

**FINAL**

**FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR TRAINING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 9, 2008**

Chaired by: Phil McLean

Meeting Date and Location: September 9, 2008, Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS),  
1970 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43223

Committee Members Present: Bob Babb, Brent Gates, Terry Gill, Richard Sacco and Jim Steele

Committee Members Absent: Mark Lundy, Mark Mankins

Staff Present: Summer Boyer, Aleta Dodson, Heather Frient, Lorrie Laing, Tom Macklin, Doug Orahood, Richard Rucker, Robert Ruetenik

Guests: Allen Daugherty, Buckeye Career Center; Scott Henry, Washington Township Fire Department; James Holcomb, Violet Township/EMS Board Member; Michele Johnson and Thomas Pack, Owens Community College; Michael Vedra, Columbus Fire Department; Scott Walker, Ohio State Fire Marshal/Ohio Fire Academy

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

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 12, 2008 FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR (FFSI) TRAINING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Mr. McLean said on page four of the minutes where the disciplinary process was discussed, the question was asked whether a fire board member could take the place of one of the Fire EMS Board members to observe or participate in the disciplinary process. Mr. McLean wanted to know if Ms. Frient had gotten an answer. Mr. Rucker said he spoke with Chief Burgess, EMS Board Chair, and it was decided to invite members of the Fire Committee to attend one day during the January 2009 EMS Board Retreat to sit in on that process and attend other meetings.

Mr. Rucker wanted to clarify for the purpose of amending the August meeting minutes to reflect where Chief Steele had stated that “in a span of six days there were prior disciplinary cases that were presented at the July EMS Board meeting” it needs noted that there were no disciplinary fire cases presented at the July Board; however, the perspective change in the fire disciplinary process was discussed. The first fire case review under the new process was presented to the Board on July 25<sup>th</sup>, and the first fire cases went to the Board on August 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rucker said he did not respond at that time because he wanted to make sure that he was correct.

**ACTION: Motion to approve the August 12, 2008, committee minutes with amendment to reflect no fire disciplinary cases were presented at the July EMS Board.** Steele first. Sacco second. None opposed. Motion approved.

OPEN FORUM

Mr. McLean had audience members introduce themselves.

Mr. Walker from the Fire Academy said the annual Hall of Fame awards and ceremony honoring five fallen officers will take place September 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM in the multi-purpose room of the Fire Academy. Governor Strickland will be in attendance.

Mr. Walker handed out flyers on the “Train the Trainer” Emergency Vehicle Operations course the Fire Academy is offering October 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. The Fire Academy is also offering the “Train the Trainer” Farm Rescue Refresher course on October 11<sup>th</sup>. He will also be doing farm rescue demonstrations at the Farm Science Review on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>. The Fire Investigator I course will be offered September 29<sup>th</sup> through October 10<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Walker said this program is the most comprehensive in the country right now it mirrors the National Fire Academy/ATF/NFA program curriculum, with minor adjustments to fit Ohio’s criteria. This class is already full and additional training will be made available as there is a backlog of attendees. Mr. McLean asked whether the course will be brought to northwestern Ohio. Mr. Walker said if a suitable house is available to burn, it might be possible.

STAFF REPORTS

DIRECTOR’S REPORT, Richard Rucker

Mr. Rucker reported that Lorrie Laing, Division of EMS Chief of Operations, resigned to pursue a position in the private sector.

**\*\*\* Mr. Gates and Ms. Frient arrived at 10:09 AM \*\*\***

STAFF LEGAL COUNSEL, Heather Frient

No report was given.

Mr. McLean asked Ms. Frient if there were any fire cases or disciplinary issues that the Fire committee should be aware of. Ms. Frient said she does not handle that and would have to check with Ms. Tertel. Mr. McLean asked how that information was going to be presented to the Fire Committee. Mr. Rucker said he does not believe the issues will be presented at Fire Committee meetings as they are going to be presented to the EMS Board directly. Mr. McLean said then this committee will have no communication about if there were any cases and what transpired. Mr. Rucker said a report could be given on what occurred. Ms. Frient said it would be after the Notice for Opportunity for Hearing is issued, because then it is considered a public record. She said even when cases are presented to the EMS Board, members do not know who the case is about. Mr. McLean said his concern is if there is a continued problem in one area, such as the new continuing education or recertification, shouldn’t that be communicated to the Fire Committee so changes could be made before it reached a magnitude where it is a big problem. Mr. Sacco and Mr. Steele agreed. Ms. Frient said she would let the Ms. Tertel and the Investigation section know that if they are seeing a particular pattern emerging, to inform the Fire Committee.

FIRE CHARTER REPORT, Doug Orahood

Mr. Orahood distributed copies of the monthly August staff report and the fire training monthly activity report. He reported that the continuing education (CE) online program is working well. Sixty fire departments and schools are using the system and entered over forty classes and six-hundred students. Ninety-seven individuals have registered and entered almost five-hundred classes. This service is free to individuals, fire departments and schools.

Mr. McLean commented that Mr. Kennington's county listing report shows that to date, 34,000 firefighters have renewed online. He and other members of the committee have spoken to numerous fire chiefs to determine if the numbers in their respective counties appear correct. Mr. McLean asked Mr. Kennington if he believes there should still be about 10,000 more to register. Mr. Kennington said it's possible. Continuing efforts are being made to publicize the need to recertify including having the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) distribute the information to fire chiefs in every county and continue to have China Dodley send out press releases. As soon as the EMS Listserv is operational, an email with the information will be sent to approximately 30,000 individuals. Mr. Kennington is concerned some firefighters did not take this seriously and thought that the Division would simply send them a new card. Mr. Rucker said counties with low numbers should be focused on and all fire chiefs in those areas should be called personally. Mr. Kennington said he would do that and Mr. Rucker asked committee members to call chiefs in their areas. Mr. Gates said he will call the Noble and Perry County chiefs. Mr. Kennington stressed that the county list numbers go by where the firefighter lives, not their work location. He said there are 140 people with no county selected and he is working with Sue Morris to assist in determining which county they should be assigned to. Mr. Kennington said there are 57,000 active volunteers in the database, but less than 9,000 have renewed. Mr. Kennington said even if 50% have dropped out or passed away, there should still be around 25,000 volunteers in the state.

Mr. Orahood distributed the Firefighter I and II objective check off sheets for review. At the bottom, there is a statement for the student, program director, and instructor to sign saying the student completed all the requirements. Mr. Steele said it looked good.

**ACTION: Motion to approve the Firefighter I and II objectives.** Steele first. Babb second. None opposed. Motion approved.

Mr. Orahood said the 2008 standards will be put on the EMS website by the end of the month. He thanked program coordinators, Tom and Michelle from Owens Community College, for their assistance on the project. He stated that if a class is already started, the old test would be used.

Pamphlets for the EMS Fire Conference to be held October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> were distributed. The registration deadline is September 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Orahood attended the State Fire Marshal's Education Collaborative. Topics discussed included regional fire training and using statistics to compare Ohio fire training on the fireground at the station versus what the National Fire Incident Reporting System/United States Fire Administration (NFIRS/USFA) has as national statistics. Ohio is ranked seventh in fire fatalities in the nation and the committee will try to identify why the state ranks so high and recommend preventative measures. Statistical information glean from why, when, where and how the line of

duty deaths are occurring, that information will be used to determine how the funds requested will be used (i.e.: increase income, more training centers, more rural fatalities, etc.). The draft survey to collect data regarding training has been drafted and once approved, will be distributed through the Ohio Learns Network.

CHAIR'S REPORT, Phil McLean

Mr. McLean reported that the Ohio State Firefighters Association (OSFA) conference had very low attendance. Only around 200 attended and only 66 were trained this year. The Fire Academy assisted and did a live burn class.

Mr. McLean said at the beginning of the year, members of this committee were passionate about the need for National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1403 live burn training, and yet no decision has been made. He is disappointed with that. There is a need to further educate instructors in burning acquired structures. The committee needs to decide whether there needs to be a new certification, curriculum or training developed. Mr. McLean believes this committee owes it to the fire community to have training available for instructors. The issue and discussion about liability coming back to the fire chief if he doesn't send his man to 1403 training is absurd. Fire Chiefs are already liable, and if they don't understand that, maybe they shouldn't be in that position.

Mr. Steele said he is completely in favor of 1403 live burn training for instructors and would prefer a 24 hour course. Currently there is no mechanism in place that guarantees instructors are trained to do live burns.

A lengthy decision ensued, but all members agreed that fire instructors need additional training in 1403. One proposal all seemed to agree with was to have an eight hour fire awareness course for new assistant instructors and instructors, and sixteen hours continuing education (CE) in 1403 every three years for current instructors. There were many opinions on how to structure this, and the committee decided to create a workgroup to iron out the details, including developing curriculum. The 1403 Workgroup will consist of Mr. McLean, Mr. Mankins, Mr. Steele, Mr. Sacco, Mr. Gill, Mr. Babb and Mr. Orahod. A recommendation was made to also have someone from the Instructors Society, the Ohio Fire Academy, and a program director on the workgroup. The hope is once the course is developed, it will be available in several areas of the state with the caveat that whatever institution teaches it, they must have all the props and equipment required, including a redundant water source. The 1403 committee will meet after the normal FFSI meetings. Mr. Kennington reported there are over 5,000 fire instructors in the state: 2,284 special topic instructors, 2,753 fire instructors, and 798 assistant fire instructors. There are 1,736 EMS instructors.

Mr. Orahod brought up the mentorship program that the Board is working to develop to encourage more people to become EMS instructors. This might be an appropriate time for the FFSI committee to consider it. Assistant instructors work with a certified instructor over a period of time, eliminating them having to take two weeks off of work to take the 80 hour class. Mr. Gill said a mentorship program in EMS is probably okay because most of that instruction is classroom based and not in a hazardous atmosphere. Mr. Gill said there are other alternatives than a two week block of 80 hours to become a fire instructor. They can do it on Monday and

Wednesday evenings, four hours a night, two nights a week, for 10 weeks. An instructor teaching a live burn does not need the distraction of having someone tagging along.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Rucker said Carl Jordan is resigning from the EMS Board. Mr. Jordan's fire committee designee is Mr. Sacco, who will remain on the fire committee until a new Board member is appointed.

Mr. Babb said the Columbus Division of Fire has three scheduled acquired structure burns coming up. One is this Friday on Snouffer Road at 10AM. He invited anyone who was interested to attend.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Holcomb reported that the last building standard plans examiner certification meeting was held in June.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**Meeting adjourned at 11:41 PM.**