

Alaska Fire Standards Council

Meeting Minutes – September 27, 2005

Best Western Hotel, Wasilla, Alaska

Present: Bettac, Davis, Dobson, Frey, Reed, Rotroff

Others: Warren Cummings, Mark Barker, Bill Hedrick, Ron Buck,
Greg Moore, Mike Tilley, Jodie Hettrick

Absent: Leifert, Jones

1300 While waiting for a quorum, outgoing Chairman Cummings discussed the need for the council to elect a new chairman. Discussion included whether the position be interim until the February 2006 meeting or full fledged until the annual vote of the position in February.

Also discussed was the content of the information packet put together by Bill Bettac. Packet included action items for later review by the council.

1405 Call to order by outgoing Chairman Cummings
Roll call
Quorum present

1410 Election of new Chairperson

Motion nominating Bud Rotroff as chairperson made by Frey, 2nd by Dobson.
Rotroff declined citing financial concerns in traveling to the February meeting in Juneau.

Several motions nominating all council members present were attempted and all declined for various reasons.

Bud Rotroff left the room for a personal call.
Motion to fund the travel expenses for the next chairperson to the February meeting in Juneau made by Reed, 2nd by Frey.
Motion passed.

Motion nominating Bud Rotroff a second time made by _____,
2nd by _____.
Motion passed.

Motion nominating Jeff Dobson as vice chairperson made by Frey, 2nd by Davis.

Motion passed with Dobson casting the lone dissenting vote.

1430 Break

1437 Communications

- A. Public notice of meetings
Bettac will handle appropriate notice for February 2006 meeting
- B/C. August 4 and June 10 letters to Anne-Marie Palumbo regarding no notifications of potential ethic violations by council members

Ethics report discussion added to new business
- D. Bettac e-mail to Cummings
Discussion of member's availability to serve on the council
- E. Cummings letter of resignation from the council to Gov. Murkowski
- F. Gov. Murkowski letter accepting Cummings letter of resignation
- G. Budget sheet
Discussion of one year expenses to fund an administrator and clerk for the council.
Fire Marshal's office to oversee budget and keep track of "roll over" of unused funds from one budget year to the next.
- H. Description of Fire Standards Council
Discussion of what is the definition of "fire service personnel"

1515 Point of Order (time is approximate)

Davis moved to address the RIT Program in Unfinished Business so that he could leave to instruct at the Firefighters Conference. 2nd by Reed.
Motion passed.

Discussion:

Hettrick and Davis led a discussion of the administration and testing of the training program. Barker suggested separating a program into 3 elements:

standards, certification and curriculum. Currently, Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire Prevention, Training and Education Bureau (TEB)

has the only program that has a state certification. There is no standardized RIT program in the nation.

Motion to postpone action on RIT Standard made by Davis, 2nd by Frey. Motion passed unanimously.

Continued discussion of standards – certification – curriculum and Alaska Fire Standards Council (AFSC) approval. AFSC approves standards and certifications process but not the curriculum used to train personnel to achieve the standard and receive certification.

1600

Point of Order (time is approximate)

Jodie Hettrick asked for an opportunity to speak to the council regarding the Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Specialist Certification Program.

Motion by Dobson, 2nd by Reed to hear the presentation of the Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Specialist Certification Program.

Hettrick addressed the council and first gave an update on the Public Fire and Life Safety Educators (PFLSE) I, II and III which are complete. This led to a discussion of the PFLSE instructor level descriptions. Level I is similar to the Methods of Instruction I where the instructor uses prepared material. Hettrick would like AFSC to approve this program at this meeting.

Discussion: There is no time interval established between the three levels. Should there be intervals as found in the State of Alaska EMT I and EMT II and EMT III?

Additional questions as to if this was the first time this program was submitted for review and approval. Frey found references to this program in earlier minutes.

Frey and Moore to review this program and report back to the council on September 28th.

Hettrick addressed the council regarding the Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Specialist Certification Program (JFSIS).

Discussion: No clear recommendation or motion came out of the discussion regarding certifying similar programs outside of the fire service. Barker addressed the basic elements that were prerequisites for the JFSIS.

Dobson and Buck to review this program and report back to the council on September 28th.

Hettrick briefly addressed a letter submitted to the council by Bill Hedrick regarding time intervals between Firefighter I and Firefighter II. This topic was discussed in depth later in the meeting.

Hettrick briefly addressed a request to discuss changing the name of the Rural Basic Firefighter program during the September 28th meeting.

1620

Communications

I. Mission Statement of the Alaska Fire Standards Council
Historical document discussion.

J. Approved Courses document dated January 1, 2004

Discussion: Public Fire Educator III to be added as being reviewed per Bettac.

Frye noted the discrepancy of what has been approved and what has been reviewed by the council in previous meetings

Barker revisited the difference between an approved certification program and an accredited course

Frye addressed information gleaned from the September 2003 meeting minutes regarding various programs the council has already approved.

Approved Courses document was found to be not up-to-date. Bettac will research all approved programs and will update the list.

K. Minutes of February 9, 2005 Fire Standards Council meeting
Approved as reviewed.

L. Action Items for September 2005 meeting

1. Report of EMS and Police Standards Criminal History check
Leifert absent so there was no report.

2. RIT Program
Previously discussed as a Point of Order

3. Firefighter Apprentice/Cadet Program Standard

Discussion: The need for this type of program within the rural villages to prepare young people to be the next generation firefighters and leaders in their community.

Frye shared Child Labor Laws and the lack of concrete policies addressing this type of program.

Potential liability for the state vs how the Boy Scouts run the Explorer program.

Frye also shared about the Volunteer Fireman's Insurance Service program for Apprentice/Cadet Firefighters.

M. Roster of the Fire Standards Council

Discussion: Scott Elmer has resigned due to his new position as Sitka Fire Chief

Status of Rocky Jones is unclear due to his new position as Meadow Lakes Fire Chief

Three open positions previously held by Elmer, Bettac and Cummings

Barker spoke to the Boards and Commissions report to the council of possibly "loosening" the membership criteria in order to get more qualified applicants. This will require a change in state statute.

N. Letter from William Hedrick dated August 24, 2005

Discussion: Hedrick addressed the council of his concern in seeing no time interval required between Firefighter I and Firefighter II. He shared his observations of the lack of leadership skills in brand new firefighters during the Firefighter II testing

Hedrick also clarified there were only three training groups in the state that were conducting back to back Firefighter I and Firefighter II training. Those groups were PRISM, Anchorage International Airport and Fairbanks International Airport.

Further discussion ranged from:
the hiring/training practices of the airports

Barker clarifying CFR 139 that governs all airports does not require Firefighter I nor Firefighter II and CFR 139 does not meet the requirements of NFPA 1004.

Rotroff addressed the fact of departments teaching to pass a test vs. random testing elements. He also addressed time intervals from probationary firefighter to journeyman firefighter.

Barker spoke to IFSAC having no time interval requirements.

Hettrick offered to find an appropriate spot in the Training and Education Bureau curriculum to address a time interval between Firefighter I and Firefighter II to give the candidate more chances to get more experience.

Barker asked "what is to say that in 6 months, a firefighter will receive greater experience?"

Frye asked about what are the prerequisites?
(But I'm not quite clear which program he was speaking to)

Hedrick re-addressed what Rotroff spoke to regarding the tendency of teaching to pass the test and the need to reduce the number of mandatory test elements and increase the number of random elements.

Rotroff spoke of allowing the back to back training of Firefighter I and Firefighter II but do not certify the candidate until six months later.

Motion by Frye and 2nd by Reed.

"Training and Education Bureau to implement a six month separation between Firefighter I and Firefighter II certification."
Motion passed unanimously.

1650 Point of Order

Frye addressed the council regarding finding notations in previous meeting minutes about the Rural Fire Protection Specialist Program (VPSO) in February 2003 and in the 2004 Training Report

1652 Communications

- O. E-mail from Jodie Hettrick dated January 27, 2003
No substantial discussion
- P. Alaska Fire Standards Council Results Delivery
To be discussed on September 28th
- Q. Two Child Labor Law handouts
For background information

1659 Motion to recess for the day by Reed, 2nd by Dobson

Meeting Minutes – September 28, 2005

Best Western Hotel, Wasilla, Alaska

Present: Bettac, Dobson, Frey, Reed, Rotroff

Others: Gary Powell Mark Barker, Bill Hedrick, Greg Moore, Mike Tilley, Jodie Hettrick, Warren Cummings, Scott Elmer, Ken Ackerly, Steve Schreck, Jim Evans, Jack Smith, Betty (from the Municipal League)

Absent: Leifert, Jones, Davis,

1112 Call to Order
Roll Call – No Quorum

Informal discussion only

Fire Marshal Powell addressed the council regarding funding for the council via an Alaska Fire Chiefs Association grant and a legislative change from a receipts based funding to a general fund source.

Fire Marshal Powell spoke of his appreciation to all the volunteer efforts performed by the council members.

Rotroff addressed his concern in keeping with past practice of Training and Education Bureau participation with the Fire Standards Council and not a representative from the Fire Marshal's Office

Fire Marshal Powell spoke to that concern and stated he wants to keep TEB at arms length with the council; involved but not driving the council activities.

1122 New Business

A. Apprentice Firefighter Program

Steve Schreck addressed the council about this program to prepare youths to be firefighters, especially in rural communities.

"Learning for Life" Explorer program used as an example. Explorer program requires at least 6 kids and 3 adults. Alaska Apprentice Firefighter Program (AFFP) based on 16 to 18 year old kids.

Rotroff asked how close is the AFPP to the Basic Firefighter Program?

Schreck stated the AFPP closely parallels the Basic Firefighter except where required to be an adult > 18 years old.

Frye spoke of a document (I didn't catch who wrote the document) that explains the AFFP and that the AFFP does not supercede existing programs.

Schreck added the Explorer Program and their own insurance allows specific training that the AFFP can not provide

Schreck and Bettac will work on the document referred to above and will send it electronically to council members.

Bettac to arrange a teleconference to further discuss this program within 90 days.

Smith asked if AFFP skill sheets can be tied into NFPA Standards to show compliance

Schreck answered in the affirmative but it could get confusing. To avoid confusion, call the AFFP a state standard and not NFPA.

1135

Point of Order

Carol Reed arrives – still no quorum

Discussion of Apprentice Firefighter Program continues

More asked if AFFP is compliant with state/national child labor laws?

Schreck spoke to disclaimers written into child labor laws and apprenticeship programs are not covered by these laws. Puts the responsibility back onto the local government.

Frye spoke of the Volunteer Fireman's Insurance Service Junior Fire/Emergency Programs.

www.vfis.com

Barker spoke of the explorer program as great but the adults running the program don't know the rules and requirements. He also spoke of calling Federal OSHA about the proposed AFFP and the Explorer Firefighter Program. OSHA was "stunned" to learn

about kids and SCBA and live fire training. Barker is aware of incidents with the state of teenagers performing adult tasks.

At this point a many members of the council and audience began a fast paced discussion:

"The need for a state standard to govern youth in apprenticeship/explorer programs but we need more input from the lawyers" Barker

"Is it the consensus of the council to call it a standard?" Jim Evans

"should be a curriculum guideline" Barker

"Rural Basic FF program requires the student to be 18 years old. Instructors are told not to go into the high schools to train students" Schreck

"Is there an Alaska statute that covers this sort of thing?" Moore

"The Apprentice Firefighter program trains leadership in the community" Schreck

"Is there any parallel items of the Apprenticeship program to ROTC?" Dobson

"Who is willing to assume the liability of this program" Schreck

"After the student turns 18, how do they convert the training to Firefighter I?" Tilley

"Student qualifies first as Basic Firefighter and then moves on to Firefighter I as training is documented" Schreck

"Can there be a maximum standard to limit the liability?" Rotroff

"The Apprentice Firefighter Program was written with the program as a reasonable risk to the state." Schreck

"Local communities are allowing Apprentice Firefighters to participate in SCBA and live fire drills which takes the state off the hook and the community assumes the liability." Barker

"What we have is a case of having a standard versus working outside the standard. We (the council) have adopted standards with out legal counsel." Barker

"Recommendation that we send the Apprentice Firefighter Program out electronically to other departments that run an Explorer program." Rotroff

At the conclusion of the discussion, Bill Bettac will receive input from other departments and then pass the information on to the lawyers for review.

1150 New Business

Council and guests view the Ethics video.

1219 Break

1241 Meeting resumed

AS. 39.52 Ethics Information for Boards and Commissions

Annual ethics disclosure form completed by: Rotroff, Dobson, Bettac, Reed, Frye, Barker, Moore and Tilley

1320 Roster of members and guests passed out for updates

1322 Point of Order

Council Chairman Rotroff expressed "without a quorum, do we want to work through the old/new business?"

It was agreed to continue discussing the agenda but no voting on issues.

Discussion of a future teleconference and the cost involved.

Bettac to look into setting up a teleconference using the Fire Marshal's Office budget

Rotroff to request Fire Marshal Powell to support the use of his budget for the teleconference

1330 Unfinished Business

A. Report of EMS and Police Standards

Tabled until next meeting in Juneau, February 2006 due to Leifert's absence

B. RIT Program

Discussed September 27, 2005

C. What programs or certifications have already been approved?

Discussion and review of past meeting minutes

D. Rural Fire Protection Specialist

Status of this program is not documented in any of the previous minutes.

Revisit this topic in Juneau, February 2006

E. Report to Missions and ?? (I could not hear the correct name) regarding previously approved courses

F. Apprentice Firefighter Program

Discussed but not voted on September 28, 2005

G. Firefighter I and Firefighter II NFPA requirements for Haz Mat and EMS

No word yet from NFPA

1410 New Business for February 2006

A. NFPA interpretation of Firefighter I and Firefighter II requirements for Haz Mat and EMS

Frye to fill out formal request

1420 Dobson left for previously scheduled meeting and Chairman Rotroff took over recording the minutes.