

**South Carolina Fire Academy
Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
Meeting Minutes – July 8, 2009**

Members Present: Jonathan Jones, Art Sattler, Bryan Beason, Phil Elliott, Lavarn Lucas, Dixon Odom, Karl Ristow, Joel Rogers, Bill Streuber, Wesley Williams

Members Absent: Bill Addis, Bruce Burding, Shannon Tanner, Mitch Trammel

Alternates Present: Steve Curry, Skip Hannon, John L Melton,

Non-Voting Members Present: John Reich and Ed Roper

Visitors Present: Will Vaigneur, Phillip Russell, Cindy Brazell, and Russ Friar

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order. Ed Roper advised that a quorum was present.

Chairman Jones asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April meeting with the corrections noted. Lavarn Lucas made a motion and Karl Ristow seconded. Discussion: none. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman Jones asked for reports from the different associations:

SC Firefighters Association – Jonathan Jones

Jones stated the annual conference will be next at Myrtle Beach and noted that the education portion of the convention could not be pulled off without assistance from the fire academy. The Academy's logistical support is greatly appreciated.

SC Fire Chiefs Association – Wesley Williams

The annual conference will be held in October in Greenville.

SC Fire Marshal Association – Phil Elliott

No report

Public Education Association – No representative

Industrial Representative – Joel Rogers

No report.

Professional Firefighters – Steve Curry

No report

SC Arson Association – Bryan Beason

Beason stated that the association just completed their second core training in June, with guest speak Rusty Horton. They are preparing for their annual conference Oct. 19-23 in Myrtle Beach. This is a joint SC/NC conference.

Higher Education – Karl Ristow

Charleston chiefs met with Trident Tech recently concerning replicating the Greenville Tech program in the Charleston region. They have talked to Trident Tech about offering an

associate's degree in Fire Science. This would allow South Carolina to have two technical programs that are similar at both ends of the state. They have made contact with the College of Charleston to discuss establishing a baccalaureate program where students could transfer from the associate program in to the baccalaureate program.

SC Society of Fire Service Instructors – Art Sattler

Sattler stated that they will have a meeting next week at the beach with guest speaker Eddie Bucanna.

Superintendent's Report – Ed Roper

Roper handed out a current organization chart.

Roper handed out and reviewed the regional report, the finance report and the budget report. Roper noted that the Academy hosted the Dept of Public Safety to shoot their new "move over law" video. Roper also stated that the Academy is in the process of relocating the Region 7 office (Greenwood) from the Newberry Fire Dept to Northwest Fire Dept. in Greenwood.

Roper recognized John Reich for being awarded the NASFM Olin Greene Outstanding Fire Prevention Award.

Curriculum Report – Russ Friar

Friar handed out his curriculum section report and reviewed.

Resident Training – Phillip Russell

Russell handed out and reviewed the resident training report.

Division update - John Reich

Reich added to Russell's report concerning the development of US&R props. Reich's desire is have training fund the US&R.

Reich noted that as of July 1, 2009 a new policy for SLED background took effect requiring that request must have payments first before the report is received.

The Freddie program still cost money and we are waiting for delivery now. Reich is asking that fire departments coordinate this program.

The 1% program – it is our responsibility to qualify departments and send to the county treasures office. The deadline is Oct. 31, 2009 for fire dept to key their data electronically.

The Fire Marshal's office will be sending two employees to the annual convention next week to answer questions about the 1% money.

Unfinished Business

Jones discussed the sub-committee assignments and tasking for the Firefighter and Fire Officer Standards and program delivery research committees. Jones reminded the committee that we are not creating the standard, we are not writing legislation; however, we will come back with a recommendation from the advisory committee.

Members for the Firefighter Standards sub-committee:

Jim Still – chair

Shannon Tanner
Instructor Society representative
Professional Firefighter representative
Arson Association representative
Pub Ed Association representative
Industrial representative

Members for the Fire Officer Standards sub-committee:

Chris Nunnery – chair
Mitch Trammell
John L Melton
Karl Ristow
Chief's Association representative
Fire Marshal Association representative

Jones reviewed a handout from Joint council that was presented at the last quarterly meeting by Ken Kerber. Jones focused on the questions listed on the handout as items that the joint council wants the Advisory committee to address.

1. What are the credentials?
2. Is there one standard for all firefighters or separate standards for career vs. volunteers? Is there a need for that? Jones stated that some things that need to be considered when answering this question is, taking the company officer for example, the definition of company officers the same for a paid department with the officer riding a rig with 4 firefighters and the volunteer department where it 's the guy who is just the manager of that station. Is it the same? Does it need to be the same requirement? Those are all question that will have to be answered.
3. Will there be a grandfathering provision? Some kind of time table for those already in the system.
4. What will be the training standards?
5. How will the standards be enacted?
6. How will they be enforced? This is a big question.
7. How will the training be delivered? The goal is delivering in the most effective way possible to all portions of the state fire service, quality courses, not necessarily based on the way we have always done it. A list of delivery method alternatives driven not by what we are currently doing but what is technically available and whether that is applicable realistically for our state.
8. Who will do the record keeping? Who will manage the whole thing?

These are all good questions and give us a starting point, but we do need more detail. Basically we are looking at recommending a list of minimum courses a firefighter should have to take to obtain minimum competency level and you are going to have to define what that minimum competency level is. Is there a different standard for a structural firefighter and non-structural firefighter? Do we just go with National standards? Are we looking for NFPAs or IFSAC? Will we accept programs that meet NFPA without an IFSAC certificate? A recommended list of training courses that a fire chief or officer should take to obtain the rank? We may come up with other job list in the middle such as driver operator programs where an engineer will be considered. Some departments don't use the term engineer. These are all things that have to be considered. Again,

whether it should differentiate between volunteers and paid firefighters. The ultimate goal from the joint council is a goal of adopting NFPA standards, working toward that, but the implementation process to get there will be in baby steps. It may be that we have to establish some things and adjust as we go.

The joint council also encourages members of the committee to be assigned to either visit other states or have other states come in and make presentations about what other states are already doing. It warrants us to look at other programs that are already established, if nothing else, to see the hurdles and pitfall that they encountered while trying to implement standards.

Jones also stated that these committees should be classified as “working” committees and in that respect has asked the Fire Academy staff to the extent possible to email out all reports, along with minutes, several weeks ahead of each quarterly meeting so that discussion can be limited in those reports to pertinent issues at hand and more time will be spent working on these projects at the quarterly meeting. This committee will need to focus on the job at hand.

Other Business

Karl Ristow stated that by allowing these committees to figure out what are the standards and what it should be is diluting from what OSHA already wrote and we are allowing it to be convoluted into something less than that. Ristow feels that this committee should take a position of where this committee stands, that the standards are not mandated, it is not required, there is no law that requires departments to follow the standard, it is just a position.

Ristow made the following motion: ***The SCFA Advisory committee’s position is that all firefighters should be trained to the Firefighter I or II standard before being allowed to make entry into an IDLH environment.***

Second: Art Sattler

Discussion: there was discussion asking to clarify what is an IDHL environment. Ristow was asked to amend the motion with such clarification.

The motion was amended as follows: ***The SCFA Advisory committee’s position is that all firefighters should be trained to the Firefighter I or II standard before being allowed to make entry into an IDLH environment at a fire scene.***

Vote: Yes – 10

No – none

The motion passed unanimously.

The purpose of that motion was to provide these two committees with direction and how to make that an achievable goal.

Other unfinished business:

Lavarn Lucas stated that his fire department is having an open house for their new

facility on July 29.

Published meeting dates for the next fiscal year.

Oct. 14, 2009
Jan. 13, 2010
April 14, 2010
July 14, 2010

Jones introduced Will Vaigneur as the new chairmen of the advisory committee for the next year.

Adjourn

The next quarterly committee meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2009 at 10 a.m.

With no other business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectively submitted,

Ed Roper
Recording Secretary