

WYOMING FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL FOOL'S DAY 2023
RIVERTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Call to order – Pledge of Allegiance: Meeting called to order by President Mathews at 9:00 AM. With the pledge of allegiance recited.

Roll Call – There were 17 members and guests present.

Motions – All motions made and seconded were unanimously passed.

Minutes of Last Meeting – Joint meeting held December 1, 2022. Minutes are not completed yet.

Treasurer's Report – Gene Diedtrich reported on the Statement of Cash for the period November 1, 2022, and ending February 28, 2023. Beginning balance of \$46,570, deposits of \$69,218, disbursements of \$51,958, leaving an ending balance of \$63,830, with the following restriction of \$30,423 for the LAST fund and the 2 SAFER grants. Leaving an unrestricted cash balance of \$33,407.

Association Bills – Gene Diedtrich spoke on the lobbying expenses that were received. The money remaining from the \$4,500 amount approved at the November meeting will be forwarded to James Rietz, the treasurer of the Wyoming Fire Advisory Board and held in a separate legislation fund, with the remaining funds.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Election of Officers – Gene Diedtrich presented the officer nomination report, with President Mathews stepping down from the president's position, the following report was presented. There are three elected offices to fill, those being President, 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents. First Vice President Eric Quinney has agreed to become our new President. Second Vice President J. R. Fox has agreed to become our 1st Vice President. For the Second Vice President's position, I have three members to nominate those being John Rutherford, Josh Van Vlack and Jim Wamsley. A written ballot for this position has been prepared. President Mathews called for nominations from the floor 3 times for any of the elected positions, there were no floor nominations. A motion for the Secretary to cast a unanimous ballot for the Office of President Eric Quinney and the Office of 1st Vice President J. R. Fox was made by Chris Kocher and seconded by Jerry Munger. The results of the written ballot for 2nd Vice President were counted and Jim Wamsley received the majority vote and elected to the 2nd Vice President's position. Past President Byron Mathews presided over the officer installation, and all repeated the "Oath of Office". At this time, our new President Eric Quinney took charge of the meeting and presented a Past President's pin to Past President Mathews, thanking him for his years of service to our organization and asked for his continued support.

Missouri Valley Division, IAFC – Jim Wamsley gave the report of the division. He indicated that he just came back from attending the winter meeting in Kansas City. He reported that the division has two scholarships available. The first one is for the Annual Division Conference in Fargo, ND, June 21-28, 2023. The Wyoming division has available from the IAFC \$1,500 for as many people that we can send to the conference. If you are interested in this, apply through our Division Director Craig Haslam. The second scholarship is the Lynn Washburn scholarship. This was established by Ms. Washburn for women in the Fire Service. Doesn't have to be a Chief officer. She designed it for any woman that has an interest in improving herself in gaining and developing leadership skills. If interested contact 2nd Vice President Wamsley and he will get you to the individual in charge of the program. Jim encourages all members to join the IAFC, there is a membership available for small departments. There website is a very good source of information. Craig's 3-year term as our Missouri Valley Division Representative will be up in 2024.

Special District Association – President Quinney reminded everyone that there was legislation passed a couple sessions back that requires all officers of a District to have Special District training by July 1, 2024. The Special District Association has a training module on their website, which is cost free. The University of Wyoming has a session of online training that is available and informative. This training is a Wyoming Legislature Requirement.

Wyoming Council on Fire Prevention and Electrical Safety – Dan Johnson reported that there has been a recent meeting of the board. There is a new board member Justin Smith. There have been no pending appeals to the council. The council reviewed all the reports of the entities that report to the council and approved same.

IAFC VCOS – J. R. Fox reported that the winter newsletter is on the website. He noted that information from the AFG funding reported over 7,000 applications for the funding. There is a recent report put out by the URL on Lithium used in batteries, he stated this is going to be a big issue for all of us in the future. This year’s “Symposium In The Sun” will be held in Clearwater, Florida in November of this year, information is on the website.

National Volunteer Fire Council – President Quinney reported that Chief Larry Erdmann and himself are the Wyoming Council members. The Council just recently held the first Wildland Fire Symposium in Rapid City, South Dakota. There is a Training Summit scheduled for this June in Oklahoma City. He indicated there are scholarships and stipends available for personnel to attend. The website of the council has a huge number of resources available to departments.

National Fire Protection Agency – Nick Hudson reported that the annual conference is scheduled for Las Vegas this year on June 20 and 21. There is very good training scheduled and he highly recommends attending. All pub-ed information available on the website is free to fire departments. There was a discussion the on the current lawsuit concerning Carcinogens in Fire Fighter turnout gear. It was noted that there are opportunities to participate in these rulemaking standards.

Wyoming Fallen Fighter Memorial – Dan Johnson reported the annual memorial service will be held on Saturday August 19, 2023 at the Academy. There was a discussion about whether the memorial should continue to be held in August or possibly moved back to April in conjunction with the April Chiefs’ meeting. If anyone has input about the date of the memorial, please forward your comments to Chief Dan Johnson – djohnson@cityoflarimieorg. If there is a Hall of Fame ceremony this year, it most likely be held in conjunction with the Fallen Firefighter memorial.

Legislation Committee – Gene Diedtrich reported for the Chair of the Committee Lanny Applegate. The legislative committee had a very successful year. The committee supported the passing of Senate file 0038 – special license plates for organ donors. Senate file 0043 – EMS Districts, allows counties to form EMS districts. HB0118 – providing \$9 million for the Vol/Fire, EMT and Search and Rescue Plan. A big Thank You to all the Fire Service personnel who helped the lobbying effort by contacting your legislators. Your hard work is the reason the above legislation was passed and signed by Governor Gordon. The Wyoming Legislature – Management Council has selected the Recruitment and Retention request as an interim topic and a hearing is scheduled for the Labor, Health, and Social Services committee meeting at Casper on April 27, 2023 at 1:30 pm. The Fire Insurance premium cancellations being done by insurance underwriters was discussed at great length, there is still more to come.

WSFA – Residential Sprinkler Committee – Nick Hudson reported the group meets once a month. I interested, reach out to Nick. A new addition for the State is a side X side trailer for public viewing, Past Director Reed and Assistant Director Young were very instrumental in obtaining the trailer. If questions arise from anyone regarding home sprinklers, please contact Nick.

Wyoming Volunteer Fire, EMT and Search and Rescue Pension Plan – Jerry Munger reported that the board met last evening at Hudson. He reported that the plan on March 24, 2023 has 2,399 active members. Monthly payments to retirees and beneficiaries amount to about \$610,000 per month. The fund balance on January 31, 2023 was approximately \$98 Million.

Wyoming Fire Academy – Ian Kraft reported on the 2022 Academy training and inspection hours and incidents. The Academy had an increase in staff this year over last, and product of such has increased the training opportunities at the Academy significantly. The construction projects at the Academy are close to being put out to bid, and hopefully construction will start later this spring or early summer.

Safer Grants – Gene Diedtrich reported that the 2019 grant has a remaining balance of \$275K and is set to expire on November 21, 2024. The 2021 Grant has a remaining balance of \$763K and expires November 19, 2026. The Grants provide reimbursement for qualified training, college tuition/books and one-time physicals for volunteer in the Fire Service. Contact Gene Diedtrich for any questions about the Grant availability.

STATE FIRE ASSOCIATION REPORTS:

Wyoming State Firemen's Association – Matt Lee, the president of association addressed the group. He reported the association is thriving and doing well. He said Riverton is hosting the 90th Annual Convention meeting and drill field competition on June 15-17, 2023. The Riverton Fire department members and their wives have been working hard to make the convention a great success. He indicated that the Association is doing the annual raffle to help with the convention and other operating expense, lots of good prizes and the tickets are only \$1 a piece.

Wyoming Firefighters Certification Committee – Ian Kraft reported that he spoke with Jake Ribordy, there is a certification meeting planned for April 21, 2023. There is one position left to fill, which needs to come from the Middle to the Northeast Quadrant of the state. Applicants need to contact Becky at the Academy office.

Wyoming Association of Fire Marshals – Nick Hudson reported that he is the acting president of the group. The conference on Community Risk Reduction is schedule for May 17-19, 2023, at the Casper Ram -Kota. You can register for the conference through Eventbrite.

LAST Team – Dan Johnson reported that there is a softball tourney scheduled for June 23-26, 2023, at Riverton. All proceeds will be contributed to LAST to be specifically used for “Mental Health”. There has been a 75th anniversary Winchester Model 70 rifle, new-in-box donated to LAST and will be raffled off. The LAST team has met with the Sportsmen Warehouse business, and they have agreed to let LAST team volunteers sell tickets at their business stores. After a winner is determined, Sportsmen Warehouse will take care of the processing and transfer of the gun to the raffle winner. Have had 5 missions since the last meeting, another project LAST is supporting, is funding the updating of a Fire engine that has been donated for use at funerals.

307 CRR – Byron Mathews reported there are a lot of statewide initiatives going on. Thermal fuses, side X side trailer and a new program called Youth Firesetters program. He talked about a fireman's home burning, look at ourselves, are we behind in our own homes with fire and carbon monoxide alarms.

STATE AGENCY REPORTS:

Wyoming State Forestry – Byron Mathews reported for Forestry. There is no new word on the new State Forester. The hiring panel is in the process of selecting a successor to Bill Crapser. The district 3 State Forester position is still vacant. The State Helicopter contract was awarded to the same contractor as last year. Will be available early June 2023.

Wyoming Fire Marshal – Director Mathews first report to our body as the WSM. He indicated that there were staffing challenges, like a deputy FM, staffing challenges and training. The insurance media network and wildland interface were addressed somewhat at the recent Fire Marshal's conference he was at in Baltimore, he reported how impressive it was. He reported that the ESO emergency reporting was very challenging and costly. The WSM, office of EMS and the State Forestry are working on a pollable solution to records management. No decision has been made yet, but the potential cost increased by ER reporting will see some departments paying double for the extra modules. Out of the 144 emergency reporting accounts in Wyoming, only about 85 are reporting data. So there seems to be some departments who are not entering data into emergency reporting. LEADERSHP@7220 will be the 1st annual fire service leadership symposium in Wyoming. It is scheduled for Cheyenne on September 8, 2023. Save the date and watch for more details.

Wyoming Office of Homeland Security – Dillon Comer a member of the Homeland Security team reported that the office is busy with routine items. The numbers of the RRT's for 2023 is at 11, had 54 total during 2022. The office can supply radio support in times of need if any department needs it. There are also several grants available. Contact the Cheyenne office if you are interested.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

CDL Certification Process – Ian Kraft reported that program has been in the preparation process for the past year. The curriculum needs to meet Federal Regulations. Combining several programs already in place, the new class now entails a 12-hour classroom course. Core course instruction will emerge as roughly 4 hours per person. The class is ready to roll out now. Have had a couple pilot classes. The course will be offered at the upcoming Cody Fire School scheduled for May 6-7, 2023. Will offer train the trainer classes regionally then departments members can become successful for meeting the requirements to take the CDL test. The course is a new undertaking, WE thank the Academy staff for making this program available to the Fire Service of Wyoming.

NEW BUSINESS:

Legislation Committee – With Director Mathews retirement from the committee, the committee is lacking a leader. Lanny Applegate who worked tirelessly the last session on all the Fire Service legislative efforts was persuaded in to being the new Legislation chairman if President Eric would be his co-chair. Motion was made by John Rutherford and seconded by Chris Kocher to make this happen.

Calendar of Events – Chris Kocher raised a very valid point, that a regularly updated calendar of events is needed by the Fire Service to inform everyone what is happening, when and where. He indicated that there is a calendar on the WFCA website, Chris has agreed to take over that responsibility.

Fire Insurance cancellation was discussed in great length, still more to come.

John Rutherford introduced Steph Schofield; Steph is a member of Carbon County Fire Ryan Park Division. Steph is the handler of the Arson K-9 dog “Jennifer” who accompanied the two from Rawlins to our meeting. If you have Fire investigations where you suspect petroleum is involved, you can request the dog come to your investigation by contacting the Duty Officer at Homeland Security, telephone no. 307-630-2767. The cost for this is picked up by the Department of Homeland Security.

Meeting adjourned at 12:13 pm.

FUTURE MEETING DATES.

- **June 14, 2023 – 3:00 pm**
Meeting in conjunction with the 90th Wyoming State Firemen’s Association Annual Convention and Tournament, June 15-17, 2023, at Riverton Volunteer Fire Department Station 1.
- Meeting in conjunction with the Wyoming State Rural Firemen’s Association annual convention November 29 through December 2, 2023. Meeting will be at the Casper, Wyoming RAMKOTA INN.
- **January 12, 2024 – 12:30 pm**
Meeting in conjunction with the RIVERTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT’S annual fire school. Meeting to be held at the WYOMING FIRE ACADEMY.

A VERY DELICIOUS LUNCH WAS SERVED TO THE ATTENDEES BY THE RIVERTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FOLLOWING THE MEETING. A HUGE THANK YOU TO THEM FOR THEIR GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY.