



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

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VCOS Board Telecon December 12, 2013

Minutes

Called to order: 4:04 p.m.

Present: Chief Timothy Wall, Chief Dan Eggleston, Chief Shane Crutcher, Chief Jim Seavey, Chief Randy Larson, Chief Dave Fulmer, Chief Mike Vaughn, Chief Fred Windisch

Absent: Chief Ted Lowden, Chief Jim Wilson

Staff: Ms. Kelly Ameen, Mr. Evan Davis

Approval of Minutes – Chief Wall

The minutes from the November 26, 2013 VCOS Board call were reviewed.

Motion by Chief Seavey and seconded by Chief Crutcher to approve minutes from the November 26, 2013 Board call as submitted. Motion carried.

Near-Miss Update – Chief Wall

The Board reviewed the Near-Miss letter asking for support. VCOS will continue to support the program. Once the new Near-Miss website is launched, VCOS will include an announcement in the Report from the Chair e-blast.

Chief Wilson represented VCOS on the Near-Miss Sustainability Task Force call earlier this month. Most discussion focused on the re-launch scheduled for January 2014.

February Board Meeting – Chief Wall

A conflict came up with the originally scheduled dates for the February live VCOS Board meeting. Chief Wall asked Board Members for their availability either January 30-February 2 or February 13-16. Most Board Members preferred January 30-February 2. Chief Wall will also check with Chief Lowden and Chief Wilson about their availability. The location for the meeting is still being determined. Some possibilities include Houston, San Diego, and Tampa. Chief Seavey is also looking into Key Largo.

The May Board meeting is scheduled for May 1-4, 2014.

PPACA - Mr. Evan Davis

Rep. Lou Barletta (R-PA) and Senators Mark Warner (D-VA) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) worked together to introduce bipartisan legislation (H.R. 3685/S. 1798) to exempt fire departments from a requirement to offer health insurance to their volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel. The IAFC is requesting that people contact their members of Congress and ask them to cosponsor this legislation. IAFC has posted online draft [letters to representatives](#) and [senators](#) (Word doc) for you to use. An e-blast went out yesterday to all IAFC members.

To see who has already agreed to cosponsor the bills, visit www.thomas.loc.gov. There is a search bar at the top of the page where you can type in the bill number to see who has cosponsored the bill, view the bill text, and see what committee has jurisdiction over the bill.

Chief Windisch mentioned that Chief Philip Stittleburg, Chairman of the National Volunteer Fire Council, was on Fox News about the PPACA issue for volunteers. He appeared on the 'On the Record' with Greta Van Susteren segment.

Chief Seavey told the group that at the Senate confirmation hearing on Wednesday (12/10) for the new IRS Commissioner, Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) asked nominee Mr. John Koskinen if he would take regulatory action to address how the Affordable Care Act may impact volunteer firefighters. Mr. Koskinen announced that if confirmed as the next IRS commissioner, he would exempt volunteer firefighters from the ACA. Mr. Davis confirmed this was correct, and that if for some reason we can't get the bill passed, we hope Mr. Koskinen will act on his promise.

Chief Seavey asked if the LOSAP bill was introduced. The bill is called the Volunteer Emergency Services Recruitment and Retention Act of 2013 (HR 1009/S 506). The House bill is sponsored by Rep. Peter King (R-NY) and the Senate bill is sponsored by Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY).

Yesterday, Rep. Larson (D-CT) and Latham (R-IA) introduced the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Reauthorization Act (HR 3747). This bill would prevent the government from taxing the first \$600 in incentives that a volunteer receives as well as all property incentives (such as local property tax waivers). The Senate version of this bill (S. 501) was already introduced by Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) in March.

Contact Mr. Evan Davis with any additional questions. He appreciates all the hard work VCOS has put into these issues.

Communications Committee Update – Chief Larson, Chief Crutcher, Chief Fulmer

Chief Fulmer reported that the Communications Committee talked a few days ago on a conference call. They are working on a plan for projects and will pass that along to the Board once it is completed.

Chief Crutcher is getting more information about developing apps for VCOS. Over the next few weeks he will receive more detailed price information and participate in some app demonstrations.

Ms. Joelle Fishkin is working on the Symposium Newsletter scheduled to be distributed in January. Chief Collins is writing an article on how to submit ideas for sessions, etc.

iWomen – Chief Larson

Chief Larson sent the latest iWomen partnership proposal to the VCOS Executive Committee. Chief Larson recommended moving forward with the iWomen partnership. The partnership will be a good recruitment opportunity for VCOS. Mr. Mark Light has reviewed the partnership proposal and is fine with VCOS moving forward. He clarified that recipients of the free VCOS memberships must be IAFC members.

Chief Larson sent an estimate of costs to attend the iWomen conference in February to the VCOS Executive Committee. The Executive Committee thought the costs were reasonable.

Motion by Chief Crutcher and seconded by Chief Eggleston for Chief Larson to attend the iWomen conference in February. Motion carried.

Motion by Chief Seavey and seconded by Chief Larson to approve the iWomen partnership proposal. Motion carried.

Training

The next VCOS webinar is scheduled for tonight, December 12th at 7 p.m. and is entitled [VCOS On-Fire Leadership Webinar: Taking Fire Dynamics Research to the Street](#). Chief Eggleston said there were 94 people registered. Chief Windisch stated he will have about ten people in a room participating.

Ms. Ameen will ensure that the recorded webinars on the VCOS website.

Other Business

Chief Windisch reported that the Fire Chief of Year award is up in the air now. Pierce still wants to sponsor it, but with the support of others like VCOS. Chief Windisch is waiting for more information at this point before anything can be done.

Chief Seavey presented the idea of creating challenge coins to commemorate VCOS' 20th anniversary. He sent an initial design and pricing information to the group for review. Overall, the Board likes the idea of doing something like this and agrees it is important to celebrate VCOS' 20th anniversary. This will be a subject for the February Board meeting. A suggestion was made to ensure that the coins are made in the USA. Any further comments or thoughts about the challenge coins should be sent to Chief Seavey. Ms. Ameen will get a list of VCOS members that have been with the section since 1994.

Roundtable

Chief Seavey: Mr. Robbie Robertson passed away last month. A copy of his obituary can be found here: http://www.dailyprogress.com/obituaries/robertson-james/article_8564cc9b-8a7e-59f5-bdce-82c6663a8ab6.html

Chief Vaughn: Thanked the VCOS Board for their thoughts and prayers regarding the recent tornadoes that struck his community.

Chief Eggleston: There was an IAFC Board of Directors call today. 2014 budgeting and the PPACA were discussed. Section budgets for 2014 have not been approved yet.

Chief Windisch: Stated that more flexible accounts and codes are needed for the 2014 VCOS budget. VCOS projects often need more definition and accounting codes that line up with VCOS activities and projects. Chief Eggleston will bring that up.

Ms. Ameen: The IAFC will be closed December 25-January 1.

Chief Wall: Thanked everyone for their work and stated that he is glad Chief Vaughn is safe and continues to wish the best to his community. Happy holidays!

Reminder: The next VCOS Board teleconference will be on January 9, 2014 at 4 p.m. ET

Adjourned: 4:50 pm