

**FINAL**

**FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR TRAINING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 8, 2009**

Chaired by: Phil McLean

Meeting Date and Location: September 8, 2009, Ohio Department of Public Safety, 1970 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43223

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

Committee Members Absent: Mark Lundy

Staff Present: Aleta Dodson, Heather Frient, John Kennington, Doug Orahood, Richard Rucker

Guests: Dave Belcher, Ohio Society Inspectors; Rick Best, Ohio Courage To Be Safe (CTBS); Jeff Cotner, Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors; Charlie Dixon, Columbus Division of Fire; Ted Huffman, Tri-C; Stephen Jones, Tappan Lake Volunteer Fire Department; Steve Kimple, National Fallen Firefighters (NFFF) and Ohio Courage To Be Safe (CTBS); Jim Holcomb, EMS Board/Violet Township Fire; John Peters, Ohio Rural Fire Council; Dave Telbun, Tri-C; Steven 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 JULY 14, 2009 FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR (FFSI) TRAINING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**ACTION: Motion to approve the July 14, 2009, FFSI committee minutes.** Steele first. Sacco second. None opposed. Motion approved.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT, Richard Rucker**

Mr. Rucker announced the new Director for the Department of Public Safety is Cathy Collins-Taylor. He said Ms. Collins-Taylor has experience in law enforcement and as the Ohio Department of Public Safety Ohio Investigative Unit Executive Director.

**OPEN FORUM**

Mr. Dixon gave and members of the Volunteer course workgroup gave an update on the pilot course. Hosts are needed for the additional pilot classes and interest has been expressed by C-Tech, Meigs County, Bowling Green, and Wayne County. A suggestion was made to involve Columbiana County due to their concerns about the 36-hour volunteer course and difficulty getting certified firefighters. Mr. McLean and Mr. Calco will be attending a fire chief's meeting in Columbiana County regarding those issues. Members on the Volunteer workgroup and OSFSI are willing to attend the additional pilot courses to provide guidance and assistance. Mr. Steele is for having additional pilots, but the only data from the first course provided to the FFSI committee has been a pass/fail report. He would like more information, including student comments. Mr. Orahood said he has the evaluations from the course and hopes to have ready for

presentation at the November meeting. Mr. Steele said after the courses are completed, a list of how the topic hours stabilized and what the recommendations are should be provided to the committee. Mr. Wright suggested an evaluation form should be filled out by the instructors who taught the pilot courses. Mr. McLean said a few more pilot classes will be held and Mr. Peters will get feedback from the instructors.

Ted Huffman and Dave Telbun, Cuyahoga Community College, presented a proposal to the Committee for permission to hold an online fire safety inspector beta course in February. They are developing the course in response to northeast Ohio fire chiefs, who said they would send more students if an online course was available. He said it is difficult for many departments to send firefighters to attend the 80 hour class due to manpower and budgetary issues, and the school has seen a decline in enrollment. Their proposal would have students spend one day a week in the classroom for a six week period, with the remaining hours spent online utilizing Power Point, blackboard, and voice narrated videos. Each week would consist of assignments, a quiz, and an eight-hour class.

Committee members expressed concern that the proposal given only computes to forty hours. Mr. Telbun said the student would spend approximately an hour to an hour and a half per chapter. Mr. Huffman said they can't track the time the student spends reading the book, but with new technology, blackboard software can track the amount of hours they are online. Mr. Steele said when this committee has approved online courses, documentation was provided showing they far exceeded the recommended hours of a traditional classroom setting. Mr. Huffman said it will be an eighty hour class: forty hours will be in the classroom and the Power Point is the same one used in the traditional classroom course. It will be a non-credit course as he does not believe the fire safety inspector is included in the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) model for an associate degree.

The committee also had concerns about students just out of firefighting school who immediately become inspectors without field experience. Mr. McLean said it would be difficult to explain fire stopping and fire blocking to a business owner by a firefighter who has only been in two fires. He said that would need presented very well in the classroom to compensate for the student's lack of experience and expertise. He is also concerned whether or not these students will receive tours and inspections of sprinkler systems, suppression systems, bulk storage, etc. Mr. Huffman said they take the students to a "box" store such as a Home Depot where every component is contained. Committee members requested additional information be presented at the November committee meeting. Mr. McLean will take extra handouts from today's presentation to the OFOA meeting and will discuss this proposal with the OFOA group for feedback and assistance in determining whether the fifty percent of the course can be taught online. Mr. Orahoud will provide the committee and Mr. Huffman feedback from that meeting.

#### CERTIFICATION REPORT, John Kennington

Mr. Kennington discussed the passing of HB1 and combining EMS and Fire certifications to one expiration date. He is working with the EMS Board Education committee on this and expects their implementation proposal will be presented at the October EMS Board meeting.

Mr. Kennington received two letters requesting exemption from certification to present to the committee. The first one was a Chief submitting a letter on behalf of his firefighter for an

extension for their FF II certification card that expired August 23, 2009. The chief said the firefighter did not renew due to being involved in a bad motorcycle accident and it is still unclear if they will return to work. Mr. Gill asked if the individual was incapacitated prior to the renewal date and Mr. Kennington assumes the accident occurred before his expiration date because the letter stated "early summer". Since it is still uncertain if the firefighter will be returning to work, Mr. Kennington does not know how long an extension would be needed. Ms. Frient said there is no extension rule; there is only an exemption rule (OAC 4765.20.17). Mr. Steele asked if the individual signed the letter and Mr. Kennington said no. Ms. Frient said individuals have to request the exemption and sign it. She said if the card expired August 23, 2009, a request should have been made 90 days prior to the expiration. According to the OAC, if submitted less than 90 days, the Executive Director could consider the request if it is determined there are extenuating circumstances affecting the submission of the request for exemption in a timely manner or the inability of the certificate holder to comply with the continuing education requirements. Mr. Kennington will call the Chief to get more details. Mr. Steele said he is open to the exemption providing more information is provided as it appears the individual meets two of the three exemption requirements.

Mr. Kennington said the second e-mail received was from an individual who did not renew before the January 2009 date and was in military training from January 20, 2009 until July 2, 2009. The e-mail said while on active duty he was unable to recertify his FF I and FF II and requested an extension or waiver. A copy of his military papers was provided which indicate he shipped out four days before the certification deadline. Mr. Kennington said he was a FF II prior to going into the Air Force and took the Air Force fire training. Mr. Gill said meetings were held in advance of his going into the service and Mr. Steele is not in favor of giving him a card because he forgot the date. Ms. Frient said he would have to go into reinstatement. Mr. Gill said if he does that, the military training he had can be counted for the CE and he just needs to retest.

**ACTION: Motion to deny the request(s) for exemption(s) regarding continuing education for one individual(s) serving on active military duty during the certification period. Recommend individual provide proof of 18 hours continuing education training and re-take the test. Steele first. Babb second. None opposed. Motion approved.**

Mr. Kennington said he had one more request, but is not going to present since the Fire Chief, Stephen Jones, Tappan Lake Volunteer Fire Department, is in the audience today to address the committee. Mr. Jones said he is here on behalf of one of his volunteer firefighters who was scheduled for renewal in July but did not meet that deadline. He said the volunteer had changed his personal e-mail, did not receive department e-mails as he was off-duty, and did not receive notification from the Division about renewing. Mr. Jones spoke to him a day after it expired. He said the individual is an active volunteer but said if he has to retake the test, he will no longer be a volunteer. Mr. Steele questioned why the individual does not want to follow the rules by re-taking the test and Mr. Jones said they feel they have done everything on their own time and expense and since they already took the test once, does not feel they should have to do it again. Mr. McLean said this committee is not in the business of taking firefighters off the street, but feels the 36-hour test is a great refresher and does not cost anything. Mr. Mankins said the individual still had a paper card with the expiration date. Mr. Kennington said the individual e-mailed him inquiring about the rule and why the process was changed from paper. Mr. Kennington said eleven different e-mails were sent to the e-mail that was registered with the

Division reminding him to renew. Mr. McLean asked if a motion is needed as Mr. Jones is presenting on behalf of the individual. Mr. Kennington said according to Ms. Frient, the individual would have to request the exemption himself. Ms. Frient said the individual must submit a signed letter to the FFSI committee requesting an exemption and if that has not been done, the committee has no jurisdiction. She reminded Mr. Kennington he must have a signed letter from individuals before presenting to the committee for consideration. Mr. Rucker said he thinks the committee has enough information to know what the letter will say. The Chief has taken time to come here and address the committee personally and Mr. Rucker thinks a decision can be made that he can relay to the firefighter rather than make them jump through another hoop. Ms. Frient said rather than doing a formal motion since there is not an application, the committee can make a recommendation. The committee's consensus was not to grant an exemption.

#### FIRE COORDINATOR REPORT, Doug Orahood

Mr. Orahood distributed copies of the Fire report for July and August. The Fire disciplinary actions and monthly statistics report was also distributed. Mr. Orahood reported he continues to work with the Ohio Board of Regents on Stackable Certificates and is checking on the status of the fire safety inspectors and instructors. He said the Fire Safety Inspector test will need reviewed and updated due to the standards changing.

Mr. Orahood and Executive Director Rucker will meet with the State Fire Marshal Education Collaborative and the Board of Regents at the end of this month to discuss regulatory authority. Executive Director Rucker and Mr. Orahood continue to meet on the higher education learning experience in Ohio based on the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) model for the associate degree program. Once the model is agreed upon, the educators will be invited back to assist in the development process. Mr. McLean said college credits have been granted for the 256 FF I and the 36 levels. The State Fire Marshal Education Collaborative was started by Chief Bell to develop higher education program working with the Board of Regents using the FESHE models to bring standardization to fire science programs around the state for credit toward a Bachelor and Masters Degree. They are two separate groups.

At the July meeting, Mr. Orahood brought up the possibility of the Division becoming Pro Board certified. Mr. McLean said the Pro Board prefers to be housed with the organization providing certification in the state, which is the Division of EMS. He said it would give Ohio training a little more credibility. Students would pay \$50 to apply for certification and the Division would have to pay \$1,000 every five years for renewal. Mr. Orahood said the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) does not allow the Division to charge for certifications and stressed this would be an optional certification. The student would need to schedule a Pro Board practical skills test, and if successful, the program director of that school would sign off on the student's application. Mr. McLean said the customers are requesting this certification and this committee should look at it and make a recommendation. Mr. Steele said Pro Board offers certification for every NFPA 1000 level standard. The Division of EMS would be the Pro Board accredited institution that would certify any of the 73 chartered schools in Ohio and could administer tests. Mr. Orahood said it is a lengthy process to get approved and since there is a cost to the Division, Mr. Rucker has to receive approval from the Director of Public Safety, which has been submitted. Items discussed included Pro Board certification could simplify the reciprocity process with other states by waiving the training requirement, HazMat certificates could be issued, new rules would

need written, and only FF I and FF II firefighters are eligible to test. Mr. Cotner said it costs a lot of money for the Fire Academy to maintain the certification including hours spent every five years for recertification. Mr. Gill said from an instructor's viewpoint, he does not see where Pro Board certification raises the bar in education with what the student gets out of it and the cost to maintain it. Mr. Orahod said Pro Board would require the Division to issue a minimum 2,000 certificates per year for all levels. Mr. Orahod said the committee needs to discuss whether Ohio should move in this direction. He said one of the big pushes for joining Pro Board came from southwest Ohio in order to have a fire officer certification. He wanted to see if the committee wants to look at that at the same time or after the Division receives Pro Board status. Mr. McLean said this project should not be driven by one department request and the committee is looking at Pro Board certification for multiple reasons. Mr. Gill said if the Committee decides to have a Fire Officer I and II state certification, would that certification be required in order to get promoted within their department. Mr. McLean advised Mr. Orahod to stay on track of becoming Pro Board certified.

#### CHAIR'S REPORT, Phil McLean

At the last meeting, increasing the hours for the Fire Hazard Inspector course to include the hazard update was discussed. There will be a presentation at the November meeting on this.

Mr. McLean said Rick Best and Steve Kimple, the Ohio advocates for the 16 Life Saving Initiatives, are here to discuss how to imbed the initiatives into Ohio fire training courses, recruit advocates, and sponsor a train the trainer class for chartered institutions. There are 10 regional advocates across the country, and each region is comprised of approximately five states. These advocates provide training classes for free. Mr. Kimple said the program is to prevent the preventable line of duty deaths. One of the curriculums is the "Courage to Be Safe", which has been very successful nationally the last several years. However, the number of deaths has not dropped and Ohio ranks in the top ten for firefighter deaths. Mr. Kimple said from 1977 through 2008, there have been 4,050 deaths in the line of duty across the country. This year it already stands at 67. He thinks line of duty deaths have become accepted as part of the firefighting tradition and that needs to change. Wyoming has imbedded the initiatives into their Firefighter I and II curriculum by referencing certain skills to the 16 initiatives for all certification levels. The Wyoming skill objective sheets were distributed for committee members' review. Mr. Orahod will be an instructor for the train the trainer program. Resources and funding are available for at least another year under the Fallen Firefighter foundation. A "Safety Through Leadership" curriculum is being designed for Fire Officer I & II and will have a separate textbook. Mr. McLean said the program awards two seals of excellence and Ohio received one that was directly related to the amount of work Rick Best and Ron Terriaco have done in Ohio.

Mr. McLean thinks the committee can incorporate the initiatives by providing a train the trainer course for all institutions including a participant from their fire community; imbed the training into Level I & II curriculum with an awareness component in the 36-hour course, and use for Fire Instructors continuing education (CE). A lengthy discussion was held regarding the initiatives. Mr. Best said the initiatives are applicable to more than teaching and said there are some fire departments in southern Ohio that do not even have a standard operating procedure (SOP). Members discussed holding the train the trainer during the Division's annual Fire/EMS program coordinator update in the fall, use the risk management angle to receive workers compensation discounts and have workers compensation pay for the training, concern that base

hours for courses would be increased, and requiring it as mandatory continuing education (CE). Mr. Best said could do regional training. Mr. Orahood received approval to put the additional four hour course online for firefighter and instructor CE. Members felt that the way we've always done it attitude needs adjusted and the culture can be changed with the younger people to shape the future culture as they enter the fire service. Suggestions included training one instructor from every institution the initiatives could be imbedded in FF I and II courses, include in the 36 hour pilot course two hour block for safety, and have advocates visit every fire department with the message. Mr. Babb and Mr. Wright will work with Mr. Dixon on the skill sheets and schedule a charter directors meeting to sponsor the train the trainer course. Mr. Best said if federal funding is lost, they would lose their website, but if training is done before that occurs, the program could live on.

**\*\*\*\* Break 12:12 PM to 12:21 PM \*\*\*\***

Mr. Orahood gave a Power Point presentation of the Live Fire Training NFPA1403 instructor course that will be presented to the Fire Alliance. The focus is on a pro-active approach to the best training for acquired structure burns comprised of nine chapters with a teaching component for each one. This class would be available as an optional certification for instructors interested in conducting live burns. Mr. Sacco thought a standardized instructor course was going to be developed in addition to the 1403 add on module. Mr. Steele asked if the committee is going to require rules that instructors are required to take this module in order to conduct live burns. Mr. McLean said the initial goal for this was to have an optional class for acquired structure burns available as a pro-active approach. The committee owes it to the fire service to make this course available for those interested in educating themselves. Mr. Steele will contact the Chiefs to set up an Alliance meeting to discuss the life safety program, 36 hour, and hazard class. He will prepare a draft outline of how the course will be taught prior to meeting with the Alliance. Mr. Gill thinks this will raise the bar and the committee should make two courses, one for acquired structures and one for burn buildings. Mr. McLean thanked everyone for their work.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Kennington thanked the committee for their support of Division staff in certification rule enforcement.

#### OLD BUSINESS

No new business was brought forward.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION: Motion to adjourn.** Babb first. Steele second. None opposed. Motion approved.  
**Meeting adjourned at 12:50 PM.**