

WYOMING FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30 ,2023

RAMKOTA HOTEL - CASPER, WYOMING

Call to order – pledge of allegiance: The meeting was in conjunction with the Wyoming Fire Advisory Board and Wyoming State Rural Fire Association. Shad Cooper, president of the Wyoming State Rural Fire Association, opened the meeting with introductions and leading the Pledge of Alliance, Craig Haslam presented the invocation.

The WFCA part of the meeting followed with President Eric Quinney calling the meeting to order at 8:10 AM.

There was no roll call taken.

Motions – all motions made and seconded were unanimously passed.

Minutes of previous meeting: The meeting minutes of the Wyoming Fire Chiefs' Association meeting held June 14, 2023, in Riverton were approved as emailed to the membership. Motion by Brent Godfrey, seconded by Jason Caughney.

Treasurer's Report - Gene Diedtrich reported on the Statement of Cash for the period June 1, 2023, through October 31, 2023. There was a Beginning Cash balance of \$61,202, total receipts of \$45,254, disbursements of \$62,660, leaving an ending balance of \$43,796, with a restriction of \$11,353 for the 2 SAFER grants and the LAST checking accounts. Leaving an unrestricted cash balance of \$32,443.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Safer Grants – Gene Diedtrich reported that the WFCA currently has two active SAFER grants offered through FEMA. The 2019 grant has a remaining balance of \$242K and is set to expire on November 21, 2024. The 2021 grant has a remaining balance of \$740K and expires November 19, 2026. The grants provide reimbursement for qualified training, college tuition/books and one-time physicals for volunteers in the Fire Service. President Quinney spoke on the need for anyone expecting to utilize the grant, to send Gene an email or contact him before the training, college course or physicals begin so, approval can be given, because if it's for something you want to attend, it might not be covered by the grant.

Missouri Valley Division, IAFC – Craig Haslam introduced Chief Silvernal, President of the Missouri Valley Division of the IAFC. He stated that the Missouri Valley Division is in place to support all the members of the Fire Service. The annual conference was held at Fargo, N.D. in June of this year. It was very well attended. The 2024 conference will be held in Fort Collins, Colorado on June 5-7. The division has available a free scholarship for one member from each state to attend the conference. If you are interested, contact Craig Haslam or Jim Wamsley. There is another scholarship available for a up and coming female chief, use the same contacts if you are interested in attending. He stated that membership in the IAFC makes one a member of the Missouri Valle Division and available for everyone that puts on a Fire Department uniform. He asked all to visit the website and obtain the newsletter. He stated that the Division is in the process of building an application (app) and making it available for all the Fire Service with info about the Missouri Valley Division.

IAFC VCOS – JR Fox reported a quick update from the VCOS. The group has recently updated the Lavendar report, which is on occupational cancer. He stated that they have a Chaplin report for those departments that have a Chaplin or are looking to start a program. The Yellow Ribbon report has been updated, which relates to mental health. The annual symposium in the Sun at Clearwater, Florida was recently held. Jason Caughney is on the VCOS

board of directors, he was present and reported that if you are in a combination department, VCOS is of immense value. He reported that there is one annual scholarship available per state on an annual basis, contact Jason for information. The group has a lot of fire service resources on their website available.

Special District Association Update – Craig Haslam reported that the training requirement for board members of all special districts has been approved by the Wyoming Department of Audit. The training requirement must be completed by July 1, 2024, for every person a member of a Special District Board. You can access the website by going to the Wyoming Department of Audit and clicking Wyoming Special Districts. He recommends doing the training as a group function consisting of each district's board. In person training meetings are scheduled for Casper on January 4th and fifth, Gillette on February 15th, Rawlins on April 25th and Pinedale on June 6th. Training can also be done on the website. Contact Craig with your questions and training.

Wyoming Council on Fire prevention and Electrical Safety – Byron Mathews reported for Dan Johnson: The council adopted the minimum fire standards, rules, and regulations, which do not exceed other authorities. The council consists of five members appointed by the Governor. The council has heard no appeals over the last quarter, nor are there any pending. The council has scheduled February 6, 2024, to begin the discussion and process of adopting the 2024 ISO rules.

National Fire Protection Association – Nick Hudson reported that Bob Sullivan could not make the meeting but wanted to thank Eric Quinney for attending the recent Fire Chief Forum hosted at the headquarters in Quincy, MA., the forum brought together Fire Chiefs from around the United States and Canada, had a great exchange of information. The NFPA has a new website, makes it a lot easier to find information. Added resources are on the site – a plethora of information on Lithium batteries. Fire Prevention week went well, the departments across the state did a good job. The Pro Codes act going through congress needs a boost from us all to get it passed.

WyoLink Update – Mark Harshman reported on the Statewide Radio System. He noted that this is the first time ever that he was not concerned about money, due to legislation passed to cover the WyoLink project. There are 80 Tower sites. Received a grant from the Feds to replace some of the receptors and radios. The upgrades will improve the system. The system is being used a lot, in July the system had 2.1 million push to talk, equated to 153,000 minutes of use. When the system started the State Government was the biggest user, now other users have exceeded their use. Law enforcement is the biggest user, at the present time.

WFCA Residential Sprinkler Committee – Nick Hudson reported for Justin Smith. Nick and Justin Co-chair this committee. Have a highly active group, meet on the third Thursday of the month at 1:30 pm, if you are interested, contact either co-chair and you will be put on the invite. Have National representatives attend the meeting every month. The group has a side-by-side residential sprinkler trailer, it has traveled to a lot of Wyoming communities. The trailer is available to all communities, there is a link on the WSFM website to schedule the trailer. Great resource. Reach out if you have questions.

Wyoming Association of Fire Marshal's – Nick Hudson that this group is the Fire base code group in the State of Wyoming. Have approximately thirty-five members in the state. Next conference of community risk reduction will be held on April 10-12, 2024, at the Casper Ramada Inn and will offer 16 hours of training and networking, different topics are to be covered at the conference. Membership in the group is cheap and the networking is great.

Wyoming Volunteer Pension Board – Lanny Applegate reported. August 31 financial statements showed a fund balance of \$112 million. Expressed a big thank you to all that helped with legislation this past session to restore the money to the fund that was removed by legislation in 2022. Currently have 1,426 retirees from the plan, the total current membership is 2,372.

307 Community Risk Reduction – Byron Mathews introduced the New Deputy Fire Marshall Monica Colby; she reported the following: She said that she is extremely glad to be here in Wyoming. We are working at zero fire fatalities, have thermal fuses available for home oxygen users. Start a new program with the American Red Cross with Smoke Alarms installation, including individuals with hearing disabilities. The program is available for each Fire Department. Additionally, working on extending to Carbon Monoxide with the Red Cross. The 307 group has a monthly online meeting on the second Tuesday at 1:30 pm. Secretary note, Monica welcome to Wyoming and the Wyoming Fire Chiefs' Association, look forward to a long relationship.

Wyoming Fire Academy Report – Ian Kraft reported that the grounds training access project that has been progress for several years had to be pushed back and lumped in with another project in Lander to make it more profitable for the local contractors, hopefully close the bidding process in early 2024 and the project started by nest spring. The Fire Academy is a new roof replacing the current one, that too will be next spring. The Academy is on schedule for delivery of a new Fire Vent prop. Funded through an AFG grant. The new prop is a mobile prop, will be stationed at the Academy, it will travel the state. The prop will handle items like ventilation training, garage door training, overhead sprinkler training, forcible entry, low angle rescue, the prop will be a nice addition. The Academy Wildland schedule for 2024 is up on the website. If you need a fire investigator, call the hotline at 307-349-4993, please route all requests to that number.

Wyoming State Fireman's Association report – Gene Diedtrich reported for State President and Afton Volunteer Fire Department Chief Cody Wilkes. The Afton VFD will be hosting the 91st annual Wyoming State Firemen's Association convention in Afton on June 13 – 15, 2024. We would like to extend an invitation for all to enjoy the festivities. Every year the Association, in conjunction with the hosting department organizes a benefit raffle to help defray the expenses of the convention and drill team competition. This year the prizes are as follows: first prize Custom Freedom Arms 454 Casull pistol, second prize Henry Firefighter Tribute Edition ,22 S/L/LR, third prize bourbon package (Pappy Van Winkle), 4th and 5th prizes have yet to be determined. Raffle tickets are \$5 each, the drawing will be June 15th at the banquet, you do not have to be present to win. Tickets will be available at the mid-winter WSFA meeting scheduled for 3:00 pm on January 5, 2024, at the Wyoming Fire Academy. Anyone interested in buying tickets or information on the convention can contact Cody via email at cody.wilkes@simplot.com or telephone at 307-884-8207.

LAST Report – Gene Diedtrich reported for Dan Johnson, from an email he sent, as follows: LAST helped the State Fire Marshal's Office with the 2023 Firefighter's memorial and the Hall of Fame services on August 19,2023. One member placed on the wall from 2022, Bruce Lang with the Pine Haven Fire Department passed away in December of last year during an ice rescue operation. A big thank you to Game and Fish Commissioner Rusty Bell for his generous donation of a commissioner tag that was auctioned by the Wyoming Sheep Foundation. LAST will recognize and publicly thank Commissioner Bell at the Game and Fish Commission meeting in January of 2024. Any member of the Wyoming Fire Service that has contact with a Game and Fish Commissioner, and can help set up a meeting, the LAST would travel to them and discuss the program and "lobby" for the commissioner tags. Please contact Lanny Applegate for meeting arrangements. Thank you to Mike Larsen for the donation of the 75th anniversary edition of the Winchester Model 70 (.30-06). The drawing for the rifle was held at the end of this meeting, and the rifle was won with ticket 001 by Cindy Keller, Chief Dan Johnson's administrative secretary. Congratulations to Cindy. There was a total of \$7,640 tickets sold, proceeds for the raffle will be used for the Fire Engine rehab project for funerals. The current Bank Checking balance is \$11,463 checking and \$20,576 in CD's. LAST is planning to schedule training for team members in 2024, details pending. Lanny Applegate added that Game and Fish Commissioner Richard Ladwig has committed a commissioner tag to the LAST for 2024. Mark Young commented on the Fire Engine Rehab going on, currently working on the installation of a hydraulic lift to assist in loading and transporting funeral caskets.

Wyoming Firefighter Certification Committee Report – Jake Ribody reported that the NFA 2022 Edition of the Hazmat Awareness and Hazmat Technician Standard will be going into effect on December 30, 2023. The

committee is currently looking at some technical rescue standards, a survey will be forthcoming and circulated regarding the technical rescue issues. The new Methodology Evaluation should go to the Pro Board for accreditation by the year's end. Reminder test requests are written in practical evaluations need 14 days advance notice for written and 30 days advance notice for practicals. Rebecca puts in a lot of time and passing your information on to her in a timely manner will help a lot.

National Volunteer Fire Council – Eric Quinney reported that he and Larry Erdmann from Green River are the Wyoming directors on the Council. The fall meeting was held in Cooperstown, New York. Wyoming has a total of 450 members in the NVFC, at one point there were seven hundred members. If we could reach the 500-member threshold again the annual dues to NVFC would be waived. Eric indicated that he would be glad to work with anyone to get signed up to the council. There are lots of online resources available on the website. The council works with the other Fire groups, keeping the volunteers in mind. Resources are available on the website for Mental Health issues, Recruiting and Retention and various other information.

Firefighter Cancer Support Network – State Director of the Network Paul Juergons reported that Occupational Cancer is still the leading cause of LODD to firefighters. There will be more firefighters dying this year from cancer than firefighters passing from Fire Ground Operations in the past four years. The Firefighters Support Network (FCSN) has developed a training for the Fire Service to give them a better tool to reduce the risk of Carcinogens and IE. Cancer. Presenting the training tool and getting out to the Fire Service is a problem, Paul plans on being at Riverton to present the class during the Mid-winter fire school. The training is free, and all should attend the training as Cancer is a huge Fire Service Risk.

No Old Business.

No New Business.

The Chiefs' part of the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:20 AM.

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND SITES:

January 5, 2024, starting at 12:30 PM at the Wyoming Fire Academy in Riverton, Wyoming in conjunction with the annual Mid-Winter Fire School sponsored by the Riverton Volunteer Fire Department.

April 6, 2024, starting at 9:00 AM at the Riverton Volunteer Fire Department Fire Station #1. This is the annual meeting of the WFCA and when the annual officer election is held.

June 12, 2024, starting at 3:00 PM at the Afton Volunteer Fire Department held in conjunction with the 91st annual meeting and drill team competition of the Wyoming State Firemen's Association, which runs June 13-15, 2024.