

**Fire Chiefs Association Meeting Minutes
For the Meeting on
January 3rd 2003**

Call to Order Pledge of Allegiance:

Meeting was called to order at 1:30pm and the group had the pledge Allegiance

Roll Call – Roster Passed Around:

There is a section on the roster for E-Mail address. Please include your E-Mail address if possible.

Minutes of Last Meeting:

The Last meeting was Sept 27th, at Long Creek Cabin. Russ Wenke moved to accept the minutes as mailed to the Chiefs. Don Huber seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

The report covers Sept. 17th thru Dec. 31st and was given by Gene Diedtrich. Initial funds of \$8,489 with \$155 extended and \$31 interest leaving total funds of \$8,366.04. Of which there are two partial grants remaining; there is \$2,466.43 for the recruitment and retention grant and \$532.12 of the web site grant remaining. They will likely be expended by the end of the month. This leaves a total of unrestricted funds of \$5377.49. Chief Young moved to accept the report. Russ Wenke seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Committee Reports:

State Fire Prevention Council:

The Council is currently involved in interviewing for Dick Dubay's position, and will be watching the fire code issue with the legislature. The international fire codes are also being considered. Recommendation of code task force was for the legislature to adopt the International Building Code, the International Fire Code, the Uniform Mechanical Code, and any language pertaining to the International Electrical Code that shall be changed to state and national electrical code.

Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs Association:

The Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs is a division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Eight states are included (Wyoming, Colorado, North and South Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri). There is an upcoming board meeting Feb 7th – 9th in Kansas City. This meeting will be used to develop their position statements and a strategic plan. The initial plan is to develop better communication between the Association and all Chief's Associations. Chief Sarff was invited to the meeting, in order to provide input from the Wyoming Fire Chief's Association. Chief Sarff went to International Association of Fire Chief's meeting and helped to develop their strategic plan. The MVFC's Association upcoming annual conference is July 11th thru the 13th in Kansas City. The International Fire Chief's next meeting is in Dallas, on August 22nd

thru the 25th. The IAFC's Strategic plan and mission statements will be made available to the membership. E-Mail addresses can also be given to Chief Young so he can send announcements to the membership. WWW.IAFC.Org is the website address for the IFC strategic plan. Chief Gary Scott has been named to serve as an advisor to the Homeland Security Advisory Council. Don Huber made motion to have the Wyoming Fire Chiefs association pay the airfare to send Chief Brad Sarff to the planning session. Chief Bob Symons seconded the motion. The motion carried. The MVFC Association will provide Chief Sarff's hotel costs.

Certification

Recognition was given to three former members of the Certification committee. The new Certification Coordinator is Rita Lee. Janet Pickenpaugh is the new support staff for the trainers and the committee. The committee reviewed the Certification report (see the attached sheet from Certification Committee). The Live Burn Coordinator Certification will not be given through the state. The class will still be taught but certification will not be given thru the state; individual departments may certify as they see fit. Re-certification of firefighters was discussed, and input was requested from the Fire Chief's Association. That issue will be tabled until some other issues with the committee are addressed. There is an ongoing review of all certifications offered by the state. The plan is to issue task books for each. There are eight certification task books currently available. They will be available from the State Fire Marshal's Office website, or on a disk from the SFMO. The committee readdressed Hazmat certification in regards to their current rules. The decision was made that fire affiliated organizations are involved with Hazmat and should be certified. The people who are involved in responses are the ones who will be certified, not persons from unaffiliated agencies. They may still take classes and be given a certificate of completion. Two new proctors were elected. There was also an equivalency made for Hazardous Materials Operations. Hazmat Incident Command was approved, and there are three ways in which to obtain this certification. A class for Hazmat Incident Command is forthcoming. A new certification is pending on a rescue specialist, and there will be a task book assigned to this.

Legislative

The Firefighter License Plates Bill will be attempted again. Chief Ken Sutton has some different approaches to the plate design. There is a House Bill in the Transportation Committee and identical bill in the Senate on the license plates.

Volunteer fireman's pension fund is up for housekeeping. This includes changes to its wording in order to limit the participation from private enterprise.

There is a bill going forth for State of Wyoming to adopt the International Fire Code.

There is a bill regarding Hazmat legislation. The Department of Justice money will soon provide equipment, and the regional response teams are meeting. The bill is now in the Senate, and pending approval, it will go to an Appropriations bill. Some of the issues involving this bill are the inclusion of cost recovery safeguards. Support for the legislation is requested in order to help small departments with little or no Hazmat equipment or training.

Senator Larson may develop a bill allowing for a mill levee increase with a local option of 6 mills for fire districts, instead of the current three.

There are some supplemental budget requests from the State Fire Marshals Office and Forestry.

The city and county of Sheridan are asking for a one-time exemption to the civil services bill in order to allow the combination of some agencies.

There are five Homeland Security Bills. One is the bill regarding Emergency Mutual Aid Among States or EMAC bill. Another is a bill concerning the false reporting of incidents. Another is addressing the concerns of mutual aid for law enforcement organizations. There is a provision for the Health Department to deal with a Weapons of Mass Destruction event. Lastly, there is a bill to create an oversight board to help develop wireless communications among all emergency agencies.

A Campbell County representative is looking into a bill to protect the job of volunteers. This is similar to the current Military Deployment legislation.

There is a bill for Public Safety Communications. A plan is being developed for statewide communications. There is a web page for people to submit comments on the subject. There are also three regional meetings coming up looking for feedback on the subject. Please log into www.feclientnet.com and use the password Wyoming (all lowercase) by January 8th, as that is when the website will be closed.

There are a lot of people who want to help with lobbying, but can only stay for a limited time. If this is the case, please leave your name with Brad Sarff or Russ Wenke, so they can assist you whenever possible. The start date of the legislative session is the 15th of January and the session will go until the 1st week of March. The Chief's Association is set up at the Hitching Post Inn. You can call 638-3301 and just ask for Wyoming Fire Chiefs.

The next legislative committee meeting is scheduled for April.

NFIRS

The new WFIRS Coordinator is Philip Oakes. Ninety-Seven copies of the Firehouse software are out and the State is expecting to distribute all 100 by the end of year. Philip will pursue those departments who are not using their software and try to get them to report or to turn their software in. Another goal will be upgrading all software to new version. Chief Symons handed out a memo listing updates on continuing local and national problems. There will be a website implemented so fire departments can access their information on-line. 2002 fire reports are due by January 31st. It is requested that fire departments submit their reports on a monthly basis. There was a review of the annual report including some corrections made to the report.

Fallen Firefighters Memorial

The memorial is scheduled for April 5th, and Chief Young is working on a guest speaker. The time of the memorial is set for 1pm.

Constitution & Bylaws

No report.

Wyoming Fire Academy

Thirteen hundred students have gone thru the academy this year. The drawing for the Buffalo Hunt is in Dubois on August 9th. Plans are to try to expand the facility with a 70x70 foot addition. Carl and LoRayne have retired and will be missed. Ken and Larry will work to coordinate their efforts in the future.

National Volunteer Fire Council

Ken Metzler was the director for Wyoming until Carl took that position. Carl Junck has now retired and Ken Metzler is the director again. Ken gave a national legislative update. The National Volunteer Fire Council is tracking appropriations bills. Their concern is the VA HUD and Independent spending bill, which still needs to be approved. Other issues being followed are the State of California 1821 Bill, which limits the liability of people and agencies who donate equipment to the fire service. Several states have similar legislation.

International Association of Fire Chief's Volunteer Chief Officers

Chief Gary Scott did not run for office, but was asked to retain his position. There is a lot of interest nationally in advancing the following items: The formation of a National Volunteer Firefighter Coalition, Job protection for volunteer firefighters, Long term disability for volunteers firefighters, the development of a National Volunteer Bill of Rights, Homeland Security, and the formation of a legislative group – The Office of Volunteer Fire Leadership (which would help with the advertisement for recruits). The IFC are looking at school safety issues with the Sheriff's Association. They are looking at a joint affiliation including emergency service workers.

Recruitment & Retention

January 25th there is a Recruitment and Retention seminar at the fire academy taught by Jeff Johnson. The class is free, and lodging is available for 30 students. On the Friday night prior to this class there will be another training officers roundtable discussion.

Nominations and Elections

No Report.

Wyoming Association of Arson Investigators

Sept 2002 the Wyoming chapter of the IAAI, the Cody Fire Department, and Park County Fire District had a class on vehicle fires with 80 students. This class also included representatives of the Ford motor company. The course was well received by the Fire Service. Their annual spring conference will be in Thermopolis on March 14th thru the 16th. The division of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms may be assisting in this conference. Discussion was held on other possible classes. The IAAI received a \$100,000 grant from FEMA to work on Juvenile Fire setters Programs. The IAAI is currently working with the state committee on the investigator certification. The IAAI is working to have its fall 2003 conference at the fire academy.

Fire Investigation Task Force

Several issues were discussed including refining the Origin and Cause Technician certification. There are now 37 people certified to this level. Discussion was held on the need for an investigators certification and on Juvenile Fire Setters programs. It has been decided that the committee needs to develop a cadre of instructors. Bill Hitt and Rich Hallcroft will work on having a Train-The-Trainer class. Another issue discussed was developing a means of ongoing funding for the committees efforts.

Fire Marshal's Office

There is a code issue before the legislature. The bill is currently with the Corporations Committee. The Uniform Code is what is currently in the statute. The Wyoming Association of Municipalities, and the State Fire Marshals Office are working in conjunction to change that legislation. They are looking for adoption of the International Codes and the Mechanical Code. The Legislature wants to revoke the school exemption and have the SFMO take over inspection of health care facilities and to provide for home rule.

There is a budget amendment of \$160,000 to facilitate training through the SFMO. The recommendation from the former Governor was not to fund it.

Communication solutions and interoperability issues need to be addressed. The current plan is to have an operational plan in place by October.

The SFMO has been conducting Hazardous Materials training. The SFMO was cleared to hold a Hazmat Technician Class by the Attorney Generals office. Thought eh Homeland Security funding the State trained nineteen people to the level of Hazmat Technician. The next course begins May 12th. Salary reimbursement is available.

The SFMO is working with the Burlington Northern Railroad for a grant of \$25,000. They are also working with the Union Pacific Railroad for a similar grant. This money will be used for a Train-The-Trainer class.

Five new positions were made available in the last legislative session. Ken Metzler has filled the Training Coordinators position. Bill Hitt replaced Ken Metzler as a State Fire Trainer. Rita Lee, the new Certification Coordinator, and Janet Pickenpaugh, the new Trainers support staff, started yesterday. A plan reviewer was hired in the Cheyenne office. The SFMO has an Electrical inspectors position open in Green River, and Dick Dubay's slot is still open; interviews are scheduled for January.

March 21st and 22nd the SFMO will be holding their annual educational conference in Lander. The Classes to be offered were discussed. They include a Grant Maintenance Class, an Officer Development course, and a class on above ground storage tanks.

Wyoming State Forestry

Forecasts are not favorable for a good recovery to the fuel moistures and reservoir systems this year.

After a one-year vacancy they have filled their secretary's position.

The State Fire Trainer's position is available. It will remain open until filled. Interviews will be held in February.

The Interim director addressed the need for help in Cheyenne Office. That help is forthcoming and there will be changes to the organization of the Cheyenne office, but he cannot give specifics at this time.

There is a request for \$2,000,000 for the Emergency Fire Suppression Account before the joint appropriations committee; \$900,000 of this is for last years bill, and \$1.1 million is for this year. There is a request from the current administration as to what the average bill is for fires in the state. Reimbursement issues were discussed. Ray is working with the Joint Appropriations Committee to try and make the suppression account solvent. The outgoing Governor does not recommend that the account be given the requested amount. State Forestry general fund is currently \$515,000 overspent and they are looking for supplemental appropriations from the Joint Appropriations Committee.

The appointment and dismissal of the State Forester was discussed. The State Forester was fired under a state statute that was changed in 1997. Previous to that the Forester served under the land board. Support is being sought to change the statute so the Forester serves at the pleasure of the land board.

There are also several budget requests from State Forestry that would allow State Forestry to have permission to take care of federal monies.

WEMA

Bob Bezak passed out sheets about the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program.

The current drought will be WEMA's main issue this year. WEMA is projecting another down year for moisture. Water shortages will be the major issue of the year for WEMA. The State of Colorado may be even dryer this year.

The Homeland Security Department will likely take a long period of time to get rolling. The future for this new department is uncertain at this point. Bob pointed out, that in dealing with the new department, you also have to deal with the issue of the media, and with the issue of mental health. FEMA has moved from its roll of Cabinet position to a new location and they are unsure how that will affect them in the long term. The State Emergency response commission will be releasing its annual report in the next few weeks. There are several articles in it regarding hazardous materials. It also includes participation from Union Pacific Railroad and the Burlington Northern Railroad. The report is done on should be out soon.

Discussion was held on the Emergency Management Assistance Compact legislation and how it will help determine the mutual aid among states. Bob reminded everyone that the Homeland Security Issues would likely determine how this legislation would go.

There is a bill to move the Wyoming Emergency Management Agency from being under the Military to being directly under the Governor's office.

A request is being made for the new Governor to begin addressing rural issues on both a state and federal level. There are several programs in place to augment current services provided, but there is no money available for small rural departments to provide the basic service. In addition there are several rural agencies with no money available for matching funds. An example of this is if a fire department has no Hazmat program or

The new look for WEMA is unsure, with both the new administration and with the new Homeland Security Legislation.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT Teams) are being trained around the state. Citizens are being trained to be there to assist responders. There will be 5 additional classes coming up.

WEMA is on continuing resolution for additional monies to keep WEMA going. They are not sure when the department will be off continuing resolution, and have a stable budget.

Bob discussed the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

Public Fire Educators

The Public Fire Educators will provide two \$150 stipends for two volunteer representatives to attend the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Class at the academy. Interested people should send a card to 420 Broadway in Thermopolis. Class is February 22nd. The cards are due by Jan 31st.

PFE of Wyoming is currently reviewing the Wyoming Certification of Public Fire Educators.

The Public Fire Educators received a \$9500 grant for training tools. They will have 5 sets of props built to provide local fire education. These will be used to replace the fire safety motor home that was sold and the money used for fire safety education.

A request was made for people to sign up and help out the Public Fire Educators.

Old Business

Applications are being accepted for the alternate representative to the National Volunteer Fire Council.

New Business

The State of Wyoming Health Department is updating its EMS rules. It has been several years since local fire departments have had questions for providing EMS services on wildland fires. A letter was received by Chief Gary Scott from Jim Mayberry to solicit the support of rules and regulation changes in EMS. Presently rules and regulations contain a chapter for non-ambulance personnel. Advance skills could be made available to wildland personnel in lieu of working on an ambulance. This would be made available for fire departments that qualify. Fire departments could carry advance skills personnel without being hospital oriented. There will be four hearings around the state to discuss these changes.

Chief Bob Symons made a motion to support the proposed changes to the Wyoming EMS rules and regulations with assistance from the lobbyists during the legislative session, and a letter from the president of the Fire Chiefs Association President. Chief Mark Young seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Discussion was held on funding the legislative effort. Jim Noel moved to fund the legislative effort \$3000. Chief Ken Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Discussion was held on the amount to charge for dues this year. Lanny Applgate moved to set dues at \$50 for each initial member and \$30 for each member under the primary. Scott Schiller seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The National Volunteer Fire Council dues needed to be discussed. Jim Noel moved for the Fire Chief's Association to pay its \$200 share of the dues. Dwayne Stollins seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Chief Young advised all members that the Casper Fire Department is undergoing a Department of Labor SFLA audit. This is the first for a fire department in the state of Wyoming.

Ron Smith advised the membership that there is a Hazmat Incident Management Class on January 15th at the academy. The class is five days long, and is fully reimbursable.

The next Hazmat Technician class is May 12th through the 23rd. The hope is that the class will be filled with personnel from the northwest part of the state.

A reminder was put forth that the Hazmat Class funding may be changing, and some legislative support may be necessary to keep that funding.

Through the NFA TRADE Organization there will be a command a control class upcoming in Rapid City. Contact the Casper Fire Department for details.

Election of Officers

Bob Symons made a motion to open nominations for officers. Ken Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at the academy during the Firefighter memorial.

As there was no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm.