

**MINUTES OF THE  
WYOMING FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION MEETING  
January 4, 2002  
Riverton, Wyoming**

Association President, Brad Sarff, called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- A roster sheet was passed around for signatures of those attending today's meeting (attached herewith).

- Jim Noel made a motion to accept the minutes from the September 28, 2001 meeting as written. Speed Hartbank seconded. Motion carried.

**MOTION #1**

- Gene Diedtrich gave the Treasurer's Report for the period September 1, 2001 through November 30, 2001. The beginning cash balance was \$7,733. Interest earned was \$63. Over \$12,000 was collected for the Widows and Orphans Fund (which will be sent to New York next week. Envelope and copy costs were \$72. The ending balance is \$19,725.84. This includes a balance of \$2,456.43 in the Recruitment and Retention grant and a balance of \$1,222.12 in the web site grant. There are unrestricted funds of \$4,045.73. Jim Wingert made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Ray Weidenhaft seconded. Motion carried.

**MOTION #2**

- Gene Diedtrich stated that the Fire Chiefs' and the Fireman's Association traditionally share the annual dues of \$300 to the National Volunteer Fire Council. Ken Sutton made a motion to pay \$150 toward these dues. Scott Scheller seconded. Motion carried.

**MOTION #3**

- Gene Dietrich stated that this is the time of year that we normally donate to the legislative committee for their efforts and suggested the amount be increased to \$2,500. He also reminded everyone that the annual Association dues are due, at \$50 per department and \$30 thereafter. A motion was made by Jim Wingert to leave the dues at \$50 per department and \$30 thereafter. Butch Krause seconded. Motion carried.

**MOTION #4**

A motion was made by Bob Glasson to increase the donation to the legislative committee to \$2,500. Bob Symons seconded. Motion carried.

**MOTION #5**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**State Fire Council:** Mark Young reported he attended a meeting of the Council in Cheyenne in December. There were no appeals. He heard the division reports from the State Fire Marshal's Office and they welcomed Citizens Representative, Joe Jones onto the Fire Council. There was nothing else outstanding to report.

**Missouri Valley:** Mark Young stated there would be a Board meeting on January 18, 2002 in Kansas City, which he will attend as our representative. Next years convention will be in Castle Rock.

**Certification:** Rich Hauber stated they elected Lyle Armstrong as the new chair of this committee and Bill Hitt as Vice-Chair. Lyle reported that the old Firefighter 1 test became obsolete on 1/1/02. The proctors should destroy all old tests. The old Firefighter 2 tests will be used until 3/1/02. One project they are working on is the new Fire Apparatus Operator task book. They also reviewed the Public Fire Educator certification and discussed possible recertification at all levels, with a possible task book. There is no timeline set for this process, but it could possibly take 3 years. He mentioned there would be a Training Officer symposium on January 26<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn in Riverton. Dave Baker from Natrona County was approved as a new proctor.

**Legislation:** Lanny Applegate stated the schedule was fairly light so far. This will be the 4<sup>th</sup> try on the firefighter license plate Bill. He read the criteria for acquiring the license plate and what happens when you leave the fire service. He requested that everyone contact his or her local legislators concerning this bill. Chief Sarff stated there are currently a lot of states with firefighter license plates. For this to happen we have to rattle some chains to let them know we want this. He mentioned that Jim Noel had done a survey across the country on this issue and 20 or so states have a firefighter license plate. Emily Howery asked if there was a proposal for retired firefighter plates. Lanny suggested we should get the initial plate issue resolved first. The actual Bill is on the state web site, and includes a copy of the proposed plate. Concerning the Haz-Mat Bill, there would be 6 regional response teams. The tentative sites are Gillette, Riverton, Worland, Rock Springs, Casper and Laramie. The State Fire Marshal's Office has asked that we help support their budget request, as has State Forestry. Lanny briefly discussed APCO trying to get statewide participation.

**WFIRS:** Ken Sutton stated that reporting departments were at 62% for 2001 compared to 54% for 2000. One problem is that 91 sets of software were given out, but about 17 departments are still not reporting, using the software. WFIRS is now tied to the FIRE Act grant money and USFA is requesting verification from the State that grant recipients are reporting. Non-reporting could also affect future grants. There were also 10 computers given out by the State and if they are not being used they will need to be returned to the State. We have adopted a "use or lose" policy with the software and computers. New upgrades for the software were sent out in early December. In addition to the WFIRS classes at the Fire Schools in Riverton and Cody, Elaine provides one-on-one training to any department that requests it. It was proposed that a Forestry section be added to the annual report.

**Fallen Firefighter Memorial:** Geri Dewey reported that the memorial would be on April 6, 2002 at 1:00 p.m. They are currently working on the program and asked that if there was anything special anyone wanted in the program, that they should speak to them as soon as possible.

**Constitution and Bylaws:** Emily Howery reported there were no changes.

**Public Fire Service Educators:** Emily Howery reported they intended to divest themselves of the motor home (Fire Safety House). They currently have an offer from Rawlins Fire Department to purchase the motor home. Any other interested parties should contact Emily.

**Wyoming Fire Academy:** Larry David reported that for the next 5 months, the classes are full. They continue to work on the grounds around the Academy. He thanked the State Fire Marshal's Office and State Forestry for all their help.

**National Volunteer Fire Council:** Carl Jungck reported he attended their meeting in Albany, New York. While there, they toured a retired firefighter home. The Council is active in legislative issues. He suggested everyone check out the website, [Nvfc.org](http://Nvfc.org). They also have a weekly magazine. He mentioned you could join the NVFC as an individual or a fire company. He briefly discussed a \$7,000 grant, which is available through NVFC.

**Fire Chief/Volunteer Chief Officers:** Gary Scott reported that the name has been changed to the Volunteer Combination Officers Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs'. He stated they work a lot on legislative issues and discussed one they have worked on for the last 6 years, concerning the Fair Labor Standards Act. He also discussed the "Like in Kind" issue and other governmental agencies. Since the information he was providing was so vast, if you have any questions regarding these topics, please contact Chief Scott for information. Gary introduced 2 cadets from Campbell County. Gary also discussed compensation and the definition of fair compensation. Other issues they are working on are adding firefighters to the HUD Bill and an effort to create disability coverage for firefighters hurt on the job.

**Haz-Mat:** Don Huber reported they have been working on the Haz Mat issue for 10 years. The million-dollar grant he spoke about last year has been submitted and the groundwork is done for the regional response teams, which will involve 6 areas. Starting next week there will be meetings in each of these areas: Laramie, January 7; Casper, January 8; Gillette, January 9; Riverton, January 15; Worland, January 16 and Rock Springs, January 17<sup>th</sup>. A gentleman came out from Texas A&M, who is a contractor from the Department of Justice and assisted with the grant writing, so it looks good for us to get it. We are going to try again this year regarding legislation, but in a different way than before. We have given it to the Governor and hope he makes it an Executive Order or gets it presented to the Legislation. Don mentioned that Jim Noel would discuss the Counter Terrorism Commission. Rich Hauber mentioned that the letter regarding Haz Mat seemed to deal mainly with weapons of mass destruction, with Haz Mat further down the line. Don stated the way we would handle weapons of mass destruction is through regional Haz Mat teams. These teams must be established first.

**Recruitment and Retention:** Jim Wingert reported there is \$2,400 in funding left over from the grant. We need to use this before going after new grants. Please contact Jim if interested in being on the R&R Committee.

**Nominations and Elections:** Jim Wingert reported that the current officers are: President, Brad Sarff; Vice President, Don Huber; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Jim Wingert and Executive Secretary, Gene Diedrich. He asked that nominations for these offices be sent to him prior to March, as elections take place at the April meeting.

**Wyoming Association of Arson Investigators:** No report.

**Fire Investigation Task Force:** Jim Wingert reported that "Origin and Cause" is off and running. The Mid-Winter class is the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the Origin and Cause class. They are looking at Fire Investigator certification. Lyle Armstrong asked if there would be an additional Train the Trainer class. Jim said to contact Nancy Kubalanza for information on that.

**State Fire Marshal's Office:** Jim Noel thanked everyone for his or her support. He recognized any individuals wearing State Fire Marshal shirts and stated many were participants on various sub-committees, and not employees of the agency. Relating to the Budget session, we are requesting 5 additional employees and appreciate any support you may be able to give us on this issue. There were town meetings in all 23 counties. Jim stated he is involved with the Wyoming Counter Terrorism Commission set up by the Governor, which includes 4 sub-committees. Jim was assigned to the Prevention Committee, which includes the Haz Mat issue. At the last meeting of the Commission they decided to move 6 issues up to the Governor's desk for his support in the upcoming legislation. Another issue was EMAC, which is state-to-state mutual aid and in-state mutual aid. Jim was also asked by the Commission to look into the issue of communication. Information is not getting to the fire service concerning terrorism. He developed an email list to communicate things that he received from the Department of Health, WEMA, etc. We would like feedback on how this is working. Another issue relating to domestic terrorism is federal funding. The question is how are we going to spend existing federal money on local emergency response. The committees are trying to position Wyoming in a way to get the most money for the different things we have going. Jim introduced Mike Sexton, the new fire investigator/electrical investigator for the SFMO. Jim stated that through the FIRE Act there were 14 Wyoming departments that were awarded grants, totaling over \$1 million. This year \$350 million will be provided. The application period will be March 1-31, 2002. The last issue was one of legislation, relating to codes adopted at the state level. Nancy Kubalanza stated there would be a grant writing class, hosted by the Wyoming Fire Chiefs' on February 15<sup>th</sup> in Riverton. Sheela Schermetzler will again be the instructor. The class is \$50 and limited to 50 students. Please get with your legislators concerning the request for the \$328,000 exception budget for Training, which provides for contract instructors, etc. Brad Sarff mentioned that this request is built out of the strategic plan for the Foundation Board. Nancy also mentioned that there would be a Training Officer symposium on January 26<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn in Riverton. We are paying for your lodging and food if you attend.

**State Forestry Division:** Ray Weidenhaft stated that he got a SFMO shirt and the SFMO got Stephanie Wagoner, Administrative Assistant. Steph moved to the SFMO from the Forestry Division. They also lost a 2<sup>nd</sup> clerical assistant, so there are now 2 vacancies in the office. There is also a vacant mechanic position for the Honor Camp in Newcastle. Announcements for these vacancies have been posted. Due to the 2000 fire season, Forestry took quite a hit to the emergency fire suppression account. We asked legislation for \$1.2 million.... they gave us \$600,000. That was hardly enough to get past the first fire in Teton County. Thankfully, that was a FEMA fire and we will receive 100% reimbursement. We are asking for \$2 million this year. We have approximately \$1 million in outstanding bills. The County Commissioner Association met and discussed the avenues to take on how to up the ante for county's participation in the account. Next year we will be working on how to increase the premiums to the counties. Red card applications are on Ray's desk. If you don't get one by the end of January, contact Ray. He discussed the National Fire Plan grant money. There were 15 grant applications for mitigation type work. All 15 got funded. In the next month or two he will be sending out the Volunteer Fire Assistance applications. Approximately \$60,000 of federal money will be available. He cautioned that you should not use federal money to match federal money when applying for these grants.

**WEMA:** Jim Noel reported on behalf of Bob Bezak. They are also involved in Counter Terrorism. They are looking at vulnerability and targeting and looking at the entire state to determine targets. The target list is small, thankfully. They are updating their plan as it relates to domestic terrorism. The Capitol complex will see increased security. They are involved in the Winter Olympics in Evanston from February 5-25<sup>th</sup>. Concerning the Office of Justice programs, they are meeting to deal with the issue of the 6 target sites for regional Haz Mat response teams. On legislation, WEMA is pursuing the Haz Mat issue. We all know we are in a drought, particularly those that live in Fremont County and the problems associated with that. WEMA is prepared to support State Forestry Division with any help they can provide. Kim Lee discussed the Disaster Mitigation Act 2000, which replaces Project Impact.

●Carl Jungck suggested we look at getting an organization together to assist the families of fallen firefighters, to offer them support in whatever areas are necessary. Ray Weidenhaft suggested adding this function to the Fallen Firefighter Memorial Committee.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

●Gary Scott made a motion to reappoint Ron Smith to the Communication Training Advisory Board, representing the Fire Chiefs'. Jim Wingert seconded. Motion carried.

**Motion #6**

●Brad Sarff stated that the contributions to the September 11<sup>th</sup> Widows and Orphans Fund was a lot more than he ever anticipated and thanked everyone for their participation.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

●Brad Sarff stated he received a lot of information from various companies on “pins” for this Association. Gene Diedtrich asked whether the fad of pins has worn out. Ken Sutton mentioned that we used to have a pin and could take a sample from this. Brad questioned whether there was any interest in having a new pin.

●Brad Sarff introduced a guest, Eli Bebout. He is a past legislative supporter and now running for Governor of Wyoming. Mr. Bebout thanked Brad and said he was there to listen and learn and will help with lobbying efforts.

●Kim Lee introduced a guest from FEMA, Norm Winteround, who will present a program tomorrow night on the World Trade Center disaster.

#### **NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2002 at 10:00 a.m. at the Wyoming Fire Academy, prior to the Firefighter Memorial. Mark Young mentioned that Steve Westerman of Missouri Valley Association of Fire Chiefs’ has expressed interest to be the speaker at the Firefighter Memorial.

#### **Adjournment:**

Jim Wingert made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 p.m. Scott Scheller seconded. Motion carried.

#### **Motion #7**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Elaine Codianne, Wyoming State Fire Marshal’s Office.