teams are being deployed to help with the problems of Bird Flu.

Public Comments:

- None.

Action Items:

- It was suggested to buy mobile microphones for people using Zoom. John stated he would try to accomplish that by the end of the fiscal year.

Next Council Meeting:

- Tentative date for next meeting is July 14, 2022 at the FSTB.

Adjournment:

Motion

Scott Kovarna called for a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Ray Reynolds. Motion Carried and Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm

