



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



4025 Fair Ridge Drive • Fairfax, VA 22033-2868 • Tel: 703/273-0911 • www.iafc.org

VCOS Board of Directors

May 1-2, 2015

Emmitsburg, MD

Minutes

Present: Chief Jason Catrambone, Chief Shane Crutcher, Chief Charles Flynn, Chief Randy Larson, Chief Norvin Collins, Chief James Seavey, Chief Fred Windisch, Chief Dan Eggleston, Chief Timothy Wall, Chief Ed Rush

Absent: None

Guests: Mr. Troy Markel, Mr. Ron Oettel, Mr. Joe Giorgi, Chief Kevin Quinn

Staff: Mr. Tommy Hicks, Ms. Karin Fitzgerald, Mr. Richard Miller, Ms. Kelly Ameen

Friday, May 1: 9:15am – 5pm

The meeting started at 1:55pm.

Introduction and Welcome of Guests – Chief Wall

The Paul Harvey "Fireman" video was shown to the group.

Chief Wall welcomed the IAFC staff, VCOS board of directors, VCOS members, friends and supporters, and the NVFC to the meeting. He acknowledged what a great tour the group had of the NETC. He also commented that the dedication ceremony at the National Fire Heritage Center went very well.

IAFC Hazmat Projects - Mr. Richard Miller, IAFC Program Manager

The online propane awareness class will be up in next 30 days on the IAFC Academy. It is a free program.

The Pipeline Emergency Preparedness program is a partnership with TransCanada and the IAFC. Ten town hall meetings will be conducted nationally. The program will also be brought to the Symposium. The town halls will be done in localities near pipelines. The first class is in South Dakota. Mr. Miller asked for VCOS' support in advertising the classes. TransCanada provides 2 instructors for each class. Board members commented that the message should come through VCOS and the fire service not the pipeline industry. Mr. Miller handed out a draft flyer. The VCOS logo could be added as well. They are looking at the IAFC member list to market directly to those people for the town halls. VCOS board members may be able to attend and represent IAFC/VCOS. Each class is not more than four hours. Chief

Windisch can go to the Texas class. Chief Catrambone can go to the one in North Dakota. He will touch base with the lead there. Mr. Jim Rist and Mr. Melvin Byrne are the IAFC leads on this effort, but Mr. Miller is assisting when they need it. VCOS could write an article from attending the classes. VCOS could potentially fund board members to attend.

Mr. Miller gave an update on the FSTAR project. They are now working on FSTAR 2 which will build a searchable database of firefighter research. They have also received some requests to do some additional town hall classes for FSTAR and the fire dynamics research. One of the biggest wins from the first phase of FSTAR was Houston changing their practices to use the latest research and firefighting tactics.

IAFC recently submitted a proposal for a guidebook focusing on implementing 1582 physicals for physicians and medical providers to know how to give those physicals.

On Wednesday, August 26 at FRI there will be a Physicals Summit organized by the Safety, Health and Survival Section.

IAFC Leadership Update - Mr. Tommy Hicks, IAFC Chief Programs & Technology Officer & Assistant Executive Director and Ms. Karin Fitzgerald, IAFC Chief Operations Officer & Deputy Executive Director
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Ms. Karin Fitzgerald provided an IAFC Leadership update:

The IAFC continues to work aggressively to raise awareness on Capitol Hill about issues critical to our association's 11,000+ members and the U.S. fire service.

Chief Bryant has been to Washington, D.C. four times so far in 2015, delivering our message to Congress and Administration officials:

- January – appeared before the Federal Communications Commission to talk about the importance of 911 location technologies to first responders and public safety.
- March 11 – testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation about FirstNet and its goal of building a nationwide public-safety broadband network to meet the needs of first responders.
- March 19 – testified before the House Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications about violent extremists, terrorists, and the possible use of chemical weapons on our communities.
- April – back in D.C. for the CFSI dinner. He took advantage of the opportunity and conducted two full days of meetings with key members of the House and Senate –including appropriators – and U.S. Fire Administration officials. The meetings were very productive and they covered a lot of ground.

The primary goal was to seek congressional support of federal programs that assist our firefighters and EMS personnel. He reminded the members that the fire and emergency service responds to more than 29 million incidents each year, including structural fires, hazardous materials incidents, wildland fires, EMS calls, and numerous other emergency response situations. We will continue to work with Congress to ensure that federal fire service programs continue to address all natural and human-made threats to our communities and the nation. In FY 2014 and 2015, Congress agreed to appropriate \$44 million for the USFA. For FY 2016, the Administration proposed only \$41.582 million. We are concerned that this proposed cut will eliminate the State Fire Training Grant program, which would restrict USFA's ability to assist state fire training academies with their educational missions. Instead of cutting funding to USFA, we are asking that the agency's funding be restored to its FY 2011 level of

\$45.6 million. This would protect the State Fire Training Grant program and allow USFA to begin to enact other priority initiatives that we support.

For FY 2014 and 2015, Congress agreed to appropriate \$340 million each for the FIRE and SAFER grant programs. For FY 2016, the Administration requested only \$335 million for each program. The Administration also proposed eliminating the separate account for "Firefighter Assistance Grants" and moving the program under the "State and Local Programs" account, which could make it easier for FEMA to transfer funds out of the AFG program and into other programs. Also, the Administration proposed continuing to fund the administrative costs for the AFG program out of FEMA's "Salaries and Expenses" account. The IAFC is asking that funding for these programs be restored to their 2011-funding level of \$405 million each. We are telling appropriators that since 2011, the costs of fire equipment, apparatus and staffing have increased significantly.

In his FY 2016 budget request, President Obama again proposed consolidating the 16 homeland security grant programs administered by FEMA, into a single \$1.043 billion program. This includes the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) and the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP) that would be administered by the states. We are concerned that this proposal will reduce transparency into how FEMA's homeland security grants are allocated and limit local jurisdictions' ability to influence how these grants are used. We are asking Congress to ensure that local public safety agencies are equal partners with the states in deciding how homeland security grant funding is spent. This proposal was rejected for FY 2015 and we hope it's rejected for FY 2016.

As you know, nationally, the number of volunteer firefighters has decreased steadily since 1984. There are several reasons for this trend, including increased demands from fire departments on their volunteers' time due to growing emergency call volumes. But another reason is the result of changes in federal taxation of state and local comprehensive benefits and incentives programs.

- In 2002, the IRS began to count such local volunteer incentives as taxable income. As a result, volunteer personnel in many states must now pay federal tax on incentives, such as local property tax rebates, length of service award programs (LOSAPs), local tax credits, personal vehicle gas allowances, and more. The IAFC believes taxation of such incentives hinders the ability of localities to recruit and retain volunteer emergency responders.
- In 2007, a bill was passed which included the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act (VRIPA). This specifically excluded from taxable income any property tax benefit and up to \$360 per year of all other payments from a state or local unit of government to volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel through the 2010 tax year. The VRIPA expired at the end of the 2010 tax year.
- Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced a new Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act (VRIPA, S. 609). The legislation would amend the IRS Code to reinstate and increase the exclusion for benefits provided to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responders by raising the base from \$360 to \$600 annually and extending coverage through the 2017 tax year. Representative John Larson (D-CT) is expected to introduce similar legislation in the House of Representatives. The IAFC is working to recruit cosponsors for VRIPA (S. 609). In addition, the IAFC is asking the House

Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee to include this legislation in any comprehensive tax reform legislation or tax extenders legislation that Congress may consider later this year.

The IAFC received notice that our organization will receive a 2015 Gold Circle Award from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). We are receiving the top honor in the Membership Recruitment category for the IAFC's "We are the IAFC" Member Recruitment Campaign.

Fire-Rescue International has received the Top 250 Tradeshow award from the Trade Show News Network (TSNN). FRI 2014 in Dallas was ranked the 150th top trade show of 2014 in the United States. Winners were determined by square footage, show attendance and exhibitor participation. This year FRI will be in Atlanta and registration is tracking ahead of last year so far.

Chief Wall commented that all of the IAFC staff is great to work with and very professional.

Mr. Hicks conducted a demo of the beta version of the IAFC Helix system located at www.myhelix.org. Everything is responsive and mobile friendly. It allows for single sign-on access to all IAFC applications on a public safety cloud with links to all sorts of helpful resources and public safety applications.

Departments can tailor several of the applications for their individual department's use. This includes a department specific Near Miss System and also a department specific learning management system. For the department near miss system, there will be an option to add a risk management element. This will be available by FRI. Departments with their own near miss systems through Helix can choose to share their near miss reports with the national near miss program. Departments will be able to benchmark their department against the national level as comparison. Eventually they'll be able to compare their department to departments similar in size and make up.

Another application within Helix is the IAFC Academy, an online learning management system (LMS). It can be used for online only, blended, or instructor-led courses. Courses are open to everyone, not just IAFC members. There are currently two courses on the IAFC Academy, but there will be 48 additional classes added in the next three months.

In terms of pricing, the tailored department level near miss is \$499 annually. The risk management addition will be about \$4,900. The department specific LMS has a \$4,900 annual fee. If a department would like a more robust LMS with lots of customization and additional functionality, the price could be more like \$25,000 - \$30,000.

Helix is free and so is the IAFC Academy. There was confusion on the difference between Helix and the IAFC Academy. Mr. Hicks explained that the IAFC Academy is one application within Helix. Helix is the umbrella program that has several applications/programs within it.

The goal is to have 100,000 firefighters on the system by the end of the year. GPO and Daily Dispatch might be integrated into it as well.

Chief Collins commented that \$4,900 is too high for volunteers.

Mr. Hicks responded that there will be a fillable forms option for \$499/annually. He also mentioned that they did some stakeholder focus groups. Chief Wall suggested doing a survey to IAFC members to get feedback on the system, options, and prices. Maybe a focus group at Symposium to meet with the IAFC leadership to hear about this would be a good idea.

The beta version of Helix and the IAFC Academy launched May 1 (today). The IAFC will have time between now and Symposium to get some feedback.

There will be a records keeping application launched at FRI. They are working on a GIS application as well.

Mr. Hicks ensured there will be many free courses on the IAFC Academy. It also sounds like having a department specific records keeping component would be beneficial to volunteer departments.

Chief Rush commented that this could be a funnel for vetted training programs.

Chief Wall stated that VCOS is committed to helping Near Miss. VCOS is currently working with Ms. Laura Bell for a bigger program presence at the Symposium.

Updates from our Friends and Supporters

Chief Kevin Quinn, Chair of the NVFC, thanked VCOS for inviting him to the meeting. He looks forward to strengthening the VCOS and NVFC relationship to help more "boots on the ground." He believes both organizations should be working together to grow and help the volunteer fire service community. He has been in the fire service for 39 years. He appreciates working together on the Volunteer POV Response paper. It will be discussed at their July Executive Committee meeting.

Mr. Troy Markel and Mr. Joe Giorgi attended the meeting on behalf of VFIS. VFIS recently launched VFIS University, a new distance learning website with more than 300 courses available. VFIS attended FDIC. The exhibiting Thursday was very good and it slowed down Friday and was even slower on Saturday. They believe having 2 days for exhibiting at FRI is the right amount of time. They also think there is value in smaller regional shows in addition to the big national conferences.

Mr. Ron Oettel participated on behalf of Provident. He appreciates the continued partnership with VCOS and commented that VCOS does very meaningful work.

Chair's Report – Chief Wall

Over the past few months, Chairman Wall has been on conference calls with several IAFC staff including Near Miss, Government Relations, and with Mr. Mark Light. He is also working on the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association's Volunteer Workforce Steering Committee with the IAFC.

CFSI went well. Several board members attended Chief Gaines' funeral. Chief Wall was able to talk to Administrator Mitchell and Mr. Bill Webb while at CFSI. He also attended the NVFC annual dinner and congratulated Chief Phil Stittleburg on his retirement as Chair of the NVFC. VCOS donated a Symposium scholarship and 2 nights of hotel to the NVFC Foundation auction.

The April call minutes were reviewed. One change was noted – Chief Larson was absent on the call and he is listed under both present and absent. Ms. Ameen will make that change.

Motion by Chief Seavey and seconded by Chief Flynn to approve the minutes from the April board call with the requested change. Motion carried.

International Director's Report – Chief Eggleston

Chief Eggleston reported on some activities on behalf of the IAFC board. The IAFC Foundation received a grant from the Motorola Solutions Foundation for \$75,000. Through the grant, the IAFC Foundation will expand the reach of its Future Leaders Scholarship Programs and the IAFC's Officer Development Programs (ODP), including the Company Officer Leadership Symposia (COLS), Chief Officer Leadership Symposia and Executive Chief Officer Leadership Symposia.

The EMS Section shared their strategic plan with the IAFC board.

The Human Relations Committee is getting refocused and has been restructuring.

Chief Eggleston has led the effort for the Volunteer POV Best Practices Paper. The idea and concept started from the TAMPA 2 Summit. The NVFC and Safety, Health and Survival Section reviewed the document and provided comments that have been incorporated. VFIS and Provident also reviewed it and made comments. Some VCOS board members suggested looking into making it an e-book or audio book. Mr. Mark Light suggested a catchier cover. We could use Mr. Mike Macdonald to layout the document in a more appealing layout if we decide to print any copies. **Action item: Chief Eggleston will look into pricing for an e-book/audio book and decide what format to publish this. He will consult with the NVFC.**

Chief Eggleston also provided an update on the Diversity Report. Mr. Mike Macdonald took the initial outlines and notes and created a draft document that was included in the board packet. Chief Eggleston sent it to the IAFC Human Relations Committee for review. **Action item: Chief Eggleston will ask the HR Committee to get comments back within 30 days.** Chief Windisch commented that it shouldn't be called the Green Ribbon Report since green represents safety. He suggested maybe the transparent or clear report. In addition, we might need warning language saying that the report contains strong language. Chief Rush thought the report was going to be different and more about how to diversify not the importance of it. There are some recommendations for implementation towards the end. However, this is the first step of discussing the problem and something can be developed later that goes into more detail with implementation.

Vice Chair's Report – Chief Crutcher

Chief Crutcher will be going to Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs Conference later this year. We are working on getting a VCOS booth there. He will have more to report in his committee reports later in the meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Chief Windisch

Financially, VCOS looks fine. Chief Collins asked that the board be provided with more budget details in the future in order to compare budget versus actuals. If board members have fiduciary responsibility, they need to clearly understand the state of the financials. This will be discussed more in executive session.

Motion by Chief Seavey and seconded by Chief Catrambone to go into executive session. Motion carried.

Executive session started at 4:27pm.

The regular meeting reconvened at 5:00pm.

Chief Wall thanked the board for the donation in memory of his father and shared details from the funeral service.

Motion by Chief Larson and seconded by Chief Collins to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15pm.



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Saturday, May 2: 9:00am – 4:00pm

Present: Chief Jason Catrambone, Chief Shane Crutcher, Chief Charles Flynn, Chief Randy Larson, Chief Norvin Collins, Chief James Seavey, Chief Fred Windisch, Chief Dan Eggleston, Chief Timothy Wall, Chief Ed Rush

Absent: None

Guests: Mr. Troy Markel, Mr. Ron Oettel, Mr. Joe Giorgi, Mr. Wayne Powell

Staff: Ms. Kelly Ameen

Meeting Location: Vigilant Hose Company 25 W. Main Street, Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Recap of Yesterday and Today's Goals

Chief Wall thanked everyone for a good day yesterday. We will bring up some of the executive session topics that came up yesterday during old business. Thanks to Mr. Wayne Powell for yesterday and hosting today.

Motion by Chief Wall and seconded by Chief Flynn to come out of adjournment and start the meeting today. Motion carried.

Discussion and Action Items:

Program Planning Committee – Chief Wall

Chief Richards submitted a report for the board packet. VCOS needs to submit a replacement for the Council now that Chief Richards is on the Committee. VCOS is responsible for expenses. We should nominate someone by July. There are two live meetings a year (one at FRI and a site visit in October) and some conference calls. Chief Donna Black is interested. If you have someone to nominate, let Chief Wall know.

Fire Chief of the Year – Chief Wall

Motion by Chief Crutcher and seconded by Chief Flynn to nominate Chief Eggleston as the VCOS nominee for career Chief of the Year. Motion carried.

Chief Oprandy is helping to submit the nomination for Chief Eggleston and sent an email to Chief Crutcher. **Action item: Chief Crutcher will send that email out to the board for other comments.** The requirements and process for nominations were reviewed on the IAFC website.

Chief Seavey recommended nominating Chief Byron Andrews from Sterling (VA) Volunteer Fire Department for Volunteer Chief of the Year. Chief Windisch recommended Chief Charles Addington from Texas. After discussion, VCOS agreed to nominate Chief Andrews and then Chief Windisch could submit Chief Addington separately. Nominations are due by June 5.

Motion by Chief Windisch and seconded by Chief Flynn to nominate Chief Byron Andrews as the VCOS nominee for volunteer Chief of the Year. Motion carried.

Action item: Chief Seavey will work on the nomination for Chief Andrews.

Proposed Bylaws Change – Chief Windisch

Chief Windisch proposed some changes to the existing VCOS bylaws. Draft language was passed out to all board members. One change involved board vacancies. It was suggested that if the resignation occurs between January 1 and perhaps April 15 of the year, the remaining board members may or may not opt to appoint versus an election. In other words, the position could remain open until the next election. In this year's case, the election will be for one year only.

Another suggested change was regarding the International Director seat. It was suggested that this position be filled from an existing or prior VCOS board member.

We should also get rid of the language referencing the mailing of ballots since everything is done online now.

Action item: The Bylaws Committee will take a look at the current bylaws and these suggested changes. Chiefs Windisch, Flynn, and Collins were appointed to the Bylaws Committee. They should keep Chiefs Florentino and Eggleston in the loop. The committee should have suggested changes to present to the VCOS board at the meeting in November at the Symposium so that we have enough time to then submit them to the IAFC for review so they can be adopted in 2016.

Near Miss Partnership – Chiefs Wall and Rush

Reports were submitted by Chiefs Buchanan, Kerrigan, and Rush. The draft Near Miss proposal to work with VCOS was reviewed. Chief Rush reported that they had a call recently to talk about Near Miss' presence at Symposium. They also discussed the possibility of a Near Miss scholarship or award. There could be a break-out session at Symposium with the winner. They need to work out the details. Chief Wall suggested advertising the award or scholarship at FRI and Symposium this year and then do it in 2016. A future VCOS newsletter could have the Near Miss theme. There was discussion that we are already having trouble getting people to apply for awards and scholarships so maybe that isn't the best way to market Near Miss. Perhaps give all Symposium attendees t-shirts with the VCOS and Near Miss logos to help promote the program? It could be the theme of the networking session or at the closing kitchen table discussion and we could encourage people to wear the shirts then. Tie Near Miss into Symposium West? We should challenge other sections to get involved. We need to maximize our investment so that it provides the most impact for the Near Miss program.

Action items: Invite Ms. Laura Bell to be on the next VCOS call. Chief Rush will be on the Near Miss call next Tuesday and provide an update about the VCOS board discussion and ideas. Chief Windisch will get a quote for t-shirts.

Motion by Chief Windisch and seconded by Chief Larson to approve \$5,000 out of the Symposium budget for t-shirts to help promote Near Miss at the 2015 Symposium. Motion carried.

CPSE Committee – Chief Wall

Chief Christopoulos submitted a written report. There was a request for VCOS to endorse the CPSE credentialing process. There was confusion among the board between accreditation versus credentialing. Could this be used against volunteers since requirements are tough? **Action item: Invite Chief Christopoulos to be on the June VCOS call to help clarify some questions. Then Chief Eggleston will write the letter of endorsement if everyone agrees.** There was also a suggestion of using our ISO relationship and looking into getting extra ISO rating points for having a CFO in your department.

Instructor of the Year

The VCOS board called Chief Eddie Buchanan to congratulate him on the instructor of the year award from ISFSI.

Affordable Care Act Taskforce – Chief Wall

Chief Noonan submitted a report. The VCOS board suggested putting together a hot sheet about how this affects departments. We could put the hot sheets in the Symposium attendee bags. **Action item: Chief Wall will follow-up with Chief Noonan.**

VCOS Educational Opportunities

You and ISO – Chief Curl submitted a report. There were recent classes in KY and CT. Chief Windisch reported that there may be a class in July in Indianapolis. Chiefs Larson and Catrambone reported they tried to organize a class in their areas, but it isn't going to work out.

Beyond Hoses and Helmets – Chief Render submitted a written report. There have been two classes conducted so far this year and there are a few more classes scheduled. There is still room for more classes this year.

FROG – Chief Collins submitted a report. They currently have enough instructors. They will have 2 classes in Maine and another one in Tennessee later this year. **Action item: Chief Collins will give the FROG flyer for the Maine class to Chiefs Wall and Flynn so they can take it to the upcoming New England Chiefs meeting in Maine.** The revenue posted this year for FROG was for the class last year in Maryland. There will be a FROG and BH&H class in Maryland this year through their grant.

Leading the Transition – Chief Cheves submitted a report. There will be a class at Firehouse Expo. This class may need a rewrite and some updating. **Action item: Chief Crutcher will get this group on a call to discuss the program and also find out who the current instructors are.** There is an upcoming class in Harris County but there was a question about its worth since they are already well into the transition process. **Action item: Chief Eggleston will ask Chief Cheves about that.**

Webinars - Chief Oprandy's report stated there were 305 people on the last VCOS webinar.

2015 Symposium in the Sun – Symposium Committee

They are finalizing the list of presenters. The Hilton is sold out on Thursday and Friday nights with limited availability for the other nights. They are working now to open the Marriott and Pier House 60. There will be a shuttle from Marriott to the Hilton. There are 21 sponsors/vendors so far.

Mr. Robert Mantooth is a featured speaker. He will be going to dinner with us on Thursday night. His speaking fee is around \$5,000.

There are lots of new presenters this year. Within 2 weeks the committee will have all speakers finalized. Friday morning will be awards and scholarships. Contracts have been signed with the Hilton through 2018 and the future Symposium dates are as follows:

- Nov 10-13 2016
- Nov 9-12, 2017
- Nov 8-11, 2018

Future Symposium Further West – Symposium Committee

We are looking at May of 2016 for Symposium West. Cities in consideration include: Seattle, Portland, Salt Lake City, Reno, San Diego, etc. There is an RFP going out in those areas. The IAFC is really happy with the hotel used for the Wildland Conference in Reno. We may be able to get a better deal there. We need to keep in mind Mother's Day and CFSI when picking dates.

Action item: The Symposium Committee will vet the RFPs and bring their recommendation to the board. Keep the name Symposium West.

FRI 2015 – Chief Wall

FRI scholarship information is on the website. We need the board to promote the scholarships. The application period is open now and ends June 12. **Action item: Chief Larson to work on a flyer to promote it.**

Training Officer Award: We have received a few applications so far. The chief or someone from the department has to be a member of the IAFC. **Action item: Create an awards and scholarships flyer.**

Action item: Brainstorm the 20th anniversary close out and we will discuss it on the next call.

While at FRI, board members are encouraged to go to Division lunches, attend the VCOS annual meeting, attend the IAFC business meeting, and help with the exhibiting booth. We may also have some break-out meetings with other organizations and fire service leaders. The hotel has not been assigned yet. **Action item: Chief Seavey will do the exhibiting booth shift schedule.**

Future Meetings – Chief Wall

The VCOS board meeting at Symposium 2015 will be Sunday, November 15 from noon-6pm. The 2016 VCOS board meetings will be the first weekend of February (Feb 4-7) and the first weekend of May (as a reminder CFSI is May 4-6).

There was an idea to hold a VCOS board meeting in Canada with the IAFC Canadian Division or the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs. **Action item: Chief Eggleston will reach out to Chief DeHooe about having a meeting in Canada.** We've also been invited to Shell Pipeline in Houston for a meeting. VFIS is willing to host a meeting anytime as well.

Labor and Management Collaboration Project – Chief Larson

They had a conference call last week. They need about 20 people from the labor side for the meeting in Denver July 16-19. Maybe a skype call/webinar can be incorporated at the live meeting to have more people involved and to cut travel costs.

The end goal of the project is to have a best practices paper and a group that could assist and visit departments that are having issues. This could be part 2 of the Red Ribbon report.

The presentation at FRI will be an update on the process and what we are looking to do as deliverables. Chief Ken Richards and Chief Peter Struble are presenting at FRI.

Based on the Denver meeting we will know if there will need to be a break-out at Symposium.

Chief Windisch asked for a cost model and reminded the group that we have appropriated \$10,000 towards this effort.

There will be another conference call in the next few weeks.

Chief Struble did a revision to the latest paper. Chief Collins sent the latest version of the paper to the board.

We need to get the labor side incorporated into the final paper and that is the point of the Denver meeting. FRI is just an update on the project but not to present the findings.

There was discussion on whether or not we are ready for a meeting in July with labor. That is very soon and we are still not clear on the goals of the project. There is concern whether or not the labor side will participate.

Chief Mike Morgan was working to get local Colorado folks to the meeting in Denver in July. Chief Buckman went to Denver recently to get background on who should attend.

Action item: Chief Larson should organize a call and clarify next steps with the project team. If there will be a meeting in Denver in July, we need to get that going quickly.

Diversity Report Draft – Chief Eggleston

The latest draft was included in the board packet. The HR Committee is reviewing it now. They are committed to a partnership on this. **Action item: Chief Eggleston will ask them to get back to us within 2-3 weeks. We will discuss this on the VCOS June call. The goal is to launch it at FRI. Chief Eggleston will look into an e-book option as well.**

Membership Report – Chief Wall

VCOS membership numbers as of April 2015 are as follows: 2,465 total members, 1984 regular members, 71 associate members, 60 departmental members, 121 affiliate members, 16 past president members, 211 life members, 2 electronic members

We are continuing the pilot program for membership with iamresponding and Ward Diesel. We will get an update for the June call.

Membership information was sent to the ISO seminar attendees from the Connecticut class.

VCOS needs to submit one chief officer and one company officer to showcase VCOS for the "We are the IAFC" campaign. Signs will be created for the IAFC Pavilion at FRI. They need to have a specific example of how VCOS tools/resources helped them. **Action item: Chief Eggleston will reach out to the Chief of San Juan, New Mexico. Chief Crutcher has some people in mind. Chief Collins will reach out to Karen McQuaid. Chief Catrambone will touch base with a company officer. This will be an action item for the June call. Send names and contact information to Chief Wall and Ms. Ameen.**

2015 Booth Schedule – Chief Wall

VCOS will have a presence at the following conferences:

- February 18-22: Virginia Fire Chiefs Association Fire Rescue Conference
- April 20-25: FDIC – IAFC has a booth
- June 8-13: Interschutz in Germany (no booth)
 - VCOS presence – Chief Seavey
- June 18-20: Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs in Birmingham, AL
- July 14-18: Firehouse Expo in Baltimore
- August 25-29: FRI in Atlanta, GA
- November 12-15: Symposium in the Sun in Clearwater Beach, FL

Chiefs Flynn and Wall are going to a New England meeting next week. Chief Rush will be at the New York Conference in June.

Exhibiting Taskforce – Chief Seavey

A report was sent out to the board. There is good saturation around metropolitan areas. There are lots of VCOS members in the East. The taskforce is proposing two booth formats. One is similar to what we've been doing and then the other one is larger for FRI, FDIC, etc. **Action item: Read the report and send feedback to Chief Seavey.**

Communications Committee – Chiefs Crutcher, Catrambone, Larson

The next newsletter is coming out soon in May. The summer newsletter will feature this trip. Mr. Wayne Powell will do a write-up for the newsletter. There is a new feature article on board members in each issue.

The VCOS website has over 15,000 page views between November 2014 and April 2015. The top visited pages are the home page, SOPs/SOGs, Symposium, eLearning, Beyond Hoses and Helmets, and the Education page.

Chief Crutcher did a Facebook ad/boost and saw great results. Board members should share and link VCOS social media posts.

The Symposium app contract was sent to Mr. Tim Hopkins from IAFC for approval.

We should have the NVFC publicize our awards/scholarships. We can also boost awards/scholarships on Facebook to get more people to apply.

VCOS Strategic Plan – Chief Wall

There was a question on page 35 of the board packet regarding appointing an ex-officio seat (non-voting) to the Safety, Health and Survival board. **Action item: Chief Wall will reach out to the Safety, Health and Survival section.**

2015 VCOS Election – Chief Wall

The terms of office ending in 2015 include Chiefs Catrambone, Seavey, Rush, and Wall. Voting opens at the end of May/early June. About 10-12 candidates have applied, but they haven't been vetted yet. Chiefs Windisch and Oettel were appointed to the Election Committee. **Action item: Chief Wall will ask Chief Florentino to also reach out to Chief Cowger to be on the committee.**

VISION – Chiefs Crutcher and Larson

There was a conference call a few months ago. We added some folks to get it re-energized such as Chief Jim Wilson and Chief Brett Waters. Board members should look for more resources. We should reach out to other sections for resources as well.

Information Only Items:

Additional Submitted Reports

The following additional reports were included in the board packet:

- NVFC SAFER Grant – Chief Flynn
- NFFF Strategic Visioning Project– Chiefs Flynn and Catrambone
- IAFC Terrorism & Homeland Security Committee – Chief Ed Richards
- NFPA 1720 – Chief Render
- NFPA 951 – Chief Melby
- NFORS – Assistant Chief Byron Smith
- NFPA 350: Confined Space Safe Work Practices – Chief Ed Boring

- Chief Waters' Report

NFPA 1720 – The new ISO schedule doesn't include NFPA 1720. ISO references 1710, but not 1720. **Action item: Chief Windisch will have a call with Mr. Skip Gibson and Chief Render. He may want to include the new NFPA liaison, Ryan, as well.**

For all board reports, the template should list who funds them and also include the full name of the committee (especially for NFPA taskforces so we know the topic). Project leads should always include some financial reference. Is there financial impact? Add that to the template.

Action item: Ms. Ameen to update the template with those changes.

Action item: Ms. Ameen will send Chief Windisch the spreadsheet of who pays for committees.

Action item: Chief Wall will follow-up with Chief Waters to clarify his existing assignments (since some are older projects that he no longer needs to include).

Action item: Chief Seavey will send the board information on swift water rescue awards that are currently open for nominations. Add this to the Report from the Chair and social media.

New Business

There was an idea to partner with the Safety, Health and Survival section to do a safety report with some of the latest fire dynamics research. **Action item: Chief Windisch will reach out to them.**

Old Business

VCOS will have a booth at Firehouse Expo in Baltimore in July. In addition, a few VCOS members are presenting classes there. We have the opportunity to publish articles in Firehouse magazine so think of articles to do. The Communications Committee will work on this.

VCOS was listed in ISFSI's Fire Prevention and Safety proposal as receiving some of the deliverables from the grant. There is no financial obligation needed from VCOS. The proposal was reviewed by the VCOS Executive Committee and focuses on research of basement fires.

VCOS was included in the IAFC's SAFER grant proposal for "the volunteer of the future." Funds were included to conduct some of the VCOS educational classes and for development of some new resources for volunteers.

Ms. Ameen gave a background on how Helix and the IAFC Academy came about. When grants run out, the IAFC needed a way to keep online learning classes available to responders. Having an internal platform makes it more cost efficient. After speaking with departments, Mr. Hicks found that departments were also interested in lower cost options for hosting some of their digital needs. In addition, the IAFC has many different programs and Helix allows for them all to be in one place with a single sign-in option. **Action item: Chief Wall will call Mr. Tommy Hicks regarding questions/feedback based on his Helix presentation.** There was a suggestion that VCOS "remain neutral" for now on Helix and the IAFC Academy. There was also some concern about how this would affect some of our existing partnerships.

Roundtable

Chief Crutcher has been promoting VCOS in KY. He will be attending the Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs conference. He may be requesting some VCOS materials to take to a conference in Kentucky.

Chief Larson now has dual residency in Colorado and Texas and continues to promote VCOS in those areas.

Chief Rush appreciates the opportunity to be on the board. The board is very passionate and productive.

Chief Seavey welcomed everyone to his home state of Maryland. He thanked Mr. Wayne Powell for his help. Chief Seavey is running for re-election to the board. Recently, Chief Bobby Hook passed away who was a past chief of his department. Tomorrow some board members will be visiting the Independent Hose Company in Frederick, Maryland and then heading to the Sterling Rescue Department in Virginia. There is a National Fire Service Cancer Steering Committee meeting coming up in Phoenix. There are 22 people on the committee and he is hoping to get more volunteer representation on it.

Chief Collins stated he was glad that the NVFC came to our meeting and thanked Chief Wall for making that partnership a priority. Overall, the Symposium is looking great. Thanks to all of the VCOS partners.

Chief Catrambone reported that Dr. David Griffin did a presentation in North Dakota. There are only 8 paid/combination departments in North Dakota and the rest are volunteer. He is aiming to be a bridge between them. That is why it is hard getting attendance at trainings, etc. The Missouri Valley conference is the same dates as the North Dakota state conference.

Mr. Markel thanked VCOS and Mr. Wayne Powell.

Mr. Powell is in awe of what VCOS does. This is a tough time for volunteer and combination departments. The IAFC has always been an important part of what he has done. His department is participating in statewide recruitment efforts. They also use the VCOS ribbon reports.

Mr. Giorgi commented that VCOS is always reaching new heights and trying new things. Thanks to Mr. Powell for hosting.

Mr. Oettel enjoyed the dedication and being at NETC and at the Vigilant Hose Company. He also thought it was great that Chief Quinn from the NVFC was here. He commented that VCOS has helped him as a chief.

Chief Windisch mentioned there was a lot of strong leadership involved with the dedication ceremony. It was definitely a very special event.

Chief Flynn commented on the productivity of the meeting. He enjoys being on the NVFC SAFER workgroup. He is also on the steering committee for the Connecticut Volunteer Workforce Solutions grant between the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association (CFCA) and the IAFC.

Mr. Powell mentioned the Wingspread Conference happening in 2016. Chief Dennis Rubin is the lead on this effort. They need volunteer representation. Chief Windisch is going. **Action item: Chief Wall will reach out to Chief Rubin to get younger leaders there.**

Ms. Ameen enjoyed the past few days and appreciates all of the hard work VCOS does to help volunteer and combination departments. It is really inspiring.

Chief Wall is on the steering committee for the CFCA SAFER grant (Volunteer Workforce Solutions). There is a recruitment training class on May 9 that the program is conducting. He will be attending the New England Division meeting next week. Thanks to all for a great meeting. He has submitted for re-election to the VCOS board.

Motion by Chief Crutcher and seconded by Chief Flynn to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40pm.