

Iowa Firefighters Association
Board of Directors' Meeting
October 30, 2016
Pleasant Hill, Iowa

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Halleran at 10:15 a.m.

A motion was made by Gene Evans and seconded by Mark McNees to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Guests:

Blake DeRouche – E911 Program Manager – Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management:

During the last legislative session, and during the last several, the legislature has shown a desire for PSAP consolidation. His office is trying to convey that shutting doors isn't necessarily going to save the money that legislature thinks it will.

They've been holding stakeholder engagement workshops throughout the state. They've been talking about being much more interested in "shared services" or sharing technology amongst PSAPs versus closing doors. They have been discussing what types of technology could be shared between neighboring PSAPs or regions. They are also taking discussing the potential or feasibility of moving the land line to the wireless network. They believe those two measures are much more productive and show greater potential to save money than closing PSAPs. Their office needs to write a report to give to the legislature that is due January 15th. They've hired a consultant that is helping them do that. As a state \$124 million per year is spent on 911. The legislature this year also tried to incentivize consolidation. They created a \$200,000 consolidation grant for PSAPs with a local match.

Blake said they are in study phase right now. The life span on technology equipment is about 5 – 7 years. Maybe the next time you need to update some equipment you don't get to and maybe you have to share with someone but they don't know how that would be designed yet. The possibility exists for forced consolidations in the future but they would much rather see people come to the meetings and maybe give them some good ideas for what could be done that would be a more palatable choice rather than being told what to do later on.

There are 113 PSAPs in 99 counties. Blake said he doesn't think they will get to the point where they would draw a line in the sand and say we need to get down to x number of PSAPs, as long as we can show sufficient cost savings through other means which he thinks can be done.

Mark McNees asked about the reliability of the wireless network. Blake said that they are building in redundancy and more and more redundancy could always be built in. All 113 PSAPs are connected on ICN fiber. There are 2 data centers that are totally redundant. They can both handle calls and process it all over the state. A couple years ago there was a large ICN outage and they devised a secondary network that consists of 13 of the biggest PSAPs that is on totally different fiber. So if ICN were ever to go down those 13 largest PSAPs would be able to handle the calls for the entire state. There is also a large amount of cyber security that is built in.

Mark McNees asked Blake if he'd heard of any PSAPs that wanted to consolidate. Blake said that there had been discussions since the grant program came out as to what the grants could be used for. All the funds have been applied for and 80% of it went for getting on to either the statewide or regional radio systems.

Jeff Quigle – State Fire Marshal:

The State Fire Marshal Division did not receive the AFG-FPS (Assistance to Firefighter Grant/Fire Prevention and Safety) for this Fiscal Year to continue to purchase smoke detectors for installation throughout the state. We were very disappointed to receive this news. We will be applying once the grant application period opens in 2017.

I have completed the required paperwork to request approval to fill the Accreditation and Certification Program Fire Service Coordinator position at the Fire Service Training Bureau. The paperwork will need approvals from both the Department of Administrative Services and the Department of Management. There will be further updates once we receive approval to start the hiring process.

I will now be starting the paperwork to request approval to fill the vacant Fire Service Training Bureau Chief position. There will be further information once this paperwork is completed.

Trooper Wayne Brosam who was selected for the Southwest Iowa Fire Inspector position will be sworn in on Friday, November 4, 2016. We are very excited to have Wayne join the State Fire Marshal Division. Wayne has both a very strong fire and law enforcement background.

Oral Board Interviews for our vacant Southeast Iowa Special Agent/Bomb Technician position were completed on Thursday, October 20, 2016. We will announce the candidate who was selected this upcoming week. There will be further information in my upcoming IFA Newspaper Article.

Interviews have been completed and we have made a conditional offer to a candidate for a vacant Electrical Inspector position for a 3 county territory in Western Iowa due to a retirement. There will be more information on this position. We have made a conditional offer to a candidate for a vacant Construction Engineer position in Des Moines. There will be more information on this position.

Kyle Gorsch – FSTB:

Certification Testing –The process of re-scoring tests is nearly complete. FSTB staff are busy entering the new scores into the FSTB database. This process could take another 2-3 weeks. Fire Department Training Officers/Chiefs will be notified about effected staff on their departments. Students will be notified in writing if they received a failing score. They will be informed of re-fresher training sites and re-testing sites located around the state where they can re-test and no cost to the student.

Test Updates - The FSTB is in the process of utilizing subject matter experts to evaluate all tests for improvement. The HazMat Ops test will be increased to 50 questions. Instructor I, Instructor II, Officer I, Officer II, Driver Operator Pump and Driver Operator Aerial will all be increased to 100 questions.

Accreditation Update - Pro Board – Accreditation was suspended on January 1, 2016. We will be preparing to host a site visit in the next few months. IFSAC – We are accredited with IFSAC. SFM Quigle and Acting Bureau Chief Gorsch attended the IFSAC fall meeting in Charlotte, NC. The IFSAC Board of Governors unanimously voted to grant an extension until February 2017 to host a site visit.

Pearson Vue - We will begin transitioning to Pearson Vue next month (November 2016). Information was shared with the group about this process.

Field Staff Meetings – The FSTB has been going throughout the state and holding field staff meetings to make sure that all the field staff are all doing things in the same way and bringing them up to speed on what's been going on.

Jeff Quigle – Something that has been popping up off and on – The DOT has been giving some mis-information about CDLs and driving fire apparatus. Firefighters have always been exempt. They are exempt when responding to incidents and they are also exempt in just the day to day functions. President Halleran asked Jeff if he would please put the information in one of his articles so the correct information was out there.

Jim Shutts made a motion to approve the minutes of the last Board of Directors' meeting that was held on June 11, 2016 in Mount Pleasant, IA. It was seconded by Marv Trimble. Motion carried.

Executive Director's report – Wendy Lensing

I'd like to thank everyone for coming today and thank the Pleasant Hill Fire Department for hosting our meeting.

This weekend has been our annual States Networking meeting. This is when we host board members from our surrounding states. We had one of our best turnouts ever with 26 people in attendance at the meeting and several spouses that came along to support the Des Moines economy and have dinner with us last night. There is always a wealth of great information that is shared. So as not to steal everyone's reports right off the bat this a.m. I'll stop there and let them all share their takes on yesterday's meeting.

The IFA Scholarship application period is now open. You can find the information on our website or I can e-mail or mail it to you.

This is also the time to nominate members or departments for the IFA Individual and Department of the Year Awards. There are a lot of members deserving of these recognitions. Please take a moment to send in a letter of nomination. Again, this information is on our website and has been printed in the Iowa Firefighter.

I'm hoping to get billing for 2017 sent out by mid-November. Please return your dues as soon as possible. It really creates a backlog in the office when dues are coming in throughout the entire year rather than in a timely manner. There are other things that need to be focused on at certain time of the year and keeping things flowing is a great help.

Thank you.

Membership Report – Wendy Lensing:

As of October 31, 2016 our membership is at 14,756. Total membership stayed fairly steady since last year. Mutual aid membership is at 2,624 which is down a bit. That usually drops a little every year as the older members pass away and not as many join mutual aid now as they used to.

Financial Report – Wendy Lensing

Total current assets of the Iowa Firefighters Association as of September 30, 2016 were \$475,571.15.

Total current assets of the Iowa Firemen's Foundation as of September 30, 2016 were \$53,307.37.

President Halleran will be contacting Wendy to set up a time to audit the books from last fiscal year.

Motion was made by Mark McNees to approve the financial report. It was seconded by Nick Riley. Motion carried.

Officers Reports:

1st Vice President – Marv Trimble:

President Halleran and I met with Governor Branstad November 13th. The governor was very receptive to our priorities. I will let president Halleran address those talking points.

The board attended states networking yesterday, and it was very well attended. Attendance was: Kansas 4, Nebraska 7, Missouri 1, Illinois 2, South Dakota 1, Minnesota 2, Wisconsin 1, and we had 8 present. We had hours of discussion on a number of subjects. I'm sure we all took something we can use from the meeting.

Fireworks will be brought to the Capitol again this year. Our neighbors allow differing levels of fireworks. KS no bottle rockets, 5 days before the 4th and 2 days after. NE no bottle rockets 10 days before the 4th nothing after. 1 inch shells max., no flying lanterns. MO, Marshall law, Wild West. No restrictions on sales or use. IL, MN, WI, like Iowa, sparklers, and snakes. In South Dakota residents have 10 days that they are allowed to purchase fireworks. If you are from anywhere else and show an out of state driver's license you can purchase year round.

I know you've heard this from me every report but, we remain vigilant on our opposition of fireworks in Iowa. The politicians are seeing \$ signs. I see more injury and danger to you as responders.

Stay safe.

2nd Vice President – Jim Shutts:

Nick and I went to the National Benefits Summit the week after convention. That was a very interesting learning experience. We learned a lot of good things. There are several benefits that we are working on right now that might really be a boost to our membership and the IFA.

After that trip I went on one presentation for the former chief over in Grand Mound.

We had the States Networking meeting this weekend and that's been it for me since convention.

3rd Vice President - Gene Evans:

I would like to begin by also thanking the Stoney Creek Inn for the outstanding hospitality that they extended for the States Networking meeting. Our out of state guests brought varied viewpoints on problems that plague all of the Fire Service.

Also, just a few comments on the upcoming election. I urge all of the membership to seek out the Candidates that are running for Local, State & national office and get a feel for how they plan to support all of the Emergency services. I would ask that you vote in this election, and make choices that will further the work of Fire, EMS & law Enforcement in Iowa.

4th Vice President - Nick Riley:

I want to start by thanking the Pleasant Hill fire department for hosting our meeting this morning. I attended the Benefits Summit in North Charleston, South Carolina on September 18-21; obtained a lot of information on cancer and cancer presumptions that other states and ours are working towards. One of the biggest things that came out of these discussions was KEEP YOU and YOUR GEAR clean!! Wash your gear as soon as possible and then get yourself a shower as soon as possible. Also had a group there that works in the Fire/EMS services that works with companies to get discounts on things. I will be in contact with them to see if we can set up a meeting and see what we can do within the IFA to get these saving passed onto not only our fire departments but to each member of the IFA.

My training tip for this meeting would be: Remember cold weather is coming so have your cold weather gear ready for this winter... wool socks, yak tracks (if you've got them) and stay safe out there!

5th Vice President – Jason Barrick:

Welcome everybody. It's been interesting for me since convention but everything I expected it to be it has been so far and still having fun. Just finished up the state networking meeting. A lot of good, valuable information and I'm looking forward to that in the years to come. That is all I have for this report.

Past President – Mark McNees:

Since our last meeting I've been to Red Oak and Hospers for presentations. It was good to get out and visit with them.

Over the years we've gotten so many good ideas from the States Networking meetings that have helped in the leadership of this IFA board and also in my department back home. We've gained a tremendous amount from that and a lot of contacts and friends.

Something that was mentioned about fireworks yesterday was that even though Wisconsin doesn't have much, there is no enforcement at all. There is a lot of illegal stuff being sold right on the street, in tents, left up all year, no one does anything about it. If anything ever does pass here, the rules better be enforced. The SFM office needs staff to enforce it if it is ever legalized.

We've been talking about the cancer presumption. One of the biggest things we need to do is get numbers. Minnesota has a registry. People can voluntarily go on there if they've got cancer and register so they can get some numbers. I think that's something we need to look at here. We say it's a problem, but we need numbers.

Another item – our database has been a disaster for the last couple of years with iMIS. We're done with trying that. We did get a couple of new ideas yesterday. We'll start looking into that further. Nebraska had the same problem we did with iMIS and they are looking at something different also.

When the membership renewals do get sent out I talked to the Elks and their major project is the fire safety house trailers. They are again going to send raffle tickets to Wendy to enclose with the billings. Any department or firefighters are eligible to purchase them. Last year Marble Rock Fire Department won \$2000. They've been really good partners with us on these trailers.

One more thing that we talked about yesterday, I would encourage any of our members that may work for a company or have an idea, is corporate sponsorships. I think we're leaving a lot of money out on the table. I can think of at least 4 big Iowa companies that could be a benefit to us through sponsorship of some of our programs or potentially offering something to our members.

President Bill Halleran:

Thanks to Pleasant Hill Fire for hosting today's meeting location. We have had an eventful weekend with the Annual States Networking Meeting. It was another successful roundtable hearing what each state has going on.

A few topics that were covered were cancer presumption, Recruitment and Retention, Corporate Sponsors for Associations as well as many others. These meetings are very valuable as we can bounce topics off each other and see what we can do to better each other's Associations. These meetings have proven to be very valuable.

Thanks to Blake DeRouche from E911/Homeland Security for coming today and giving us a briefing on legislation and where the E911 Communications Centers are going.

Reminder to all the Fire Departments in the State to please submit action photos to Jeff Gargano at the Iowa Firefighter's Newsletter.

Thanks to State Fire Marshall Jeff Quigle and Acting Bureau Chief Special Kyle Gorsh for coming today as well to bring us up to speed with the recent happenings at the Fire Service Training Bureau. We all agree that having somewhat transparency to get through this would best benefit all of us.

I wanted to pass out another reminder about the Mid-Year Banquet that will be held in Coralville at the Marriott on April 21-22. Please call them at 319-688-4000. We have a block of rooms set aside. Sigourney Fire/Rescue Committee is working to obtain many doors prizes and raffle items. Entertainment will be the Lucas Beebe Band.

Heads up that Firefighter Day on the Hill will be March 2nd.

As Marv mentioned we met with Governor Branstad. We did ask for a couple of line items - \$35K for the Fire Bridge so that doesn't necessarily come out of the rest of the FM budget as well as some funding for the Juvenile Firesetter Program. Another thing that we've been discussing is that right now we offer the \$100 tax credit for volunteers. It's been going well but we are looking to possibly take that away and instead take that \$100 per 15,000 firefighters and turn that into a \$1.5 million pot and use it for a recruitment and

retention LOSAP program. Say I get \$100 a year and my city matches it with \$100 a year and it goes into a nest egg. After a minimum of 5 years on the fire department if I decide to get off there is a check waiting. It would be kind of like a Roth IRA. We presented that to the governor and he was very receptive to that also.

Recruitment and Retention was talked about yesterday and someone mentioned it's actually Retention and Recruitment. You're trying to keep those that you have.

John Pederson came and talked to us Friday. Nothing really going on right now. Waiting for the election results.

Convention Committee – Marv Trimble:

We met just prior to the convention meeting to discuss the situation of no one running to host the convention in 2018. We talked briefly about the requirements that are listed in our packet and in looking at those.

Unfinished Business – none

New Business – none

Good of the Association –

Osage Fire Department will host the poster contest luncheon in 2017.

Jason Barrick made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Nick Riley. Meeting adjourned 11:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Lensing
Executive Director