

Iowa Firefighters Association  
Board of Directors' Meeting  
June 13, 2015  
Hiawatha, Iowa

Present: President Brad Yeager, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Bill Halleran, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP Marv Trimble, 4<sup>th</sup> VP Jim Shutts, 5<sup>th</sup> VP Gene Evans, Past President Al Esch, Executive Director Wendy Lensing. Absent: 1<sup>st</sup> VP Mark McNees.  
Also present: Randy Novak, FSTB; Jeff Quigle, SFM; Matt Powers, Hiawatha; Bob Platz, Dyersville; Bob Hagen, Jewell; Ellen Hagen, Jewell; Melissa Schmitt, Greeley; several members of Hiawatha FD.

**Meeting was called to order at 11 a.m. by President Brad Yeager.**

**Motion was made by Bill Halleran and seconded by Jim Shutts to approve the agenda. Motion carried.**

**Motion was made by Gene Evans and seconded by Marv Trimble to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2015 Board of Directors' meeting held in Eagle Grove. Motion carried.**

**Executive Director's Report – Wendy Lensing:**

Thank you to everyone for coming to the meeting today and thank you to Hiawatha for hosting the meeting.

We are still ironing out issues with the new database. Things were just not working the way they should be yet and I was getting behind waiting for things to work correctly. I had to revert to using the old system to get everything processed as payments came in and then was faced with trying to re-enter again on the new system if and when it was working properly. We are now discussing having them start over and wipe out the data from the new system and just migrate our data again so that we don't have to double enter all the payments for this year.

We are looking for volunteers for the Hall of Flame. If you would like to work a shift please contact me. There are lots of weekday shifts still available. You will receive an admission ticket and a Hall of Flame t-shirt for working a 4 hour shift.

I am also looking for drill officials for convention, especially if you have some knowledge of the drills that would be helpful. Please contact me. There are several openings on that schedule.

We were awarded a SAFER grant back in 2009 for recruitment and retention program that was to run for 4 years from 2010 – 2014. An extension was granted for 6 months to try and finish out the classes. This grant is just now running out and will be closed out this month.

**Financial Report:**

Total assets for the Iowa Firefighters Association as of May 31, 2015 were \$525,717.83.

Total assets for the Iowa Firemen's Foundation as of May 31, 2015 were \$51,401.99. Of that total, \$3,807.03 belongs to the Smoke Detector Project and \$47,594.96 belongs to the Foundation.

Motion was made by Jim Shutts and seconded by Al Esch to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

**Officer's Reports:**

**2<sup>nd</sup> VP Bill Halleran:**

Thanks to Chief Nesslage and the rest of his command staff for hosting today's meeting. It is nice to see everyone in attendance.

As the legislation season is wrapping up we dodged the proverbial bullet with the fireworks bill that was introduced. We were pleased to see that this did not move forward anymore. We can only imagine that this will be brought up again next year.

Tonight we will be attending the Candlelight Vigil held in Coralville at the Memorial and tomorrow will be the Sunday Memorial event. For anyone that has never attended this Memorial I strongly encourage you to do so. The Memorial Committee lined up an amazing event with special thanks to Mike and Joan Reuman.

I look forward to another successful convention this year in Story City. We are still accepting nominations for IFA 5<sup>th</sup> Vice President. It is a very rewarding feeling to be on this board and to know that your thoughts and input are valuable.

Have a safe summer to all and as always, "Let no man's ghost return to say his training let him down".

### **3<sup>rd</sup> VP Marv Trimble:**

Thanks to the Hiawatha fire department, Chief Nesslage, and Assistant Chief Powers for your hospitality. I feel somewhat responsible for the success of this department. I trained both of these guys when they were on the Cedar Rapids fire department.

Since our last meeting I have had the privilege to make a years of service to the Melborne Fire department. I gave out 7 awards ranging from 20 to 56 years. 256 years in total. I think they have the retention piece nailed. I also presented a 40 year award to Richard Mott of the Jessup Fire department.

This year I have made 5 trips to the Capitol in Des Moines. Twice were sub-committee meeting dealing with fireworks. In both of these meeting the only people to speak in favor were the ones that wanted to profit from the sales. During the house meeting the last person to speak, before the representatives, was from Revenue and Finance. She reported a projected \$1 million in tax revenue in the first year. Clearly the emphasis was on income, to the state and individuals.

Some of you must have contacted your law makers. The bill passed in the Senate, then went to the House. It passed in the House with some changes. The bill then had to go back to the Senate. It never made it back on the floor for a vote. We dodged a bullet.

Maybe you think it's no big deal. People shooting off a few fireworks. The bill that passed the Senate allowed the use any day from 9:00 am until 10:00 pm any day. Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, and New Years Eve, and the Saturday or Sunday immediately preceding and following. During these holidays you could use them until 12:30 am.

With increased access there will be increased incidents. Injuries, property damage and God forbid death.

Next year this will be tried again. Let's all contact our lawmakers and tell them "No more fireworks".

Thanks.

### **4<sup>th</sup> VP Jim Shutts:**

Since the mid-year meeting things have been kind of slow. The 18<sup>th</sup> of April Gene Evans and I were in attendance at the Iowa fire prevention poster program awards luncheon held at the Jewell fire station to present awards to some very talented children. We had poster program winners from all corners of the state. That evening I attended the years of service banquet for the Janesville Fire Department presenting years of service awards to 6 gentlemen with a total of 171 years of service to their

community. Chief Destival has a very fine group of firefighters he leads. On Tuesday the 21<sup>st</sup> of April I went to Manchester to attend the funeral visitation for Palo firefighter Stephen Cook.

We dodged a bullet with the fireworks bill but we will need more support against this bill as I'm sure they will hit hard next year to pass this. The legislative season this year was like hand to hand combat to even keep all the budgets funded. I have been telling firefighters that I meet up with to make sure and schedule a shift at the State Fair Hall of Flame booth which is coming up quickly.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> VP – Gene Evans:**

I would like to open by expressing my thanks to the Hiawatha Fire Department for hosting this meeting. It is always a pleasure to visit Fire Stations around the state.

Since my last report, the focus of the Board has been primarily monitoring the Legislative session. As my rookie year unfolded, I learned that interacting with Lawmakers is a difficult and ever changing process, that is measured in small victories and sometimes major defeats. We were fortunate that the Fireworks bill did not progress to a vote, but I am certain that it will re-appear next year. Please have conversations with your local Senators and Representatives when the opportunity arises and let them know that the IFA will continue to oppose the legalization of fireworks in Iowa.

In closing, I would like to remind everyone to be safe during the upcoming summer months. Participation in outdoor activities presents additional safety hazards that we all need to be mindful of to keep both ourselves and our families free from harm.

#### **Past President – Al Esch:**

I'm going to focus on the PSAP and E911 legislation. We fought tooth and nail to get something that was palatable for everyone. Unfortunately we came up a little short. The Governor got pretty much what he wanted out of the bill. There wasn't a whole lot of concession gained or lost. It looks like that is going to make it through. We were looking at different numbers and this will bring about a lot of consolidation in our call answering centers. There is always a chance to revisit this in the future if funding for the answering points becomes short. We had hoped for better availability of funds and bigger percentage and it just didn't come about. Just when you thought you had something it would change a couple of hours later. I went to Des Moines on a couple of different occasions for subcommittee hearings and it was an eye opener. I won't be a mainstay down at the capitol in the future but if the opportunity comes up I'm sure I can be talked into going and helping out if it's needed.

I did a length of service award presentation in Fairbank for Bob Maricle the night of the Mid Year banquet. There were a lot of family and media present. I also talked to some local legislators that were there that evening.

I also attended the funeral visitation for Stephen Cook from Palo. I realized when I saw some of his certifications that were on display that I was his instructor for FFI.

#### **President – Brad Yeager:**

I want to thank Marv and Mark for the research they did on a couple of the bills and some Al provided some great insight on the E911 bill as well.

The year started out great. We went to the meeting with the Governor and thought this is awesome he's going to listen to us this year and then he didn't listen at all and then we got thrown under the bus with fireworks and the E911 bill. This year was a struggle for me and for all of us but thanks to everyone here we made our voice heard and John Pederson our lobbyist really did a lot of legwork down there for us. The 911 bill didn't come out in our favor but it certainly wasn't what the initial bill included so we did at

least get a few concessions there. I think we just got lucky at the end on fireworks. I'm sure we'll deal with it again next year. I hope maybe we can get law enforcement more involved with it also.

One thing that John Pederson got put into a bill that we hope will get signed is a \$100,000 grant for the FSTB. I'll let Randy explain how that will be used.

Next week I will be delivering a length of service award to Don "Foxy" Cox from West Des Moines for 41-1/2 years of service. I will also be presenting a length of service award to Dave Anderson the Chief from Lake Mills. He's been there forever and is retiring. That's only 15 miles from my hometown and my dad was Chief in Forest City. I've known him my whole life and it's always kind of bittersweet saying goodbye to some of those guys you've known forever.

Thank you to Hiawatha. It was 1995 or 1996 or something like that I was actually on the Hiawatha FD. It was a great department back then and I'm sure it's even better now.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **NVFC – Bob Platz:**

I'd also like to thank the Hiawatha FD. My son, Brian, was also on this department at one time.

The National Volunteer Fire Council spring conference was in April. Phil Stittleburg resigned as Chairman. Kevin Quinn from Rhode Island is the new Chairman. NVFC has sent a delegation to Germany to deal with a worldwide volunteer fire membership. Brian Seymour is over there as part of that.

There was a bill presented to the President for his signature which makes the PSOB funds non taxable, and he signed it.

SERVE act was introduced in the house for a \$1000.00 tax credit for Volunteer Firefighters and EMS.

VRIPA bill will be introduced soon; this bill would make the first \$600.00 of firefighter pay on call, or token salary, tax free.

I am reading some of the Globe grants for bunker gear.

The Georgia-Pacific grants are open now (the fire department must be within 30 miles of a Georgia-Pacific plant). Iowa plants are in Fort Dodge and Dubuque.

I attended SAFER grant reading session in Baltimore, MD two weeks ago.

Attended the CFSI dinner and the NVFC legislative committee had table very near the stage and Vice President Joe Biden was main speaker.

#### **Memorial Committee – Mike Reuman –**

Mike sent a note for Wendy to read:

Plans are to start set up at 10:00 a.m. Saturday. When everyone is done with the IFA board meeting and if you plan to be around for the weekend, we can use everyone's help. We need help with the candlelight service and Sunday morning service. Some of the wives could help Saturday night and Sunday with merchandise sales/prepare candles, etc. Two or three people will need to hand out programs, someone needs to direct people as to where the wreaths should go before the service so they're easy to pick up at the time of "Placing the Wreaths". Someone needs to direct all honor guard to where they will organize themselves for the BLUE LINE. We'll need everyone's help to take things down after the service.

Hope to see everyone there! Pray for a dry weekend!

### **Convention Committee – Marv Trimble:**

On June 28<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. in Traer they will be meeting to check equipment and test hose.

### **Guests:**

#### **Fire Marshal – Jeff Quigle:**

The SFM Division currently has 18 fire deaths reported for 2015 to date. The SFM Division had 21 Fire Deaths reported for 2014 on this date.

Bureau Chief Randy Novak completed and submitted an AFG-FPS (Assistance to Firefighter Grant/Fire Prevention and Safety) this Fiscal Year to continue to purchase smoke detectors for installation throughout the state. The SFM Division continues to partner with the IFA and the Central Iowa Chapter of the American Red Cross regarding distribution and installation of smoke detectors throughout the state. The SFM Division is in the process of changing the Administrative Rules requirement of dual sensor smoke detectors to the 10 year sealed lithium battery smoke detectors.

We are currently looking at purchasing additional software from Image Trend for management of our licensing programs. We are initially looking at the fire alarm and sprinkler licensing software and have options to add additional licensing modules in the future. We intend to start this software project in upcoming Fiscal Year 2016.

Our Special Agent stationed in Northwest Iowa is retiring at the end of this month. We are in the process of completing the paperwork to fill this position. We also continue to work on filling a Fire Inspector in Southwest Iowa.

Commissioner Roxann Ryan appointed Construction Engineer Senior Rich Bolten to State Building Code Commissioner and Construction Engineer Senior Ljerka Vasiljavic to Deputy State Building Code Commissioner last month. The SFM Division is really excited about these appointments as the State Building Code Commissioner position has been vacant since March 2012.

We are also continuing to work on a dedicated position at the SFM Division to oversee the National Fire Incident Reporting System and serve as a liaison to the Fire Service through the Department of Public Safety/Division of Intelligence. This position will be working directly with the Fire Departments regarding reporting their fire incidents through Fire Bridge. Our goal is to achieve a 90 to 100% reporting rate.

The Healthiest State Initiative and the State Fire Marshal Division are combining efforts to keep Iowans safe and a bit healthier. Organizers are encouraging Iowans to “Walk at the Whistle” on Wednesday, October 7, during Fire Prevention Week as part of the fifth annual Healthiest State Walk. There will be more information forthcoming.

### **FSTB – Randy Novak:**

#### **Budget:**

- We have not received final word on the FY16 allocation, but we expect this to be level funded from this current year. We do not know the status of the \$100,000 one-time funding.

**Grants:** The Bureau has applied for the following federal grants:

- FSTB received our National Fire Academy “State Training Support Grant” for \$20,000 for federal FY 15 (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015). This will be used to support the delivery of NFA Approved Courses (Instructor I & II, Fire Officer I & II) and NFA 2-Day Courses. We have applied for the FY2016 grant and should hear something soon.
- FSTB received a 2013 AFG grant for a new mobile live fire simulator (\$350,000 - \$290,500 federal share, \$52,500 our share). Delivery is expected mid to late July.
- FSTB has applied for, and has been awarded a 2014 AFG grant for a mobile drill tower (\$220,000).
- FSTB is managing the IFA/SMF 2013 FP&S grant for smoke alarms (\$200,000).
- We have applied for a 2014 FP&S grant for smoke alarms (\$200,000 through the IFA) and a 2014 FP&S grant for the Juvenile Firesetter Program (\$20,000 through the SFM).

#### **Recently Added Courses:**

- FHWA: National Traffic Incident Management Responder Training Program with the ISP (4 hours with 2 optional hours of activities).
- We continue to offer, with the ISP, the 1.5 hour Crash Scene Management course. This is ideal for county association meetings, FD meetings, etc.

#### **Major Events:** (check our website: [www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb](http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb) )

- National Fire/EMS Health & Safety Week – June 14-20 (sponsored by NVFC and IAFC).
- FSTB Programs (2014-15)
  - Instructors Conference, October 9-10 at Ames.
  - Hazardous Materials Symposium, October 22-23 at Ames.
  - Announcement for various open enrollment classes will be posted on our website (under “Training Opportunities”) and mailed to Iowa fire departments throughout the year.
- National Fire Academy (NFA) Courses:
  - See list of FY15 NFA courses. (FY16 courses are being selected now).

Check our website for new information: [www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb](http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb)

- You can now sign up for an automatic e-mail notification when something has been added.

#### **Unfinished Business –**

Gene Evans asked if the software issues were at a point where we needed to speak to attorney about a breach of contract. Brad and Wendy said no. Things are being worked out and hopefully re-importing our current data will solve the problems.

#### **New Business –**

Bob Platz said that Iowa’s membership in the NVFC has really grown.

Wendy said that she would be posting and e-mailing out information on the recruitment and retention program offered by NVFC.

#### **Good of the Association – None**

**Ajourned 12:00 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Wendy Lensing  
Executive Director