

Iowa Fire Service & Emergency Response Council

Meeting Minutes November 18, 2021 Fire Service Training Bureau

Council Members Present:

Justin Adams - *IA Fire Chiefs Association*
Jeff Kling, Vice Chair - *Public member*
Pam Kenkel - *Public member*
Lonni Koch - *IA Firefighters Association*
Scott Kovarna - *IA Association of Professional Firefighters*
Bonnie Cook - *IA Firefighters Association*
Brian Platz – *IA Association of Professional Fire Chiefs*
Ray Reynolds - *IA Association of Professional Fire Chiefs*
Joe Mullen - *OSHA, Division of Labor, Ex-Officio member*
Megan Wichmann- *IA Association of 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*

Absent (Excused):

Thomas Craighton – *IEMSA & IaSFSI*
Deb Krebill - *IA Fire Chiefs Association*

Resigned:

Alicia Lidtke - *IA Firefighters Association*

Guests:

Kim Fensterman - *Kirkwood Community College*

Call to Order:

Chairperson, Justin Adams, called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve Agenda by Justin Adams; second by Jeff Kling. Approved.

Approval of Minutes:

Meeting Minutes from July 15, 2021. Motion to approve the Minutes at the next meeting by Lonni Koch; seconded by Ray Reynolds. Approved.

IFSERC Membership Update:

Alicia Lidtke from the Iowa Firefighters Association resigned creating a vacancy. Information on how vacancies are filled was submitted to President Jason Barrick for consideration and he will be submitting nominations to the Governor's office for a replacement.

Introduction of Megan Wichmann as the newest member of the IFSERC Board, representing the Iowa Association of Professional Firefighters. Megan is a FT firefighter with the Cedar Rapids Fire Department.

Community College Report (Kim Fensterman):

Community Colleges are still dealing with Covid protocols.

Community College representatives would like to know if they can receive a list of the Fire Service Training Bureau's Instructor's due to low numbers of instructors at some community colleges. Russ Grossman stated he would share that information.

The question arose about the Instructor's that are not on the TS1 list, yet they still do training, how do they get updates and paperwork. Those instructors on the current FSTB TS1 list are current and active DPS employees. Those instructors not on the list can contact the FSTB to receive updates and assistance.

Kim asked for more clarification in the procedure guides about accommodations and what all that entails and what documentations do they need.

BC Kraemer stated that requests for formal accommodations are based on the individual candidate and upon his/her care providers specific accommodation request (extra time, having a reader, etc.). The accommodations requested have to be reasonable. Furthermore, the FSTB follows what most colleges utilize with reference to academic accommodations. One of the most requested accommodations is for extra time.

Kim stated that the Firefighter 1 training requests have increased, but there is a lack of Instructors to teach said course.

BC Kraemer informed Kim that instructor recruitment has been difficult not only for the community colleges, but for the FSTB as well as of late. The FSTB is waiting to bring on board several new instructors after the new WorkDay HR/payroll platform bugs have been fully worked out. There are some regional gaps where the FSTB needs to do more specific recruitment in.

BC Kraemer follows up that data has showed struggles on the HazMat Awareness pass/fail ratios. Preliminarily, these issues could arise from portions of the ERG book not being fully covered (white pages, the exam only having 25 questions and each question being weighed more heavily, etc.). A deep dive by the FSTB will be done to better explore why students are having issues with Hazmat Awareness exams. Ray Reynolds mentioned an IFSTA computer/phone application that may be beneficial for students to utilize to learn and understand hazardous materials.

IaSFSI Report:

Thomas Craighton not present to give report.

SFM Update (SFM Dan Wood):

FM Wood mentioned the Southeast Iowa Training Day in October 2021 had 92 students and had a good concept to grow on.

Arson Explosives: New agent in the Dubuque area.

New bomb suits have been well received.

Received a \$365,000 new bomb robot through a Homeland Security Grant.

278 callouts for agents this year and 80 explosive calls. Both numbers are up.

Fire Prevention Bureau has new Fire Inspector in Carroll area now.

Still working on Health Care budget due to COVID.

The Building Code Commissioner position has been re-posted. It is no longer classified as "at will" making it a more secure position.

Plan Reviewers are extremely busy. They reviewed over a billion dollars-worth of construction plans last year. That's about 900 plans each between the four of them.

The Electrical Bureau recently adopted the new 2020 International Electrical Code while making a couple of amendments.

Fireworks: 596 permits/licenses were issued as of this year. There were a few injuries, but no fires or deaths reported yet.

Discussions about Fire Reporting came up and how the State's NFIRS system is underutilized by fire departments.

FSTB Update (Bureau Chief Kraemer):

Iowa Society Fire Instructor's Conference is Dec. 10 & 11. FSTB is hosting the 2nd day at Camp Dodge.

Fire School will be held in July again.

Budget: Appropriations for FSTB comes from the State Fire Marshal's Division for salary and benefits. FSTB does not have its own operating budget. We self-generate our own operating budget by assessing a service fee from the training fund of about 30%, which we use for a self-operating budget.

FSTB has 9 full time positions and about 125 part-time positions which we deem as field staff or TS1's.

The Special Programs Coordinator position is now in the final interview process.

FSTB is continually staying operational under the CDC's recommendations pertaining to COVID.

The move to Camp Dodge has been successful.

Received a \$20,000 grant from FEMA to put on more advanced courses.

Attendance for our Annual State Fire School in 2021 was a low 217 attendees. Our next Annual State Fire School will be July 22-24, 2022. Vendors welcomed.

This year we offered 5 Chief Officer Classes, 3 from the Leadership Series NFA, and a couple from the new Fire Chief Series. More to come.

2020 the FSTB was awarded a half a million dollar AFG grant and it was used to purchase a semi-truck and a fire truck.

Currently drafting specifications for a new Fire Truck.

Camp Dodge has offered 2 - 3 acres to use as training grounds for the FSTB to build a new burn building and other infrastructure to help with re-establishing the conducting of fire academies, workshops and other trainings.

FSTB Update (Field Programs Coordinator Russ Grossman):

Mobile Training Unit requests have progressed nicely and we are right on tracking using up the Volunteer Training Fund.

FSTB has thus far 127 mobile training prop deployments in CY2021

Russ reiterated earlier discussion about the decrease in people wanting or willing to be Instructors in some areas of the state and a more targeted recruitment approach by the FSTB is going to be looked at.

Second burn trailer is up and running. We have a total of 3.

FSTB Update (Certification Coordinator Gary Howard by John Kraemer):

Gary is currently doing site visit in Missouri for IFSAC.

FSTB is having a Pro-Board site visit Dec. 8 & 9, 2021 in order to get this accreditation back.

FSTB is preparing for its IFSAC re-accreditation site visit for February 2022.

Passing rates as of November 2021:

HazMat Operation – 75%

FF1 – 66%

FF2 – 79%

The FSTB has successfully implemented a different computer based testing platform called nexTEST. It is currently used by law enforcement in their testing processes.

With Wi-Fi capability, students will be able to bring their own device (BYOD) to a proctored test site. Paper tests will still be available, as another option for students.

There are 22 exam sites across the state to test, each having 3 - 4 testing opportunities a year so students don't have to travel too far. This should reduce the hardship on students having to travel and provides an average of 70 different testing opportunities within the state.

The FSTB Certification Program is rebranding the main patch and rocker bars for certifications to match the new FSTB emblem.

Update Division of Labor (Joe Mullen):

Joe Mullen is on the Board coordinating the Governor's Annual Safety Conference. A conference was held at Prairie Meadows on November 1 & 2, 2021 with a good turnout of around 180 people. For next year's conference, the Fire Service Training Bureau was invited to provide training props and some demonstrations. BC Kraemer accepted the invitation to participate in the conference.

There was discussion brought up by Ray Reynolds about minors at Fire Departments. John Kraemer asked Joe Mullen about his summary of Child Labor Laws and safety issues. These laws would be disseminated to the Council members.

Discussion continued about how to educate students at the high school level to become a firefighter and what to do and moving the accepted age to 17 years old. Law would need changed to do such. Iowa's child labor laws are defined in Iowa Code and are very specific. These laws would need to be followed until a change is made.

Old Business:

Discussion arose about appointing 4 members to the Firefighting Equipment Revolving Loan Fund sub-committee. Motion by BC Kraemer that new amended subcommittee be composed of Ray Reynolds, Pam Kenkel, Brian Platz, and Lonni Koch. Motion passed.

BC Kraemer asked for 3 members to be appointed to a subcommittee to work with the State Fire Marshal and BC Kraemer for a separate operating budget for the Fire Service Training Bureau. The work group for the

operational budget committee is Brian Platz, Megan Wichmann and Justin Adams.

Committee members for Phase 2, requesting funds for our Regional Fire Training Facility, so far is Scott Kovarna and Ray Reynolds.

New Business:

New Fire Brigade Standard Proposed

Jeff Kling stated OSHA is considering revising their Fire Brigade standards, expanding it to All Emergency Services (Emergency Response Standard) that will affect many entities; Standard 1910.156. There is a concern on how it will apply to the NFPA and if it will clash.

Action Item

Next Committee Meeting

March 24, 2022

Adjournment:

Motion

Ray Reynolds called for a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Scott Kovarna. Motion Carried and Meeting was adjourned at 3:08 PM

