

WYOMING FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION
MEETING MINUTES
Fire Academy, Riverton, Wyoming
January 9, 2026

Called to order by President Fox at 11:18AM

Motions - All motions made and seconded were unanimously passed unless otherwise noted.

Meeting Minutes - The Meeting Minutes of the previous meeting held December 4, 2025, at the Best Western in Casper and were presented as emailed to the membership. Motion by Lanny Applegate, seconded by Brent Godfrey.

Treasurer's Report - Gene Diedtrich submitted a written report on the Statement of Cash Position for the period November 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. There was a beginning balance of \$56,957 deposits of \$20,423, disbursements of \$20,004 leaving an ending balance of \$57,376 with a cash restriction of \$17,858 for Consortium Section and the L.A.S.T. checking account, leaving an unrestricted balance of \$39,518. Motion to approve made by Mark Haines and seconded by Chris Kocher

Wyoming Retirement System - Director David Swindell gave an update on the 3 Retirement Plans for the Fire Service. The 2025 Investment Rate of Return is anticipated to be close to 15%. This will bring the Volunteer Plan to 100% funded, the Plan B to approximately 103% and Plan A to 100% Market Value. Director Swindell also announced that he will be retiring as of August 1st. Chief Fox thanked Director Swindell for his service.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Missouri Valley Division, IAFC - Chief Harnish gave the following report and provided the following information

- Remember that January is Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month, a great time for Departments to pursue Gold Helmet Status with the firefighter cancer registry.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/firefighters/registry/goldhelmet.html>
 - <https://nfr.cdc.gov/>
- Discussion on dues increase. All but 2 other divisions have a higher dues structure than we do. We have not had a dues increase for at least 35 years. Each \$10 increase in our dues brings an increase of roughly \$13,000/year to our budget. The constitution says it is necessary to give 120 days notice to the membership prior to voting on the dues increase. A 2/3 majority is required to pass.
 - Changes last year prorated dues for new members for first year, decline in funds
 - Dues throughout the divisions range from \$10-65, MVD is \$20 and has been going back to the early 1990's
 - Recommendation to increase the dues to \$40 will be presented to the membership at the annual meeting in June
 - A document detailing how money is to be spent will be coming soon
- All states in the MVD are preparing for upcoming Legislative sessions, all states are facing tax reduction initiatives
- Winter Board Meeting/Force Conference week of March 31, 2026
 - I will attend
 - State President is invited to attend with MVD paying for 1 nights lodging and lunch the day of the meeting

Scholarship Opportunities

- Lynn Washburn Scholarship (\$1500 to assist aspiring female fire officers in the pursuit of professional development and advancement). This scholarship is awarded annually in the month of April. The Application period opens January 1st each year and closes March 1st. Application is available on the MVD website
- \$1500 State stipend (to attend the Division Conference, Lincoln, NE June 3-5), if interested submit a letter of interest to me by May 1, 2026
- If interested contact me for assistance

Special District Association - Craig Haslam reported that the Special District Association is participating in the Wyoming County Commissioners Association Property Tax Working Group. He mentioned that the National Association is facing the same issues and talked about Districts Making a Difference Program at the National Level.

Wyoming Council on Fire Prevention and Electrical Safety - Director Byron Mathews reported that the Council will meet in the 1Q of 2026 with no date set. There are currently no pending issues before the Council.

IAFC VCOS - Chief Caughey reported on the activities of the VCOS Section of the IAFC. The section supports volunteer and combination departments. He reminded the body about the Symposium of the Sun Conference in November and the scholarship opportunity to help offset costs. Chief Caughey talked about a new Chief to Chief Mentorship program being rolled out, announced a scholarship to attend FRI in Kansas City in the summer, and spoke about a new program that will help train in fire ground operations with limited staff. Webinars are back online and the Critical Thinking Program is in its 3rd year and will be held in Texas this year.

National Volunteer Fire Council - Chief Eric Quinney reported out on the NVFC. He announced that Wyoming has enough members to qualify for the State Dues to be waived. He reported out on the Drinking Water Program, the State Farm and Nutella Grants and encouraged departments to apply for these programs. Work continues on the proposed OSHA Standard and departments were encouraged to sign up their members to receive the benefits of the NVFC. Interest was solicited for people who would be interested in being involved with the National Volunteer Fire Council.

National Fire Protection Association - Nick Hudson and the NFPA Regional Representative Bob Sullivan reported out on the NFPA

Nick Hudson mentioned the new Public Awareness Calendar and distributed it out to those attending the meeting. Nick is the public education rep for the NFPA here in Wyoming. Bob Sullivan reported out on the following.

- A big THANK YOU! to WFCA President J.R. Fox of Campbell County Fire Department for recently attending NFPA's 2025 Fire Chiefs Forum, held at NFPA Headquarters in Quincy, Massachusetts in November. For this Forum, NFPA invites the Presidents of the State Fire Chiefs' Associations in all 50 U.S. states, and in all the Provinces in Canada. We spent two days discussing a range of current topics important to the Fire Service, and NFPA thanks all of the Chiefs for their valuable input and expertise. The information sharing helps with collaboration between NFPA and the Fire Service, helping to address topics such as firefighter PPE, fire apparatus, fire training and certifications, firefighter health and wellness, the latest research on fires involving lithium-ion batteries, fire code development, and legislative issues such as the single-stair debate in new apartment buildings.

- We are asking for help from the Fire Service in Wyoming to support the Pro Codes Act currently making its way through the U.S. Congress. Fire codes and standards are constantly under attack by outside influences and special-interest groups, and there are many ongoing attempts to diminish the importance of fire codes and standards. There are some who would like to see fire and building codes eliminated altogether. The Pro Codes Act is intended to help preserve the current codes- and standards-development process. The best way to voice your support for the Pro Codes Act is to contact your Wyoming U.S. Senators and U.S. House Representative in Congress, and ask them to please support H.R. 4072, the Pro Codes Act. NFPA has a page on our website with much more information, including an easy process already set up to contact your elected representatives and ask for their support: www.dontchancesafety.org . On that page, scroll down and look for the section that says "Tell Your Elected Officials - Safety Standards Matter". In that section, click on the "Act Now" button, and follow the steps to contact your representatives. The whole process only takes a couple minutes. WY Representative Hageman is on the U.S. House Judiciary Committee that is reviewing this bill. We also have template letters available that you can put on your department's letterhead, to send to your representatives. The Congressional Representatives have expressed to NFPA that they would like to hear directly from more fire departments and fire code officials across the U.S. that this bill is important to you, so that they can in turn, voice their support in Congress for passage of the bill. NFPA can help you with this process and with more information, feel free to contact Bob or Nick for assistance. Please contact your U.S. representatives and thank you for your help! .

NFPA Journals are accessible on the NFPA website and every 5 years the NFPA conducts a needs assessment survey, please fill out those surveys with the deadline being extended to February 15th. The annual conference will be held in Las Vegas this year June 22-24th. Always willing to talk to everyone about being involved in the code development process. Please get involved and reach out with any questions.

Wyoming Firefighter Memorial - The memorial will be held on August 15th, 2026. The Hall of Fame Ceremony will be at 10:30AM with the Memorial at 1:30PM A keynote speaker is needed for the event. The cost of event last year was \$4928.96.

WYO-LINK UPDATE - Chief Kocher reported out on Wyo-Link. The latest meeting included topics regarding first net coverage lapses across the state, a request from Park County for more towers to increase coverage, and 911 funding and interoperability with neighboring states. The next meeting will be February 4th and 5th. Looking for appropriations to conduct gap studies for coverage and evaluate 911 funding. Presentations with FirstNet, T-Mobile and Verizon about their programs.

Legislative Update - A discussion was held about the upcoming legislative session. A Legislative Committee meeting was held prior to this meeting of the WFCA today at the Fire Academy. Lanny Applegate reminded everyone going to Cheyenne to Lobby to register as a Lobbyist. Name tags were discussed and will be ordered for those going to Cheyenne. A motion was made by James Current to adopt the recommendations of the Legislative Committee and to allow Lanny Applegate, Shad Cooper and those lobbying in Cheyenne to make decisions on behalf of the body for issues that may come up during the session. Craig Haslam seconded the motion. The recommendations of the committee for pending legislation are attached to these minutes in a spreadsheet.

WFCA Residential Sprinkler Committee - Nick Hudson reported that the Side by Side Demonstration Trailer is available and to get in touch with him to get it scheduled between May 1st and October 31st. The goal of the committee is to educate, educate and promote.

Wyoming Volunteer Fire, EMT and Search and Rescue Pension - Lanny Applegate reported on the most recent status of the pension plan. The fund grew from \$131 Million in July to \$139 Million in October with more to come at the end of 2025. The Plan has 2410 current members and there were 4 deaths in 4Q of 2025.

Wyoming Fire Academy - Ian Kraft reported on the Fire Academy statistics. 201 Classes, 2873 Students for 2958 Hours. 23 recruits successfully passed the Spring and Fall Academies. He also reported that the gas training field is being converted to handle both natural gas and propane and 3 new props will be acquired. Training section is fully staffed with a new addition of a trainer for the Southwest.

2021 SAFER Grant Report - Gene Diedtrich submitted a report on the current status of both SAFER Grants and encouraged Chiefs to submit for qualified training reimbursements and new hire physicals. The 2021 Grant has a balance of \$539K and will expire in November 2026. Reminder that all grant expenditures must be preapproved through the grant administrator Gene Diedtrich.

Highlights of SAFER GRANT coverage.

Training Reimbursement

Includes the Training Cost, Daily meals and lodging incurred within the Wyoming Current Per-Diem rates.

College Books/Tuition

Acceptance will be for a 1-4-year period, depending on the life of the grant, allows 8 semesters of tuition at a qualified college or online teaching college. Allows up to \$1,650 tuition and \$350 for relevant books per semester, passing grade of a C or better per semester to qualify for payment.

One Time Physical

For new members of a department, a department member must be in good standing. Needs to be a NFPA 1582 compliant physical, reimburses up to \$880 per physical.

SECTION REPORTS

Wyoming Firefighter's Certification Committee - Chief Allen Robinson, the new Chairman of the Certification Committee reported on several ongoing projects of the committee. Work continues on Technical Rescue, Cancer Awareness Module, new methodologies for both FF1 and Haz Mat. The committee is evaluating the need for the Facility and Fire Brigade Standard and continuing education requirements for FF1 and FF2. Chief Robinson also addressed prior learning and experience being within the past 5 years to be considered relevant. The committee will meet again in April. Chief Shad Cooper asked the committee to look into NFPA 1000 and the new standard for exterior only and support firefighters.

Wyoming Association of Fire Marshals - Nick Hudson reported the annual conference will be in Casper, April 7-9, 2026, in Casper. 16 Hours of CEU will be available. Registration will be available at the end of January. The purpose is community risk reduction and will focus codes, community education and CRR. New code updates will be given and new codes introduced regarding wildland urban interface.

Industrial Fire Chiefs - No Report Given

Consortium Section - Chief Fox reported that the section met last night. Dues will remain the same. The hope of is to use dues in the future to offset the costs of speakers at the 7220 Conference. The Conference this year will

be October 29-30th in Gillette with speakers lined up this year. He encouraged Chiefs to send Company Officers and those Firefighters who might be future leaders. In order for these events to continue participation is needed.

STATE FIRE ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Wyoming State Firefighter Association - President Ervin Stofflet reported that the 93rd Annual Convention will be held in Wheatland June 18-20, 2026. The Association is once again having a benefit raffle with several prizes (rifle, set of tires, gun safe, smoker, knife set, etc) to support the legislative efforts. Tickets are \$5 each and contact him as wsfa.stofflet@gmail.com for tickets and more information. There was a call for more departments to field drill teams to help continue the tradition and help reach 100 years.

Wyoming State Rural Firemen's Association - Craig Haslam, the new president of the Rural Fire Advisory Board reported that they continue to work on projects with State Forestry related to the Budget requests and pending legislation for the upcoming legislative session.

L.A.S.T Team Update - Allen Robinson reported that the LAST Team has completed 9 missions in 2025. They have a checking account balance of \$15,297.30 and a CD Balance of \$22,193.22. Chief Johnson will be transitioning his role to Chief Allen Robinson in Rawlins over the next year. They are looking for someone to head up the Honor Guard for the LAST Team to replace Chief Robinson as he assumes more of a role for the Team. They are also reviewing the recent legislation passed by Congress. The Fallen Hero's Act, and he reported that more cancers have been included in the PSOB Benefit.

307 CRR - Director Mathews did not have anything to report. Nick Hudson added that they are analyzing and processing data to determine what statewide issues there might be and that the thermal fuse supply has been exhausted. Carbon Monoxide is also still an initiative of the CRR but does not have funding to do any more work on it at this time.

Wyoming Firefighter Cancer Support Network - Chief Harnish reported on behalf of Paul Juergens that there is training available for the Cancer Support Network. Opportunities are available for a Train the Trainer and the goal is to have educational opportunities across the state to help with the upcoming FF1 Cancer Awareness Requirements.

STATE AGENCY REPORTS

Wyoming State Forestry - Jerod DeLay of State Forestry submitted this report on behalf of State Forester Norris and himself as they were unable to attend.

In 2025, WSFD aided in the management of 18 Emergency Fire Suppression Account (EFSA) fires in 8 counties, totaling nearly 33,450,00 million dollars in suppression costs and approximately 19.7 million dollars EFSA costs. There were 1,327 non-federal fire occurrences with 88,742 acres burned, and all lands; 1,662 fires burning 250,535 acres. The 10-year average is 997 fires for 202,529 acres. During 2025, 890 invoices were processed through the fire billing system for \$20,549,424.10.

WSFD Aviation: State Forestry contracted 1 Type 3 and 1 Type 2 helicopters. The Type 3 helicopter; flew 62 missions, 564 personnel transported, 117,684 gallons of water delivered in bucket drops, 204.4 flight hours, and

supported fires in 8 counties. The Type 2 helicopter; flew 53 missions, 102,828 gallons of water delivered, 70.5 flight hours, and supported fires in 6 counties.

The WSFD Single Engine Airtanker (SEAT) operations were increased to 4 SEATs in 2025. These aircraft were operated out of the Casper Tanker Base at the Casper International Airport, Worland SEAT Base, and for the first time in five years out of Gillette Airport. In 2025, Wyoming contracted SEATs responded to 76 initial attacks, delivered 189,547 gallons of retardant and an additional 30,711 gallons of water.

Forestry Conservation Program: The Smokebuster Crew operated in 2025 with 1 Site/Crew Supervisor, 4 Crew Supervisors, and 17 qualified Inmates.

- 10 fire assignments for 29.5 shifts
- 7,205 inmate hours
- Completed 156.5 acres of fuels treatments

Volunteer Fire Assistance: In 2025 49 grant applications with 48 funded, \$877,687.40 in total grant requests with 50/50 reimbursement. A total of \$384,525.17 was awarded: \$372,235.76 in equipment, \$10,306.79 in training and \$1,983.79 for organization.

Fuels Mitigation: The Fuels Mitigation Program received funding for 10 projects. Region 2 Community Assistance Funding Adjacent grants (CAFA) were accomplished in Converse, Sheridan, and Albany Counties for \$736,122 for 382 acres of treatment. Region 4 CAFA grants were accomplished in Teton, and Lincoln Counties for \$532,945 for 71 acres and 7 defensible spaces. Weston County Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) accomplished 10 defensible spaces, 519 acres of fuels treatments and 25 acres of fuel break. In 2025, Converse County was awarded a CAFA Grant for \$243,000 for funding 285 acres of planned fuels treatments. Sublette, Sheridan, and Park Counties were awarded WUI project funding totaling 80 acres for a \$146,000. Park County received Community Wildfire Defense Grant funding for a County Wide Protection Plan (CWPP) for \$138,500.

FEPP/FPP: Wyoming has 312 pieces of Federal Excess Personal Property valued over \$13.0 million and over 300 pieces of Firefighter Property worth over \$3 million. It is estimated that the equipment and fire trucks obtained through these programs contribute to the suppression of 75% of all Wyoming fires, regardless of ownership.

Personnel: After 29 years of service Gary Hobbs retired and Brian Ott is replacing Gary in the Fleet & Fabrication Facility Supervisor. Interviews were conducted yesterday (Jan. 6th) for the now vacant Warehouse Assistant Supervisor position that Brian formally held. Eric Herdt was hired as a Crew Supervisor for the Smokebuster Crew at the Forestry Conservation Camp in Newcastle. WSFD also hired 3 additional Fire Operation Specialists - Training; Cass Urbigkit in Pinedale, Dan Oakley in Riverton, and John Orban in Newcastle.

Looking forward into 2026,

- WSFD will be working to complete the update to the Cooperative Master Agreement.
- Scheduling A.O.P. meetings in the next couple of months, after the legislative session ends at the beginning of March.
- Completing the Private Wildfire Resource Regulation Rules, comments close on January 28th, 2026.
- Develop some rules around the 537 Account
- Award the next aviation contracts for both fixed wing and rotor wing aircraft
- Legislative session outcomes
- Updating EFSA MOU to the counties

Wyoming State Fire Marshal's Office - Director Mathews was present and reported that the agency is progressing with getting staffing filled. A new Chief Electrical Officer has been hired. He discussed the new federal reporting requirement with the NEIRS Program and asked that departments reach out with any help they may need. Their ability to help on the back end is not what it used to be with NIFRS. Director Mathews announced that a new Investigations Unit has been established. Currently the Trainers are still helping with Investigations, but it was his hope that at some point to move away from that. He introduced Chris McDonald as the head of the Investigations Unit. Chris retired from DCI and comes to the agency with 25 years of Law Enforcement experience. Chris reported on the activities of the Unit and discussed his goals of helping the Fire Service and Law Enforcement to work more seamlessly on investigations and evidence issues. They highlighted the work of the K-9 detection dog and relayed the desire for local departments to utilize the investigators and dog when needed.

Wyoming Office of Homeland Security - No Report Given

Wyoming Office of EMS - Shane Kirsch, the VP of the Wyoming EMS Association reported that the Wyoming EMS Director had recently resigned. He read an email from the Department of Health indicating that they are looking to fill that position by the 1st of February. No other information was available from the Office of EMS

CONTINUING BUSINESS

By-Laws Update - Chief Wamsley was unable to attend. Work continues on the By-Laws and more information will be available at the April Meeting

Fire Service Website - The old domain for the Wyoming Fire Service has been purchased by a company out of California. A discussion was held about needing to secure the domain so that the website could be updated and not to continue to have outdated information out on the web. Craig Haslam made a motion that the WFCMA contribute up to \$250 and to ask the Fire Advisory Board to contribute up to \$250 for a total of \$500 to attempt to buy the domain back from the California Company. Chris Kocher seconded the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

Bank Account Changes - Eric Quinney is replacing Gene Diedtrich as the Secretary/Treasurer and it is necessary to add Eric Quinney to the bank accounts to conduct business for the association. The following two motions were made to effect these changes.

A motion was made by Brent Godfrey to add Eric Quinney, PO Box 640, Evanston, Wyoming 82931 to the Signature Cards of the First Northern Bank of Wyoming as a signer for the following two checking account, numbers XXX-775 and XXX-776 of the Wyoming Fire Chief's Association. No, to allow use of the Debit Card and Yes, to allow addition to the Bank's Online Banking System. Motion seconded by Jerry Parker.

Another motion was made by Chris Kocher to add Eric Quinney to any financial accounts of the Wyoming Fire Chief's Association. Motion was seconded by James Curren.

WFCMA Merchandise Website - Chief Fox presented a website opportunity to sell merchandise of the Fire Chief's Association. He demonstrated a sample website and discussed the process for getting a website up and running so

members could purchase merchandise. The cost to set up the website would be between \$200 and \$500. Then once setup, members could purchase items through the website. Craig Haslam made a motion to allocate up to \$500 to set up the website. Shad Cooper seconded the motion.

Challenge Coins - Chief Fox and Chief Quinney talked about the idea of having a Challenge Coin made for the Fire Chief's Association. A discussion was held about the coins and who they would be for and distributed. Chief Quinney offered to move forward with design options and pricing for the April meeting if the Body was interested in the idea. John Rutherford made a motion to move forward with design and pricing for challenge coins. Brent Godfrey seconded the motion.

With no other business being brought before the body. A motion was made by Mark Haines to adjourn the meeting. Second, by James Curren. All present voted in favor. The Chief's portion of the Meeting was adjourned by Chief Fox at 1:53PM

FUTURE MEETING DATES

- April 11, 2026, annual meeting of the WFCA, with elections starting at 9:00 AM at the Riverton Volunteer Fire Department Station #1 meeting room. A delicious lunch will be served after the meeting by the good cooks of the RVFD.
- June 17, 2026, starting at 3:00 PM at the Wheatland Fire Department held in conjunction with the Annual Convention of the State Firefighters Association.
- December 3, 2026, starting at 8:00AM at the Best Western in Capser held in conjunction with the Rural Firefighters Annual Conference.