

**WYOMING FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION
CASPER, WYOMING
September 16, 1999**

The meeting was called to order by President, Russ Wenke at 5:20 p.m. A roll-call registry was circulated for signatures. Mr. Wenke thanked Chief Scott for arranging for the OSHA presentation.

Minutes -- A motion was made by Jim Noel to approve the minutes of the June 16th meeting. The motion was seconded by Lanny Applegate. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report -- Mr. Wenke reported he had received a message from Gene Diedtrich indicating he wouldn't be able to attend. He further stated the Treasurer's Report is the same as last time, which is: balance of \$11,056.47 and the Recruiting and Retention Grant is \$3,062.10.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council on Fire Prevention, Electrical Safety & Energy Efficiency in Buildings -- Russ Wenke. The Council met on Wednesday, September 15th in Casper. There were no appeals, however the Council did discuss the status of some of the previous appeals and where they are going. Some changes to rules on appeals were approved. The purpose was to clarify the language explaining the Council does not have the authority to grant variances from the Codes. There have been numerous requests recently which actually asked for such variances. It is hoped the revised language will make the scope and limitations of the Council's authority clear. The Council also expressed its appreciation for a Council Member, Dr. Dennis Scheer, who recently had to resign. Dr. Scheer was the representative from the public at large and when he accepted a position as Superintendent of a school district in Colorado, it necessitated his resignation. The Council's Assistant Attorney General, Kim Baker-Musick, has received another assignment in that agency and the Council expressed its appreciation for all of her assistance.

Missouri Valley -- Bob Taylor. He reported he was the only representative from Wyoming who was there for the entire conference. Fortunately Chief Young made a presentation to the Executive Board and Casper will be hosting Missouri Valley in the year 2001. Next year the conference will be in Joplin, Missouri and he strongly recommends that the City of Casper and the Fire Chiefs' Association consider hosting a hospitality room and putting together a good presentation.

Wyoming Fire Fighters Certification Committee -- Nancy Eagle. Nancy reported there had been a conference call several months ago and the committee would be holding another one next month, but there is nothing specific to report at this time.

Legislative Committee -- Lanny Applegate. He stated there is nothing new since the last meeting. There will be a short committee meeting following this meeting.

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Wyoming Fire Incident Reporting System -- Ken Sutton. He reported there is a new version of the software and he asked Donna Depew to speak to that. Donna reported vendors have been or are in the process of being certified for version 5.0. The companies which have full model versions available are: Fire Programs, FireHouse software manufactured by Visionary Systems and Sun Pro. These are the ones who most commonly deal here in Wyoming and surrounding states. Any department which wants to go online with INFIRS 5.0 and wants to use a certified product can do so. The state has plans to be online with its system by the end of the year and after the first of the year we'll look at phasing departments into the system. Donna indicated she has not had an opportunity to review the software so does not have a preference at this time. Chief Sutton noted the FireHouse program will be an upgrade to the present one so there will not be a great deal of cost involved to those departments which already have it. Donna noted that the old 4.1 version will not be upgraded so a new product will need to be purchased. She stated there is a data entry tool which is part of the state's component which comes from the U.S. Fire Administration, however it is strictly data entry with no reporting features. The problem with that is the State of Wyoming would have to be sole support for that data entry piece and it has not yet been determined if the State would do that.

Fallen Firefighter Memorial. There is no report at this time.

Constitution and Bylaws (Brad Sarff). There is no report at this time.

Officer Development (Gary Scott). Gary reported there have been approximately six seminars with 250 individuals in the classes. He stated he thought these would be offered at the Cody Fire School and Mid Winter. They are still seeking a sponsor in the southeast and southwest parts of the state. Campbell County will probably host one for the northeast and that will conclude the initial agreement with Missouri Valley in the grant. Continuance at Cody and Mid Winter will depend upon the Certification Committee's recommendation regarding the class.

Wyoming Fire Academy (Lanny Applegate). Lanny reported he had met with Larry David, the contractor from Lander, on Wednesday. Larry is requesting any of the Chiefs who are going to the Buffalo Hunt to stop by and look at some of the proposals so that a final decision on design can be reached.

Wyoming Fire Academy Buffalo Hunt (Lanny Applegate). Lanny reported a lady from Casper had won the raffle. In addition, two other hunts were sold. The final dollar amount won't be known until after the hunt. He noted there are plans to hold a Pension Board meeting in conjunction with the hunt dates.

National Volunteer Fire Council. Carl Jungck was not present so there was not a report.

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International Volunteer Chiefs' Section (Gary Scott). Gary reported they have been doing quite a bit with the International Volunteer Fire Chiefs' Association. The 21st Leadership Class is now being sponsored by NBFC and is available throughout the state through a cooperative agreement with Pierce Manufacturing. Pierce has become a funding ally for the Volunteer Chief Officers section and for every truck that is sold with the Pierce brand on it, they are giving the group \$100, plus they are sponsoring classes throughout the United States dealing with Pierce. That amounts to \$80,000 to \$100,000 to that group from Pierce. Also, funds are being received through some apparel agreements and there are also some funding possibilities with WalMart.

NFPA 1720 is the Volunteer Standard, which used to be 1200. Work on that is being wrapped up this week in Tampa, Florida so you can look for that to be open for comments relatively soon. Because it is definitely a split standard, he feels there will be difficulty in getting it approved.

With respect to the Fair Labor Standard which has been worked on for six years, they go before the Senate in testimony sometime between October and February. Dates will be publicized when the hearings are scheduled. There should be about a month's notice and it is hoped they will be able to put together a rather large group of firefighters from across the country to make an impact. This issue is picking up a lot of momentum and there are a number of representatives and senators who are interested in it.

Nationally there is federal legislation pending as to how much insurance you provide on your firefighters and the types of coverages available for death benefits, as well as, health and wellness benefits within volunteer organizations. A lot of this was spurred by the firefighter deaths which occurred outside of Ft. Worth, Texas.

HazMat (Jim Noel). He reported the working group which included Donnie Huber has been changed to a planning group under the State Emergency Response Commission ("SERC"). Jim stated he is a member of SERC, as is Donnie, and he (Jim) was elected to chair that subcommittee which will deal with legislation relating to the SERC, as well as hazardous material and the emergency management portion of that. The decision of the group at this point is not to proceed with legislation during the Budget Session. Brad Sarff is also on the planning subcommittee as is Bob Bezak and several others. Any comments relative to the proposed legislation should be directed to any committee member.

State Fire Marshal (Jim Noel). Jim reported the State Fire Marshal's Office ("SFMO") has been working with the budget all summer. As part of the budget process, the Legislature set up an Executive Committee for Expenditures and Revenue. That Committee then established three Expenditure Subcommittees and three Revenue Subcommittees. Every agency appeared before an Expenditure Subcommittee where they were asked to offer up cuts, as well as to make presentations to the Subcommittee. The Revenue Subcommittees then looked at all of the issues

associated with revenue. During the Expenditure portion of it, the agency made a presentation indicating that Administration was the lowest priority program because agencies were supposed to structure cuts around programs. However given past cuts, there wasn't anything left to offer. The SFMO did offer funding alternatives, i.e., increasing the plan review fees which are currently collected under a 1973 schedule to a 1996 schedule. Such an increase would generate approximately \$112,000 per biennium. The agency also offered the proposal of initiating building permit fees for those projects which actually go to construction after a plan review process. Counties and municipalities already collect such fees. The amount was fairly substantial, about \$300,000 per biennium. The SFMO budget is \$2.2 million and \$400,000 is the proposed amount which the agency could generate.

Because there are rumors about State Lands and the SFMO, Jim indicated he would also address that issue. He noted State Lands and the SFMO were assigned to different Subcommittees. SFMO was assigned to the Subcommittee dealing with Public Safety, Corrections and Judicial, i.e., Department of Corrections, Attorney General, Education and several others in addition to the SFMO were included. In another Subcommittee evidently one of the things offered up as a cut by State Lands was to remove either all or the fire portion part of State Forestry from State Lands and place it either with the SFMO or another agency. Jim stated he has been talking with Tom Osterman about this because Tom had heard the rumor even before it happened. Jim emphasized the Director of State Lands did not talk to him about this--the SFMO had nothing to do with that proposal. As it stands now in State Forestry, the fire program at least has been recommended to the Governor as one which should be considered for combining with a compatible program within state government. Jim indicated he felt this is a matter in which the Fire Service needs to make the call as to where it feels the program should be located. He went on to say he felt they could function very well as separate programs or as a combined program.

He went on to say at this point in the budget process, the Governor and leadership of both houses of the Legislature have decided to maintain an across the board cut. Overall, the cuts amount to about \$115 million. The Public Safety area of the budget would represent \$5.5 million. This translates into a 6% to 10% cut for the SFMO which means people and programs. The Department has identified programs and has talked to potentially affected employees because it would mean layoffs. Cuts will affect all of the Department's customers, i.e., fire service, electrical industry, building officials, etc. He emphasized that customers who want to see programs remain intact will have to become active on behalf of those programs.

In response to a question concerning time lines, he noted the Legislative report is to be to the Governor by October 1st. Jim further reported he and the other directors within the Public Safety group have a meeting on September 24th for a peer review of their budgets to determine how to cut \$5.5 million. The Governor hopes to have his budget developed by the 1st of November and will then conduct around the state discussion groups. The Governor has to submit the final budget to the Legislature by December 1st.

Recruitment and Retention. There is no report at this time.

State Forestry (Ken Sutton for Ray Weidenhaft). Ken noted that as member of the Fire Advisory Board, he sent out a letter to all county fire wardens with information on the matter Jim just discussed. He asked them to contact their legislators to let them know their thoughts on the matter. He agreed with Jim that if the people who are affected by this do not step up to the plate, important programs may be seriously affected. The legislators need to understand the components and differences in the programs currently offered by State Forestry and the SFMO. That can only be accomplished through dialogue. If the Governor requests further information, that will provide another opportunity to present pertinent facts. He said he also stated in his letter that if the Fire Service feels the programs cannot be cut any more, it needs to say so. He emphasized the Legislature does not want to just hear, "Don't cut us." They want suggestions as to what to do to raise revenue.

Wyoming Emergency Management. There is no report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Russ noted the officers had attempted to do a survey and he received 17 completed surveys and one letter response. The purpose of the survey was to determine ways to increase participation in Chiefs' meetings and participation in the Association. Out of the 17 original surveys, eight stated they did regularly attend Chiefs' meetings; nine said they did not. He did a little further study on the nine who did not and found four of those indicated training sessions in conjunction with meetings may entice them to attend; three marked that a change in location or length of the meeting might entice them to attend and one indicated that expense money might entice him to attend. Of those nine, written comments included: 1) meetings more centrally located; 2) don't have the time and having the meetings the same time as fire school creates a manpower problem; 3) I don't regularly attend because of my work schedule--it's not your problem; 4) better posting of meeting schedules at local level with emphasis on weekend meetings clearly noted; 5) focus Association's achievements, objectives and goals to educate the non-attendees and then help them gain a balanced position within the organization; 6) closer proximity to home, but understand that is not possible; and 7) very hard to get additional time off from employer to attend; hard enough to get fire time off. He stated it appears there are some people who will never be able to attend regularly, but seven of the nine who said they don't regularly attend, did mark several areas of training in which they were interested. So, it appears if we offer something like the OSHA presentation or in conjunction with the Fire Marshal's Conference, some of them will be enticed to come. A quick rundown of the actual survey results includes the following: Training--State or Federal Policies or Laws--seven said they would specifically be interested in that, three specified OSHA, five NFPA, five Worker's Compensation, four Fair Labor Standards Act and one asked for information on preparing for ISO. Some other areas--Incident Command,

there were four who wanted that, five in Strategy and Tactics, and under that category six said Structural, five Wildland, five Confined Space, six Search and Rescue, four HazMat and four EMS, so there is a pretty broad range of classes desired. Russ stated nine of the 17 respondees were looking for officer training, which probably is what this organization should be trying to do. In that category, seven wanted information on personnel; 11 administrative issues such as laws, rights, paperwork and five on interpersonal skills such as dealing with people. He also noted that of the responses, most indicated they would like to see classes conducted during at least one or two of the yearly meetings. Meeting dates and locations will be set in April and Russ asked everyone to keep the training issues in mind for a decision at that time.

NEW BUSINESS

Jim Noel said he would like to clarify the relationship between the Wyoming Chapter of IAAI and the Fire Chiefs' Association. Russ stated his recollection that about two years ago, the Chiefs' extended an invitation for membership to the WIAAI and at the same time requested an application to be come a member of that group, but nothing had come of it. Bob Taylor stated WIAAI has never been formally associated with the Chiefs'. The only association they had was through the Certification Committee when they were going to develop a criteria for arson investigators and run it through the Certification Committee, but nothing ever came of it.

Jim went on to say the matter of meeting conflicts has been an ongoing issue for many years and Ken Sutton noted there have been discussions about WIAAI becoming a part of the Chiefs' Association, but nothing has ever come of it. That may be a solution of the problem of meeting conflicts because meeting dates could be coordinated.

Russ offered to contact WIAAI's current president and make a specific request that they have representation at the Chiefs' next meeting to discuss it.

At this point, Don Taylor of the Sweetwater County Sheriff's Office introduced himself as the President of WIAAI. He stated the conference dates had been determined in conjunction with International. He further stated there is nothing to say this could not be changed in the future so there would not be a conflict. With respect to the issue of membership in the Chiefs' Association, the WIAAI has people who would be interested in membership if applications can be provided. By the same token, WIAAI would be willing to provide applications to members of the Chiefs' Association. He emphasized the need for cooperation between the two groups. Russ inquired as to whether someone from WIAAI would be able to attend the next meeting of the Chiefs which will be at Mid Winter on January 7th. Mr. Taylor stated he was sure someone from WIAAI would be able to attend.

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Jim Noel emphasized he wanted to see a closer relationship between the Fire Service, the Fire Marshal's Office and the Arson Investigators. It does take a team to be effective and it's in everyone's interest to resolve conflicts. Don Taylor echoed that thought.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Jim Wingert and seconded by Gary Scott that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.