



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



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VCOS Annual Meeting Minutes

August 17, 2023
Kansas City Conference Center
Kansas City, MO

Participants:

VCOS Board Members Present:

Chief Rich Cowger, Vice Chair
Chief Fred Windisch, Secretary/Treasurer
Chief Jason Catrambone, International Director
Chief Jim Cook, Board Member at Large
Chief Paul Sterling, Board Member at Large
Chief Brita Horn, Board Member at Large
Chief Kevin Hardwick, Board Member at Large
Chief Shawn Stokes, Board Member at Large
Chief Al Yancey, Board Member at Large

VCOS Board Members Not Present:

Chief Chuck Flynn, Chair
Chief Spencer Cheatham, At-Large Director Elect

Guests/IAFC Staff:

Chief Jason Caughey, At-Large Director Elect
Mr. Kevin McGee, IAFC Liaison
Mr. Steven Alanzo, Government Relations Senior Manager
Mr. Jeff Dulin, Strategic Advisor
Mr. Dave Donis, Workforce Solutions Manager

Call to Order

Chief Cowger chaired the meeting. A roll call was taken and a quorum was present. The meeting came to order at 13:32 hrs CT.

Approval of July 11, 2023 Minutes

MOTION: 16 August 2023-01

Motion made and seconded to table the approval of the July 11, 2023 Board meeting minutes inclusive of all comments to the September 2023 Board of Directors meeting. Motion carried.

Stokes/Windisch

Vice Chair Report

Chief Rich Cowger, Vice Chair

Chief Cowger informed the membership that Chief Flynn has a personal obligation that

conflicted with his attendance. He welcomed members, sponsors and guests to the Annual Meeting.

Chief Cowger informed the membership that Chief Florentino, Election Committee Chair provided a written report that there were ten applications for three open positions. The election for three year terms were won by Chief Jason Caughey, Laramie County (WY) Fire Authority, Chief Spencer Cheatham, West Point (VA) Volunteer Fire Department, Assistant and Chief Chuck Flynn, East Granby (CT) Fire Department.

Secretary Treasurer Report

Chief Fred Windisch, Secretary/Treasurer

Chief Windisch reported that \$227,021 was carried over from 2021, total revenue is \$59,827, total expenses are \$114,556. The ending balance is \$172,292. Net Assets decreased \$54,729. The loss was due to lost revenue from Symposium 2020 and catching up from projects delayed due to Covid-19. The policy is to retain a minimum of \$100,000 at year end.

Chief Windisch presented that the Pierce Initiative fund had a 2021 carryover of \$240,790 with total revenue of \$51,200. Total expenses are \$56,732 with an ending balance of \$235,258 resulting in a net asset decrease of \$5,532. \$37,043 was used for the Leaders in Critical Thinking project. The policy is to retain \$100,000 in the Pierce Initiative account.

Chief Flynn reported that the pandemic negatively affected all VCOS operations and revenue streams for two years and all costs increased substantially. Symposium in the Sun is having continued success. Chief Windisch anticipates that revenue streams will be flat without investment in more partnerships. Efforts are underway to address marketing, branding and sponsorships.

Chief Windisch reported that there was a \$5.00 dues increase effective September 2022. VCOS is in a sound financial condition.

International Director Report

Chief Jason Catrambone, International Director

A focus with the IAFC is to "Lead and Educate" The Officer Development Program from COLS will be revised and presented through a MOU with Columbia Southern University.

Training Officer of the Year Award

Robbie King – Vector Solutions, Chief Rich Cowger

Mr. King and Chief Cowger presented the Training Officer of the Year Award to Captain Shane Metcalfe, Irondequoit (NY) Fire District.

FRI Scholarships – Chief Al Yancey

Chief Al Yancy presented congratulations and \$1,500 scholarships on behalf of the section to Lieutenant Steven Claucherty, Spring Valley (OH) Fire Department and Captain Josh Merriam, Hanover (NH) Fire Department.

Presentation

Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Geospatial Tool Kit – Jeff Dulin, Strategic Advisor, Dave Donis IAFC Workforce Solutions Manager

Chief Dulin and Mr. Donis reported a new tool kit under development that volunteer and combination fire departments can use to enhance their recruitment and retention efforts.

Oath of Office

Chief Donna Black, IAFC President and Chair of the Board presided over the Oath of Officer for Chief Jason Caughey as the newly elected At-Large Director.

Chief Donna Black, IAFC President and Chair of the Board

Chief Donna Black informed the membership on the successful Strategic Plan that was approved during her term as president. She stated that pursuing implementation of the plan requires that the Board needs all divisions, sections, committees and councils to contribute to its progress.

Chief Steven Locke, IAFC Treasurer

Chief Locke informed the membership that he is term limited as IAFC Treasurer and is running for Second Vice President in the next election cycle.

Chief John Butler, IAFC Incoming President

Chief Butler expressed well wishes from the IAFC Board of Directors and appreciation to the section for its many accomplishments over the past year and beyond.

Education Coordinator Report – Chief John Buckman

The VCOS webinars have been in high demand with large attendance from around the country and various countries. The Blue Ribbon Report Committee was reconvened to update the report. The White Ribbon Report is now in draft form. The Yellow Ribbon Report remains current.

Legislative Report – Mr. Steven Alanzo, Senior Manager

Mr. Alanzo presented an update on legislative, regulatory and administration actions that the Government Relations and Policy Department is acting upon and anticipating.

Election of Officers – Chief Jim Cook

Chief Cook informed the membership that with the assistance of Chief Kevin Hardwick and Kevin McGee, he will conduct the election of officers consistent with the VCOS by laws. He provided an overview of the election process that will be conducted after the Annual Meeting.

Chief Jim Cook, At-Large Director

Chief Cook discussed the network value of hour VCOS membership. Chief Cook, who chairs the Communications Committee, stated that the committee seeks to improve membership outreach to members through our social media platforms and VCOS web site.

Chief Brita Horn, At-Large Director

Chief Horn recognized Committee members Chief Buckman, Eddie Buchannon, Mr. Ed Mann who have joined with her to produce the Gold Data Ribbon Report. She reported that the report has three sections, 1) Before the wheels turn, 2) While the wheels are turning and 3) when the wheels stop turning.

Kevin Hardwick, At-Large Director

Chief Hardwick reported that the Amber Ribbon Report Best Practices for Fire Service Canines was released here at FRI and copies are available at the VCOS kiosk in the IAFC Pavilion or on the VCOS web site.

Chief Paul Sterling, At-Large Director

Chief Sterling reported that there is a New Member Committee with several initiatives to welcome and provide an information orientation to new members. Chief Sterling informed the members that he serves on Scholarship selection committees and served on the selection committee for the Ben Franklin Award. He is currently seeking door prizes that will be given at Symposium in the Sun.

Chief Shawn Stokes, At-Large Director

Chief Stokes reported that a Request for Proposal is open for a Resource Coordinator position that is needed to support the project and initiative workload of the Board.

Chief Al Yancey, At-Large Director

Chief Yancey informed the membership that the Board updated the VCOS Strategic Direction plan and with the facilitation Mr. Bob Norton at an in-person Board meeting, updated the Mission, Vision and core values statement as well as create a written behavior expectations document that was agreed to as a consensus document.

Outgoing Director At-Large Directors

Chief Cowger presided over a presentation to express appreciation to Chief Jim Cook for his two terms as director at-Large and Chief Kevin Hardwick for his one term as director at-large. Both Chief Cook and Chief Hardwick were presented appreciation plaques to recognize their leadership and accomplishments to the VCOS.

Old Business

Chief Sterling directed a question to the chair asking if all Executive Committee meetings are closed meetings and have no minutes. Chief Cowger answered that minutes are not historically taken during the Executive Committee meetings, the meetings are closed, it's the Executive Board and action is not taken during Executive Committee meetings.

Paul Sullivan, VCOS member requested to speak regarding issues he wished to express to the Board and membership and to have his written comments posted into the record.

New Business

Chief Horn requested that an agenda item be added to the September Board meeting so that she can propose the use of Microsoft Meets to record Board meeting minutes.

Good of the Order

Nothing for the Good of the Order

The meeting ended at 1505 hrs CT.

Minutes submitted by:

Mr. Kevin McGee
Interim VCOS Staff Liaison

Chief Chuck Flynn
VCOS Chair

Chief Fred Windisch
VCOS Secretary/Treasurer

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