

Fire Service Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 4, 2013 10:00 a.m. to 11:40 a.m.
League of Minnesota Cities

Members/alternates present:

Bob Johnson, Insurance Federation of Minnesota – Chair
Mark Dunaski, Designee MN Commissioner of Public Safety
Dan Winkel, MN State Fire Department Association
Steve Zaccard, Fire Marshals Assoc. of MN/International Assoc. of Arson Investigators
Nyle Zikmund, MN State Fire Chief's Association
Rick Loveland, MN Professional Firefighter's Association
Sue Iverson, League of Minnesota Cities
William Goede, League of Minnesota Cities

Members/alternates absent:

Jim Fisher, MN Association of Townships
Tom Thornberg, MN Professional Firefighters Association
Shane Schmidt, MN State Fire Department Association
Mark Kulda, (Alternate) Insurance Federation of Minnesota
Don Smiley, MN State Fire Chief's Association

Others present:

Jerry Rosendahl, State Fire Marshal
Jared Jordal, DPS Government Relations
Kevin Reed, Department of Public Safety, HSEM
Bruce West, MN Board of Firefighter Training and Education
Tim Butler, St. Paul Fire
Michael Gaede, St. Paul Fire
Gabriele, Alan, St. Paul Fire
Matt Nelson, Minnesota State Patrol
Marv Calvin, MnSCU Fire Training Consortium
Sherry Munyon, Capitol Access
Angela Geraghty, Department of Public Safety – Secretary

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

The June 5, 2013 meeting minutes were approved as written.

New Business:

There was discussion at the Committee's June meeting regarding the future role of the FSAC and members agreed to have internal dialogue within their fire service groups regarding this. Chair Bob Johnson asked DPS to share recently learned information about the status of the FSAC. Jared Jordal, DPS Government Relations, stated DPS learned while obtaining information from a recent legislative inquiry that the FSAC legally sunset on June 30, 2009 under Minn. Stat. § 15.059, commonly referred to as the Sunset Act. The legislature amended the statute in 2007 citing specific advisory groups and functions and unless a group was listed or performed a listed function, they would cease to exist on June 30, 2009.

Chair Bob Johnson stated he has been part of both formal and informal advisory groups to commissioners. He sought feedback from members regarding whether they would like to work to have

the committee legislatively reinstated or if they were interested in being part of an informal advisory group to the Commissioner of DPS. There was discussion and Members present voiced their support of going back to the legislature to have the committee formally reinstated. Members will work with DPS and others to develop the appropriate statutory language to reinstate the FSAC.

State Patrol Chief Pilot Matt Nelson and St. Paul Fire Captain Alan Gabriele gave a presentation on the Minnesota Aviation Rescue Team (MART). Formed in 2010, MART is a partnership between St. Paul Fire and the Minnesota State Patrol Flight Section specializing in rescue/recovery in difficult to reach or inaccessible areas significantly reducing execution times in comparison to ground crews. MART is a rescue asset available to all agencies throughout the state of Minnesota at no cost to the agency. Today MART is a highly trained and proficient team of 6 pilots and 18 short haul rescuers. Short haul rescues are performed utilizing a cargo hook and a 100-150 foot line under the helicopter to which the rescuer is attached. Since inception, MART has performed four successful rescues. At this time MART can be requested through the State Patrol or Ramsey County dispatch centers. MART is working with the BCA to develop a procedure for requests to be handled through the Duty Officer.

MART is not currently designated as a statewide asset and receives no state funding. Members agreed MART is a statewide response team and it should be made an element of TF1. Members will work to have MART identified as a statewide resource so they are eligible to receive state funding. The Minnesota State Patrol and St. Paul Fire Department have invested significantly in the program to date. MART equipment needs total \$51,053.67 and include flight helmets with integrated communication equipment, Nomex flight suits, and one-piece helicopter operations harnesses for rescuers. Ongoing operational costs including the cost of consumables for MART training is \$30,300 annually. Total funding request for MART is \$81,353.67.

There was discussion on the \$1.3 million uncommitted funds in the Fire Safety Account. Fire Marshal Rosendahl declined to make a funding request as he had no budget initiative that went through the supplemental budget process.

Executive Director Bruce West provided a handout showing a comparison of FY13 funding and FY14 funding for the Board of Firefighter Training and Education. The document detailed a reduction in funding to the Board of \$2,097,200 in FY14. There was discussion on specific reductions including the per firefighter training reimbursement rate of \$105 in FY13 dropping to \$80 in FY14.

There was discussion on whether MART is eligible for FSA funds under the statute. Rescue is a response of a fire department; therefore FSA funds are appropriately designated to MART. The Minnesota State Patrol simply provides transportation to the fire rescue personnel.

The Committee agreed it was important to develop a strategic plan for Minnesota fire safety goals over the next five years. This plan will provide a broad picture of how Fire Safety Account funds can help fill current gaps in fire safety and bring Minnesota fire safety to an optimum level to keep Minnesotans safe. Nyle Zikmund agreed to take the lead on this and report back at the January meeting.

Nyle Zikmund proposed the following distribution of surplus Fire Safety Account Funds:

- MBFTE \$450,000 to firefighter reimbursement
- Task Force 1 \$350,000 for equipment and training

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- Shared Services \$200,000 for grants
- MART \$80,000 for equipment and training
- CAT \$120,000 (\$10K each CAT, \$20K for ERT) for admin, training, equipment
- SFM \$100,000 for technology, database, special equipment as needed
\$1,300,000

There was discussion on the proposal. The \$450,000 to the Board of Firefighter Training and Education will bring the per-firefighter reimbursement rate close to the \$105 rate in FY13. TF1 continues to operate without a base budget. The last round of shared services grant requests doubled the amount available demonstrating a clear need. Funding for MART would go to the abovementioned needs. CAT teams continue to operate without an increase in funding; the additional funds will assist with equipment and administrative costs and training. Funding to the State Fire Marshal's Office is to be used at their discretion based on internal priority.

Nyle Zikmund made a motion to recommend the above-noted distribution of Fire Safety Account Funds to the Commissioner of Public Safety. The motion was seconded by Steve Zaccard and approved unanimously by the Committee. The Committee will submit these recommendations formally to the Commissioner of Public Safety.

State Fire Marshal Rosendahl will retire in December. Assistant Commissioner Dunaski stated a selection process will take place for the position with the intent to bring someone on board before Rosendahl departs.

Minutes recorded by Angela Geraghty