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VCOS Annual Meeting Minutes 12 August 2026 Kansas City Convention Center Kansas City, KS

Participants:

VCOS Board Members Present:

Chief Al Yancey, Vice Chair
Chief Jason Catrambone, International Director
Chief Shawn P. Stokes, Secretary Treasurer
Chief Kevin Cooney, Director at Large
Chief Jordan Cramer, Director at Large
Chief Jason Caughey, Director at Large
Chief Tim Sendelbach, Director at Large
Chief Fred Windisch, Director at Large

VCOS Board Members Not Present:

Chief Rich Cowger, Chair
Chief Spencer Cheatham, Director at Large

IAFC Guests/Staff:

Chief Chad Hoefle, Director at Large Elect
Chief Burke, IAFC 2nd Vice President Candidate
Kevin McGee, IAFC Staff Liaison
Mikel Robinson, VCOS Staff Support Contractor
Chief John Buckman III, Education Coordinator
Mr. Eddie Herzig, IAFC Government and Policy
Ellen Lemieux, IAFC Workforce Solutions
VCOS Members

Call to Order

Chief Al Yancey called the meeting to order at 1530 hrs CT and welcomed the membership, partners, and all others in attendance. Chief Yancey recognized Chief Steven Locke and CEO Donna Black, who were able to make a brief appearance at the meeting.

Approval of July 8, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Chief Al Yancey, Vice Chair

MOTION: August 12, 2026-01

Motion made and seconded to approve the July 14, 2026 Board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Stokes/Caughey

Chair Report

No chair report. Chief Cowger was deployed as a member of a wildfire Incident Management Team.

Vice Chair Report

Chief Al Yancey

Chief Yancey provided Chief Burke the opportunity to address the membership regarding his campaign for IAFC 2nd Vice President.

Chief Yancey reported on the status of the National Fire Service Framework to identify best practices for volunteer and combination fire departments.

Chief Yancey reviewed the VCOS strategic plan to inform the membership of its contents.

International Director Report

Chief Jason Catrambone

Chief Catrambone provided a review of 2026 IAFC accomplishments. Chief Catrambone also informed the membership that he was elected to serve on the IAFC Executive Committee.

The IAFC is in the process of considering membership types to be aligned with fire service terminology.

Secretary/Treasurer Report

Chief Shawn P. Stokes

Chief Stokes presented the 2026 Financial results, the Pierce Initiative fund results, and the Symposium in the Sun financial results, which were good.

MOTION: August 12, 2026-02

Motion made and seconded to approve the 2026 financial results. Motion carried.

Windisch/Catrambone

Election Committee

Chief Shawn P. Stokes

Chief Stokes reported that the IAFC Election Committee declared the 2026 VCOS Board election results to be official. There were seven candidates for 3 at-large positions with 378 ballots cast. Chief Stokes reported to the membership that two incumbents were reelected, and one new candidate was elected to the Board: Chief Jason Caughey, Chief Kevin Cooney, and Chief Chad Hoefle.

Chief Stokes reported that the revision to the bylaws presented on the ballot were officially accepted by the IAFC Election Committee.

Chief Stokes reported Executive Committee results as follows; Chief Rich Cowger submitted for chair, Chief Al Yancey submitted for vice chair, Chief Shawn Stokes submitted for secretary/treasurer and Chief Jason Catrambone for International Director. With no other Board members submitting for Executive Committee positions the candidates were uncontested and therefore ascend by acclamation for a 1-year term of office except for Chief Catrambone who has a 2-year term.

2026 – 2029 VCOS Board At-Large Oath of Office

Chief Steve Locke, IAFC 1st Vice President

Chief Locke, IAFC 1st Vice President administered the IAFC Oath of Office for the 2026-2029 at-large Board seats to Chief Jason Caughey, Chief Kevin Cooney and Chief Chad Hoefle.

Training Officer of the Year Award

Chief Al Yancey, Mr. Robbie King, Vector Solutions

Chief Yancey and Mr. King presented the 2026 Training Officer of the Year Award to Deputy Chief Eric Bergum, Inver Groves Heights (MN) Fire Department.

A Hustle Worth Having Campaign

Ellen Lemieux

Ellen Lemieux provided an overview of the Hustle Worth Having national volunteer firefighter recruitment campaign.

At-Large Directors Reports

- Chief Jason Caughey reported on the VCOS Hall of Fame initiative that will commence in 2027. He also provided a report on podcasts.
- Chief Kevin Cooney informed the membership on the status of the IAFC FEMA task force to which he is a representative of VCOS.
- Chief Jordan Cramer informed the membership on the status of the Workforce Solutions Grant.
- Chief Fred Windisch informed the membership on the partners proposal that designates several categories of partners and contributors.

Legislative Update

Mr. Eddie Herzig

Mr. Herzig provided a legislative and Administration report.

Education Coordinator Report

Chief John M Buckman III

Chief Buckman III provided an update on the 2026 Symposium in the Sun Conference. He informed membership that the conference will move to St Petersburg, FL to accommodate larger numbers of attendees and vendors at a lower hotel room rate. He provided an update on CTA, the Red Ribbon Report, and the reinstitution of VCOS webinars using a new platform.

Old Business

No old business.

New Business

No new business.

The Annual Meeting ended at 1640 hrs CT.

Minutes submitted by:

Mr. Kevin McGee
VCOS Staff Liaison

Chief Al Yancey
Vice Chair

Chief Rich Cowger
Chair

Chief Shawn P. Stokes
Secretary/Treasurer

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