

Fire Service Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 9, 2014 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
League of Minnesota Cities

Members/alternates present:

Bob Johnson, Insurance Federation of Minnesota – Chair
Mark Dunaski, Designee MN Commissioner of Public Safety
Mark Rosenblum, MN State Fire Department Association
Nyle Zikmund, MN State Fire Chief’s Association
William Goede, League of Minnesota Cities
Don Smiley, MN State Fire Chief’s Association
Jim Fisher, MN Association of Townships
Chris Parsons, MN Professional Firefighters Association
Rick Loveland, MN Professional Firefighter’s Association
Steve Zaccard, Fire Marshals Assoc. of MN/International Assoc. of Arson Investigators

Members/alternates absent:

Sue Iverson, League of Minnesota Cities
Shane Schmidt, MN State Fire Department Association
Mark Kulda, (Alternate) Insurance Federation of Minnesota

Others present:

Bruce West, State Fire Marshal
Sherry Munyon, Capitol Access
Kevin Reed, HSEM
Marv Calvin, MNSCU
Kate Weeks, Department of Public Safety
Steve Flaherty, MN Board of Firefighter Training and Education
Angela Geraghty, Department of Public Safety – Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bob Johnson at 10:00 a.m.

Members and guests present introduced themselves. MSFDA President Mark Rosenblum advised he was elected President of the Association in June and was sitting in on this meeting as a representative. MSFDA will notify the Fire Service Advisory Committee when a member has been officially appointed to the Fire Service Advisory Committee.

The April 2, 2014 meeting minutes were approved without objection.

Fire Safety Account

Fire Marshal Bruce West provided an update on the Fire Safety Account. FY14 collections totaled \$13,228,789. Because the impact of the reduced rate of .50% was unknown, the budget was reduced to \$10,200,000 in anticipation of lower collections, resulting in \$3,028,789 of unallocated funds. The committee will make recommendations for appropriation of these funds as it is imperative they are utilized for purposes outlined in statute.

Commissioner Dohman approved the Committee’s October 2013 recommendations regarding the one-time appropriation and expenditure of \$1.3 million. \$450,000 will go to MBFTE for firefighter reimbursement; \$350,000 to TF1 for equipment and training for which Bloomington will be the fiscal agent; \$200,000 for shared services grants; \$80,000 to the Minnesota Air Rescue Team (MART) for

which St. Paul is the fiscal agent; \$100,000 to CAT teams; \$20,000 to the ERT in St. Paul; and \$100,000 to SFM for technology and database upgrades.

Fire Service Needs Assessment Report

There was discussion on the Fire Needs Assessment report. This report will play an important role in laying out where the fire service is today in Minnesota, where the gaps are, and what needs to be done as part of the long-term vision for fire service in the state of Minnesota. Nyle Zikmund stated the Humphrey Institute is conducting significant research on recruitment and retention issues in the fire service. Data revealed in this study will be valuable to the Fire Needs Assessment Report. Initial data has revealed that at 3.47%, Minnesota has the lowest number of career firefighters per capita in the nation. There will be a meeting on July 24th where a draft report on the study's findings will be delivered. Feedback from the fire service on the draft report has been encouraged and based on the feedback, the report will be finalized in preparation of the 2015 legislative session.

Volunteer First Responder Incentive

The volunteer first responder incentive to address the firefighter recruitment and retention crisis was ultimately passed as a pilot program to include 14 greater Minnesota counties. The program will provide an annual \$500 stipend for volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel in 2015, 2016 and 2017 for their service in 2014, 2015 and 2016. A study will be performed at the end of the third year to determine the impact of the stipend incentive. The total cost of the pilot program is \$1.6 million.

Rail and Pipeline Safety Bill

Assistant Commissioner Mark Dunaski discussed the rail and pipeline safety bill. DPS will be the umbrella organization working with all stakeholders involved to facilitate a collaborative approach to ensure the safety of Minnesota communities. Under this legislation, railroads must annually submit to DPS and PCA their plans for delivering monitoring equipment and an operator at any discharge site in Minnesota. The bill requires DPS to carry out the following protection activities related to railroad and pipeline spill and discharge preparedness:

- Assist local emergency managers and fire officials to understand the hazards of oil and other hazardous materials being transported.
- Assist railroad and pipeline companies in developing safety policies and protocols for first responders.
- Facilitate cooperation between railroad companies, pipeline companies, emergency managers, and local public safety entities.
- Participate and help develop major exercises and training.
- Work with local governments to incorporate railroad and pipeline hazard response information into local emergency operations plans.
- Monitor public safety related training and planning requirements and refer noncompliance to PCA.

The bill establishes assessments on railroads and pipelines of \$2.5M annually (\$1.25M rail, \$1.25M pipeline). Assessments begin July 31, 2014 and collections will take place on a quarterly basis. Each year, \$104,000 will be appropriated to the PCA for discharge preparedness and the balance must be distributed by the DPS Commissioner in the following ways: \$100,000 annually for ERTs and the remaining funds to the MBFTE and HSEM. A one-time general fund appropriation of \$1.57M will be made on July 31st which will allow the initial familiarization training program currently being developed to immediately move forward.

Permissible uses for the funds include training, costs for gear and equipment related to hazardous materials readiness, response and management, and emergency planning, preparedness and coordination. DPS must prioritize use of the funds for first responder training needs, community risk from discharge incidents or spills, geographical balance, and recommendations from the Fire Service Advisory Committee. Proposals for the use of these funds will be presented to the FSAC for consideration at the September meeting.

The DPS Commissioner must submit a report to the legislature by January 15 of 2015 on the emergency response preparedness in the public and private sectors for incidents involving transportation of oil. DPS will contract with an independent party to conduct this study and complete the report. The DPS Commissioner must submit an evaluation report to the legislature by January 15 of 2017 on the safety preparedness and funding relating to incidents involving the transportation of oil.

Task Force 1

There was discussion on Task Force 1. Rick Loveland questioned whether TF1 is technically a state asset as they do receive funding from the Fire Safety Account. TF1 is not a state asset at this time. A Memo of Understanding was drafted and put out to the involved entities and is currently awaiting approval and signature by one entity. DPS's desire is to have this signed and put into place immediately. Once TF1 has been formalized as a state asset, they can advocate for base funding each year. TF1 can currently be mobilized through the Duty Officer.

September Meeting

The next committee meeting will be held on September 10, 2014 at the League of Minnesota Cities. The committee will invite entities to submit funding proposals in advance of the meeting. Equal time will be designated to each entity at the meeting for a brief overview of their proposal and for questions by the committee. Entities will be asked to provide both an overview of immediate needs and long-term goals.