

WYOMING FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 5, 2001

Chairman Russ Wenke called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Everyone joined in the pledge of allegiance.

Ken Sutton presented a plaque to the Larry "Cap" Lee family from the Wyoming State Fire Advisory Board. Accepting were his wife, Dawn, his sons - Kim and Kevin, and grandsons Ryan, Matt and Nathan.

Russ Wenke introduced Governor Jim Geringer who spoke of many items that pertained to the fire service. He acknowledged the work that "Cap" Lee had done for the fire service, benefits for firemen and the Fire Academy. He talked about the past fire season which claimed two lives in Wyoming. He spoke of the things the Western Governors were doing in response to wildfire and the role of the people involved in emergency response and firefighting. This was the 2nd worst fire season in Wyoming history. One of the challenges was to have more trained supervisors. The NIOSH investigation showed that the 5 causes of firefighter deaths were inadequate incident command, inadequate risk assessment, lack of firefighter accountability, inadequate communications and inadequate SOP's. He talked of his feelings for the Emergency Responders and some of the benefits for the emergency service. He talked of the causes of the fires and whether or not those things could be controlled. He discussed the challenges in wildland fires and structural fires including wildland urban interface. The Western Governors from Utah, South Dakota, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming met with Secretary Babbitt, Dept. of Interior and Secretary Glickman, Dept. of Agriculture and Forests to compare notes to get through the fire season and what to do about the future seasons. As a result of this meeting there was a firm commitment from the Secretaries to work to reimburse, they agreed to allow amendments to the appropriations bills that were under consideration at that time, they would double the amount of money being allocated to firefighting, prevention, forest planning, forest health and reimbursement for local firefighting. Now they have a Fire Plan Action Team in Wyoming that is working with federal, state and local agencies in Wyoming and across the west. The Governor's Office is compiling a list of the Urban Wildland communities in Wyoming. He complimented the Wyoming Fire Academy for their web page since it makes the information so available. He talked of other web pages. Another challenge for the firefighters is the exotic chemicals that are transported across the state. He talked of the great tribute that the Academy is and the fact that over 600 firefighters were attending the Mid Winter Fire School. He then toured the Fire Academy.

Russ called the meeting back to order. A sign up sheet was sent around with a request to include e-mail addresses. All officers were present.

Ken Sutton moved and Brent Godfrey seconded to accept the minutes from the last meeting.

Gene Diedtrich gave a treasurer's report.

Ending Balance \$2,970.63 unrestricted funds

Dues to NVFC are due.

Brad Sarff moved to accept the report. The motion was seconded and passed.

Jerry Busby moved and Lanny Applegate seconded that the Chief's Association pay their half (\$150.00) of the National Volunteer Fire Council dues. The motion passed.

The Executive Board recommended that there be no increase in the dues for this year. Gene will mail out reminders with the minutes. It is \$50.00 per department and \$30.00 thereafter.

Committee Reports

Russ Wenke reported that the **State Fire Council** had no requests at its last meeting. He reported that the Day Care Fire Standards were discussed. The next meeting will be February 9th in Cheyenne.

Bob Taylor gave a report on the **Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs** conference to be held in Casper and hosted by the Wyoming Fire Chiefs and the Casper Fire Department. It will be July 11-13 at Parkway Plaza. On the agenda, so far, are a golf tourney, a barbeque, and a rodeo. The keynote speaker is still in the works. The committee is working on a one-day pass for \$25.00 as a possibility with registration. He discussed the hospitality room. The planning is right on track.

Rusty Megeath reported that the **Certification Committee** had met and hoped to have the new Firefighter tests out by April. He also reported that the committee had given approval to an Origin and Cause Technician certification.

The **Legislative committee** report was given by Lanny Applegate who touched on the bills that were coming up this year. Several people gave clarification on the various bills. (See the attached list.) The license plate bill, the firemen pension bills, haz mat, fire suppression, fire recuperation, state forestry supplemental budget, fire codes housekeeping bill, wireless communication and county assessor – ag classification bills were several of those discussed. Lanny also asked if anyone was interested in going to Cheyenne for the legislature to please let someone know. The number is 638-3301. Gene brought up another bill on the dual membership in the pension plan. Current members who have dual enrollment (about 8) will be grandfathered and from now on members can only be enrolled in one plan. Russ summarized and asked for questions. Russ reported the Rural Association voted to support all of the bills with the exception of the one on restaurant hoods. Speed Hartbank moved and Jerry Busby seconded to support all of the bills except the hood system bill. Ken Sutton asked everyone to support the License Plate bill since it is a recruitment and retention tool. It is recognition for the Fire Service. The motion passed.

The group discussed raising the donation to the lobbying effort. Bob Taylor moved and Bob Symons seconded to raise it up to \$2000.00. The motion passed.

There may possibly be another bill on the firing of volunteers who respond to a fire while on their regular job. Several states have already passed bills guaranteeing their jobs.

Ken Sutton gave a report on the **WFIRS**. The 5.0 program is in place as of January 2001. Some of the upgrades have glitches. Call your concerns in to Elaine Codianne before she meets with Firesoft (within the next two weeks). 50 fire departments have requested software but 29 of those departments have not reported to date. If you aren't going to use the software and equipment, make it available to others. There are 13 new requests for this year. Contact Elaine if you have problems or need training. You need to report even if you have no incidents. Because of the number of departments on line there is a two-hour call back waiting period to Firesoft.

The **Fallen Firefighter Memorial** report was given by Gerry Dewey. The service will be at 1:00 p.m. on April 7th. The names of the two fallen firefighters from this past year will be added to the memorial.

Emily Howery reported that there were no changes to the **Constitution and By-Laws**.

The **Officer Development** report was given by Bob Taylor. They are working on criteria for a Structural Protection Specialist.

Larry David gave a report on the **Wyoming Fire Academy**. Everything is going well and the Natural Gas project has now been completed. KN Energy has used it and it worked very well.

National Volunteer Fire Council – Ken Metzler gave a brief overview. New legislation is posted on the web. We need to continue recruit and retention. If you have questions, call Carl or Ken.

Don Huber reported that the **International Association of Fire Chief Volunteer Chief Officers** are getting close to resolving FLSA (Fair Labor Standards Act) but he had no details.

Don Huber reported on **Haz Mat**. They are pursuing a 1.7 million dollar grant from the Department of Justice. This will head them toward the Regional Response Team concept. They have to have the plan for the grant in place by March. The committee has fallen under the State Emergency Response Commission because they needed the input. They will need a technical committee for development and he perceives the Haz Mat committee would be on that. There is a possible bill being worked on for statewide mutual aid. The planning committee is made up of Don Huber, Brad Sarff, Jim Noel (chairman), Duane Stolns, SERC, WEMA, Law Enforcement and EMS.

Gene Diedtrich asked the Green River people to have Al Harris call him so they could pursue the **Recruit and Retention**. There is still money in the grant and the hotline is still in effect.

International Association of Arson Investigators – Charlie Carpenter reported on the meeting in Rock Springs. He reported that the materials to check out for testing were at the Fire Academy. (No materials have been received at the Academy at this time).

Jim Noel spoke on the various services available through the Fire Marshal's Office such as electrical inspections and building inspection and enforcement. Nancy Kubalanza reported on the training. She thanked the Fire Service for their support. Over this next year we hope to hire another Arson Investigator. It would be a dual position and would help on electrical licensing investigation. We are trying to find resources for the arson program. We are working on firefighter injuries. We plan to do a statewide campaign to help in this area. Ken Metzler announced that they are trying to reactivate the Training Association. The Fire Marshal's Office has a grant to put on two NFA classes. "Initial Fire Investigation" in January and "Challenges for Local Training Officers" in March will be held at Douglas. There are some smoke detectors left if you need them. Ron Smith gave a report on the Haz Mat training. It is going strong and we received another grant that is good through Dec. 30, 2001. We still offer Awareness and Operations. He reminded everyone that there is a recertification requirement on Haz Mat training. There will be some terrorism training set up later. If you want information on firefighter deaths/fatalities, please contact Ken or Ron with your e-mail address. Ron will do a presentation on firefighter deaths in April. There are programs and services available that firefighters are not aware of. There is a guide available on how to deal with a firefighter death. Call the Fire Marshal's Office if you need a guide or information. These services are for the surviving families. Rich Hallcroft reported on the Arson program. The new Origin and Cause Technician certification is in place and Jim Wingert will give a report. The intent of this certification is to provide certified firefighters who can work a simple fire. If you need help investigating, call Rich. If he can't get there he has other resources. This certification would also help provide resources in a large investigation. The goal is to have at least one Origin and Cause Technician on every fire department. If you need information or help on any of these programs, contact the Ken, Ron, Rich or the Fire Marshal's Office.

Brad Sarff thanked the Fire Marshal's Office for all the help that was given on the college fire in Rock Springs

Jim Noel talked about the hiring of the Fire Investigator, which will remain in the Electrical Division. He also talked about the State Fire Marshal's Conference. He encouraged everyone to try to attend. If anyone has something they would like to see offered at a future conference please call the Fire Marshal's Office.

Ray Weidenhaft thanked the Fire Service for all their work during the fire season in his report on **State Forestry**. He reiterated that the Governor was very sincere in his appreciation for what the firefighters did. The Smoke Busters from the WHCC went on 50 fires involving 216,000 man-hours with no lost time injuries or accidents. He talked about the upcoming congressional funds that have been discussed in the news. The State Forestry is working to try to get as many available funds as possible for Wyoming. Several Urban Interface projects were submitted and some of those were recommended for funding. There are several sources of funding but it is not known what will be available to Wyoming.

There was no report from WEMA.

Old Business

Jim Noel gave a report on the 100 million dollar Fire Act. The Fire Marshal's Office will work to be able to coordinate the funding. There will be a grant process with applications. Any new information will be sent out by the Fire Marshal's Office.

New Business

Jim Wingert gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Origin and Cause Technician certification that was approved by the Certification Committee. (See the attached copies of his presentation). Questions were asked about the re-certification. Don Huber moved that the Fire Chiefs endorse the Task Force recommendation with refined re-certification. Speed Hartbank seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Jim Noel commented on the Arson Task Force. Wyoming's reporting on arson is 6 to 10 percent below the nation or the surrounding states. He suggested the Fire Chiefs consider an arson committee with the Arson Task Force as sort of a lead. Russ suggested we bring this back in April.

Russ reported that the Union Colony Fire and Rescue Department took Roger Rathbun's family under their wing while he was in the Greeley Burn Center. It is suggested that the Chief's send a letter to this department thanking them. Emily Howery moved that the Chief's write this letter. Jim Wingert seconded. The State Forestry will be making a presentation to the family at the Forestry Management Conference. He indicated he would give them the letter also if the Chief's wanted. The motion passed.

The April Chief's meeting will be April 7th. The Memorial will be at 1:00 p.m. and the Chief's meeting will follow at Station #1. The banquet will be at 6:00 p.m. Russ encouraged a good attendance at the Memorial. Russ reminded the group that nominations would be due in April. Please pass any ideas or nominations on to Don Huber.

Larry David inquired whether the Association could help with transportation to the immediate families to come to the Memorial Service. Discussion followed regarding lodging instead of transportation because of cost. Maybe some of the local businesses would help out. Jerry Busby moved that we allow the Executive Board to get with Ron Smith and look at the costs and then make a decision. Brent Godfrey seconded. The motion passed.

Jim Wingert moved the meeting be adjourned. Brad Sarff seconded. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.