



Lake Region Firefighters Association

October 18, 2010 Lake Region Meeting Minutes

President Doug Storck called the annual meeting of the Lake Region Firefighters Association to order at 7:40 PM. The pledge of allegiance to the U.S. flag was said. A moment of silence was observed for all fallen firefighters. We were welcomed to Hoffman by host chief Vern Haack. Chief Haack thanked everyone for coming and thanked his staff for preparations for the meeting. Roll call was taken by the Hoffman Fire Dept. at the registration table showing 63 firefighters representing 18 fire departments. There were 6 guests and vendors present. Minutes from the July quarterly meeting and the annual Board of Directors meeting were emailed. Reading of July quarterly meeting minutes were waived with a motion made by Forada and second by St. Cloud to approve the minutes. Motion carried. Reading of the annual Board of Directors meeting minutes were waived with a motion made by St. Stephen and second by Holdingford to approve the minutes. Motion carried. The treasurer's report was presented showing a current balance in the checking account of \$ 3,726.36. Motion was made by Albany and second by Forada to accept the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Mike Schroeder, MSFDA representative presented his report. The MSFDA board held a meeting in St. Cloud. Mike congratulated Alexandria Fire Dept. for sending a team of firefighters to compete at the Firefighters Challenge in Indiana. The 2011 MSFDA conference will be in Detroit Lakes June 2 – 4 and will be a week earlier than this year. Alexandria will host the 2012 MSFDA conference. The MSFDA has signed contracts with the 2011 conference symposium speakers from the Seattle Fire Dept. and is working on planning of other training activities for the conference. The MSFDA website is being updated regularly and Mike urged everyone to check it at www.msfga.org. The MSFDA and the MSFCA assisted with hosting of the National Volunteer Fire Council's annual conference held in Bloomington. The conference went very well with attendees from 48 different states in attendance. Bloomington Fire Dept. is to be commended for their efforts in assisting with this event as well. Mike spoke about the Fire Safety Account and efforts to identify funding and possible uses of money from the account to be approved in the next legislative session. Mike informed those in attendance that the Fire and Rescue Shared Services Task Force report titled "A Blueprint for Shared Services" is now available on the State Fire Marshal's website at www.dps.state.mn.us. This task force was formed by Governor Pawlenty to study the possibility of fire departments sharing certain services as an effort to save money. \$200,000 is being proposed to be spent from the Fire Safety Account to assist with further study of shared fire services in local applications between fire departments. Mike encouraged fire departments to stay in tune with these efforts as a sign of the future to provide services at a reasonable cost, and is happening in all facets of government service delivery. \$400,000 from the Fire Safety Account is being proposed to be used by the State Fire Marshal's office to be used for hotel and daycare inspections. \$240,000 is being proposed to be spent on the 10 CAT/ERT teams in the state to increase their training compensation from \$45,000 to \$65,000 annually. \$40,000 to be used towards the De-Con program. The proposal also includes \$500,000 to be used for Task Force I; the Structural Collapse teams based in Minneapolis with

three satellite teams in outstate MN. The budget for these programs totals close to \$1.4 million with another \$2.7 million budgeted to be used for firefighter training. This is the current proposed budget presented to Commissioner Campion and will be further discussed. A legislative feedback survey was handed out to all fire departments in attendance to identify the top legislative priorities to focus on in the upcoming state legislative session. These issues included: Fire Safety Account: Appropriate Fire Safety Account money to Fire Training, Donated Equipment: Civil immunity for donated equipment, Competitive Bidding: Exception for purchases of used equipment, Workers Comp to Cover Mental Injuries, Individual Contributions to Volunteer Pension Plans, Tax relief for volunteer firefighter pensions, and Subsidized healthcare program for paid on call/volunteer firefighters. Mike highlighted each of these issues. The MSFDA in coalition with the American Cancer Society proclaimed the period of October 25 -27 as cancer awareness period encouraging firefighters to wear pink shirts or ribbons to honor those who battle cancer. Mike also reminded all firefighters to monitor their turn-out gear and have it cleaned regularly to remove the cancer causing agents that become attached during firefighting operations. Max Radil asked MSFDA rep. Schroeder if it would be possible to move some funding from the Fire Safety Account to MNSCU to possibly avoid some employee position losses. Mike said that this could not be done presently, due to the definition of how the Fire Safety Account monies can be spent. Mike addressed another issue that some fire departments are frustrated with, which is the fact that the firefighter training needs to be conducted prior to the reimbursement request being submitted to the state. Some smaller fire departments can have trouble carrying the financial burden and would rather have the money upfront from the Fire Safety Account prior to conducting the training. This could be a reason why participation in the program is not as high as expected. Mike stated that there were 340 fire department requests for monies out of 780 fire departments, requests ranged from \$70,000 to \$300, which would average to \$18,000 per request, and the average award was \$9,400. The use of the Fire Safety Account monies needs to be utilized through the current format or risk loss of funding from the state.

MSFDA President Shane Schmidt was also in attendance and addressed the region. Shane commended Mike Schroeder for his dedication to bringing forth his reports to the region recognizing Mike's last report as MSFDA representative for the Lake Region. Mike is currently the Vice-President of the MSFDA, a term expiring in June of 2011. A round of applause was given to Mike Schroeder for his years of service to the region. Shane and Mike will be attending a networking session in Iowa conducted by 7 Midwestern states to identify common issues facing fire departments. The MSFDA is assisting with preparations for a festival, parade, and tribute in Minneapolis September 16 – 18, 2011 in honor of firefighters. Shane cautioned fire departments of a new trend called "Death by Haz-Mat" in which a fire department receives a call to a "slumper" in a vehicle which turns out to be a Haz-Mat incident. The person uses common household chemicals to create "hydrogen sulfide" which is inhaled as a way of committing suicide. This could be a serious hazard to firefighters inadvertently opening the vehicle door without their SCBA and inhaling the chemical. This has happened twice already in Minnesota. The winter meeting of the MSFDA board will be January 21 – 22 in St. Cloud to review activities of the MSFDA now and into the future.

Bill Thoennes, MSFCA representative presented his report. The MSFCA conference will be October 21 – 23 in Rochester. Bill highlighted anticipated events during the conference. Fire Service Day at the Capital will be March 8th, 2011. Bill encouraged everyone to check the MSFCA website at: www.msfc.org for current events. The website also has many links to other fire related sites. Bill highlighted some of the legislative issues identified in the survey, specifically the issue of advancing

Workers Comp. coverage to cover mental illness resulting from a fire/rescue event which has affected a fire department in the Lake Region; Garfield Fire Department.

Dean Wrobbel, MFSCB representative presented his report. Dean forwards the MFSCB reports to the Lake Region Secretary to email out to the Lake Region fire departments and will continue to do this. Dean highlighted new certifications that will be coming out including: Plan examiner, Technical Rescue/Ropes I, and Fire Instructor III. They will be setting up a 472 Haz-Mat Operations and a 472 Haz-Mat Technician certifications which meet the full NFPA standards requirements. The MFSCB has conducted several make-up test sites across the state for firefighters needing to make-up a certification. There are Haz-Mat courses available for free in Alabama through assistance from HSEM which assists with airfare and other costs. Fire Investigator certification training has been going well with 18 certified and another 20 in the process to become certified. The MFSCB is currently conducting a long range planning session to determine future needs of the regions across the state. Dean encouraged everyone to check the MFSCB website at: www.mfscb.org for current events and upcoming testing.

John Steinbach, State Fire Marshal representative presented his report. The St. Paul Fire Dept. in cooperation with the State Fire Marshal's office has constructed a "Kitchen Fire Safety" trailer to educate the public in what to do in the event of a kitchen fire. A DVD video titled "Kitchen Fire Safety" is being made by Becki White, State Fire Marshal's office and will be distributed at the MSFCA conference for fire departments to use for public education training. John asked if anyone had any problems with the online MNFIRS program; the state is still striving for 100 percent participation statewide. The "Fire in Minnesota" report for 2009 will be handed out at the MSFCA conference. John highlighted a few topics from the report. As of this meeting, there have been 27 fire-related deaths in the state this year. John reminded everyone that they need to fill out an additional form available from the State Fire Marshal's website for fires that were started from a FSC (Fire Standard Compliant) cigarette as a way for the state to track these types of fires. A "Basic Fire Investigation" course will be conducted in February in Thief River Falls and in March in Mankato. The advanced course will be held in April in Thief River Falls and Mankato. John encouraged everyone to monitor the website at: www.fire.state.mn.us for current and upcoming events. John announced a new "Life Safety Initiatives-Everyone Goes Home" program led by the State Fire Marshal's fire investigators who have had training to teach the program. The program has 16 life initiatives taught with a power-point presentation to increase safety awareness and strive to have every firefighter go home safely. There will be more information about this program at the MSFCA conference. A consulting firm with Homeland Security and FEMA is gathering data to formulate a database of all fire station locations in the U. S. If a department receives a request for information, it should be considered legitimate and should be completed and returned.

There was no VFBA report.

There was no DNR report.

Bill Mund, IAFC (Great Lakes Division) representative presented his report. Bill reminded everyone of their ability to purchase through the GPO program and save money. The GPO program will announce by early December a new national contract for SCBA purchases. They are also working with a vendor, Talentwise, a background investigation source for conducting background checks for current and/or new employees. Sprint offers cell phone service contracts for reduced costs for firefighters. Book purchases can be made from the bookstore at www.fireservicebooks.com with rebates going back to the Great Lakes

Division then distributed to the state associations. At the last board meeting, they endorsed a program initiated by a volunteer firefighter in Indiana with 25 years working with Boy Scouts titled “Get Fired up over Scouting”. It is an effort to promote the Boy Scout program and encourage involvement possibly in conjunction with local fire station open houses. Bill echoed the information from John Steinbach referencing the “Everyone Goes Home” program as an important program in promoting fire ground safety. Bill announced that the City of St. Cloud will be hosting the 2012 CANAM Police and Fire competitions. More information will be forthcoming with any profits from the event donated to charities. The IAFC (Great Lakes Division) website is www.gld-iafc.org.

Warren Jorgenson, MN Fire/EMS Safety Center presented his report. The AFG program has wrapped up the distribution of its 2009 awards. The 2010 process is soon to start. Make sure that your department’s contact information is up to date. They will be making an extra effort this year to get all the awards out sooner, hopefully by January 1st. Warren encouraged any paid on call/volunteer firefighter that has a desire to become a full-time firefighter someday to take the necessary steps to become grandfather licensed through the MFSCB when it becomes available. The State Training Board is gathering updates on fire departments that have qualified instructors on their departments. Warren passed out hand-outs referencing upcoming training activities and the upcoming Fire Instructors and Training Officers Association of Minnesota (FITOAM) conference to be held in January in St. Cloud. **Warren announced that this will be his last report to the region.** The State Board of MNSCU has decided to no longer keep the fire activities at the office of the chancellor. Fund 120 associated with providing customized training and has been rolled into another Fund 110, the degree/ credit funding source of the college system. The positions of Warren Jorgenson and Bruce Roed have been cut. Some colleges may no longer have the state support in regards to Fire/EMS training. It will be up to the local college president as to what level of funding support Fire/EMS training will receive. Warren’s last date of employment will be December 3rd. Warren had 41 years working in the fire service with over 30 years working in the State delivering fire training.

Mike Schroeder led a tribute to Warren Jorgenson for his long career in the Minnesota fire service. Mike and those in attendance gave Warren a standing ovation in appreciation for everything he has given to the fire service in Minnesota, specifically the Lake Region.

Scott Schaefer, Alexandria Tech. College coordinator presented his report. Alexandria will host a state school March 19 – 20, 2011. There will be a reduction in the number of classes offered, with higher quality classes in the 12 hour range being the goal. An advisory committee is forming and will meet to discuss the future needs of fire training and how to meet these needs. Scott will be contacting some members of the region to serve on this committee. The college is using more partnerships with other colleges to deliver training, specifically Technical Rescue. Fire departments need to get their training scheduled sooner rather than waiting until mid summer, if they will be using MN Fire Training Board monies to avoid scheduling conflicts. The restructuring at MNSCU will have an impact on local colleges, and their support of fire training locally.

Larry Rieber, St. Cloud Tech. College coordinator presented his report. St. Cloud will also be forming an advisory committee of local representatives in the fire service. There are Haz-Mat funds available from Homeland Security through the tech colleges that can be used for Haz-Mat training. Contact Larry for your needs. St. Cloud Tech. College will be hosting a NFA course titled “Decision Making for Initial

Company Operations” on February 5 – 6, 2011. There will be a Fire Safety Symposium in St. Cloud on December 4, 2010 with five speakers planned. Larry will be coordinating a state school in Brainerd April 9 -10, 2011. St. Cloud is planning a Basic Pumping class to be held in the spring of 2011 for new operators, date to be determined. They are also planning a “Fire Apparatus Officer I” class for the spring with MFSCB certification at the end of the course. A “Fire Officer I” class will be starting January 12, 2011, 6:30 - 9:30 pm, for new or future fire officers. A “Fire Inspector I” class is being formed to start on January 6, 2011 if enough students sign up. Certification testing will follow these programs if desired. The voucher dollar program is still operating and fire departments should use this money towards training needs.

Mike Roe, Ridgewater Tech. College coordinator presented his report. Ridgewater will be holding a “Positive Pressure Attack – Positive Pressure Ventilation” class on December 4th. A structure has been identified to use for the hands-on/ practical portion of the training. A NFA “Leadership 3 Strategies for Supervisory Success” course will be held on February 19 – 20, 2011. You do not have to have Leadership I or II completion to participate in this training. Both of these events will be held at the Willmar Fire Station. When training is done at a state school, fire departments should save receipts showing the type of training conducted meeting National Fire Academy standards which can then be used for reimbursement from the MN Fire Training Board. Firefighter I and II classes will be starting soon. A “Haz-Mat Operations Technical Review” will be held February 5, 2011. Mike also had a handout from the MN PCA with contact information to have a representative from the PCA come to your fire station and conduct a three hour training workshop on when to call the PCA and what to do prior to their arrival.

Marv Calvin, MN Board of FF Training & Education representative was unable to attend the meeting.

Bruce West, Homeland Security & Emergency Management presented his report. Bruce thanked Warren Jorgenson for always being there for fire departments across the state and their training needs. Haz-Mat grants are available through the HMEP program to send firefighters to outstate Haz-Mat training and will cover all costs except the firefighter’s salaries. This is the second year of this program. Bruce reminded everyone of the grant monies available up to \$6,000 from HSEM to be used by a group of fire departments holding a Haz-Mat training exercise. Anhydrous ammonia leaks need to be reported to the State Duty Officer no matter the size of the leak. The De-Con program study is under way gathering input from regional representatives, and state fire associations as to the future of the De-Con program. The study is being conducted by Peter Butler, hired by HSEM of MN. They have been hearing comments that many fire departments are not prepared to do gross and mass decontamination procedures with little training in this area. The De-Con trailers are also being discussed with the appropriate placement of these trailers and restructuring of the trailers relative to adding another axle and redistributing the weight for easier towing of the trailers. There will be two focus group meetings to also gather input for the De-Con program to be held: October 27th in Grand Rapids at the fire station, and November 2nd in Owatonna at Cabelas. Both dates will include a 1pm and 7pm sessions to accommodate people’s work schedules. A final report is expected by the end of November and will be published on several state fire websites. HSEM has made a commitment to provide sustainable funding for the hosting department of a De-Con trailer for the future through funding from the state to help cover maintenance costs. There have been reports of water tower and wastewater treatment plant break-ins around the state. The types of activities need to be reported. Bruce reminded everyone to be aware of this growing trend and pay attention to the public facilities. Bruce expanded on the “death by Haz-Mat” trend using chemical assisted suicide in

vehicles and the awareness that firefighters need to have. Hydrogen sulfide training is available for fire departments. Nationally, cyber security continues to be a concern for agencies and fire departments.

OLD BUSINESS

DIRECTORY/WEBSITE: President Storck updated the region on the status of the Lake Region website development. Data is being gathered and entered into the new website. He anticipated that the website would be up in about a month. The website address for the Lake Region will be:

www.lakeregionfire.com. Both President Storck and District #2 representative Jeff Drais have been and will continue to work with Iceberg Web Design, a company approved by the Board of Directors to facilitate the formation of the Lake Region website.

BYLAW REVIEW & ACCEPTANCE: Mike Schroeder presented the bylaw changes as proposed by a committee formed to review and bring the bylaws up to date with past actions approved by the region. These were introduced and held over from previous meetings and each fire department was mailed a copy of the proposed changes. A motion was made by Alexandria to increase the President's annual salary to \$200 from \$120 as part of a bylaw change second by St. Cloud. Motion was approved unanimously with a hand vote, one per fire department in attendance. Albany moved adoption of the changes to the bylaws as a whole be approved second by St. Stephen. Motion was approved unanimously with a hand vote, one per department in attendance. Associate membership language that had been presented and mailed to all fire departments in the region was then presented. A motion was made by Brandon to incorporate the proposed associate membership language into the new bylaws second by Forada. Discussion ensued with Bill Mund, St. Cloud moving an amendment to Article III, Section 3 to allow for voting for acceptance of a new fire department member to the association to be conducted at the next association's meeting instead of forcing that department to wait until the annual meeting held in October. The last sentence in Section 3 would then read "The fire department's membership request will be voted on by the Active Membership at the association's next meeting." Both Brandon and Forada accepted this as a friendly amendment to their motion. Motion was approved unanimously by a hand vote, one per department in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

Elections were held with the following results:

President Storck opened the floor for nominations for a three-year term for Secretary/Treasurer. Albany nominated Jeff Drais, St. Stephen second by Holdingford. No other nominations were heard. A motion was made by Forada second by Albany to cast a white ballot electing Jeff Drais as Secretary/Treasurer. Motion carried.

President Storck opened the floor for nominations for a two-year term for MSFDA representative. Mike Schroeder has been selected by the MSFDA board to complete a one-year term as MSFDA Vice-President. There were no nominations heard from those in attendance. Albany moved to table the election of this position to the January meeting second by Alexandria. Motion carried. Election of the MSFDA representative is to be conducted at the January meeting.

President Storck opened the floor for nominations for a two-year term for MFSCB representative currently held by Dean Wrobbel. St. Stephen nominated Dean Wrobbel, St. Cloud second by Holdingford. No other nominations were heard. A motion was made by Alexandria second by Albany to cast a white ballot electing Dean Wrobbel as MFSCB representative. Motion carried.

2011 meeting locations will be:

District # 4 January 10, 2011 at Elbow Lake
District #1 April 18, 2011 TBD
District #2 July 18, 2011 at St. John's University
District #3 October 17, 2011 at Alexandria

There was no interest in hosting the Eugene L. Weber Lake Region School at this time.

Next meeting will be in Elbow Lake January 10th.

Motion to adjourn was made by Albany second by St. Stephen. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Tom Zabinski, Secretary/Treasurer