

Iowa Firefighters Association
Mid Year Business Meeting
March 28, 2015
West Des Moines, IA

Those present were: President Brad Yeager, 1st VP Mark McNees, 2nd VP Bill Halleran, 3rd VP Marv Trimble, 4th VP Jim Shutts, 5th VP Gene Evans, Past President Al Esch, Executive Director Wendy Lensing, Ellen Hagen, Jewell; Bob Hagen, Jewell; Dave Zimple, North Liberty; Tom Campbell, Panora; Scott Hagenson, Lake Mills; Jeff Gore, Eldora; Jack Runge, Buckeye; Cliff Renslow, Stuart; Kenny McAdoo, Tama; Tony Whitmore, Iowa Falls; Rusty Hockman, Jewell; Richard C. Harman, Cedar Rapids; Joan Reuman, Traer; Walter Cook, Walker; Leonard Baker, Alden; Randy Viet, Alden; Randy Novak, FSTB; Bob Platz, Dyersville; Darren Groen, Waverly; Jeff Soash, Waverly; Jeff McFarland, La Porte City; Rob Edgar, Waverly; Jeremy Scott, Pella; Dick Frank, Forest City; Shirl Frank, Forest City; Pete Weber, Raymond; Joe Moore, Center Point; Mike Wink, Monticello; John Novak, Traer; Mike Tomas, Tama; Jim Kenkel, Woodward; Ron Kelchen, Monticello; Kelly Green, Monticello; Bob Siddell, Solon; Roger Bissen, Harlan; Brian Platz, Solon/Iowa City; Jon Reyhons, Solon; Mike Reuman, Traer; Dan Vodoshodshy, Tama; Al Wessels, Dyersville; Dan Smith, Solon; Ed Tibbott, Manchester; Bruce Blum, Harlan; Terry Jacobsen, Harlan; Mike Kienast, Harlan; John Davis, Harlan; Scott Harvey, Eldora; Zack Harvey, Eldora; Jared Schnebly, Forest City; Tim Gansemer, Dyersville; Gary McCool, Guthrie Center; Randy Sheeder, Guthrie Center; Bill Willenborg, Dyersville; Doug Sandbothe, Atlantic; Denny Drabek, Garner; Terry Jass, Garner; Greg Leerar, Garner; Chad Schmidt, Hudson; Brad Pfantz, State Center; Leo Caloud, Hudson; Gordy Clarke, Hudson; Mike King, Hudson; David Abbas, Ackley; Jeffrey Quigle, SFM/DPS; Don Cox, West Des Moines; Dave Deeringer, Wellsburg; Brittanee Deeringer, Wellsburg; Glenn Engel, Waverly; Al Muhlhausen, Maquoketa; Brian Seymour, Indianola; Jessica Scott, Redfield; Alex Arnburg, Redfield; Don Scott, Redfield.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by President Brad Yeager.

The Des Moines Fire Department Honor Guard presented the colors.

Mark Johnson from the West Des Moines Marriott welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. He mentioned that in case anyone didn't know yet that the IFA Mid Year Meeting was set for 2016 to be held again at West Des Moines Marriott on April 1st and 2nd.

West Des Moines Fire Chief Mark Sonnenburg welcomed everyone to West Des Moines and thanked everyone for what they do. He said the Iowa Firefighters Association has been a big part of the fire service for a lot of years. He didn't really wrap his head around how long it had been until he spent some time with Don "Foxy" Cox and they talked a little bit about history and the organization itself. Foxy told him he'd been a member of the IFA for 41 years. Mark recognized him for his years of service and thanked him and asked for a round of applause. Mark mentioned many places in West Des Moines to visit. He said he couldn't talk about West Des Moines though without recognizing the West Des Moines FD. It is a combination department and he is proud of that. It has allowed them to stay in touch with the community and meet their needs. There are 5 stations across the city staffed with a combination of full-time staff and paid on call. It's been tough but they have been able to meet the needs of their rapidly expanding community and maintain their combination work force. These days he feels sometimes being a full-time department being a part of the community is lost. Being a combination department has allowed them to maintain that. Meeting the needs of the community should be a fire departments first

priority. In West Des Moines being a combination department has allowed that to happen. Their museum in Station 18 is filled with the rich history of the department being a part of the community and he encouraged everyone to stop by and see it if they have time.

RESOLUTION #1 – Dave Zimple, Chairman Resolutions Committee

To the members of the Iowa Firefighters Association assembled here in West Des Moines, Iowa on this 28th day of March in the year 2015.

WHEREAS: We would like to thank the West Des Moines Marriott, the West Des Moines Fire Department, the Mid Year Committee and the citizens of West Des Moines for their gracious hospitality

THEREFORE: Let it be resolved that this resolution be passed by a standing ovation from all members present at this annual Mid Year meeting of the Iowa Firefighters Association.

Respectfully submitted by the Resolutions Committee.

Guests:

Muscular Dystrophy Association – Danielle Etter and Ellie Whistler

Danielle Etter is with the Muscular Dystrophy Association and spoke briefly about MDA. They serve about 1600 patients in the Iowa area with any of 43 different neuromuscular diseases that they cover. Some of the services they provide to those families include clinic visits, support groups, loan closet, educational seminars, research and summer camps. The Fill the Boot program helps tremendously with all of these programs. She thanked those that currently participate in the Fill the Boot program and take the time to raise funds to support the services that they provide.

Ellie Whistler is an 8th grader at Indian Hills Junior High and she goes to camp. She said her diagnosis is kind of an odd situation because they haven't exactly pinpointed what it is. They sent part of her muscle to the Netherlands for a certain test that is only done there. They have been searching for 4 years to find out and she loves how supportive MDA is. They have helped with a scooter that she uses at school. Going to camp was great because she met so many good friends. She loves to do comedy at camp and since she found out she loves to do comedy she has started taking improv classes. She said everyone really appreciates what you do to raise money for MDA.

President Yeager thanked Danielle and Ellie for coming. It's great to meet the kids that are being helped. He presented Ellie with a fire alarm bank and the boot was passed for donations. Total collected was \$437 and Wendy will send a check for that amount to MDA.

Iowa EMS Association –

The Iowa EMS Association was going to have someone at the meeting but due to a death in the family they had to back out. Linda Fredriksen, President of the Iowa EMS Association sent a letter that President Yeager read :

Thank you very much for the opportunity to address the membership of the Iowa Firefighters Association at the mid-year business meeting on March 28, 2015. I regret to inform you that although Mark McCulloch, our Vice-President, had planned to deliver a brief presentation, he unfortunately is unable to do so because of the death of his grandmother.

The Iowa EMS Association has appreciated the strong relationship it shares with your Association, and we look forward to continued future collaborative efforts. As two organizations with many similar, and in many instances, common goals, we recognize the positive benefits of working together to support, as well as enhance our respective initiatives. In short, it makes good sense to work together whenever we have the opportunity to do so.

In closing, thanks for the invitation to meet with your membership; we look forward to an opportunity to work with you again in the future.

Warm regards,

Linda Frederiksen,
President, Iowa EMS Association

President Yeager commented that the IFA is trying very hard this year to reach out to all of its brother and sister organizations and have had a good relationship with them.

Iowa Emergency Management Association – Darrell Knecht, President

Darrell Knecht is the Emergency Management Coordinator for Howard County in northeast Iowa near the Minnesota border. He's held that position for approximately 13 years. He lives in Elma in SW of Howard County and has been on the volunteer fire department there since 1983 and has been the Chief since 1988. He said if you get to know your Emergency Management Coordinator you will find a lot of them are part of the fire service, law enforcement, EMS. Part of their association's mission statement is to "assist Iowans in preserving life and protecting property in the face of any hazard". He said that little portion of the mission statement kind of says it all for all of us.

Darrell is the President of the association. They now have 2 Vice Presidents, 1st VP Doug Reed from Pottawattamie County and 2nd VP Dave Wilson from Johnson County. Michael Ehret from Dickinson County is their Treasurer and they just elected Thomas Craighton from Franklin County as their new Secretary and the outgoing Secretary is Roxanne Warnell from Hardin County. They have 6 districts that are set with the same boundaries as ISAC and Homeland Security districts and they have a district representative in each district. If you don't know your coordinator Darrell urges you to make contact and get to know them. If you need help in making contact with your coordinator they will help you do that. The website for their association is www.iowaema.com. All of their contact information is on there. Darrell extended an invitation to everyone to attend one of their monthly IEMA executive meetings. It is typically the first Friday of every month but sometimes it changes. They are held at Polk Co. EOC.

They are active in legislation and have a lobbyist. The hot issue right now involves 911 funding and the wireless surcharge. He encourages everyone to stay informed on that subject and stay engaged. There are still a lot of unmet needs and that funding is needed at the local level.

IAPFC – was unable to attend

Iowa Fire Chiefs Association – Duane Hendrickson, Secretary/Treasurer

The mission of the Iowa Fire Chiefs Association is essentially to offer resources and support to those in a management position of Iowa's fire departments. They have a website that is fairly interactive where you can have discussion forums, ask questions, get resources and documents to help in that process. They have a resource manual that used to be a 3-ring binder, then a 2-ring binder, and then a CD and they are now in the process of making it a thumb drive that should be available this year.

They are also involved in the continuing education of management and they have a Volunteer Fire Chiefs Workshop in Ames on April 11th in conjunction with the Fire Service Training Bureau. It is a daylong seminar.

They are introducing an initiative that they are promoting and that is a Volunteer Fire Chief "How To" initiative. Sometimes on a small rural fire department you may find yourself being voted in as Chief with very little idea of what is required. They are trying to provide resources to help with this process. The fall conference this year is October 24th in Harlan. More information will be coming on that this summer. That meeting is where the officers are elected and they do the business of the association. The Iowa Fire Chiefs Association works together with the Iowa Firefighters Association as well as the Iowa Association of Professional Fire Chiefs and Iowa EMS Association as we all have common goals and bring all our voices together.

Iowa Interoperability Board – Ellen Hagen

Until Past President Esch asked me to represent Volunteer Firefighters on the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board I had never heard of the Board. After about 7 monthly meetings I don't know a lot more but I do know some things I want to share with you.

Our Mission is "The board shall develop, implement, and oversee policy, operations, and fiscal components of communications interoperability efforts at the state and local level, and coordinate with similar efforts at the federal level, with the ultimate objective of developing and overseeing the operation of a statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system." What that is saying is "The Iowa Interoperability Board establishes Policies and Protocol for Interoperability."

There are 6 committees. They are 1) Finance, 2) Governance, 3) Operations, 4) Outreach, 5) Technology and 6) Training and Exercise. I am Co-chair on Operations and Outreach. I put the word out that we needed FF to serve on these committees. Some of you stepped up and I thank you very much!!

One of the things I do understand is the First Net part. FirstNet has been obligated by Congress to take all actions necessary to ensure the building, deployment and operation of the nationwide public safety broadband network. A meeting in each of the 99 counties will be held to explain First Net. In a nut shell this means all first responders will be able to communicate in an emergency setting. This will not be over radios but instead a broadband network—cell phone. There are 6 counties where meetings have not been scheduled. If you are a FF in Fremont, Decatur, Greene, Lyon, Pocahontas, or Butler please step up and host a First Net meeting. Talk to me later and I can give you information about hosting. How many of you have attended a meeting? Thank you for taking part.

President Yeager said that Ellen Hagen continues to serve our association in wonderful ways and he asked for a round of applause for all she does. She serves with bereavement process through LAST program and if we need something she is always available.

Legislation – John Pederson

So far up at the capitol it's been a little slow and one reason is they are still fighting over the school funding. The House is at 1.25% for schools and the Senate is at 4% and a lot of the budget things that we will be concerned with over time will not be settled until that is settled and they know how much money they have. They set targets for each of the different budgets and so once they have the overall number then they break it down into the other numbers. If they don't know how much money they have they can't set these other budgets. Usually they would have set these over the last month or so but so far they haven't. Hopefully over the next week or so we will see some of these targets, they'll get the school funding pieces put together and we can move along with the allocations that we get through the Justice Appropriations budget.

A couple items you are probably hearing a lot about already is the proposal by the governor in the budget to deal with a statewide system on the E911 surcharge. I'm learning a lot on this. We have been in several meetings on this with DPS, with the Governor's office, interested parties, leaders, committee chairs. We have done e-mails back and forth for months trying to figure out the best way to state our case on what we would like to see as the percentage that the PSAPs get, is there going to be any more rollover dollars to grant out, is the state going to be putting money into this and if so how much money are they going to put in? There are many, many questions and next week Senator Danielson will be holding a meeting and a couple people from the board plan to come down to state our case again. There are a lot of moving parts to this and we're going to do the best we can. I think what we are hearing is this is going to happen one way or another so we just have to cut the best deal we possibly can to get what we want and part of this is going to be you also speaking up to your local legislators, your representatives and senators, to help us formulate a bill that we can accept. We may not like all of it, but we do have an opportunity to be heard and I hope each and every one of you takes that opportunity

and meets with your representatives and senators. We'll be sending more updates out once this starts to move and we have some idea where they want to go with it.

The state's budget is in fantastic shape. Our reserves are over \$700 million. Our general fund budget is usually about \$7 billion so we have 10% in the bank. They did overspend a little bit on education reform and some of the tax breaks they did for industrial and commercial property tax a couple years ago. So we are under spending a little bit and we really won't have an extra surplus in the general fund until January of 2017 is what they are predicting. Our budget for the next two years from the governor's office right now is status quo for training other items that we've had. We are trying to find some other dollars for the mobile training units and some other things but we really won't know until these other budgets are set.

One other item out there and I know some of you are on the other side of this than what I am is the fireworks. We are opposing the fireworks bills. There are 2 of them out there. You will hear more about that from some of the board members later. One of the things that they are using to be able to sell fireworks in the state is the fact, and they said it on the floor and in their newsletters, that one other state, I believe it was Indiana passed legislation and injuries and fires in that state dropped 90% after they passed legislation that allowed them to sell fireworks. Well, that is just not right. The numbers are out there, but they had a burn ban in 61 of their counties so the numbers were down because of the burn ban so they weren't allowed to use fireworks. There is a lot of misinformation out there. I guarantee you if the bill passes you will have a lot more EMS calls and a lot more fire calls. It's just going to happen. If you have any inkling that you want to help us kill these bills we would sure appreciate it. I expect the House to pass it in the next couple of weeks and then it will go over to the Senate. We have a list of individuals over there on the Ways and Means Committee that are trying to kill the bill so it never makes it to the Senate floor. So if the bill makes it to the Senate we have to talk to these individuals and we've been doing a pretty good job so far. It will all depend on if that bill gets out of that committee or not. That would be the easiest way. Once it gets to the floor it would be up to the leadership to kill it. When you are discussing some of the items on the E911 surcharge keep in mind there is going to have to be some give and take on this issue. As we talk through the process please give us your input.

Iowa Society of Fire Service Instructors – Jack Runge

The Iowa Society of Fire Service Instructors appreciates the alliance that we have with the Iowa Firefighters Association. They held a board meeting yesterday and a good deal of that meeting was about history as the society has just come off its 50th year celebration. They had an excellent conference working with the FSTB. One of the things that President Doug Kolkman has challenged their board and instructors to do is become more involved with the other associations. They have made it a goal to become involved with the Hall of Flame last year and decided to work a shift at the booth again this year. Doug attended Firefighter Day on the Hill. Something else they discussed at their meeting was the old Joint Council concept. They talked with Cliff McFarland about the demise of the state Joint Council kind of fell on the heels of the demise of the National Joint Council. Jack said if you all get together and go the same direction, who is going to step out in front of you? That being said there needs to be compromises. If all the different associations here on this list can develop goals and come together and solidly get behind those goals it's going to make John and Matt's job a lot easier because they are going to be able to speak for a lot more people.

State Fire Marshal – Jeff Quigle

The SFM Division had 42 Fire Deaths reported for 2014 and this is a sharp increase in the number of deaths from 2013. Fire Death statistics have been gathered each year since the formation of the State Fire Marshal Division in 1911. As of this date we are at 15 fire deaths for the year which at the same

time last year we only had 12. An interesting fact to note is only 5 of the 15 deaths had working smoke detectors and all the deaths occurred in single family residences other than 1 death occurred in a vehicle fire and one death occurred in an auto repair shop.

Bureau Chief Randy Novak is in the process of completing an (AFG-FPS) Assistance to Firefighter Grant/Fire Prevention and Safety to continue to purchase smoke detectors for installation throughout the state. The application period is currently open. The SFM Division has distributed approximately 32,000 smoke detectors since the inception of the program and continues to partner with the IFA and the Central Iowa Chapter of the American Red Cross regarding distribution of smoke detectors throughout the state. The SFM Division purchased 10,000 smoke detectors from the last grant. All of these smoke detectors have been distributed or spoken for. If you are interested in receiving smoke detectors please contact Dan Wood at the SFM Division to be placed on the list.

The Department of Public Safety is continuing to fund and sponsor The Iowa Fire Bridge (Image Trend) for fire reporting statistics. We continue to see more fire departments using this free service to report their statistics. This is a web based system and reporting can be completed from anywhere that you have access to a computer. If your department is currently not reporting I would encourage you to contact Alicia Ver Huel who is with the Fire Service Training Bureau and establish an account for reporting fire data. Currently 96% of the population of Iowa is covered by a fire department reporting through Fire Bridge. The Department of Public Safety continues to host the web based software program. The cost to the Department is approximately \$36,000 per year. We just purchased the analytical tool which allows our Division to quickly obtain statistics which use to take days to complete that can now be completed in minutes.

The Fire Prevention Bureau currently has one unfunded Fire Inspector Vacancy. During FY 2014 we have been able to fill two vacant funded Fire Inspector positions. One Fire Inspector was placed in North east Iowa and the other Fire Inspector is stationed in North central Iowa. We are currently working with the Department of Management and Department of Administrative Services to convert a vacant funded sworn position to a Fire Inspector position to be stationed in Southwest Iowa.

The Arson and Explosives Bureau has been very busy with fire investigations and explosive disposal work this year. As of today's date SFM Agents have worked 9 Accidental, 12 Arson, and 7 Undetermined Fires. SFM Bomb Techs have safely completed 13 Explosive Disposals. The Bureau has two Sprinter Bomb Response vehicles stationed in Western and Central Iowa. We have purchased another Sprinter vehicle that will be stationed in Eastern Iowa to respond to Bomb and Explosive Devices. We will take delivery of this Sprinter later this year. The Bureau currently has 1 accelerant K-9 stationed in Mt. Pleasant. Rocket, our K-9 stationed in Council Bluffs that was handled by Special Agent John Ticer retired last year. We also have two explosive K-9's stationed in Des Moines and Garner.

The State Building Code Bureau has both (2) vacant Construction Engineers, which we are not filling at this time. We did hire a Building Code Inspector for Western Iowa who is stationed in Dedham. Rich Bolten is currently the Acting State Building Code Commissioner. We have implemented the State Building Code Bureau B-Safe team. This team consists of State Building Code Bureau staff, architects, and engineer volunteers. This team will respond anywhere in Iowa to analyze houses, buildings and structures to determine if they are structurally safe after a natural disaster. The State Building Code Bureau provides this service free of charge.

We are also working 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.

Fire Service Training Bureau – Randy Novak

FSTB received 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. The FY 2016 grant should be posted soon.

FSTB received an AFG grant (2013) for a new mobile live fire simulator (\$350,000 - \$290,500 federal share, \$52,500 our share) Trailer is on order for July 2015 delivery.

FSTB has applied for an AFG grant (2014) for a mobile drill tower (\$220,000)

FSTB is managing the IFA/SFM FP&S grant for smoke alarms (\$200,000) They will again be applying for another smoke alarm grant (approximately \$200,000)

Courses recently added:

VFIS: Highway Safety for Emergency Responders (6 hours with activities); FHWA: National Traffic Incident Management Responder Training Program (6 hours with activities) with the ISP. They continue to offer, with the ISP, the 1.5 hour Crash Scene Management Course. This is ideal for county association meetings, fire department meetings, etc.

Both the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard) now accredit the Bureau to 12 levels. They are preparing for the “re-accreditation” visits from both in 2015.

They are using Pearson VUE “testing centers” for written certification testing (option for students).

There are currently 14 test centers in Iowa. This is an alternative to traditional test site, which they still offer.

Upcoming events – Check website: www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb for latest. You can sign up for an automatic e-mail notification when something new has been added. FSTB programs – Volunteer Fire Chiefs Workshop, April 11 at Ames; Training Officers Workshop, May 16 at Ames; Instructors Conference, October 9 – 10 at Ames. Announcements for various open enrollment classes will be mailed to Iowa fire departments throughout the year. National Fire Academy (NFA) courses: See list of FY 15 NFA Courses. (FY 2016 courses are being selected now)

Motion was made by Mark McNees, Atlantic to approve the minutes of the Convention Meeting held in Grinnell, Iowa on September 7, 2014. It was seconded by Bill Halleran, Sigourney. Motion carried.

Executive Director’s Report – Wendy Lensing

I’d like to thank everyone for coming today and thank Brad and his Mid Year Committee for doing a great job this weekend.

I've had this job since September of 2004 and each year is different. Each year we lose someone from the board and add a new one, or in some cases two, and there are always different issues that come up each year that are sometimes easy to deal with or sometimes more of a challenge. I will say in over 10 years I've never been bored! This year has been no exception and I will say has probably been one of the more challenging. We had talked for several years about the need to look into upgrading the database system we have been using. It is something that we no longer had any type of technical support for and was beginning to have some issues that we were aware of which concerned us and we weren't sure if there were issues that we weren't aware of. We started looking into what options were available and after checking into several different ones decided that iMIS was a good fit for us. Texas uses this system, Kansas and Nebraska were switching to it and there were a lot of features that seemed like it would work well for us. I do still believe that but there have been a lot of issues that we've had related to the conversion of the data. The way our membership system is set up with dues and mutual aid and the MULTIPLE ways that that is handled has created some unique challenges for them in trying to mold our data into their system. At the time we sent them our data I stopped making any changes at all so that the data would be the same in both systems and we could test it and move forward with the new system. Unfortunately things didn't go as smoothly as we had hoped and it was past time to send out billings for 2015. I went ahead and printed out all the billings on the old system and sent those out when they assured me that the system would be running by the time payments started coming in. That wasn't the case and I had no choice but to start processing everything that came in on the old system again. Everything has been kept completely up to date on the old system and as any issues come up with processing on the new system I let them know about it and they work to come up with a solution to each problem. That said, I basically have had to learn how the new system works and I have to process all of the address changes, additions, deletions and dues payments now on both the old and new systems. That will have to continue until they get a solution to each issue that has come up and I can catch up with payments on the new system and get to a place where all the data is again the same in both systems so we can check it. Most of my time has been spent on membership data in some form or another since November. We are getting closer to a fix for everything I think and Brad has started to work on the website portion of the program. This database was designed as an on-line system. I will still be able to send out bills and process them as they come in as we have in the past for those that need to do it that way but for any department or individual that wants to be able to pay on-line they will be able to do that. The Mid Year mailing that went out to the departments included a department information sheet. We do need that information filled out and returned so that I can put the most up to date information in the system and each department has a group administrator. This can be the chief or secretary or treasurer or whoever they want to appoint that would have access to the information in the system for their department. They will be able to make changes to addresses, add or delete members, and make payments on-line if they want to. We will keep you up to date as things progress. Hopefully this summer we will be able to get everything fully operational.

On the subject of dues there are still several departments that have not yet paid for 2015 dues. Reminders were sent out a few weeks ago. The board members have lists of delinquent departments and will begin making calls to those departments this week to make sure there are no problems and they have the information they need.

I am still getting lots of requests for the new firefighter license plate applications. I do have some of those with me if you need it. I also have information back on the table about the volunteer tax credit.

The National Volunteer Fire Council sent me some very nice folders with information about membership in the NVFC. The Iowa Firefighters Association is an all-state member and that means that anyone that is a member of the IFA can join the NVFC for only \$15 which is half of their regular membership. There are

applications back on the table for that along with the brochures they sent me. This is something else that I would like to add to the membership information on the website once we get it operating so that any of our members can sign into their account and be able to purchase the NVFC membership as an add-on to their IFA membership. Texas has that option and they had a huge increase in their NVFC memberships.

Aside from working on the memberships and all the other daily requests for information I have started scheduling volunteers for the Hall of Flame. If you are interested in helping out this year the dates are August 13th through the 23rd. Some of the weekend shifts are already filled up but there are lots of openings yet during the week and a few left on the weekends. It takes a lot of people to fill 3 shifts every day of the fair. The volunteers that have helped in the past love it and have a great time so if you haven't helped before and would like to let me know. You will get a Hall of Flame t-shirt and an admission ticket. The shifts are 4 hours and you can spend the rest of the day at the fair. You can get a group together from your department and work together or I have openings to fill in with others. The shifts are from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., 1 – 5 p.m. and 5 – 9 p.m.

We are also in need of drill officials for convention. Maybe you have participated in the drills for years and have decided to let the younger guys compete. Please consider helping as a drill official. We need your knowledge of the drills and a few hours of your time. If you are interested in helping let me know.

Now for a few more of my standard requests.... The credit card continues to be a great source of extra dollars. This being said, it's a benefit that is only being utilized by less than 2% of the membership. Whether you use a credit card on a regular basis for your gas purchases or something like that or just occasionally please consider getting and using the IFA credit card. The association receives \$10 for each new account and a portion of the retail fees and interest comes back to the association as well. We have been earning \$200 - \$300 per month from the card.

Be sure to sign up for e-mails and check our website and "like" us on Facebook. I try to keep getting information sent out as often as possible and these are great ways to stay in touch with what's going on between issues of the Iowa Firefighter.

Thanks again for coming and enjoy the rest of your weekend.

Financial Report – Wendy Lensing

Total assets of the Iowa Firefighters Association as of February 28th, 2015 are \$502,834.86.

Total assets of the Iowa Firemen's Foundation as of February 28th, 2015 are \$95,399.59. Of that, \$53,403.29 is actually part of the smoke detector project that both Fire Marshal Jeff Quigle and Randy Novak mentioned in their reports that we are handling the financial end of. That leaves actual totals for the Iowa Firemen's Foundation finances at \$41,996.30.

Motion was made by Mark McNeas, Atlantic to accept the financial report. It was seconded by Roger Bissen, Harlan. Motion carried.

Proposed Budget – Wendy Lensing

The board met in January at my home to work on the budget for the upcoming year. Last year we made a change to the By-Laws to change the fiscal year from a calendar year to a fiscal year that runs from July 1st through June 30th. It just seemed to make a lot more sense to do that. We had been coming to this meeting in March or April every year and voting on a budget for the year that was already a quarter of

the way done. That was the reason for the change and so the budget that we are presenting today is for July 1st, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

The income that we are expecting to see for the upcoming fiscal year is \$224,400.00. Expenses are estimated to be \$223,669.43. That will leave a net income of \$730.57.

Motion to approve the proposed budget was made by Jack Runge, Buckeye. It was seconded by Al Muhlhause, Maquoketa. Motion carried.

Audit Report – Jim Shutts

We, the auditing committee, have examined the books of the Iowa Firefighters Association, the Mutual Aid Department and the Iowa Firemen's Foundation for the year ending December 31, 2014. We have compared the books with the financial statements of all divisions. We have reconciled the books with the respective bank account statements, compared the checks written for mutual aid deaths with the completed statements covering the respective death. We have examined other phases of the office operations as we deemed necessary. It is our opinion that the financial operations of the Iowa Firefighters Association, the Mutual Aid Department and the Iowa Firemen's Foundation are in order and the financial statements of all divisions are correctly stated.

Jim Shutts, Chair

Gene Evans

Attest:

Brad Yeager, President

Motion to approve the Audit Report was made by Mark McNeese, Atlantic. It was seconded by Mark Johnson, Forest City. Motion carried.

Credentials Report – Jeff Gore

Alden – 26, Atlantic – 50, Center Point – 28, Dyersville – 62, Eldora – 36, Forest City – 38, Garner – 34, Guthrie Center – 49, Harlan – 64, Hudson – 40, Indianola – 89, Iowa City – 25, Jewell – 23, La Porte City – 35, Manchester – 47, Monticello – 39, New Hartford – 18, Raymond – 19, Redfield – 26, Sigourney – 34, Solon – 42, State Center – 51, Stuart – 34, Traer – 31, Walker – 25, Waverly – 45, West Des Moines – 51. Total of 27 towns with a total of 1061 votes.

Motion was made by Al Esch, Epworth to accept the credentials report. It was seconded by Bill Halleran, Sigourney. Motion carried.

Officers' Reports:

1st VP Mark McNeese:

Thanks to Chief Sonnenburg and West Des Moines fire. Thanks to Brad and Denise for their work for this event and to Wendy for all of her work getting everything in order.

The board has decided to try and give each officer different topics to discuss in their report in an effort to not repeat ourselves and to bring more information in a shorter time to you, the members. There will be some overlap, but we hope it gives you more in depth information and moves the meeting along. We will also individually be reporting on our activities.

I will start by saying I had the privilege of attending 2 banquets since the first of the year, Guthrie Center and Battle Creek. It was good to see old friends in Guthrie Center and hear about the new building addition that was completed and the new apparatus they are acquiring. I met some great new friends in Battle Creek and was impressed by their new upgrades in facilities and apparatus as well. The efforts of their members are evident and they are both great examples of rural Iowa department's providing great service for their citizens. I want to thank Roger Bissen and Cliff Renslow for attending three other banquets in my area that I could not attend. They continue to represent the IFA when needed and it is appreciated by all. I also had the privilege of representing rural department chiefs during the Iowa Unplugged seminar during Fire School. It was a very interesting and lively discussion with Chief Everett of Sioux City, Chief Hulett of Fort Dodge, and an engaged group of fire service members in attendance. Mike Cardwell, Jim Kenkel, and Randy Novak did a great job as well and I encourage all to attend in the future.

I reported at the January meeting that Jim and I attended the EMS meeting held by Senators Danielson and Bertrand in Sioux City. Senator Danielson has spearheaded efforts across the state to begin discussions and solutions to EMS issues and problems in Iowa. I was impressed by the wide array of providers, officials, and organizations in attendance. Since that time more meetings were held which you will hear about later. Earlier this month SF 444 passed the state government committee that would have the Department of Public Health to consult other organizations and associations to look into ways of modernizing Iowa's EMS service. This bill opens the door for input from everyone so hopefully some good proposals will be brought forth. One area mentioned in the language is to look at the possible changing of the firefighter and EMS tax credit into something that may be of more benefit to all. My personal opinion is that I would definitely like to see it changed into something that will aid more in retention of emergency service personnel and will give the state more return on their investment. While I appreciated the gesture and the credit, I think changing it into something of a LOSAP program to encourage people to stay in emergency services would be much better in the long run. If we want to truly invest in firefighters and EMS responders then providing some sort of reward for longevity would benefit those receiving something upon their retirement from service, and for those providing the benefit. The tax credit neither rewards longevity nor provides much of a return on investment for the state. I have had discussions with several states during our mid states meeting and at the national benefit summit. There is a wide array of plans across the country and I am sure Iowa could come up with something that would serve us well and provide a better retention tool and another potential recruitment tool for fire departments and rescue squads.

My hope is that during these discussions some proposals will develop that will provide the necessary funding for EMS services, will provide more coverage for Iowa's citizens, will increase efficiency, and improve the training and costs associated with the training. I know we intend to be involved in discussions and will work to make improvements. No one expects all of the issues to be solved at once, but beginning to make some changes is necessary as our current system is not in a free fall, but is certainly starting a spiral that we need to reverse. We will have to come to terms that we may not agree with during the process. I know many would like to see EMS become a mandated service. This was discussed at Fire School during the Iowa Unplugged discussion. The fact is that politically that is a not going to occur, at least not in the foreseeable future. No one is interested in making an unfunded mandate. As Senator Danielson has said we will have to look at the systems in place now for funding and see how they can be changed or improved.

I have spent an incredible amount of time researching, meeting, lobbying and discussing the proposal in the Governor's budget to use 911 surcharge funds to build a statewide radio system. I have had

discussions with 911 directors, county EMA's, and interested people in trying to grasp exactly what it would mean and how to approach the issue. Let me say up front I think those surcharge funds were meant for local PSAPs and that when we lobbied to increase cell phone surcharge to one dollar it was to help stem the flow of lost dollars due to declining use of landlines. We did not intend for those dollars to be used for a state system.

We are keenly aware that many PSAPs do not have the funds necessary to upgrade equipment, build infrastructure, or operate. We are aware that the formula for distribution of funds needs increased, and that changes in allowable expenditures would benefit PSAPs greatly. We also know that many are utilizing and grateful for the grants available from leftover funds but it does not begin to cover needs.

I attended the Iowa E911 Communication Council meeting on the 10th in Altoona. The room was packed with EMA's and PSAP officials and representatives on the board from several organizations from fire to law enforcement. To say the attendees were very upset and not in favor of the proposal is to understate it greatly. I heard their arguments and concerns and I know that legislators are well aware of the anger that exists and so do people in Homeland Security and the DPS. Comments we have heard from legislators and several recent amendments indicate they are not totally in favor of the proposal, but they are looking hard and asking for ways to make it more palatable and beneficial for everyone. In a nutshell, it appears it will be approved no matter how much opposition there is, so we are left to try and make the best of the situation.

We met with Amber the DPS lobbyist, Craig Allen, and Tom Lampe during Firefighter on the Hill Day. In that meeting we presented them with a list of concerns we have and a list of requirements that representatives of PSAPs gave us to present. They know we have major concerns with the proposal. I think that it is a broad brush they are using to justify using the funds from the surcharges, but it could be a gray enough area that I don't believe any negative effects from the FCC regarding future federal grants will occur. Based on a white paper presented to Congress regarding a handful of states diverting 911 funds, I don't believe that the federal government really cares or will get involved. Since states get to self report, and each of them who diverted funds did so as the result of a Governor proposing the move to cover budget deficits, it does not give the impression that it will result in any sanctions.

We were told during the meeting that Iowa is surrounded by states who have a statewide system and that we are late to the game. Based on what we were told the proposed system would utilize existing towers and structures and provide 95 % coverage throughout Iowa. Local PSAP's would be able to join the system at no charge and in doing so could utilize the state system in helping cover their areas of service. The new system would improve interoperability, and that they had gone through a two year bid process and awarded a contract to Motorola with a guarantee that the cost over ten years would be \$68 million. Since the original costs were estimated over \$300 million they were shocked and investigated as to why it was so much less. The use of existing towers and equipment along with several systems already in place throughout the state lowered the cost.

We were also told neighboring states and several others who have the system had the same questions and backlash we have here in Iowa. However, we were also told that after implementation many of those who were opposed are now using and happy to have the system. Minnesota has been used as an example of a state with a lot of opposition and non support. We were told there are now only 3 counties in that state that are not on the network.

I think we got some good information during the meeting and that there are most likely several positives such a system being built and it probably will improve local abilities and coverage in time. None of us are against a system and I want inter- operability as much as anyone. I also just want my radio to work every time I use it and recent narrowbanding has made that much more difficult for all of us.

The issue for me still boils down to the fact that I think a state system should be funded without using 911 surcharge funds. It still looks like a money grab from a large pot where there is enough gray area to make a relatively logical case to use the funds and build the system. So we are being realists, we will keep trying to stop this, but I don't see this proposal being killed outright. We will continue to add our voice to those who want to see that local PSAPs and responders get the best deal possible. Brad will be attending a meeting of stakeholders this coming week sponsored by Danielson.

Briefly on the issue of departments spending and reporting and fundraising; in light of the events in Shelby and Woodbine we again urge departments to look into their organization. If forming a 501c3 and an association is in your best interests then you should do so, but be aware you still have to work with your governing bodies and report on your expenditures. There are other ways to remain a part of the city government and still be able to take donations. Setting up Trust and Agency accounts per Iowa code is one way. That is how we are structured in Atlantic and it has worked well for years. We are fielding many calls and I can only advise departments to re-examine their structure and make sure they are functioning properly.

I thank all those in attendance today. I will be soon working on committee appointments for next year so if you have an interest or passion for any and would like to be considered please let me know. We would also be glad to discuss duties and responsibilities for anyone interested in running for 5th VP.

2nd VP Bill Halleran –

Welcome everyone and thanks for attending this year's event. It is nice to see everyone again. I look forward to this meeting knowing that several convention friends come to this meeting also and it is nice to cross paths again.

5th VP Gene Evans and I attended the National Benefit Summit in Oklahoma City. This Summit was attended by 19 other States other than Iowa. Some of the main topics we covered were:

- Social Media- This is a must to communicate with everyone. This can be debated for Fire Departments as well. Website or Facebook page are the easy ones. Facebook is free while a website would probably cost.
- Lighthouse Uniforms- This is a company that used to provide a Class A Uniform for a Firefighter that died in the Line of Duty. While this was a very noble act of kindness, they have taken this even further. This is now available to any Firefighter that passes away. This does not have to be a LODD and has no length of years required. PP Ellen Hagen will be point of contact on this.
- Several states use a Unified One voice at the State Capitol. This would create a Fire Alliance that combines Career, Combination, Volunteer, Chiefs and Unions. For the most part we support the same causes; it makes sense to be one voice.
- It would be wrong of me to not mention the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum. On April 19, 1995 the Federal Murrah Building was bombed. This terrorist attack killed 168 and

injured 680 more. If you are ever in the area, I promise you that you will not be disappointed in their Museum and Memorial.

Senator Jeff Danielson held a meeting in Sioux City area this past winter and from what I heard that this was well attended and good information was discussed. In January, I made contact with Sen. Danielson to see if he would be willing to do this same meeting in Coralville. He spoke of 2015 potential legislation ideas. Since Coralville Sen. Danielson held another meeting in Ankeny as well.

- A. 21st century levy modernization/reform - goal: to ensure Iowa's current levy's for EMS/Fire are able to provide adequate resources in every corner of Iowa for professional, high quality EMS/Fire response whether those services are provided by volunteer or career agencies.
- B. Education/Training - goal: create one stop shop for EMS training resources, curriculum, etc. to ensure standardization and support no matter where that training occurs in Iowa. The state must provide additional resources to ensure a ready pipeline of boots on the ground providers.
- C. Reports - goal: Streamline EMS reporting, cut red tape, reduce report filing time spent after calls are completed. Functional, reliable system statewide.
- D. Tax Credit - goal: ensure financial rewards for service incent new Iowans to consider EMS and get the best return on investment for state resources. Consider transition from current tax credit to annuity/401k type benefit.
- E. IDPH - goal: ensure IDPH staff can balance regulatory and EMS service support missions. Focus on stable staffing for IDPH EMS related duties, re-energize educational and support roles emphasizing customer service approach from IDPH to EMS provider community.
- F. Governance/Boards/Commissions - goal: Ensure EMS community has a meaning seat at the table in all matters where EMS has a nexus with other public safety professionals at both the state/local levels. Also, consider more regional options for service delivery.

I emailed Sen. Danielson to find out where he was with these bullet points. He emailed me back and advised that he is in the phase of still gathering information and they held a meeting last Wednesday with a bill drafter. They are making progress, but the complexity of EMS being scattered throughout the Code is making it a longer process than he had first anticipated, unfortunately. As well they are working on language, in consultation with IEMSA.

We held the 4th Annual Chili Cook-off at the State Capitol Rotunda this past Monday. This year we had 8 teams compete. Once again, it was a hot topic of legislation attendees and their staff. They look forward to this very much as it was bragged about several times. Down side to this is that we may not be doing this again. Of the 8 teams, 4 were IFA Board Members. We had 8 teams turn up to compete. The winners were:

- 1st- Des Moines Fire- John Jensen and Tanner Stoner
- 2nd- Belle Plaine- Louie Shutts
- 3rd- Brooklyn- Les Taylor

I have attended length service awards presentations for Wapello Fire and Birmingham Fire.

3rd VP Marv Trimble –

I would like to thank everyone for coming. I see a lot of the same faces. It's nice to see some new ones also. It would be even nicer to see more new ones.

Since our last meeting my wife Michelle and I had the honor of attending the awards banquet in Hiawatha and presented Wayne Compton an award at his retirement for 26 years of service. I also went over to Solon in January and presented Denny Hansen with an award.

I've gone to Des Moines four times this year so far and twice were subcommittee meetings on fireworks. There were 2 bills – SF 266 and HF 161. Basically they deal with legalizing fireworks in Iowa. The current versions would make it legal to use fireworks in Iowa, any day of the week from 9 a.m – 10 p.m. and longer on holidays. What's that going to do for us? We all probably know someone that has used fireworks in the past. What's the big deal? Here's the big deal. With increased access come increased incidents. We all respond to incidents. Our number one priority is our safety first. Any time we respond we assume a risk. My personal opinion and that of the board is if we can at least stop this bill where it is, we will be better off. We have costs to our own individuals; we have costs to the general public. We as responders may not be hurt by the fireworks but "Leroy" that gets smarter with each beer he has to drink is going to get hurt, or innocent bystanders are going to get hurt. We are fighting against this. I went to the House subcommittee meeting. The room was physically divided right down the center between those that did want fireworks and those that did not. Those that didn't want fireworks were health care workers, insurance companies, people that have a stake in it if things go wrong. Those on the side that did want fireworks were looking at money. There was a representative there from Revenue and Finance and she reported they estimate \$1 million in revenue the first year from fireworks sales. My question is, at what cost? What will \$1 million pay for if you lose your vision? Where will people get hurt the most? Their face, eyes, ears, hands. It's not easy working without a hand.

Another thing that some may not have thought about yet is I work in Cedar Rapids. Quite often, I hear law enforcement responding to calls of reported gun shots. What's going to happen when anyone can go to the corner store and buy fireworks or firecrackers and throw them off at any time? In the middle of the night the cops are going to be getting reports of gun shots. I talked to the Fire Marshal in Cedar Rapids and he said if it passes they are going to put a flat out ban on fireworks in Cedar Rapids. Every city that doesn't want fireworks in their city will have to enact an ordinance saying you cannot use fireworks in the city.

The lobby that wants this passed looked like vultures sitting on a wire waiting for this to pass so they could swoop in and collect the money. Everybody on that side of the room said they are safe. John alluded earlier to the Indiana study. They did quote statistics from the year after they were made legal and as he said there was a burn ban on. I have gone through a lot of reports from other states. If the bills pass as they are, we would be the most open state for fireworks of any around. I have a feeling this may have been done on purpose hoping that we would make some concessions. At the House subcommittee meeting the person chairing was asked because there is an educational component in this, who is doing the education? You guys are responding to more fire calls, more EMS calls, guess what else you will be doing? Education. Where do we go now? Elementary schools. Are those the people that will have direct access to fireworks? No. We won't be educating people at the place of business where they are being sold. Increased access is going to create increased incidents.

To recap – the threat is real, it is out there. I'm more concerned with us than I am them, but we are all one big family. I ask that you contact your lawmakers and ask them to reconsider. This thing went through the House Ways and Means Committee 15 – 10. It will go to the Senate. It has some momentum. I'm asking you guys to get behind us and try to make our jobs easier. The easiest fire we ever fought is the one we prevented.

4th VP Jim Shutts –

I would like to say it's been very busy the first 3 months of this year. The first thing I would like touch on is the Iowa Emergency Response Summit meetings that were set up by Senator's Danielson and Bertrand. IFA Vice President Mark McNees and I attended this meeting in Sioux City and found it very informative and all in attendance were very impressed with all that was covered. Senator Danielson led the meeting going over 6 different points then opened the floor for discussion and many issues were aired out. This meeting was just a start and the Iowa Firefighters Association has supported and pushed to set up two more of these meetings one in Coralville and the other in Ankeny. All of these meetings have been well attended and IFA board members were at all meetings.

I have also been going to different departments presenting years of service awards. Past President Leon Abels and I presented a certificate posthumously to the daughter of Richard Small of the Liscomb fire department for 61 years of service. On that same evening I was invited to the Toledo fire department awards banquet. I presented 2 awards that evening. The first to retiring Fire Chief Joe Boll for his 43 years of service, 32 years as Chief. The next went to current Chief Greg Johnson for his first 20 years on the department. The Toledo Fire Department will have an open house for Joe on April 26th so stop by and give Joe a pat on the back.

Firefighter Day on the Hill was this past Monday. As always it was a success with firefighters meeting and talking to their legislators. We also hosted the Chili cook off and yours truly took the 2nd place trophy.

5th VP Gene Evans –

I would like to start my report by thanking President Yeager and his committee for the great job that they have done putting together this Midyear Meeting. My compliments also to the Marriott and the City of West Des Moines for their hospitality.

Since my election to office, I have had the good fortune to attend many events. I was able to present Meritorious Service Awards to Lake City, Spirit Lake and my home department of Osage. I urge any IFA member departments that have Firefighters with twenty years of service or more to contact Wendy and request that a Board Member present the IFA certificates.

Another highlight was to be able to attend both the award and reveal of the California Casualty Firehouse Makeover at the Northwood Volunteer Fire Company. The \$10,000 was well spent on modernizing their training and meeting rooms to promote a better learning environment.

VP Halleran and I traveled to the National Benefit Summit in Oklahoma City in February. Twenty states were represented and branched from coast to coast. The conference is a moderated, round table discussion covering several topics ranging from member benefits to recruiting and retention, funding options, and many more. One of the topics that were discussed was the 501c3 Non-profit Corporation and its place in the Fire Service. Many state associations are urging their members to look into this status to help keep municipal funds separate from monies raised by the department members. I bring this up because as we all know; there have been departments in the news recently that have had issues with the use of their "pancake money". I urge all departments that conduct private fundraising to look into protecting themselves by incorporating. Our good friend George Oster is an excellent source of information on this topic. Please feel free to reach out to me if you need his contact information. Another source of help would be a local accountant or attorney.

I will briefly touch on the current legislative issues. VP McNees and the rest of the board have already covered these in detail, but I would ask that each and every one of you become involved at your local

level to make the voice of the Fire Service heard loud and clear at the statehouse. There are 15,000 of us and the more we can express our opinions to our local representatives and senators the better off we are going to be and the more successful our efforts will be.

Past President Al Esch –

Welcome everyone to the Mid Year meeting. No one truly appreciates the work that goes into setting up a meeting like this more than a past president. I guarantee, Brad, your family has done a tremendous job. The support of your fire department is evident.

It is quite an honor to come up to the podium without any paperwork or a set agenda also. Brad gave me the option to choose my own topic for my report today. I'm going to take advantage of that. I'm certainly proud of the work that the board has been doing. I think the involvement of the current board is where it needs to be. Early on especially in the legislative session it was dragging on and we didn't know what direction it was going to take but then some areas were defined. The line was drawn in the sand on the E911 funds and it raised a lot of hackles not only among the board members but certainly among the stakeholders throughout the state. I think we are meeting the demands that are being put on us to make a stand and voice our opinion on our position.

I'm afraid the fireworks bills are a little more contentious. I know as a young man growing up there was nothing better or nothing more exciting than to take several fireworks and see if we could make a bigger one. I think that is a rite of passage that many of us have enjoyed. The survivors have all their digits; some of us may have some numbing in those digits. Those unfortunate people that haven't fared as well have been met with life changing disabilities. I for one have seen some individuals that have experienced just that; a life changing moment. We just don't know the quality of these products that are out there. Even if these are legalized we may not have any control over that.

One thing I always enjoy doing as an officer of the IFA is attending banquets and special ceremonies. This year since our last board meeting I was able to attend two; one in Guttenberg and the other for Edgewood. Both of those were for folks I've known throughout the years and become good friends with and it was quite an honor to make those presentations. I regretfully had to miss one in Key West. Tonight I have the pleasure to present a 63 year length of service award to Robert Maricle in Fairbank. It was 3 years ago that I left the Mid Year meeting to present a 60 year award to this gentleman and I'm pleased to have that opportunity again tonight.

I want to thank you all for your involvement with the association.

President Brad Yeager –

I'm not going to belabor a lot of the subjects on legislation. Mark covered E911 very well and Marv covered the fireworks. There is a meeting on Tuesday at the capitol on E911 in room 22 on the Senate side and I would encourage any of you to attend that are passionate about this issue. Senator Danielson will be holding this meeting. It was mentioned that Monday we met and discussed our points on this. I don't believe we will get it killed but we are going to stand firm on what we need to get the job done.

Our agenda that we put out at the beginning of the year pretty much went by the wayside. We met with the governor and had a great meeting and he was 100% behind us but he must have forgot and left out a few items. The encouraging thing is we had plenty of time to talk to him. It wasn't rushed. We laid everything out in front of him and everyone was able to share their piece of information. When we did go to the Governor's address a couple of days later, Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds came up and

said she loved the idea of our mobile training props and so she remembered it which is great. I think as long as we can continue to push those messages to leaders we will be ahead of the game. They do know what we are after and we'll just keep pushing it. I don't know that our agenda will go anywhere this year with what's going on at the capitol but that's why we have John. Maybe he can work some magic at the end of the session. We'll see what happens.

Again, I'll mention the cooperation between our brother and sister organizations. This year with E911 we've even reached out to law enforcement associations so that we are all on the same page.

In late December we talked with the DOT about the blue light program they wanted to test. They would like to put one blue light on the back of their DOT plows. They believe it would make them more visible. They are going to do a pilot project in the Des Moines area. Iowa State is going to do the study and keep track of the data. At the end of the 3 years if blue lights make sense then they will try to get them for all their plows. If the data is not there to prove the blue lights help then we will oppose any changes to that.

Another thing I want to mention is Brian Seymour is leaving the state. He has been our alternate on the NVFC board for a number of years. He has been a tremendous asset to the IFA serving on the board and then representing us at NVFC. He will be sorely missed. We will be looking for a new NVFC representative. We have a few names in the hat. It is a very important position.

Dr. Roxanne Ryan is the new DPS Commissioner. She is new to the position and we've already had the opportunity to meet with her several times. She is awesome. She knows the fire service. She's been in DPS for years and is a lawyer by trade. She is going to be here this evening to speak to us after the meal.

Lastly, I just want to say how proud I am to serve as your President and to serve with these fine men and women up here. Earlier this year we lost a firefighter down in Centerville, Mike Cooper, and Ellen Hagen and her team were on it right away. Bill Halleran helped tremendously down there. Several from the board went to the funeral. I know it means a lot to the family and departments when there are representatives from the state there. I know I'm not special but the red coat is representative of all of us and so that is an important thing.

Committee Reports:

NVFC – Bob Platz and Brian Seymour –

Bob Platz:

I want to thank the board and membership for the opportunity to serve on the NVFC board. I really enjoy it and hope I am doing some good.

This year has not been real exciting with election year and Congress not doing much. The first thing we were involved with was they passed a bill that would finance the government but would not finance Homeland Security. We knew they would have to pass it eventually but you still have to go through the motions.

Next year we would like to increase the AFG and SAFER funds. In 2011 we had \$810 million and last year we only had \$680 million so it's gone down quite a bit. NFPA did a study to determine if the grants were doing any good and some of the things they found were:

51% of all fire departments lack enough radios to equip all responders on a shift (down from 77% in 2001 when the grant program was started)

46% of all fire department have not formally trained all their personnel involved in structural firefighting (down from 55% in 2001)

48% of all fire departments responsible for EMS have not formally trained all their personnel (down from 54% in 2001)

20% of fire departments protecting populations of 500,000 have fewer than 4 firefighters assigned to an engine (down from 30% in 2001)

26% of departments protecting populations of 250,000 to 499,999 have fewer than 4 firefighters to an engine (down from 41% in 2001)

52% of departments do not provide a free smoke alarm distribution program (down from 69% in 2001)

We also want to increase USFA as it has been cut 25% in the last decade. Randy works with some of these funds and we all take advantage of this with our training.

We are constantly working on Recruitment and Retention programs.

In April we will be having our meeting in DC. At this meeting we will be voting on a new Chairperson as Phil Stittleburg is stepping down. He has done a lot for the NVFC putting the NVFC with the other fire organizations. The nominations are Chairman Kevin Quinn, a retired school teacher from Rhode Island. Steve Hirsch is nomination for 1st Vice Chair. He's a lawyer from Kansas most of the board knows him as he comes to the states networking meetings. He is very involved. Dallas Rentrow is an executive with Texas A&M.

I would also like to thank Brian Seymour for all the work he has done for the NVFC and Iowa as a board member. He is well respected at NVFC and he has done a great job. He will really be missed. Thanks Brian.

Brian Seymour:

Bob covered everything pretty well. Committee work has been slow lately. My work mostly has been on the Wireless Committee. We are getting much more involved at the national level with different organizations and FirstNet has been around for a little bit. They really didn't involve the NVFC much and we finally have brought them around to talk to us and involve us. They will have a speaker at the meeting in DC to give us updates on that. It will be good that we are at least involved in the conversations.

From the International Committee side we've been working on the trip to Germany. I think that is going to be beneficial. We are gaining more voices at the National level here but also at the international level. I have been doing a lot of work getting ready for that trip and how we are going to promote the United States Fire Service across the world.

My final comment is this is probably one of my last times standing behind a podium in front of this group. I can't express enough the friendships I've gained through this organization and the pleasure I have had serving this organization through the board on so many different levels. It has truly been a pleasure and I can't thank each and every one of you enough for allowing me to do that. Thank you.

Memorial Committee – Mike Reuman:

This year's memorial service will be Sunday, June 14th. The memorial service is always the second weekend in June. The candlelight service will be Saturday night, June 13th. The deadline for applying to get names put on the wall is May 10th. If anyone has a name they want to get added for this year get it to Mike before May 10th.

Convention Committee – Marv Trimble:

Convention Committee met yesterday at 5 p.m. We had two issues to talk about. One was the trailers to make sure that the trailers are DOT inspected every year and tagged that they have been inspected. We all agreed that was a good idea and that is what we are going to do from this point forward. John Novak brought an inventory list of all the equipment that we use at convention. We went through it item by item. We identified issues. He is going to coordinate the maintenance of that. A couple of other changes that are going to be in place before transferring equipment between host towns is keeping an inventory of what is in each trailer – how many boxes, how much wire, etc. so they don't have to pull everything out to find out what's in there. I know Manchester sent us one. I don't know if we sent one to Grinnell. I'm pretty sure we didn't because they are the ones that brought it up. The other thing they brought up is that there are a lot of 20 amp boxes. They have an idea and we are going to try it. We are going to spec out the box, the size of the box, what size electrical box needs to be put inside, outlets, that kind of stuff and if other departments want to put them together and bring them to convention or mid year for the host town so they can use them that would be great. The rotation we are on now it will take another 8 years before we get them all upgraded and by that time some of the original 30 amp ones are going to be going. We'd like to see this. Hopefully by this time next year we'll have something and if anyone else wants to bring stuff to help get the campgrounds up to snuff can help out.

Hall of Flame – Rusty Hockman –

Are there any Des Moines firefighters left in the room? If so I'd like to thank them because they did have to come to the Hall of Flame last year during the fair because we had a little incident with some electrical wiring in the truck. We did get shut down temporarily. Everything was repaired and back up and running in short order. Other than that we had a pretty good fair.

The trip back was a little rough as I blew a tire on the trailer by Ankeny. I was lucky to be by the little airport and I couldn't have found a better place to have a flat tire. The lady there let me use the whole shop and loaned me a pickup to go get a new tire. At the last meeting I discussed with the board some things that may be needed to be done to lighten up a few of the props and it was also agreed to replace the tires on the trailer as they are all getting weather checked. I appreciate all the help at the fair. We're always looking for help setting up and tearing down the booth also.

Unfinished Business – none

Resolutions –

President Yeager - Resolution # 3 is being pulled as there was some miscommunication prior to the resolutions being printed so it is just being removed from consideration. We will be considering Resolutions # 2, # 4, # 5 and # 6

Resolutions committee – Scott Hagenson

Resolution # 2 –

In an effort to standardize the starting position for all training drill revolutions the Drill Rules Committee proposes the following change to Drill Rule # 6:

Rules: Association nozzle must be used. Nozzle to lay flat on ground at starting line. ~~Pipeman to stand erect, with hands at side~~ **Contestant stands fully upright with head raised and hands at a position above the shoulders so that the thumbs are even with the contestant's ears** until the starting gun is fired.

Explanation: The General Rules have never specified a uniform starting stance. In addition, individual contests have contradictory sections regarding the contestant's starting stance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Drill Rules Committee
Gene Evans
Marv Boldt
Brad Pfantz

Motion was made by Tom Campbell, Panora to vote by show of hands. It was seconded by Ellen Hagen, Jewell. Motion carried.

Motion was made by to accept Resolution # 2. It was seconded. Discussion followed. Jeremy Scott, Pella made a motion to amend Resolution # 2 by changing the word “contestant” to “contestants”. It was seconded by Duane Hendrickson, Jewell. Motion carried.

Vote on Resolution # 2, as amended, passed.

Resolution # 4 –

In an effort to standardize the starting position for all training drill revolutions the Drill Rules Committee proposes the following change to Drill Rule #7:

Rules: Association nozzle must be used. Hose couplings to be made up and lying flat on the ground, with nozzle standing erect beside it. ~~Participants must stand erect, with hands over head~~ **Contestant stands fully upright with head raised and hands at a position above the shoulders so that the thumbs are even with the contestant's ears** until starting gun is fired.

Explanation: The General Rules have never specified a uniform starting stance. In addition, individual contests have contradictory sections regarding the contestant's starting stance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Drill Rules Committee
Gene Evans
Marv Boldt
Brad Pfantz

Motion was made to accept Resolution #4 by Cliff Renslow, Stuart. It was seconded by Don Scott, Redfield.

Discussion – Jeremy Scott – This was brought up after the last resolution passed. If I have my hands higher than my ears am I going to get disqualified? Do I have to stand there like “Bullwinkle” with my thumbs in my ears.

Gene Evans – It says – “...hands at a position above the shoulders so that the thumbs are even with the contestant's ears” so yes, you can be disqualified as it is written.

Don Scott – If it was written that hands are above head it would be fine but as it is it will only take one judge to say that someone's thumbs weren't even with their ears to disqualify someone.

Scott Hagenson – I would like to recommend we vote resolutions # 4, # 5 and # 6 down and send them back to the drill rules committee and bring them back next year.

President Yeager – Resolution # 4 has a motion and a second. All in favor? Resolution failed.

Resolution # 5 –

In an effort to standardize the starting position for all training drill revolutions the Drill Rules Committee proposes the following change to Drill Rule # 9:

LAYOUT: Hydrant should be located at street curb. Targets set 15 feet from curb. Number 1 target 75 feet from hydrant. Number 2 target 125 feet from hydrant. Number 1 hose section laid parallel to curb and 15 feet from it. Male end even with hydrant. Female toward target. Number 2 hose section, 5 feet further out in street and in same manner as Number 1. Nozzle standing upright is center of two lines. ~~Firefighters will stand upright, hands at side~~ **Contestant stands fully upright with head raised and hands at a position above the shoulders so that the thumbs are even with the contestant's ears** one firefighter beside the nozzle, and the other two on either side of him/her and outside of the two hose lines. Hydrant closed as specified by judges.

Explanation: The General Rules have never specified a uniform starting stance. In addition, individual contests have contradictory sections regarding the contestant's starting stance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Drill Rules Committee
Gene Evans
Marv Boldt
Brad Pfantz

There was no motion made to accept Resolution # 5. Due to lack of motion Resolution # 5 is no longer under consideration.

Resolution # 6 –

In an effort to standardize the starting position for all training drill revolutions the Drill Rules Committee proposes the following change to Drill Rule # 10:

RULES: All movement of the ball must be accomplished by force of hose streams. Starting position of each team shall be with the nozzle tip back of the goal line, nozzle closed and line charged laying flat on the ground. Ball on mark in center of cable. All participants shall provide their own and work the evolution in protective clothing (firefighter boots, coat and helmet) with gloves optional (See general rule 26) and ~~shall stand erect with their hands above their heads~~ **Contestant stands fully upright with head raised and hands at a position above the shoulders so that the thumbs are even with the contestant's ears** when they are ready, and remain in that position until the starter's signal.

Explanation: The General Rules have never specified a uniform starting stance. In addition, individual contests have contradictory sections regarding the contestant's starting stance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Drill Rules Committee
Gene Evans
Marv Boldt
Brad Pfantz

There was no motion made to accept Resolution # 6. Due to lack of motion Resolution # 6 is no longer under consideration.

Motion was made by Mark Johnson, Forest City to reconsider the vote on Resolution # 2 as amended. It was seconded by Jeremy Scott, Pella. Motion carried.

Don Scott, Redfield made a motion to remove Resolution # 2 as amended. It was seconded by Scott Hagenson, Lake Mills. Motion carried. Resolution # 2 was rescinded.

Roger Bissen – What was the reason to go with a vote by hand? Was it just to save time? Does it get away from our ByLaws because when you turn in your voting credentials you have so many votes and when you do a voice vote or hand vote the number of votes go out the window? I'm just bringing it up as you may want to be careful about that in the future.

President Yeager stated that he understands what Roger was saying and if it was something that the vote was going to be close it probably would be voted on by ballot.

New Business: none

Good of the Association:

Scholarships – Cliff Renslow –

I want to thank the board for still allowing me to be part of the scholarship committee. This year we are awarding two scholarships – Alex Arnburg, from Redfield and Zack Harvey, from Eldora. Alex is actually getting ready to graduate and he has already met the qualifications so we are also presenting him with his check for his scholarship at this time.

Don Scott – Redfield –

I've been at the Hall of Flame and last year it hit me. How many of you even still have a home phone? Maybe 50%. We are teaching our kids to dial 9-1-1 there. I did bring this up to Bob and Brian with NVFC. Maybe there is a way through NVFC that there is a way that we can get a button on a cell phone like there is in your car where you just push the button and get 9-1-1. My grandson is 5. My son does not have a home phone and that keyboard is locked on his cell phone. If there was a little red button on there that the grandkids could push and automatically get the 9-1-1 dispatcher I think that is something that we really need to be looking at. Maybe we have to be the ones to instigate that. Cell phones are so smart we ought to be able to figure out a way to do that. Keep that in mind when talking to cell phone companies and maybe Brian and Bob can bring that up but we really need to be thinking about the future of those little kids. It's all about technology and we need to figure out something with those cell phones. What are they going to do if they can't call 9-1-1.

Roger Bissen said to add to that he had talked to someone about an automated system to dial 9-1-1 in council chambers when a panic button was pushed or something like that and it would take a change in legislation because as of right now I believe it is illegal to have an automatic dialer for 9-1-1. So I'm not against it but I think it would take a change in legislation.

Gene Evans – Osage –

Some of you may be aware, our good friend Past President Carl Svenson, had a house fire a couple weeks ago. For those of you that know him, a kind word would probably be appreciated. It sounds like the damage is repairable. They put the camper in a relative's yard. If you have the opportunity to reach out to Carl he would probably appreciate that.

Also, I would like to ask that anyone that is attending the Mid Year meeting for the first time, please stand. Thank you for your attendance and after the meeting is adjourned please stay for just a moment for a picture.

Rusty Hockman – Jewell –

Rusty presented President Yeager with the 2014 license plate from the fire truck at the Hall of Flame.

Mark Johnson – Forest City –

On behalf of the Forest City Firefighters Association and the City of Forest City, we would like to formally invite everyone to convention 2017 back to Forest City.

Roger Bissen – Harlan –

2016 IFA Mid Year will be at West Des Moines Marriott, April 1st and 2nd, 2016. Room reservations should be made by identifying yourself as a member of the Iowa Firefighters Association group. Reservations must be made by March 10th, 2016 to guarantee group rate and availability at the Marriott. Reservations after that will be as available and subject to different rates. Hotel reservation line is 866-202-9771.

Mark McNees made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Don Scott. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Lensing
Executive Director