



Lake Region Firefighters Association

October 17, 2011 Lake Region Meeting Minutes

President Doug Storck called the meeting of the Lake Region Firefighters Association to order at 7:36 PM. We were welcomed to Alexandria Fire Department by host Chief Jeff Karrow. Chief Jeff Karrow thanked everybody for coming and asked everybody to stand while the Alexandria Fire Department Honor Guard presented the colors, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed for all fallen firefighters. Alexandria Mayor Dan Ness welcomed the members present to Alexandria and recognized the attending state representatives and senator. Roll call was taken by the Alexandria Fire Department at the registration table showing 80 firefighters representing 22 fire departments. There were 10 guests and vendors present. State Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen (District 11), State Representative Torrey Westrom (District 11a), State Representative Paul Anderson (District 13a) and State Representative Andrew Falk (District 20a) were also present. Minutes from the July quarterly meeting were emailed. Reading of July quarterly meeting minutes were waived with a motion made by Albany and seconded by St. Cloud to approve the minutes. The treasurer's report was presented.

Type	Date	Num	Name	Memo	Amount	Balance
Plaza Park Bank						\$4,815.02
Check	08/11/2011	5001	Jeff Drais	Postage 2/17/11 - 6/28/11	(\$55.71)	\$4,759.31
Check	09/21/2011	5002	Gerard's	Director's meeting 9/21/11	(\$186.45)	\$4,572.86
Check	10/17/2011	5003	Iceberg Web Design	Web site bill	(\$25.00)	\$4,547.86
Check	10/17/2011	5004	Doug Storck	2011 President salary	(\$200.00)	\$4,347.86
Check	10/17/2011	5005	Jeff Drais	2011 Secretary pay	(\$599.00)	\$3,748.86
Check	10/17/2011	5006	Jeff Drais	VOID:	\$0.00	\$3,748.86
Check	10/17/2011	5007	Jeff Drais	Postage 9/22/11 - 10/5/11	(\$45.32)	\$3,703.54
Check	10/18/2011	5008	Minnesota Fire Service Foundation	Firefighter Memorial Donation	(\$1,000.00)	\$2,703.54
Total					(\$2,111.48)	\$2,703.54

Motion was made by Albany and second by Holdingford to accept the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

STATE LEGISLATORS

Area legislators meet with the group and held a question and answer period to talk about fire service issues. Some of the highlights are listed.

Doug Storck, Morris, talked about money budgeted for training and money received from the Fire Safety Account. Mentioned how much the money helps with training. Doug also talked about a shared services study done in the Morris area due to funding from the Fire Marshall's office.

A question from one of the legislators was how much it cost from training of a new firefighter. It was stated that Firefighter I cost about \$1,000.00. A new firefighter's training will take up most fire department's training budget which is why the Fire Safety Account is of such importance to fire departments.

Dean Wobble, St. Cloud, commented about the CAT Team/Chemical Assessment Team. St. Cloud has specialized annual training which is required over and above basic firefighter training. Senator Ingebrigtsen asked Dean about how the 800 MHz system was working in the Stearns County area and what issues were seen for other areas of the state coming online. Dean talked a little about the systems and the ability to expand out when other areas implement 800 MHz radios. Dean talked a little about how St. Cloud can communicate with other departments and the IC on scene while responding to incidence throughout the state.

Dave Orłowski, Glenwood, talked about training dollars and the Fire Safety Account. He mentioned that he uses the Fire Marshall's office often and pointed out that the Fire Marshall's budget is funded by the Fire Safety Account. Their training budget hasn't been increased in about 3 years but the amount of required training keeps increasing. The Fire Safety Account helps fire departments meet some of the need. A question about how Vo-Techs help the departments with training. Dave talked a little about the various classes offered and what is available and what departments can offer. Recruitment and retention is also an issue which adds to the training demand when new people are added.

Bruce West stated that Fire Safety Account training requests for round three was \$1.6 million, the current round was \$2,080,000; which was around \$110 per firefighter for what was allocated, not all the money was allocated by the state. Spanky touched a little on training plus the cost of outfitting new firefighters. Sherry Munyon stated that some fire departments don't have a big enough budget to even be able to pay for new firefighters to go through FFI in order to get reimbursement. Stated there is \$1.7 million sitting in the Fire Safety Accounting waiting to be appropriated by the state.

Legislators each made a statement.

All the legislators thanked the group for being invited and being allowed to listen to our concerns and being able to speak on the issues to the fire service.

Representative Andrew Falk (District 20a): Stated he didn't feel that most legislators feel there is too much money in the Fire Safety Account. This isn't the only account that was raided last session for fund services in the state. Commented about that the only reason there was money available was that \$750 million was taken away from schools and securitization of tobacco bond payment. He believes there needs to be more revenue for the state. Talked about different ways money could be raised through taxes. He understands the need for the Fire Safety Account; but other areas of the budget such as education needs funding and it will require sacrifices from other areas to fund it.

Representative Paul Anderson (District 13a): Expressed interest about shared services and how it would work. Will trying to fund the fire service the best they can. Some misconception in St. Paul about the Fire Safety Account and that the fire departments are getting as much training as they need from the account.

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen (District 11): Stated that he feel the fire service is one of the core functions of the state. Talked about different ideas and raising money at the state level and what is required to balance the budget. He also stated that the fire service should keep up their work with the Fire Service Day at the Capitol; it does get noticed. In addition he mentioned that in the larger budget, the amount the fire service asks for is not a lot of money. He stated he supports the request for the supplemental allocation of money in the Fire Safety Account in January. He is concerned about the upcoming budget and possible deficits again. Because the fund has money in it along with some other accounts like the DNR Heritage fund it is seen as a possible revenue source. The senator is hoping to keep the Fire Safety Account used for what it was intended.

Representative Torrey Westrom (District 11a): Reiterated the importance of the fire and police to the state. He suggested that some larger departments add volunteers to their ranks to help stretch their budgets. Talked about the core functionality of the volunteers in the rural areas should be looked at as a model for the fire service. Spoke on the civil immunity act that he helped pass that removed the incentive for state departments to donate used but functional equipment out of state or the country dues to possible lawsuits. He touched on the shared services and on how a county fire department could work or function.

Would it be a good policy direction to be going? He asked for feedback from the fire service. Doug Storck will talk to him after the meeting about how Morris is approaching it. Sherry Munyon stated that shared services are being looked at and how it might work in some situations but cautioned about the legislature mandating it. She also mentioned that a large portion of the state is volunteer departments and the cost savings might not be as large as some are suggesting.

REPORTS

MSFDA – Mike “Spanky” Schroeder

<http://www.msfd.org>

- MSFDA held their board meeting in St. Cloud in September.
- 2012 Conference will be June 14 – 16 in Alexandria.
- 2013 Conference will be in Bemidji.
- MSFDA did make a donation to the MN fallen firefighters memorial.

MSFCA Report – Bill Thoennes

<http://msfca.org>

- Reminded everybody about the State Fire Chiefs Conference in St. Cloud, October 20 -22nd.
- MSFCA President Marty Scheerer’s term will be up; Randy Polzin from Isanti will be running for his position. Bill Mund, St. Cloud, will be running for Vice President.
- Looking at having a mini conference in the western part of the state. Looking at some time in February in Alexandria
- MSFCA has two kitchen fire demonstration trailers. A one hour training session is required to get the trailer. \$50 per day for the trailer.
- Early request to get MFIRS reports done.

Certification Board – Dean Wrobbel

<http://www.mfscb.org/>

- October report was emailed to the membership.
- Fire Safety Account 50% of the certification fee is covered.

State Fire Marshal - John Steinbach

<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/sfm/>

- MN Pride and Honor is putting out a pamphlet early January or February covering fire service deaths.
- Reminder that the Fire Marshal’s office put on a many trainings most of which are free. Go to the Fire Marshal website to see what classes are offered. If you want John to come out to your station and give a fire scene preservation class, it is free.
- 38 fire deaths this year, 31 fire death last year.
- 1,190 brands of fire compliant cigarettes in are now available in Minnesota. A twist on this is that you can make your own cigarettes which are not fire standard compliant cigarettes.
- Fire in MN 2010 will be available at the MSFCA conference in St. Cloud.

VFBA – Steve Spaeth

<http://www.vfbaofmn.com>

- Reminder that the VFBA is your insurance company.
- Need to turn in a report if anybody get hurt in addition to workers comp.

DNR

www.dnr.state.mn.us

- No Report

IAFC - Great Lakes Division - Bill Mund

<http://www.gld-iafc.org/>

- No Report

Technical College

Ridgewater College – Mike Roe (Craig Baker)

<http://www.ridgewater.edu>

- 7 FFI classes coming up this fall and winter.
- HazMat grant money will be out soon, hazmat awareness, operation, LP and ethanol training.
- Alexandria State School March 17 – 18, 2012.

St. Cloud Technical and Community College – Chad Steffens

<http://www.sctcc.edu>

- FFI & FFII coming up on November 17th, Bowlus and Rice on December 7.
- State Fire Schooling September 22nd & 22rd will be back in St. Cloud.
- Will begin to offer certification practicals for classes in addition to the written portion.
- Use training dollars early.
- Building a burn trailer for the St. Cloud area.
- Due to increased requirements the basic FFI class is now 96 hours. FFII and HazMat ops is now considered the entry level requirements.
- Voucher dollars will go away June 30, 2012

MN Board of Firefighter Training & Education – Bruce West

www.mbfte.state.mn.us

- Emphasized everybody should use up their training dollars. Remember this is a reimbursement; you need to fill out the form once payment has been made.
- Call the MBFTE office if you have any questions on if classes are allowed. (651-201-7257)
- Firefighter licensing was successful this year. About 4500 license issued. Minimum required training for fire departments in the state of Minnesota is 2 hours a month which covers the required training.
- Live burn curriculum being developed to have qualified instructors available and to be consistent across the state.
- HSEM is developing training to have Hazmat decon training for all fire departments in the state.

Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) – Kevin Reed

<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem>

- 12 of the 15 decon trailers are functional right now.
- Will have a 32 hour training to get you through the first 30 – 60 minutes of a hazmat incident.
- Sovereign citizen groups are on the rise. Not necessarily violent but they don't want the government anywhere near their property.
- Increase smash and grab in fire, police and ambulance uniforms. Not sure what is going on yet.

- Increase in the number of people creating their own explosives.

MSFDA President – Shane Schmidt

- He just got back from the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) conference, Lake George NY.
 - Looking at creating the recruitment and retention for Minnesota fire departments which will base on the current program created in New York.
 - Web site is being updated.
 - Can-Am games in St. Cloud.

Sherry Munyon

- Budget deficit again and probably looking taking some the safety account money again.
- Some have suggested to reducing the fee for the fire safety account so it doesn't grow as fast. Some don't feel fire departments need the training.
- Legislative agenda being developed for legislative issues. Look at the list of issues and send it in.
 - Supplemental appropriation for the fire safety account. Money is in there for training but it hasn't been allocated yet.
 - A suggestion from other regions is to have a constitutional amendment to dedicate the fire safety account so the legislature can't touch the money. It might be difficult to get that one passed.
 - Looking at moving the CO monitors into the fire code out the legislature statute. Or if it can't be moved into the fire code at least adding some penalty for non-compliance.
 - Opposition to the expansion of fireworks. Reasonably sure that there will be an attempt to expand the fireworks laws to include everything.
 - Request to designate the State Fire Marshal's office as the official agency to determining line of duty deaths.

Old Business

- Mike Schroeder gave a short presentation of the Minnesota Fire Service Foundation Memorial.
 - The presentation is available on the Lake Region website: www.lakeregionfire.com
 - A motion was made by Bill Thoennes, Alexandria, for the Lake Region to donate \$1,000 to the Minnesota Fire Service Foundation Firefighter Memorial.
 - Jeff Drais stated we have approximately \$3,700 in the bank we have about \$100 in expenses coming up before the end of the year. The 2012 dues will be coming in during the beginning of 2012.
- Seconded by Evansville. Motion carried.

New Business

- Directors did an audit of the checking account and Dave Yurczyk and Max Radil stated after the review they found everything in order. Motion to accept the audit was made by Albany and seconded by St. Cloud. Motion carried.
- Elections:

President

Albany nominate Scott Schaefer, Brandon Fire
 Alexandria made a motion which was seconded by Albany to cast a white ballot for Scott Schaefer for president. One vote per department, 19 yea, 0 nay.

Vice President

St. Stephen nominated Dave Yurczyk, Holdingford

Albany made a motion which was seconded by St. Cloud to cast a white ballot for Dave Yurczyk for vice-president. One vote per department, 19 yea, 0 nay.

MSFCA Representative

Ashby nominated Bill Thoennes, Alexandria

Albany made a motion which was seconded by St. Cloud to cast a white ballot for Bill Thoennes for MSFCA Representative. One vote per department, 19 yeas, 0 nays.

Caucuses

District 1

Meeting: July 2012

Location: Albany

District 2

Director: Steve Trobec, St. Stephen

Meeting: October 2012

Location: TBD

District 3

Meeting: January 2012

Location: Glenwood

District 4

Director: Joe Lembcke, Morris

Meeting: April 2012

Location: Benson

- Tom Grover was given a round of applause for 15 years as the District 4 Director.
- President Storck was given a plaque and a round of applause for his service as president of the Lake Region.

Good of the Region

- None

Next meeting will be January 9, 2011 – Glenwood. Note this is the second Monday in January.

Alexandria Fire Department Color Guard retired the colors.

Motion to adjourn was made by St. Cloud second by Albany. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 10:15 PM.



Jeff Draais, Secretary/Treasurer