



Volunteer & Combination Officers Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs

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VCOS Board of Directors Meeting

February 9, 2019
The Ramsey Hotel and Convention Center
Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

MINUTES

Saturday, February 9 (at The Ramsey Hotel and Convention Center 3230 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, TN 37863)

Present: Chair Charles Flynn, Chief Donna Black, Chief Jason Catrambone, Chief Norvin Collins, Chief Timothy S. Wall, Chief Fred Windisch, Chief Jim Cook, Chief Ron Oettel, Chief Rich Cowger, Chief Ed Rush

Absent: Chief Al Yancey

Guests: Chief John M. Buckman III, Mr. Jeff Siegrist, Mr. Joe Giorgi, Mr. Ed Mann, Ms. Kelly Walsh, Pigeon Forge Fire Department

Staff: Ms. Jennifer Bragiel Cozad

The meeting started at 9:01 am.

Welcome and Consent Agenda – Chair Flynn

Chair Flynn led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America. He welcomed the board and guests to the meeting, and asked everyone present to introduce themselves.

The consent agenda was reviewed.

- 2018 November Board Meeting Minutes
- 2018 December Board Meeting Minutes
- NFPA 350 Confined Space Safe Work Practices – Chief Boring
- EMS Modernization Project – Chief Hughes
- Terrorism and Homeland Security Committee - Chief Richards
- New & Interim Fire Chief Guidance Document Committee – Chief Yancey

Action Item: review the draft and the considerations documents and send any new comments to Chief Yancey at yanceya@minookafire.com

- Beyond Hoses and Helmets – Chief Render
- NACo – Chief Singer

Motion by Chief Cowger and seconded by Chief Catrambone to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

Communications Committee– Chief Rush

Chief Rush provided an update on the next newsletter, and encouraged the board to submit ideas and materials.

Action Items: Contributions are due to Chief Rush by February 20 for the next newsletter.

The committee sought guidance on the creation of a print newsletter and if the cost outweighed the value. A concern about the information becoming out of date due to the time for development was also raised.

After discussion it was decided that a blend of print and digital is best. The print should be sent out following Symposium in the West and following Symposium in the Sun. This led to a discussion on the format and size of the print editions.

Action item: Chief Rush to work with Ms. Bragiel Cozad on the development of a modern print formatted newsletter.

NFPA 1720

Chief Render recommended in his report a replacement that can serve as Chair of the NFPA 1720 committee. The VCOS board discussed the situation and had consensus that they need to maintain the seat, as the representation on the NFPA committees is one of the most important things VCOS can do.

It was clarified that the VCOS selection should be a VCOS member and would have to be approved by the IAFC.

Action item: Chief Flynn to call NFPA about the position then have an executive board meeting to come up with the selection process.

The VCOS board discussed how they could improve committee reports and provide better guidance to committees. It was recommended that a different committee chair be invited to the monthly board call to provide a verbal update.

Thank You – Chief Locke

Chief Steve Locke called into the meeting. He thanked the VCOS for their early support. It made a big difference in the election.

The VCOS board provided their congratulations and thanked him for calling in.

Chief Locke's call ended.

VWS Update – Ms. Bragiel Cozad

Ms. Bragiel Cozad provided an update on VWS activities, and their new partnership with FireGrantsHelp. The partnership provides members a 25% discount on FireGrantsHelp grant writing services.

Action Item: Add into the newsletter a short paragraph and link to the state of the volunteer fire service report.

There was a discussion on when the AFG/SAFER grant period will be opening. It was recommended the VCOS have a representative on the review panel.

Discussion took place on the VCOS benefits with the VWS partnership. Ms. Bragiel Cozad explained that VWS frequently uses and relies on VCOS's excellent educational courses and VCOS members as subject matter experts.

It was asked if VWS could cover some of the VCOS staff time through the grants. This was explored by VWS and found to not be possible even with the grants owned by the IAFC due to FEMA policies and guidelines.

Chair's Report – Chief Flynn

Chief Flynn provided an overview for the Symposium in the West board meeting and explained that he and Ms. Bragiel Cozad will be working the meeting around the schedule for Symposium in the West.

Chief Flynn had a conversation with Mr. Mark Light and President Dan Eggleston. The conversation was very positive and complimentary of the section. Mr. Light is very excited for the Interim/New Chiefs document.

Vice-Chair's Report – Chief Cowger

Chief Cowger provided an overview on his work towards creating scholarship and award criteria. He recommended he revisit the topic following the break out groups.

International Director's Report – Chief Black

The Women Fire Chiefs Council has changed their name to the Women Chiefs Council (WCC). They will be having a call with Canadian Women's Chief group.

The IAFC board is hoping to get more members involved at the committee level and voted to increase the committee size.

The IAFC board has also approved a new digital content manager position to help improve and expand open IAFC communications.

Jo-Ann Lorber will be continuing as the Executive Fire Officers (EFO) chair. EFO has submitted to have an IAFC board seat. They are going through the process as laid out by the IAFC board last year. Chief Black requested guidance on the VCOS position on EFO gaining an IAFC board seat. The VCOS board discussed various aspects to take into consideration about the EFO be granted a seat on the IAFC board. Many expressed concerns that the section would not provide additional value, and already has a strong representation through graduates.

Motion by Chief Windisch and seconded by Chief Catrambone that the VCOS position is to not support the EFO section in obtaining an IAFC board seat. Motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion on the motion. The VCOS board resulted that a statement of position was unnecessary and Chief Black can explain the reasoning for the VCOS position.

Chief Black provided an update on the joint meeting between WCC and iDELP. The meeting was placed on hold for a short time, but is now moving forward. The meeting should not impact Symposium in the West.

Chief Black informed the VCOS board that the legal situation has been settled. Many inquired and recommended the IAFC fight to recuperate costs incurred during the legal battle.

An update on the impact of the government shutdown was provided. The IAFC board approved a line of credit to ensure the IAFC could continue operations as normal.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report – Chief Windisch

Chief Windisch reviewed the VCOS budget.

After discussion with many board members and an interest being expressed to see more information on the VCOS's finances and spending. Chief Windisch will condense and provide a category report to the VCOS board.

Expense Report Requirements Overview

Ms. Bragiel Cozad provided an overview of expense report requirements to the VCOS board.

Action Item: Ms. Bragiel Cozad to share her PowerPoint on expense reports with the VCOS Board.

Chief Windisch encouraged everyone to get an airline credit card to avoid baggage fees, as it can save the section a lot of money.

The VCOS board was encouraged to fill out their expense reports as accurately as possible to reduce staff time in editing and fixing them.

Symposium in the Sun

Chief Windisch led a discussion on Symposium in the Sun expenses. He recommended an increase in the registration, primarily to cover the 20% rise in food costs.

Motion by Chief Collins and seconded by Chief Oettel to increase Symposium in the Sun costs for registration as presented and recommended by Chief Windisch. Motion passed unanimously.

The Symposium in the Sun committee is currently developing the theme for 2019, and the committee doesn't foresee any schedule changes.

It was recommended that the them be a spelling out of VCOS with the values of the VCOS, and tie this into the 25th anniversary celebrations using it for the entire year.

Action Item: Chief Wall to send the list of acronyms to the marketing committee for development for use during the 25th anniversary celebrations and possibly for Symposium in the Sun.

Symposium in the West

Registration is a little behind last year, but the brochure was sent out a little bit later this year. The committee thinks the brochure will boost registration numbers. The committee is looking into offering a Grand Canyon tour. This would be separate from the conference and would be an offering. All costs would be participant responsibilities.

A discussion took place on the low attendance numbers of the conference and a desire to increase attendance.

Chief Collins provided an overview of the Symposium in the West committee's 2020-2021 proposal. The committee recommended the use and location of the Embassy Suites in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

He explained that the committee discussed moving every year but it didn't feel right. Limiting the symposium strictly to the West is limiting the ability of the symposium to reach out to some strong potential locations. The committee recommended changing the name to Symposium in the Spring to allow this symposium to reach new audiences.

Many VCOS board members recommended Denver for a future location. There was also a discussion on increasing the value of the symposium by lengthening the program.

The VCOS board agreed to define success as breaking 200 attendees.

Motion by Chief Windisch and seconded by Chief Catrambone to rename Symposium in the West to Symposium in the Spring and to approve a 2-year contract with the Embassy Suites with 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota and 2021's location to be decided by the Symposium in the Spring committee. Motion carried.

There was discussion on the motion. It was recommended to create some smaller and simpler marketing items earlier, such as save the dates, to help get the symposium into budgets.

Friends and Supporters

Mr. Siegrist explained to the VCOS board that they have a lot to think about, and they have all sorts of things that are interconnected. The most important thing is to clearly define failure as well as success.

Mr. Giorgi apologized on behalf of Mr. Troy Markel who was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Markel is heading up VFIS's 50th anniversary. Mr. Giorgi informed the VCOS board that VFIS is creating and about to release a new interactive online service called responder help. It will be a very robust system. The hard launch is planned for FRI 2019.

Mr. Siegrist emphasized that he believes Symposium in the Spring would find success in Denver. It is an easy destination that is very attractive.

The VCOS board thanked the friends and supporters for being at the meeting and providing guidance.

The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:00pm.

Meeting called to order at 12:49pm.

LION Proposal

LION will be adding VCOS to the line about promoting the NVFC, so it reads that they will promote the IAFC-VCOS and NVFC. This agreement does not have a cost for VCOS, and they will be branding and promoting the VCOS. The agreement will need to be run through the IAFC to be finalized.

Joint Anti-Harassment and Bullying Statement

The proposed statement by the NVFC was reviewed and accepted by the IAFC Board. Chief Black read the IAFC minutes on the proposed statement to the VCOS board. The VCOS executive committee decided to support the statement, since it was approved by the IAFC and had been reviewed and approved by the HRC.

CFSI

The VCOS has a joint presentation with NVFC on the Yellow Ribbon Report and the Lavender Ribbon Reports' topics on April 25 at 2pm.

Table for CFSI:

1. Chuck Flynn
2. Norvin Collins
3. Holly Collins
4. Tim Wall
5. Ron Oettel
6. Donna Black
7. Ed Rush
8. Rich Cowger
9. Open
10. Open

Action Item: Contact Ms. Bragiel Cozad if you are interested in filling one of the open seats.

Chief Wall is working with the IAFC's government relations team to schedule meetings at CFSI. Congress will not be in session, so the meetings will be with federal agencies and under staff. The meetings will be scheduled for Wednesday April 24 and Thursday April 25.

Action Item: If attending CFSI make your hotel reservations.

There is a new co-chair for CFSI, Chief Wall and Chief Flynn will be working to connect with the individual and build a relationship.

Around the time of CFSI, VCOS board attending CFSI may be invited to an event with NVFC that recognizes Chief Seavey's service at Cabin John Park (Maryland) Volunteer Fire Department.

It was recommended that one of the open seats at the VCOS table at CFSI be offered to Mrs. Mary Seavey.

Action item: Chief Collins to invite Mrs. Seavey to fill the seat.

Educational Coordinator Update – Chief Buckman

Chief John M. Buckman III provided an overview of the Beyond Hoses and Helmets (BH&H) and Fire Rescue Organizational Guidance (FROG) stakeholder meeting with LEAD. He explained that they have their own process but are extremely professional and produce amazing products. The 8 participants were all actively involved. The VCOS needs to think about who owns and controls delivery of the final product.

Chief Buckman reviewed a list of questions that arose from the meeting and a concern about VWS. The VCOS is in competition and not in competition with VWS. The VWS is

producing amazing content and courses it is important that the VCOS meets the same standards. There was discussion on how the VCOS is collaborating with the VWS programs. It was recommended that everybody take the VWS created courses, as well as the other classes that the IAFC has on the IAFC Academy.

It was recommended that the stakeholders be provided an honorarium for their time at the stakeholder meeting.

The stakeholder group is going to try to get the course and necessary information to be able to be taught within 16 hours. The group spent minimal time on FROG, but the group could have more than 24 hours of teaching materials for BH&H.

It was warned that there may be challenges with the instructors. Moving forward instructors have to teach the model, they can add to it, but the base is the model that must be taught.

This is a requirement for this to eventually become an accredited course.

The new BH&H and FROG will have some online training, but it will not all be online. The VCOS board discussed the frustrations felt at the beginning of the LEAD process, many felt like the course was being forced to be an all online course. This problem was addressed, and the course will be primarily if not completely in person.

The group recommended a name change for BH&H to reflect the new version of the course.

Motion by Chief Catrambone and seconded by Chief Cook to approve the Beyond Hoses and Helmets name change to Beyond Hoses & Helmets NextGen – Putting the Pieces Together with approval for the committee to adjust the title to reflect the final product. Motion carried.

There was discussion on the motion.

The VCOS board discussed the recommendation for an honorarium for the volunteer stakeholders.

Motion by Chief Windisch and seconded by Chief Catrambone to approve a \$750 honorarium for the volunteer stakeholders. Motion carried with 1 abstention.

Chief Buckman updated the VCOS board on some changes that have been made and are in the works to improve educational course offerings and ease of signing up to host. One change is an online interest host form at iafc.org/HostVCOSTraining. This form has already received 2 requests so far.

Chief Buckman discussed the Yellow Ribbon Report course and the Lavender Ribbon Report course. He recommended the VCOS open up who can teach the courses and makes it a primary focus to get their messages out to as many people as possible. The importance of tracking who is teaching and gaining feedback on the classes was emphasized. The board agreed that it is important to capture as much information as possible, but it is a necessity to get this information out to fire departments.

Action item: Chief Buckman to work with Ms. Bragiel Cozad to set up something to help get more instructors and more classes.

Motion by Chief Collins and seconded by Chief Cowger to support the proposal as put forward by the Educational Coordinator to put forth to everyone the Lavender Ribbon and Yellow Ribbon courses once finalized. Motion carried.

There was a discussion on tracking who gets it on the motion.

It was explained that all instructors will have to attend a webinar with the key information and expectations for teaching the course to ensure quality.

The plan for getting new instructors and maintaining quality instructors was explained and reviewed. The discussion of how to get new instructors, maintain quality of current and remove those that are no longer meeting the standards took place. It was explained that all instructors will need to be trained to instruct the new course, this could result in a natural change to the instructor list.

It was recommended the VCOS board provide guidance on how they want a course done but shouldn't be doing the work and should rely on the Educational Coordinator to ensure the course meets the boards expectations and goals.

Chief Buckman provided an overview on the development of the Lavender Ribbon Course. The course will have 2 modules, 1 will be a 20 minute awareness module the other will be a more in depth module with real world examples. The hard part is that individuals are holding to every word of the document. This is creating some problems. The course emphasizes it is about reduction and common sense. Modifications will be made as the course receives feedback from attendees.

The VCOS board discussed the creation of Yellow Rose coins and having individuals take a pledge to receive one.

The VCOS is receiving many requests for printed reports a discussion took place on the benefits versus the costs to print more Lavender Ribbon and Yellow Ribbon reports.

Based on research on payment for speakers and instructors in for the fire service, Chief Buckman requested an increase to the instructor honorarium to \$1000 per instructor per class for all courses.

Motion by Chief Windisch and seconded by Chief Catrambone to adopt a \$1000 honorarium per instructor per class. Motion carried with 1 abstention

There was a discussion on the motion. The discussion concerned the increased financial burden and how to seek out opportunities that will pay the VCOS for the presentation. The importance of marketing the VCOS was emphasized.

VCOS Bylaws

There will be no bylaws changes in 2019, due to missing the February 1 deadline. It will be a work in progress throughout the year for next year's election. A more formal proposal of changes will be created by the March meeting.

The areas that will be investigated will be the need to provide additional clarification on the immediate past chair role, technical edits, possible clarification on the selection of the International Board Director.

There were many recommendations including selecting the International Board Director in February, adding the immediate past chair to the Executive Committee, selecting officers at Symposium in the Sun, should there be 3 tie votes for an officer position the tie breaker should go to the senior board member or be decided by a coin flip, and clarifying when the new board begins their term.

Old Business

- Paratech
 - o Paratech had an employee change, they have provided a new contact. The VCOS board will be updated once progress has been made.
- 25th anniversary
 - o Calendar
 - The cost will be approximately \$11,000 to print and mail 5,000 calendars.
 - Don't know design yet and the cost for design will depend on what the committee does on the calendar.
 - Many expressed concerns about the cost of the calendars not meeting the value the calendar provides.
 - o Course Giveaway
 - Need to find a cost estimate and figure out the number of courses to giveaway
 - o Shell is interested in helping with the 25th anniversary, they need a plan for them to help.
 - o Silver Challenge Coins

Action item: 25th anniversary committee to fine tune proposal for next call.

It was recommended a special 25th anniversary logo be created. One suggestion was to add a silver ribbon to the VCOS logo that reads celebrating 25 years.

New Business

- FRI Meet and Greet
 - o The VCOS Board agreed to have another Meet and Greet at FRI.

Action Item: Chief Cowger and Chief Black and Ms. Bragiel Cozad to work on the planning of the Meet and Greet.

- Chief Whitham report on FRI Planning Program Counsel
 - o The VCOS board discussed the importance of the additional meeting and the value it would provide.

Motion by Chief Windisch and seconded by Chief Black to support the reimbursable expenses for the special IAFC FRI planning meeting. Motion carried.

- Adding Value for Members
 - o A discussion took place on how to demonstrate member value on the website.

Action Item: The Data Group to explore potential ways to improve the website to add additional value to current members.

- A discussion on coordination and improved communication for the VCOS board to improve efficiency took place.

Action Item: Chief Catrambone and Chief Oettel to investigate with Ms. Bragiel Cozad and report back at March meeting.

- o It was recommended to meet with Tim Hopkins on the topic.
- Small Department
 - o It was recommended that the VCOS board select 8-10 pilot departments to work with closely.

- There was a discussion on the high cost and the potential return. It was emphasized the importance for the VCOS to be reaching out to small departments.

Action Item: The Project Applications Group to investigate potential ways to reach out to small departments and report back to the VCOS board.

- Marketing the VCOS
 - The VCOS board discussed how the VCOS can drive a change in mindset to make the VCOS the pre-eminant organization for volunteer and combination Departments.

Chimney Tops 2 Fire and Pigeon Forge – Chief Watson

Chief Tony Watson joined the VCOS Board meeting. He presented to the VCOS board on the Chimney Tops 2 fire and how it impacted Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg. He shared his perspective and lessons learned.

Chief Flynn thanked Chief Watson for his presentation.

Chief Flynn thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Motion by Chief Cook and seconded by Chief Oettel to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned February 9, 2019 at 5:01pm. The next call is 3/12 at 4pm ET.