

VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD

Full Board Meeting

Friday, April 16th, 2021

Meeting held electronically through Google Hangouts

12:00pm

A regular meeting of the Virginia Fire Services Board was held on April 16th, 2021 at 12:00 pm. This meeting was held electronically through Google Hangouts as a result of the State of Emergency initiated by the Honorable Ralph Northam, Governor of Virginia.

Board Chair, Walter Bailey facilitated this meeting and the Board had a constituted Quorum.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephanie L. Koren	Harry L. Day
Ryant Washington	Scott Garber
Ben Reedy	Jerome Williams
Bettie Reeves-Nobles	Keith H. Johnson
Walter T. Bailey	Robert Farrell
Ernest H. Little	James Davis Poindexter
Rick Gregory	Steven Sites

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Dennis Linaburg

GUESTS PRESENT

Jeff Brown

Kyle Flanders

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT

Travis Rickman	Brook Pittinger
Garrett Dyer	Briant Atkins
Theresa Hunter	Bill MacKay

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CHANGES IN THE AGENDA

No changes were proposed

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were offered during the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Bettie Reeves-Nobles found a grammatical error in the previous meetings on page 12. Stephanie Koren also highlighted some small typo grammatical errors. They were fixed and reviewed for accuracy. Approval of the previous meeting minutes as amended with the fixed grammatical errors motion for approval was made by Lee Day and seconded by Stephanie Koren, Unanimous agreement from the committee to approve the previous meeting minutes with amendments. Ryant Washington wished to abstain as this was his first meeting.

Liaison Reports

Training and Operations Update

The Branch continues to work with implementing Cornerstone on Demand (CSOD) and currently has over 40,000 individual profiles in the platform. The decommissioning of FSTRS on February 1st has had a significant impact on staff. On that date the “public facing” access to FSTRS was eliminated. Student records from FSTRS are still available to VDFP staff and going forward will be retrievable by VDFP staff. This was not an action that was initiated by VDFP but by VITA based on IT related security concerns. Despite after a year of asking stakeholders to upload a copy of their FSTRS transcript to CSOD, the agency is averaging about 225 requests for assistance per week.

The adoption of a long range training calendar is going well. Funded training up to June 2022 is now loaded into CSOD. There are many advantages to this to include; visibility to future training, allowing a student to strategically plan their training progression,

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localities to address Career Development scheduling, reduction in cancelations, etc. CSOD is configured to automatically send email confirmation of enrollment as well as reminders that a student is enrolled in a future class. For any class, once it is closed out by the Instructor and Division Chief (usually less than 2-weeks from completion) the student can immediately print a Certificate of Attendance. Certification Certificates from one of the 23 courses that are IFSAC and/or Pro Board accredited will be produced by Quality Assurance staff and sent to the successful student.

Training and Operations was significantly affected by the events of Calendar Year 2020. In late March the agency made the difficult decision to curtail in-person funded training. This moratorium remained in effect until the summer and resulted in significant impact to the overall training effort. When compared to 2019 are numbers down in all dimensions. However, despite this, the agency still generated impressive numbers in support of the roughly 40,000 firefighters in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- The agency was forced to cancel 291 classes in CY20. These are classes that to-date have not been rescheduled. Factors effecting this include, inability to find time on the calendar, locations still having training prohibitions in place, compliance with COVID policy, and instructor availability.
- There were 17,249 students that attended VDFP programs in 2020. This is down from the roughly 26,000 that attended classes in 2019.
 - 158 ARFF students
 - 1,796 from Division I
 - 2,001 from Division II
 - 906 from Division III
 - 857 from Division IV
 - 3,425 from Division V
 - 1,227 from Division VI
 - 3,610 from Division VII
 - 3,046 attended HTR programs
 - 215 attended VFMA programs
 - 8 attended QA related training
- The agency delivered 1,202 programs in 2020. This is down from the roughly 1,600 individual classes that were delivered in 2019.

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- 26 ARFF programs (average attendance = 6.1 students)
 - 160 in Division I (average attendance = 11.2 students)
 - 158 in Division II (average attendance = 12.7 students)
 - 77 in Division III (average attendance = 11.8 students)
 - 58 in Division IV (average attendance = 14.8 students)
 - 229 in Division V (average attendance = 15.0 students)
 - 91 in Division VI (average attendance = 13.5 students)
 - 235 in Division VII (average attendance = 15.4 students)
 - 153 HTR related (average attendance = 19.9 students)
 - 13 VFMA related (average attendance = 16.5 students)
 - 2 QA related (average attendance = 4.0 students)
-
- The agency delivered an estimated total of 663,465,536 training hours in 2020. This number is derived from: Number of classes (1,202) times the number of students (17,249) times (32) hours per class. 32 hours was used as a class average. Some are as little as 16 up to Firefighter I which is 150.
 - In 2020 the agency was accredited for 16 courses by both IFSAC as well as Pro Board. The agency was accredited by The Pro Board only for an additional 7 courses. This resulted in a total of 23 courses be accredited by IFSAC and/or Pro Board.
 - For 2020 most of our training related number are down at least 25% when compared to 2019. Overall training hours saw the greatest decline as the demand for and logistics associated with longer duration classes (Firefighter I & II as well as the Officer and Instructor series) was greatly affected by cancelations and withdrawals related to the pandemic.

Risk Management Branch Report

- **Regional Firefighter Cancer Seminar:** Presented by First Responder Center for Excellence through a Federal Grant will be held on March 27, 2021 at The Glen Allen Performing Arts Center.

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Training Injury Numbers for FY21 through 2/22/2021:

<u>VDFP Training Injuries:</u>	MO –Injury From Fall: 1 FY Total: 3
Since FY Beginning: 21	MO -Exhaustion/Over Exertion: 1 FY Total: 3
Week: 1 Months Total: 4	MO- Struck By: 0 FY Total: 1
Live Fire Training: Week: 1 FY Total: 2	MO – Strains, Sprain, Pain: 0 FY Total: 10
	MO – Burn : 0 FY Total: 0
<u>Program :</u>	MO – Other: 0 FY Total: 4
MO-Firefighter Series: 1 FY Total: 12	
MO – Mayday Operations: 0 FY Total: 1	<u>By Division:</u>
MO – HMO: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 1: 0 FY Total: 0
MO- TRT: 0 FY Total: 7	MO Div. 2: 1 FY Total: 10
MO – VFMA: 0 FY Total: 1	MO Div. 3: 0 FY Total: 1
MO – DPO : 0 FY Total 0	MO Div. 4: 0 FY Total: 1
MO – Marine: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 5: 0 FY Total: 0
MO ARFF: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 6: 0 FY Total: 1
MO – Other: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 7: 0 FY Total: 0
	MO Specialty: 0 FY Total: 8
	FY: (FMA: 1 TRT: 7 Marine: 0 ARFF: 0)

VDFP COVID 19 Agency Impacts (since 3/2020)

Date	2/17/2021
Positive Tests/Presumptive Positive	20

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Close Personal Contact/Contact with Individual Testing Positive*	46
Contact with Contact	9
Quarantines in Training Programs from Positives Tests	55
Training Programs Paused or impacted from Exposure	10
PPE Exposure (Employee using provided PPE) No Quarantine	8
Pre-existing Conditions	1
Other/Symptomatic**	5

Glen Allen HQ COVID Outbreak Mid -January

VDOF Report

Virginia Dry Hydrant Program

FY2021 brings about significant changes for Virginia's dry hydrant program. The program's long-term contractor is no longer affiliated with the program, and the VDOF has shifted to the use of two newly developed contractors to complete the needed work. There remains a backlog of yet to be completed projects from FY2020 and FY2021, but the agency has been in contact with all of the program applicants to keep them updated on the progress, and the project work is now ongoing. The program is now back on track to have all projects completed by this coming summer.

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program (VFA)

The DOF is now accepting applications for our Volunteer Fire Assistance grant program. The program is designed to provide 50% matching funds to assist with the purchase of wildland and structural PPE, equipment and training. The funds are specifically targeted

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to Virginia's rural volunteer fire departments. Full details are available on the VDOF website. In 2020, 109 fire departments received more than \$221,000 through the VFA program.

Spring Wildfire Season

From a calendar standpoint, Virginia's spring wildfire season officially began on February 15th. However, activity has been almost non-existent thus far, with only 4 fires for 11 acres for CY 2021 to date. The wet weather that prevailed during most of last year also helped to make 2020's wildfire activity the second lowest on record in terms of number of wildfires, with VDOF records going back to 1914. In calendar year 2020, the VDOF suppressed 389 wildfires, which burned 5,374 acres. The ongoing wet weather, and continued prediction for more of the same into the early summer, looks like it will keep things in our favor, from a wildfire standpoint, for at least the first half of this year.

The agency's 4 pm prescribed burning exemption program received more than 120 requests for this spring, which plan to control burn more than 14,000 acres across the Commonwealth. Exemptions are authorized under the Code of Virginia for burns which control exotic or invasive plant species, help to manage natural heritage resources, or for the improvement of wildlife habitat which cannot be completed at other times of the year.

Statewide Wildfire Training Academy

May 26 – May 29, 2021 based out of Longwood University. Nearly 300 students will take advantage of the 7 different course offerings, which include coursework focused on wildfire suppression, fire behavior, prescribed burning, and emergency incident management. This year's coursework will use a combination of in person and virtual learning opportunities to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Registration will open in early March, with information available from the VDOF website.

Motion: Keith Johnson made the motion Ernie Little made the second to approve the liaison reports as submitted exhibits.

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REPORT FROM THE VDFP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Garrett Dyer gave a status update for the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. He spoke about multiple items to include:

- In relation to ATL funding the director stated that the agency has 25 million issued to 216 localities, there are currently still 107 localities that have not collected their funds which totals close to 7 million dollars. 83 Localities have not submitted the proper paperwork. Those localities have been notified in March and the final Notice will come in May. The agency is working with stakeholders and divisions to ensure that we reach as many of these localities to submit their applications as possible to receive their ATL Funding. The uncollected funds will roll over to the next fiscal year to be disbursed amongst all localities.
- Logistics has seen improvement in the maintenance of agency trailers and equipment to ensure proper use and upkeep of those important training assets.
- Regional Fire Cancer Summit was held on March 27th.
- In FY2021 35 training injuries have been reported.
- The utilization of Cornerstone has continued to increase and FSTRS can no longer be used by outside users. All training currently planned for 2022 has been placed on Cornerstone as well to assist students to plan for future training.
- Updated Firefighter 2 program will be rolled out this spring.
- Virginia is planning to have an NFPA State weekend this year but we are still awaiting for available dates to be announced.
- The State Fire Marshal's Office has reported the 2021 Fire Fatality Report has seen 15 fire fatalities with 5 of those being in the last 24 hrs. (4 of the deaths occurred in Chesterfield County and one in Accomack County.)
- Permissible fireworks are being tested to update the listing for this upcoming year.
- The VFMA has completed 19 hours of Webinar training
- As a reminder the Fire & EMS Memorial will take place at the Richmond Raceway. We will be honoring 12 honorees and the event will not be open to the public due to COVID.
- The Virginia Department of Fire Programs has reached out to the VA Department of Forestry to coordinate a joint message 2021 Wild Fire Preparedness Day on May the 1st.

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FIRE EDUCATION & TRAINING COMMITTEE

- A. Report from the Training and Education Committee
 - i. No report was given at this meeting.
- B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- C. NEW BUSINESS

FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL COMMITTEE

- A. Report from The Fire Prevention and Control Committee
 - i. Ernie Little gave his report on the Fire Prevention and Control Committee and discussed how we will be sending the MOA to the Codes and Standards Sub-committee. He also reminded the committee about the joint meeting on May 10th.
- B. Report From The Department of Forestry
 - i. State Forester Robert Farrell gave his report stating that the Dry Hydrant program has a new contractor and asked that if the members hear of any problems to reach out and let him know.
- C. Report from The Codes and Standards Subcommittee
 - i. Committee Chair Ernie Little stated that the committee will plan to meet before the next scheduled full board meeting to discuss the MOA with BHCD.
- D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- E. NEW BUSINESS

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ADMINISTRATION, POLICY, AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

A. Report from Administration, Policy and Finance Committee

- i. Vice Chair Johnson gave his report on the committee stating that they did not formally meet prior to this meeting. He spoke of the passing of the Gender Neutral Board Rules of Procedures which passed after its second reading at our last meeting.

B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

C. NEW BUSINESS

i. Montgomery County Fire & EMS Study Request

Discussion: The committee considered and decided to do the study.

Motion: Lee day gave the motion seconded by Stephanie Koren to commission the Montgomery County Fire & EMS study.

Vote: Unanimous to commission the study

LIVE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

A. Report from the Live Structure Committee

No report was given.

B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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C. NEW BUSINESS

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Chair Walt Bailey gave a brief Report.

- He recognized the former members of the Board who were just replaced with the recent appointments
- Spoke about the 10 year turnout gear issue and applauded the acting Executive Director for his help on the issue.

FULL BOARD BUSINESS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. ATL Minimums

Discussion: The Chairman asked for the motion that was passed at our last June Meeting to be read. The motion from that meeting was, "Substitute Motion to Increase the Aid To Localities minimums from \$10,000 to \$15,000 for towns and from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for counties and cities for only Fiscal Year 2021. Pending Budget Projections to accommodate an increase for all localities. In the event of a budget projection shortfall, the Virginia Fire Services Board directs Virginia Department of Fire Programs Staff to format new minimums to ensure all localities remain at or above the Fiscal Year 2020 funding level." The Chairman asked this be read aloud as a reminder of what the board did last year.

The Chairman stated that over the years the board has consistently increased these minimums gradually and it had been quite a while since the board last updated them. He also stated that localities have really loved the increase and he suggested that we increase the minimums indefinitely. An original motion was made by Lee

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Day to extend the minimum increases indefinitely, this was seconded by Keith Johnson. The motion was then substituted after additional discussion by the members of the board. Lee Day accepted the substitute motion and withdrew his previous motion. The final motion for the Aid to Localities minimums can be found below in its final agreed upon format. Stephanie Koren asked a question about if we should be cautious for one more year just to be prepared for a potential impact due to the COVID pandemic. Bettie Reeves- Nobles agreed for the one year extension so that the board can feel more confident that the funds will be there for the future. Ryant Washington also spoke for the one year extension for the minimums to be safe because of the pandemic and to be able to show a two year trend. Lee Day accepted the friendly amendment to his motion.

Motion: Stephanie Koren made the motion for continuing the minimums of \$15,000 for town and \$30,000 for counties and cities for one year due to the Covid pandemic, Bettie Reeves-nobles seconded.

Vote: Unanimous to continue the increased minimums of \$15,000 for town and \$30,000 for counties and cities for one year.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Nominations for June Elections

Explanation: The Chairman of the board Walt Bailey explained the election process which was as follows: The Board will first elect a Chair Pro-tem to govern over the boards annual elections. Upon the completion of this selection the Chair Pro-tem will then call for nominations from the floor for Chair and then Vice Chair. The independent nominations made by members of the board and closing of nomination motions can be found listed below as they occurred at the meeting. The Chair Pro-tem then appointed two members of the board to serve as the Nominations Committee to bring forward the final candidates for election, since there were more than one

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candidate nominated for an officer position per the Board Policy and Procedures. At the next meeting the Nominations Committee will give their final report and the Chair Pro-tem will conduct our Annual Elections for the Boards Officers.

Chair Pro-tem Selection:

Motion: Bettie Reeves-Nobles motioned for Jerome Williams to serve ad Chair Pro-tem for our elections seconded by Keith Johnson.

Jerome Williams was elected unanimously to serve as chair pro tem by the Board

Nominations for Chair were called:

Jerome Williams called nominations for Chair
Bettie Reeves -Nobles nominated Ernie Little as a candidate for Chair
Scott Garber was nominated as a candidate Chair by Keith Johnson

Motion: Bettie Reeves- Nobles motioned and Keith Johnson seconded to close nominations for Chair which was approved unanimously.

Nominations for Vice Chair were called:

Chair Pro-tem Jerome Williams then called for Vice Chair Nominations
Ryant Washington was nominated as a candidate for Vice Chair by Keith Johnson. Ryant Washington asked as a new member to the board that he not be considered for the position at this time.

Keith Johnson was nominated by Ernie little to serve as a candidate for Vice Chair.

Motion: Ernie Little motioned and seconded by Bettie Reeves- Nobles to close nominations for Vice Chair. Nominations were closed unanimously.

Nominations Committee was appointed:

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Chair Pro-tem Williams appointed Bettie Reeves-Nobles and Stephanie Koren to serve as the nominations committee and bring forth our nominated candidates at the next scheduled meeting on June 4th.

B. Letter to Board of Housing and Community Development

Ernie Little brought up a new business item to commission a letter from the board to request information and correspondence regarding sub-workgroups related to the issues of Mobile Fueling, Supplemental Hardware, Townhome Sprinklers, and in-building communication to the Board of Housing and Community Development. The Chairman asked the clerk to draft a letter for the board, which would be reviewed and promptly sent out to inquire about the pending sub-workgroups.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made Lee day and seconded by Bettie Reeves-Nobles to adjourn. The Virginia Fire Services Board adjourned at 1:05pm

Clerk of the Committee: Travis Rickman

REVIEWED BY:

Brook Pittinger
Deputy Executive Director