

## FINAL

### **FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES March 9, 2010**

Chaired by: Phil McLean

Meeting Date and Location: March 9, 2010, Ohio Department of Public Safety, 1970 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43223

Committee Members Present: Bob Babb, Terry Gill, Mark Lundy, Mark Mankins, Richard Sacco, Jim Steele, Dudley Wright

Staff Present: Aleta Dodson, John Kennington, Tom Macklin, Rachel Moore, Doug Orahood, Richard Rucker, John Sands, Melissa Vermillion

Guests: Tom Beatty, Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors/Clark State/Ohio Fire Academy; Charlie Dixon, Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors and Columbus Division of Fire; Bill Mallory, Madison Township Fire/EMS Board; Doug Ott, Akron Fire Department; Michael Vedra, Columbus Division of Fire; Scott Walker, State Fire Marshal Office/Ohio Fire Academy; Steve Wallis, Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors/Ohio Fire Rural Council

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM.

#### REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 12, 2010 FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR (FFSI) TRAINING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**ACTION:** Motion to approve the January 12, 2010, FFSI committee minutes. Steele first. Sacco second. None opposed. Motion approved.

#### OPEN FORUM

Dave Belcher of the Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors (OSFSI) reported the first regional roll out session on the revised 36-hour volunteer course was held last Saturday in Wayne County with 31 attendees. Three more meetings are scheduled and one will be at the annual spring meeting. Charlie Dixon said the number one question received is when will something be done for the FF I, FF II, and transition courses. Instructors want to know when they can start teaching the revised 36-hour course. Mr. Belcher said they would like to have something online as soon as possible so attendees can print their own copies or the group would like some financial assistance for providing copies and meals. Mr. Orahood said after approving the course document at the last meeting, he developed the check off sheet and instructor manual. He is waiting for forms management to return and would like to send out one more time for final review and approval. Mr. Orahood would then put online in the next couple of weeks. Once on the Division website, programs can begin using the new course. Mr. Steele asked about the status of the recommended hour guide. Mr. Orahood said it is not developed yet and the subject matter experts need to meet. He said the transition modules information might be included in that and could be discussed with the group.

Scott Walker of the Ohio Fire Academy (OFA) reported he will be filling in for Mr. Conway who will be out for the next month or two. He reported several personnel changes, including new Firefighter I and II program coordinator, Patrick Buckley.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT, Richard Rucker

Mr. Rucker reported an open forum was held at the February Board meeting for education programs to provide their comments regarding national accreditation. The Board voted 12 to 5 (one abstained) in favor of adopting the national accreditation framework. An ad hoc committee was created to assist training facilities who wish to become Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP) accredited. The Board will attempt to find funding, perhaps in the form of a one time grant, for schools so additional costs are not passed on to students.

CERTIFICATION REPORT, John Kennington

Mr. Kennington said the certification report he developed does not give the total number of active certification for fire and he will fix that. 505 initial fire certifications have been issued so far in 2010.

Mr. Kennington received three requests for exemption from continuing education requirements due to active military service and recommends for approval.

**ACTION: Motion to recommend to the Executive Director to approve three exemptions from continuing education requirements due to active military service during their certification period.** Steele first. Babb second. None opposed. Motion passed.

Copies of the proposed one card expiration date rules were distributed for review and discussion. Mr. Steele asked if this resets the cycle of all fire cards with another year of grace and Mr. Orahood said it does not and the only date affected is for EMTs who are coming to the fire based cycle. Mr. Steele said as he reads the chart, it says "CE requirements for firefighter for merged or shortened certification cycle that in 12 months or less, they have no CE required". Mr. Kennington said the only firefighter card that will change is if they are dual certified. Ms. Vermillion said 4765-20.23 is the merging of all the cards if the rule is passed and only applies to the initial certification and does not affect the renewal rule. John Sands, Division of EMS, said if someone already has an existing fire card, their date will not change. If a firefighter would become an EMT and get an EMS card, the date for both expirations will be the fire card date. The only time lengthened or shortened CE cycles come into play is when an EMT certificate holder becomes a firefighter. Additionally, if someone has an existing fire card, all their other certifications such as instructor or inspector, will go to the fire card expiration date.

Mr. Kennington gave an example. If Mr. Doe already renewed his fire card, but now needs to renew his EMT card, his cycle will be shortened six months on the EMT card and the CE for that will be prorated. He said the one causing the confusion is when EMTs become firefighters. He said if a volunteer firefighter upgrades to a FF I, and still have 14 months to go on their current certification, when they renew their card, their CE would be prorated. Mr. Orahood said they hope to have these rules in place January 1, 2011. Mr. Kennington said CE hours are more complex for EMTs than firefighters. Mr. Sands said the Division will have five CE update sessions in April to discuss the one card/one expiration date.

**ACTION: Motion for the Executive Director to approve and file rules for one card/one expiration: AMEND 4765-20-01, 4765-20-03, and 4765-20-03; NEW 4765-20-22 and 4765-20-23; RESCIND 4765-20-19, 4765-20-20, and 4765-20-21].** Sacco first. Mankins second.

Mr. Kennington said the information is being disseminated through the listservs and will be included in the SIREN newsletter. Mr. McLean asked if it will be included in the reminder postcard they receive for their EMS certification. Mr. Kennington said they will try to have the information on it, but there is only so much space on a postcard.

None opposed. Motion passed.

Mr. Kennington said they have been calling to remind people who have not yet renewed that they need to do so, and estimates they have saved 50% of people from losing their certification. Mr. Rucker said this won't continue forever but is being done for this initial process.

#### FIRE COORDINATOR REPORT, Doug Orahood

Mr. Orahood introduced Rachel Moore who has been promoted to the Fire Training Specialist.

The Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors is holding multiple regional rollouts for the revised volunteer firefighter course for instructors. The remaining dates include: March 13 – Southeast Hocking Technical College, Nelsonville; March 20 – Warren County Career Center, Lebanon; and March 27 – Owens Community College, Walbridge. Mr. Orahood will send the flyer with details to committee members and noted information was sent out on the Listservs.

Mr. Orahood reported the Board of Regents and State Fire Marshal continue work on standardizing the fire science programs. Lee Sylvie from Lakeland Community College is chairing the group which includes all the fire science associate degree programs. He distributed copies of the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) curriculum model they are using. It lists each course and which college currently offers it. The group is reviewing the curriculum and will standardize what the core courses should be. Once established, the group can start assigning college credit to those courses and standardize the fire science degree program. Students will be able to receive college credit when transferring from one state funded school to another. The next meeting is March 19<sup>th</sup>. Work on the Fire Instructor and Fire Safety Inspector has been completed and the Ohio Board of Regents agreed to establish college credit courses for those as well.

The Division of EMS would like to offer fire awards in October during Fire Prevention Week. The categories they are looking at are Fire Chief and Educator. Mr. Orahood said the Ohio Fire Chiefs have agreed to sponsor the award for Fire Educator. Mr. McLean said the Ohio State Firefighters Association (OSFA) is considering sponsoring an award for a volunteer department that excelled in training and will discuss at their next meeting.

The Pro Board has assigned a manager to oversee the Division's process of becoming accredited. Mr. Orahood said the self study and application are complete. The skill sheets are still being developed and will work on the matrix. Once those items are completed, the site visit will take place. Mr. McLean asked if a representative could come to an FFSI committee meeting to give a presentation.

Mr. Orahood said the Division is constantly fielding questions on what certifications are being planned. Schools are moving faster in developing curriculum, resulting in no standardization of fire programs. He would like to discuss the Ohio strategic plan be revisited. In order to eliminate colleges teaching their own version of a firefighter program, he proposes FFSI members and their nominating organizations work together to create a strategic plan and list the certifications/credentials (i.e. fire officers, arson investigator) they want to implement. House Bill 401 provides the ability to create certifications and thinks the committee needs a plan to show the direction of education and certification for the fire service. A lengthy discussion ensued and items discussed included if the strategic plan's goal to tell the eleven colleges what they can teach, college institutions should not be driving the fire service, and strong direction has been missing from the Ohio Fire Alliance. Mr. McLean said the Fire Alliance group needs to get together to assist in formulating this plan. Mr. Gill suggested when the Alliance is in agreement in the direction to proceed, bring their plan back to this committee. Mr. McLean will call the Ohio Alliance to schedule a meeting for this.

#### CHAIR'S REPORT, Phil McLean

The year end report was distributed and Mr. McLean encouraged members to use this when going to other conferences and meetings. On the report is a new Division of EMS Office of Fire Services logo. The report listed completed projects and those still being worked on. Mr. McLean said the report could be used to assist in developing the strategic plan.

Mr. McLean asked for an update from Charlie Dixon on how the Fire Academy has been imbedding the National Fallen Firefighters 16 Life Safety Initiatives into their programs. Mr. Dixon said based on review and discussion with Chief Babb, Chief Wright, and Rick Best, their conclusion is the best way to implement them into the Ohio certified curriculum is to add four hours to the transition, FF I, and FF II courses. Mr. Dixon said Ohio has 42 trained instructors to facilitate this program with another 130 registered. The National Fallen Firefighters said if a program is running a class and cannot find an instructor to teach, they will find one for them. Mr. Dixon said states are looking at Ohio being ahead of the game and hope to follow suit.

A lengthy discussion ensued on how best to implement the initiatives and comments included requiring the initiatives as a prerequisite like NIMS before taking the course, the FFSI committee could put out a statement recommending the four hour program be included even though not required by law, the module should be incorporated early in the course and pertinent points could be reinforced throughout the training, concern students would have to retake the course over and over at each level of firefighter training, and the four hours should be written in law to have any teeth. Mr. Orahood said if the rules are opened, then other areas originally contained in HB 401 that need refined should be included. Mr. Steele said that would take over a year. He thinks the initiatives are important and should be put into rule by themselves. They warrant action, not debate. Mr. McLean feels if this group agrees to put the four hours in law, they can present that at the strategic planning meeting with the Fire Alliance. Mr. Babb offered to work on tentative language. Mr. Orahood said putting only the initiatives into rule by will take six to nine months.

**ACTION: Motion to add four hours for the National Fallen Firefighter 16 Life Safety Initiatives to the transition, FF I, and FF II courses into rule.** Steele first. Lundy second.

Mr. Babb suggested adding this requirement in the instructor training curriculum and Mr. McLean said it should be taught to new instructors. Mr. Steele suggested it could be a prerequisite to the instructor program as an entrance requirement. Mr. Mankins said it is also needed for current instructors and Mr. McLean said that could be part of their CE training.

None opposed. Motion passed.

Mr. Orahod will start the rule revision process for the committee.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Scott Walker of the Ohio Fire Academy said the assistance to firefighter grant workshops are being held March 18<sup>th</sup>. The class will be offered in four other locations and as a web stream. Grant money is still available for FF I and FF II training. With the HB 1 rule change, the grant does not have a population requirement, but 50% of department membership must be volunteer. It does cover non-certified classes that the Academy offers. Details of all changes are available on the Ohio Fire Marshal website.

Mr. McLean said there had been a previous discussion of developing a module for transitioning from Volunteer to FF I and FF I to FF II. He recently spoke with Chief Jerry Winkler from Seville Gilford Fire Department who is ready to start this process at his department. Chief Winkler is willing to help and offered his group be a pilot for this. Mr. McLean said Mr. Orahod will need to assist them on the testing modules. Mr. Orahod said his recommendation is the schools develop the test modules. He said if you start doing state testing of the modules, administratively it could kill the charter programs and the Division trying to test everyone. Mr. Orahod said if they can't pass the test exam, it can be counted as CE. Mr. McLean said some of the OSFSI members could get together with Chief Steele, Chief Gill, and Chief Winkler to lay out the groundwork.

Mr. Orahod reported fire audits will start this month and letters will go out in a week or two.

Mr. McLean and Mr. Holcomb met with Mike Dutton on the Hazards class OFOA was developing. Mr. Dutton said he would complete the work, but has not yet finished it. Mr. McLean asked Mr. Dutton to give him the information so someone else can complete it but he still has not received it. Mr. Holcomb will see Mr. Dutton at the end of month and discuss it.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION:** Motion to adjourn. Steele first. Sacco second. None opposed. Motion approved.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:47 AM.**