



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



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Minutes

VCOS Board of Directors

**Hampton Inn at Harbison
Columbia, South Carolina**

Saturday, February 2, 2013

Board Members:

Chief Timothy Wall, Chair
Chief Fred Windisch, Secretary/Treasurer
State Fire Marshal Shane Ray, International Director
Chief Fred Crosby, At-Large Board Member
Chief Ted Lowden, At-Large Board Member
Chief Mike Vaughn, At-Large Board Member

Absent:

Chief Dan Eggleston, At-Large Board Member
Chief Dave Fulmer, At-Large Board Member
Chief Jim Seavey, At-Large Board Member
Chief Jim Wilson, At-Large Board Member

Guests & Staff:

Chief Ron Cheves
Chief Luther Fincher
Mr. Joe Giorgi, VFIS
Mr. Troy Markel, VFIS
Mr. Ron Oettel, Provident
Mr. Jeff Siegrist, Provident
Ms. Joelle Fishkin, IAFC staff

Introductions and Welcome - Chief Timothy Wall

Report from Chair, Chief Timothy Wall

Chief Wall attended the IAFC Strategic Planning Meeting on January 17-19 and participated in several breakout groups, covering the topics of "Lead, Educate, and Innovate." There were 50-60 attendees from IAFC committees and sections.

Chief Wall made two appointments:

- Chief Kevin Cooney from South Windsor, Connecticut appointed to the NFFF
- Chief Ronald C. Smith from Gillette, Wyoming to the IAFC Innovations Conference

Report from Secretary/Treasurer, Chief Fred Windisch

The preliminary numbers reported from the IAFC show that the 611 (General) account was overspent by \$65,000 in 2012 and the 612 (Pierce) account was under spent by \$9000. The 812 (Symposium) account cleared \$40,000

Chief Windisch states that accounts were intentionally over spent in 2012 because we had to spend down some surplus funds; however, the board needs to pay greater attention to expenses in 2013 and beyond. He further explained that a new system has been put into place with the IAFC Finance Department to receive weekly updates instead of only monthly.

Chief Windisch states that the VCOS staff liaison will begin sending a monthly report on hours worked for the section so administrative charges can be chartered.

Report from International Director, State Fire Marshal Shane Ray

Director Ray reported that the IAFC voted to raise annual dues by \$5.00, from \$184 to \$189. He further stated that no special projects were funded for 2013 except for a project with EMS relating to the new health care law. There was a lot of debate on the 2013 budget and dues increase.

Director Ray reports that the IAFC Site Selection committee has selected several new cities, including some cities out west. The next FRI 3-city cycle is Chicago, Dallas, and Atlanta.

The IAFC has hired Mr. Tommy Hicks from Virginia to replace Ed Plaughter as Director of National Programs.

Symposium 2013 – Chief Fred Windisch, Chief Jim Wilson

Excess income made after expenses cleared was \$40,000 for our last year at the Sheraton Sand Key. Chief Windisch asks all board members and committee members to be careful with the number of free registrations that are promised.

The theme for 2013 is "Back to the Future." The Symposium will be a heavy blend of tactical information related to firefighter safety & behavior (leadership component). If anyone has a recommendation for a presenter, contact Chief Windisch.

The new hotel, the Hilton Clearwater Beach, will give more opportunity for concurrent classes and will allow more flexibility for attendees to attend. The committee has already figured out that if there are 6 classes, all attendees will be able to attend 4. Rooms are less expensive than at the Sheraton and VCOS won't have to pay for a tent on the beach. Attendees have more options for restaurants.

The contract for 2013 is completed; 2014 and 2015 are still to be finalized. The final dates for 2013 are November 7-10, 2013.

Target Solutions Agreement – Chief Dave Fulmer, Chief Brett Waters

We used to work with Target Solutions as TargetSafety, an online training company.

Chief Fulmer and Chief Waters have been in discussions with Target Solutions with the goal of writing a new agreement with them. TS is planning to sponsor the Training Officer Recognition award in 2013 and has proposed that we hold our June meeting at their headquarters in California. There is no discussion of cash payments to VCOS.

The board discussed TS's request that we identify them as our "preferred online training program" on our website.

The board discussed the fact that there have been many changes at TS; some were concerned whether they are on solid ground. Chief Fulmer recommends that we sign a one-year agreement only. Board members and guests also expressed concerns about the goal of the relationship. Chief Fulmer stated that our members would get a 20% discount on training.

Motion by Shane Ray and seconded by Fred Windisch to write a one-year agreement with Target Solutions. Motion failed.

Firefighter Cancer Network – Chief Mike Vaughn

Chief Vaughn reported that the Cancer Network is interested in creating a ribbon report on cancer in the fire service and asks whether VCOS can help pull together a group of experts. Specifically, they're looking for 2-3 VCOS members who were involved in the creation of ribbon reports plus others who have expertise on the issue of firefighter cancer. Chief Wall suggests Mike Macdonald to facilitate writing report.

Director Ray offered his facility for the meeting. The Safety, Health & Survival Section has been contacted and asked for an expert. Mr. Garry Briese has been asked to participate. Chief Wall recommends Chief Heather Burford and Chief Eddie Buchanan for the committee.

Chief Vaughn should send out 2 potential dates to suggested participants. The Firefighter Cancer Network could fund 5-6 people to attend meeting, including VCOS participants.

Motion by Fred Windisch and seconded by Shane Ray to proceed ahead on the development of a firefighter cancer ribbon report. Motion carried.

Report on Diversity Project – State Fire Marshal Shane Ray, Chief Timothy Wall, Ms. Ann Davison

Background: A supplemental funding request for \$10,000 was approved in 2012 but was not used because the committee wasn't able to convene. The \$10,000 supplemental funding was denied by the IAFC board in the 2013 budget.

Director Ray stated that there have been problems gathering together the proper groups which would be expected to participate on writing this report. One of the leads on the report, Chief Jona Olsson, reached out to the other affinity groups, including IWomen, Black Chief Officers, Native American Fire Chiefs, Hispanic Fire Chiefs, etc and they have all agreed to participate with the understanding that at least 50% of the group must be volunteer.

Director Ray can host the meeting at the South Carolina Fire Training Academy at a reduced rate and would be able to bring in some subject matter experts from South Carolina. It is suggested that Ms. Vickie Pritchett could facilitate and Ms. Ann Davison, IAFC staff and liaison to the Human Relations Committee, could be the scribe.

Director Ray stated that developing a team to participate in writing this complex report presented unique challenges as it required a combination of expertise and perspectives from both within and beyond the IAFC. Chief Jona Olsson, VCOS member and the project lead on behalf of the IAFC Human Relations Committee, reached out to the other national affinity groups for assistance. The International Association of Women in Fire & Emergency Services, the Black Chief Officers Committee of the International Association of Black Professional Firefighters, the National Native American Fire Chiefs Association and the National Association of Hispanic Firefighters, etc have all agreed to participate with the understanding that at least 50% of the

group must be volunteers. Members of VCOS, the HRC and other individuals have also been asked to serve.

Chief Windisch responded that VCOS did address diversity in the final Summit document; in the draft stage, diversity had been treated as a "stand-alone," but it was removed as a stand-alone and was incorporated into each of the individual challenge statements.

Mr. Giorgi states that this effort is well worth pursuing and it is outstanding that VCOS is taking the lead on this topic.

Motion by Ted Lowden and seconded by Fred Windisch to approve \$10,000 toward development of the Diversity Report. Motion carried.

ISO Seminars and Dates for 2013 – Chief Larry Curl, Ret.

Chief Windisch worked with Chief Curl on an ISO class in California. The class was quite successful with 65 attendees. Chief Curl processed payments and sent them to the staff liaison for input into the IAFC database.

If any board member would like to bring an ISO class to their location, contact Chief Curl.

Ms. Fishkin stated that after it is determined how well EventBrite works for the first FROG course in Oregon in March, she will implement use of EventBrite for the ISO classes as the current system is very time-consuming.

Chief Windisch states that an instructor is needed for the ethics portion of the class at Firehouse Expo on July 25. It is possible that Chief Seavey can do this as he will be staffing the booth at Firehouse.

Vision Project Update – Chief Tim Tharp, Chief Fred Windisch, Chief Norvin Collins

The board discussed the timeline on the Vision Project website being hosted by the IAFC. IAFC Director Terry Monroe sent a message to Chief Wall that the website is on track for completion for April.

A request is going out to all lane leaders next week asking for their documents to be added to the website as one of the crucial steps is uploading content.

The board discussed appointing a deputy to assist Chief Tim Tharp because his job is keeping him in Asia which is making communication difficult.

Chief Windisch has been in communications with Globe to provide funding for the Vision Project similar to the Pierce Initiative. A draft document was sent to them 2 weeks ago for their review and comments.

FROGS Program Update – Chief Norvin Collins

The 2013-2014 budget allocates \$8000 in revenue and \$32,000 in expenses. A lot more about expenses will be made clear after the presentation at the Oregon Fire Training Academy in March 2013. There may possibly be a second testing site set up after Oregon.

The cost of the Oregon class is \$200/student. Costs could be different at other classes. The board agreed that it will be good to market the locations and costs as soon as they are confirmed.

All the FROG instructors will be going to the Oregon class; only 4 instructors will be going to all other classes. Each class is 2.5 days in length.

Currently for 2013, there have been classes requested in Iowa, South Carolina, Indiana, and at the Symposium.

NACo Representation Update – Chief Fred Crosby

NACo has a new executor director; the previous director has retired after 27 years. There is nothing particular going on at NACo which affects fire service. NACo still supports SAFER grants.

NACo's annual meeting will be in Colorado in June. Chief Crosby will probably attend that meeting.

Chief Wall asked whether there is anything VCOS could send to NACo to market the IAFC and the section. Chief Crosby suggests that we target their *Justice and Public Safety Committee* for any materials we send them.

Spring Newsletter – Chief Fred Crosby

The spring newsletter issue will focus on Risk Management; Chief Fulmer and Chief Crosby are coordinating obtaining the articles.

VFIS and Provident were both asked to write an article for this issue and both accepted. Mr. Joe Giorgi from VFIS agreed to write an article on physical damage 'agree value' (replacement costs).

Mr. Edward Holohan, President of Penflex offered to write a LOSAP article while he was at 2012 Symposium.

Webinar Schedule for 2013 – Chief Dan Eggleston, Chief John Oprandy

Current topics for 2013 webinars are:

- Volunteer Recruitment
- Volunteer Retention
- Volunteer officer development/leadership
- Dealing with nuisance fire alarms – Chief Fincher will be speaker

Chief John Oprandy purchased the VCOS webinar license on February 1, 2013.

Action: board members should solicit people who can do webinars on technical subjects.

VCOS 2013 Election

Chief Wall reported that he and Chief Joe Florentino, the Elections Committee Chair, discussed the selection of some new Elections Committee members from the Eastern Division. They will be appointed in time for an Elections Committee teleconference later this month.

Chief Wall reported that there can be no candidates running for election from the Eastern Division as there are already two board members from that division.

It was reported that the following board members' terms are up in 2013: Chief Fred Windisch, Director Shane Ray, Chief Fred Crosby, Chief Mike Vaughn

It was reported that Chief Windisch and Chief Vaughn intend to run for the board again and that Chief Crosby and Director Ray will not run.

Awards, Scholarships & Sponsors – Chief Timothy Wall

Safe Driving Initiative – Mr. Troy Markel, Mr. Joe Giorgi, VFIS

Mr. Troy Markel and Joe Giorgi discussed some revisions to the existing Safe Driving Initiative program sponsored by VFIS, as follows:

- Award will be changed in structure to be “collision/incident/crash” oriented versus “accident.”
- Award will be expanded beyond VCOS members only. Any fire department can apply.
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- Program will be awarded for “evidence of a reduction in incidents OR having no collisions/incidents/crashes in the defined 12-month period.”
- Program will recognize the winner in two ways:
 - Formally at the VCOS Symposium in the Sun
 - Presentation at the department's location following the Symposium

Mr. Markel and Mr. Giorgi discussed the need for a better definition of what a crash is so that applicants will know whether they're eligible to apply.

VFIS will be marketing the program at all their booths, including FDIC. They are also willing to put out VCOS materials at their booths.

Chief Jim Seavey is assigned to work with VFIS on this program.

Action: Joelle to make up poster with all awards listed and email to Troy Markel.

Motion by Ted Lowden and seconded by Fred Crosby to move forward with updates to Safe Driving Initiative program discussed by VFIS representative. Motion carried.

Retention & Recruitment Award (VFIS) – Chief Ted Lowden, Chief Dave Fulmer

The board discussed the recommendation from Chief Windisch that only electronic submissions be accepted for this award. The board also discussed a new proposal that only fire departments can apply for this award (no associations can apply). All present were in agreement.

Chief Windisch will pass on all his information on the 2012 award to the new committee members.

Deadlines for all awards being presented at Symposium in the Sun is August 31.

John M. Buckman III Award (Provident) – Chief Jim Seavey, Chief Mike Vaughn

The committee members assigned are Chief Jim Seavey and Chief Mike Vaughn.

2 FRI Scholarships – Chief Mike Vaughn

Chief Dan Eggleston will assist Chief Vaughn with the development of the application through the use of Survey Monkey. Chief Vaughn will send the information and timeline to the staff liaison.

2 Symposium Scholarships – Chief Ted Lowden

Chief Ted Lowden will be in charge of the two Symposium scholarship awards in 2013.

1 Gasaway Symposium Scholarship – Chief Richard Gasaway

Action: Staff liaison to inform Chief Gasaway about August 31 deadline

VCOS Website Sponsors Page – Chief Jim Wilson, Chief Timothy Wall

The board discussed the need to add additional sponsors to the VCOS webpage on corporate sponsors. The board felt that it would provide additional value to the sponsors to add text on the webpage stating that you need to click on the logo to be directed to the sponsor's webpage.

Action: Staff liaison to put text on page to state that you need to click on logo to be directed to their webpage

Action: Staff liaison to add a link to the award page from the corporate sponsor page.

Celebration of IAFC's 140th anniversary

Chief Wall reported that the IAFC is requesting that as many people as possible go to a link on the IAFC website to post a story about how/why they got involved with the IAFC.

Fire Service Legislation

The board discussed the fact that there are monthly teleconferences between the IAFF, NFPA, IAFC, and NVFC on legislative issues for the fire service. It was requested that the VCOS board have a call with the NVFC to discuss areas of mutual interest, among these being the W-2 versus 1099 forms. NVFC has some opposition to the W-2 bill and they see some benefits to the 1099 form; they object to classifying volunteers as "independent contractors."

Action: Staff liaison to ask Ken LaSala or Evan Davis to come on a call to discuss these issues and to ask if we can have a teleconference with NVFC for same purpose.

Chief Fincher reports that almost everyone in the House is going to approve the language of the 1099 bill.

Director Ray stated that anyone who schedules their volunteers with regular work hours can use a 1099 form. If they work odd or unpredictable hours, they should use a W-2.

School Safety Discussion – Chief Ted Lowden

The board discussed what role the fire service should play with school safety. Should we develop a position statement? It was reported that the IAFC does not have a position statement on this issue.

Chief Lowden states that he was inundated with phone calls after the Sandy Hook incident and callers were asking what fire departments should/could do during such an incident. Chief Lowden was not able to find any “best practices” documents.

Some people told him that it was a police/law enforcement issue and not a fire dept issue. Chief Lowden would like to discuss the possibility of producing a document that would advise the volunteer/combination fire service on what to do during such an incident. He is not looking for a large-scale report but something brief to offer guidance to the volunteer fire chief who faces such a situation.

Director Ray stated that there are many complexities to this issue due to the competing goals of personal safety versus life safety.

Chief Windisch suggested a “guidance document” (overview) rather than position statement, using bullet points giving guidance on how to prepare and how to react subsequent to an incident.

Chief Fincher will discuss this issue with the IAFC Executive Committee and bring information back to the board members.

Ken Bouvier discussed this topic at Symposium 2012; the board members discussed whether this topic should be brought again to Symposium 2013. No decision made.

Mr. Markel, VFIS, reported that VFIS got phone calls after the incident asking what was their position on fire service carrying guns.

Action: Ted Lowden will contact John Oprandy to discuss school safety as a potential webinar topic

Action: Staff liaison to put out as VCOS announcement asking members for best practices

Transition Course – Chief Ron Cheves

Chief Cheves reported that 6 transition courses were administered in 2012 and that there are 3 confirmations for 2013, including one at FDIC, one at FRI and one in Oconee County, SC. There is a little concern regarding the FDIC course as it’s a Monday morning and there may be fewer volunteer chiefs in attendance. Oconee County also has a BH&H course on the schedule for May 2013.

Chief Cheves reported that the committee is working on updating the presentation as the course is now 3 years old. A face-to-face meeting would be scheduled for FRI or Symposium in order to save expense. He also reports that the committee members have requested some funding for these meetings.

The Executive Director of the Southeastern Division is comping booth space in North Charleston SC but they will be charging \$100/person for food.

Chief Cheves states that the committee is planning to develop a check-off list with proposed actions that they can pass out to all attendees (for example, updating your department bylaws).

He has found that most of the departments requesting the LTC course have already "transitioned" before they bring in the course.

**Action: Chief Cheves will ask John Oprandy to schedule a webinar on the LTC course.
Action: Chief Cheves should send Chief Wall the estimated cost for the requested meeting at FRI or Symposium.**

Membership Update & Booth Schedule for 2013 - Chief Timothy Wall, Chief Jim Seavey

Chief Wall states that IAFC staff report our current membership to be approximately 2450. Staff also report that a marketing email was sent to all non-member VCOS Symposium 2012 attendees, including 49 chief officers, 26 company officers and 18 departmental-eligible departments inviting them to join the IAFC/VCOS.

Chief Wall encourages all board members to go to their division or state conference and set up a VCOS table and ask the conference organizers to get on agenda and give brief presentation on VCOS.

BH&H course – Chief Greg Render

Chief Render reported that ten Beyond Hoses & Helmets courses were administered in 2012 with a total of 342 students reached. There are 5 confirmed courses on the 2013 schedule with one additional course request to be scheduled.

Chief Render also states that 6 members have expressed interest in becoming BH&H instructors and he will be working to get them scheduled as trainee instructors.

CFSI Activities and Schedule – Chief Timothy Wall

Chief Wall reported that the CFSI program could be expanded this year as it's their 25th anniversary. It is his intention to purchase a VCOS table; if any board member wishes to go, get in touch with Chief Wall. CFSI will not be a VCOS-sponsored activity this year but there will be seats at the table if you need one. Shane Ray, Ron Cheves, Tim Wall and Dan Eggleston are all potentially interested in attending.

Chief Wall has not yet discussed with Sean Carroll whether VCOS would like to offer an educational seminar.

CFSI will be discussed further in a future teleconference.

Update June Board Meeting – May 31 - June 3

The board discussed Target Solution's offer to host the June board meeting but the offer was not approved. Chief Crosby offered to host in Myrtle Beach, but he confirms that's peak beach season and hotels will be expensive.

The June board meeting will be discussed on a future teleconference.

Roundtable

- Chief Tim Wall thanks Shane Ray for his great hospitality

- Director Shane Ray expresses his appreciation to Vickie Pritchett for her tremendous assistance
- Chief Fincher appreciates the invitation and the opportunity to represent the IAFC board of directors
- Chief Wall received an email from George Vichot, "a concerned citizen," who is very concerned with firefighter fatalities among volunteer firefighters and suggests many avenues for funding sources. Chief Wall acknowledged his concerns in a responding email message.
- Chief Crosby offers to host a meeting in Myrtle Beach SC at some point in the future.