

WV STATE FIRE COMMISSION MEETING

Holiday Inn Express
681 Flowing Springs Rd
Ranson WV 25438
April 5th, 2024

PLEASE NOTE:

The following minutes have been provided and are considered unofficial, until they are submitted for approval at the next scheduled meeting.

The official business meeting was called to order at 9:03am by Chairman Grant Gunnoe

ROLL CALL: by Kathryn L Burns

Commissioners Present

Steven Byers, Dave Camp, Carl Eastham, Doug Estep, Edward George, Grant Gunnoe, Phil Hart, Tom Keefer, Brian Jones, Doug Mongold, and Jim Oldaker.

It is noted that Counsel Brandolyn Felton-Earnest is in attendance as well.

Commissioners Absent

Ted Shriver
Virgil White
Marshal Tyree

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Mongold made a motion to accept and approve the minutes of the February 2nd, 2024 Fire Commission Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

RECOGNITION

None

PRESENTATION

John Ouderkerk, WV State Director Firefighter Cancer Support Network provided a presentation on Cancer Awareness in the Fire Service and the support that can be provided to members of the Fire Service.

SFMO & DIVISIONAL REPORT:

Deputy Mark Stewart presented the Inspections/Plan Review and Fire Department Services report, and Deputy Chief Bailey gave the Services and Investigations Report, and Marshal Tyree's April 2024 Operations report to the Commission containing staffing, legislative updates, fire department funding loss updates, voluntary FD shut-downs, planned visits, meetings and received correspondence.

Entertained Questions – Mark Lambert of WVU FSE, inquired if the Fire Hydrant Inspection and Testing Reports resulting from a recently formed PSC Task Force on the matter, will be made available to Fire Departments. The agency does not know the answer to the question but will follow up on the item.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The Disciplinary and VFD Equipment and Training Committees did not meet.

Fire Department Services Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 4th, 2024

Call to Order

Commissioner Byers called to order the regular meeting of the Fire Department Services Committee at 10:00AM on April 4th, 2024 at the Holiday Inn Express, 681 Flowing Springs Rd, Ranson WV 25438.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Steven Byers
Jim Oldaker
Phil Hart
Brian Jones
Dave Camp
Grant Gunnoe (Commission Chair)
Doug Mongold (Commission Vice Chair)

The following commissioners were absent:

None

Unfinished Business

1. Discussion/Consideration of Fire Officer Equivalency Process/Requirements.

Per recommendations from a workgroup review of the Fire Officer Equivalency Requirements and several subsequent follow-up conversations, Deputy Chief Bailey presented a proposed new policy on the Fire Officer Equivalency process noting the additions, and strikethroughs on the proposal and the reasoning behind them. Chairman Gunnoe gave a brief run down on how the temporary application process would work if approved. The Committee reviewed the proposed policy and discussed potential areas of concern of the proposal. One concern noted was the 5 years of experience at Fire Fighter 2 level and what would happen to a department if no one had that experience.

Commission Camp made a motion to recommend moving the item to the Full Fire Commission, seconded by Commissioner Hart. With all the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

New Business

1. Consideration of Fire Chief Applications

Assistant State Fire Marshal Bradley Scott presented the following applications for approval.

- a. Joe Brooks (Smoot)
- b. Michael Holshouser (Rhodell)
- c. William Kendrick (Bradshaw)
- d. Stephen Tasker (Benwood)
- e. John Bosley (Adrian)
- f. Dennie Hale (Welch)
- g. Joe Tanner (Grantsville)
- h. Norman Streets (Pine Grove)
- i. Augustus Taylor (Loudendale)
- j. Rodney Likin (Burlington)

Commissioner Oldaker noticed in the application of Loudendale's submission that it did not state Fire Chief but rather Chief Executive Officer. He also noticed the letter of appointment was not signed by the President or Chairman and recommended that the Full Commission table the item for further research.

Commissioner Oldaker made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission to approve the applications as listed with further research and discussion on Loudendale's submission, seconded by Commissioner Camp. With all the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

2. Report on Fire Department Receiving 180 Days to Achieve Compliance.

ASFM Scott briefed the Committee on the Departments receiving 180 days.

- a. Milton VFD
- b. Walton VFD
- c. Welch VFD
- d. Walkersville VFD
- e. Pricetown VFD

- f. Greenwood VFD
- g. West Union VFD

No action needed.

3. Consideration of Fire Department Recertification

Assistant State Fire Marshal Bradley Scott presented the following departments for Recertification.

- a. Buffalo Creek VFD
- b. Town of Man VFD

Commissioner Camp made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission the recertification of the listed departments, seconded by Commissioner Hart. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

4. Consideration of Fire Department with Perfect Evaluations Recertification.

Assistant State Fire Marshal Bradley Scott presented the following Perfect Evaluations for Recertification.

- a. New Haven VFD
- b. Point Pleasant VFD
- c. City of Huntington FD
- d. Valley Fire Rescue
- e. Arnoldsburg VFD
- f. Leon VFD
- g. Upper West Fork VFD
- h. Elizabeth Wirt VFD
- i. Jane Lew VFD
- j. Midway VFD
- k. Weston VFD
- l. Jackson's Mill VFD
- m. South Charleston FD
- n. McClellan District VFD
- o. Smithburg VFD

Commissioner Camp made a motion to recommend to the Full Fire Commission the recertification of the listed departments, noting their perfect evaluations, seconded by Commissioner Hart. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Hart moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:34am, seconded by Commissioner Camp. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Mongold made a motion to accept the report as written, seconded by Commissioner George. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote the motion passed.

DRAFT

Training Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 4th, 2024

Call to Order

Commissioner Keefer called to order the regular meeting of the Training Committee at 10:35am on April 4th, 2024, at the Holiday Inn Express, 681 Flowing Springs Road, Ranson WV 25438.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Jim Oldaker
Doug Estep
Tom Keefer
Dave Camp
Grant Gunnoe (Commission Chair)
Doug Mongold (Commission Vice Chair)

The following commissioners were absent:

Virgil White

Unfinished Business

1. Update on National Qualifying System for Emergency Responders.

Deputy Chief Bailey noted that Brent Burger with Emergency Management was scheduled for the February meeting but unable to attend due to illness and time restraints did not allow him to make the drive to this meeting. Deputy Chief Bailey stated he had held good conversations with both Mr. Burger and Director McCabe of Emergency Management and Mr. Burger will be at the June meeting to be held at Stonewall Resort for further clarification on the item. Per his conversations with Mr. Burger and Director McCabe, NQS will only have an effect on teams or resources that are deployable by FEMA request. In addition, per Director McCabe, by his requirements, NIMS training would only have to be retaken if a new version is required as a prerequisite of future training courses. Commissioner Keefer commented that was in opposition to what he had been quoted as stating on March 8th. Chairman Gunnoe thought perhaps Director McCabe would be able to provide a letter that would clear up the matter and provide a record as such of the policy. Deputy Chief Bailey will make a request for that letter.

Additional discussions regarding the 300 and 400 classes were held on the length required between classes, the type of certificates issued and the databases they are held in.

Lastly, Commissioner Keefer inquired of Deputy Chief Bailey if based on what he was hearing then, on folks getting reimbursed from FEMA required to be under the NQS system, that won't apply to anyone in the fire services. Deputy Bailey responded, No, not on anyone doing daily operations in the community.

The Commission looks forward to hearing from Mr. Burger at the June meeting.

New Business

1. Consideration of Fairmont State Fire Marshal Credentialing Program.

Deputy Chief Bailey brought to the attention of the Committee the letter of request for approval from Fairmont State for its' Fire Marshal Credentialing Program. JT Hodges from Fairmont State was unable to be at the Committee meeting but will be at the Full Commission meeting on Friday, April 5th, 2024, to answer any questions the Commissioners may have.

Chairman Gunnoe noted originally the request for approval was made by Charleston Fire but that the request needed to come from the entity itself and this is the correct path for approval. It also appears that this is a Fire Marshal certification program only, but he will clarify this with Mr. Hodges tomorrow.

Commssioner Oldaker made a motion to move the item to the Full Commission, seconded by Commissioner Gunnoe. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

2. Discussion on new OSHA Proposal for Emergency Responders.

Amanda Mason (Assistant Director of the NRC-WVU OSHA Education Training Center) provided a very detailed presentation on new OSHA proposals for Emergency Responders and the potential immediate effects and trickle-down effects the proposal could have. She noted the public comment period on the proposal has been extended to allow additional time for comment. She will provide the power point presentation to the Commission for further dissemination and will attend the Full Commission meeting for any follow-up questions the Commission may have.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Estep moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:21am, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker. With the ayes and nays haven been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to accept the report as written, seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote the motion passed.

Legislative, and Codes Committee Meeting Report

Meeting Minutes

April 4th, 2024

Call to Order

Commissioner George called to order the regular meeting of the Legislative and Codes Committee meeting at 11:22am on April 4th, 2024, at the Holiday Inn Express, 681 Flowing Springs Rd, Ranson WV 25438.

Roll Call

The following commissioners were present:

Jim Oldaker
Brian Jones
Tom Keefer
Edward George
Grant Gunnoe (Commission Chair)
Doug Mongold (Commission Vice Chair)

The following commissioners were absent:

Ted Shriver

Unfinished Business

None

New business

- 1) Update on Active Legislation by Counsel Felton-Ernest

Counsel Felton-Ernest presented information on SB 36, SB 587 and HB 5128 to the Committee.

Adjournment

Having no additional business, Commissioner Keefer moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:45am, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker. With the ayes and nays haven been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to accept the report as written, seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote the motion passed.

FULL COMMISSION MEETING

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1) Discussion/Consideration of Fire Officer Equivalency Process/Requirements.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to approve the proposal as presented seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

See FDS Report.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) Consideration of Fire Chief applications

See FDS Report.

- a. Joe Brooks (Smoot)
- b. Michael Holshouser (Rhodell)
- c. William Kendrick (Bradshaw)
- d. Stephen Tasker (Benwood)
- e. John Bosley (Adrian)
- f. Dennie Hale (Welch)
- g. Joe Tanner (Grantsville)
- h. Norman Streets (Pine Grove)
- i. Augustus Taylor (Loudendale)
- j. Rodney Likin (Burlington)

Commissioner Oldaker made a motion to table Loudendale's submission Augustus Taylor until the June meeting, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to approve the remaining applications as listed, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

2) Report on Fire Departments Receiving 180 Days to Achieve Compliance.

See FDS Report.

- a. Milton VFD
- b. Walton VFD
- c. Welch VFD
- d. Walkersville VFD
- e. Pricetown VFD
- f. Greenwood VFD
- g. West Union VFD

No Action Needed.

3) Consideration of Recertification of Fire Departments.

See FDS Report.

- a. Buffalo Creek VFD
- b. Town of Man VFD

Commissioner Mongold made a motion to recertify the listed departments, seconded by Commissioner Eastham. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

4) Consideration of Perfect Evaluation Recertification of Fire Departments.

See FDS Report.

- a. New Haven VFD
- b. Point Pleasant VFD
- c. City of Huntington FD
- d. Valley Fire Rescue
- e. Arnoldsburg VFD
- f. Leon VFD
- g. Upper West Fork VFD
- h. Elizabeth Wirt VFD
- i. Jane Lew
- j. Midway VFD
- k. Weston VFD
- l. Jackson's Mill VFD
- m. South Charleston FD
- n. McClellan District VFD
- o. Smithburg VFD

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to recertify the departments noting their perfect evaluations, seconded by Commissioner Mongold. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

See FDS Report.

5) Consideration of Fairmont State Fire Marshal Credentialing Program.

JT Hodges of Fairmont State presented the proposal to the Commission for their consideration. He stated what would be provided in the program and that a certificate of completion would be issued upon completion of the 3-week program. He noted that any powers granted to the individual would be done so by what their agency/municipality authorizes them to do and that it takes a commitment by the agency/municipality to appropriately train regarding Fire Investigations and Inspections.

Chairman Gunnoe stated that this proposed program on due processes of arrest and like items would only satisfy a small portion of the training needed, that it should generally be the last piece acquired, noting that agencies/municipalities should set pre-requisites regarding necessary Fire Investigation and Inspection training and that the Commission may need to do some work for clarification.

Commissioner Eastham made a motion to approve Fairmont State's submission, seconded by Commissioner Jones. With the ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

See Training Report

6) Follow-up Discussion on new OSHA Proposal for Emergency Responders.

Amanda Mason – Assistant Director of the NRC-WVU OSHA Education Training Center – no additional information was requested by the Commission, and they thanked Ms. Mason for her presentation.

See Training Report.

Following a 10-minute recess the meeting was called back to order by Chairman Gunnoe at 10:49.

SPEAKERS:

Charles Linaburg and Robert Cooper of Beallair Solar Committee spoke to the Commission on behalf of the residents of the Beallair Community regarding their concerns over fire safety at the Flowing Springs Farms Solar Project currently in development. These concerns included the type of training needed or required for appropriate response to any fire at the field, how that training for local fire departments would be provided/paid for and what regulations would the project be held to. A good discussion was held between the Beallair Solar Committee members present, Commission members, Staff, Local Fire Department members and Training entities, sharing their knowledge, reference material, points of contacts and potential training opportunities.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Letters to Senator Capito, Senator Manchin and Congresswomen Miller.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

August Meeting Location is Oglebay Resort, in Wheeling WV.

TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING(S):

Committee Meetings - 10:00am Thursday, June 6th, 2024, and Commission Meeting 9:00am Friday, June 7th, 2024, Stonewall Resort State Park.

ADJOURN:

Commissioner Mongold made a motion to adjourn at 11:30am, seconded by Commissioner Eastham without objection. Meeting adjourned.