



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

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VCOS Board of Directors Meeting

November 11, 2018
Hilton
Clearwater Beach, Florida

MINUTES

Sunday, November 11 (at Hilton Clearwater Beach at 400 Mandalay Ave. Clearwater Beach, Florida)

Present: Chair Charles Flynn, Chief Donna Black, Chief Jason Catrambone, Chief Norvin Collins, Chief Timothy S. Wall, Chief Fred Windisch, Chief Jim Cook, Chief Ron Oettel, Chief Al Yancey, Chief Rich Cowger, Chief Ed Rush,

Guests: Chief Dan Eggleston, Chief John M. Buckman III, Dr. Bill Jenaway, Mr. Jeff Siegrist, Mr. Troy Markle, Mr. Scott Beecher, Mr. Skip Gibson, Mr. Dan Seidberg

Staff: Ms. Kelly Ameen, Ms. Jennifer Bragiel Cozad, Ms. Sara Stehle, Ms. Cathy Feyh, Mr. Terry Monroe

The meeting started at 12:32 pm.

Welcome and Consent Agenda – Chair Flynn

Chair Flynn welcomed the board and guests to the meeting.

The consent agenda was reviewed.

- 2018 September Board Meeting Minutes
- 2018 October Board Meeting Minutes
- NFPA 350: Chief Ed Boring
- NFPA 1720: Chief Greg Render
- You & ISO: Chief Larry Curl
- Terrorism & Homeland Security Committee: Chief Ed Richards
- Center for Public Safety Excellence – Commission on Professional Credentialing: Chief Chris Christopoulos
- FRI Program Planning Committee: Chief Tim Whitham
- Member and Leadership Collaboration: Chief Peter Struble
- Interim Chief Whitepaper: Chief Al Yancey

Action Item: Send committee member recommendations to Chief Yancey

Motion by Chief Cowger and seconded by Chief Rush to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

Membership Update – Mr. Terry Monroe and Ms. Cathy Feyh

Mr. Terry Monroe joined the meeting via phone.

A presentation on membership and how to demonstrate the value provided to members in order to bring in new members was provided. There was an emphasis on the value of membership and how we can ensure we are adding value to members.

Some recommendations to increase the value add:

- Limit access to some resources
- Expand opportunities for members to get involved
- Create an ambassador program

The presentation included a discussion about the new database that will help improve the user experience for members and will allow them to customize their experience to their interests.

A discussion took place about how to add and demonstrate the value of VCOS membership.

Action item: Ms. Bragiel Cozad to email the presentation to the VCOS board.

Action item: Chief Oettel named chair of the VCOS marketing committee.

During Symposium in the Sun a focus group with VCOS member attendees was conducted. It had over 30 people in attendance. Connecticut was selected for being one of the top 3 states to have the most attendees.

The focus group was very positive and many of the attendees expressed interest in having more networking in small groups facilitated by IAFC staff.

Mr. Monroe signed off and Ms. Feyh left.

Friends and Supporters

The friends and supporters expressed gratitude for being able to attend, and emphasized the success of Symposium in the Sun. The attendees were all engaged with each other, the board and vendors.

IAFC's VWS Update – Ms. Kelly Ameen

The Chief 101 is a 2 hour online course that was launched about 2 weeks prior to this meeting. The course goes over the basics of being a chief. So far over 200 people have taken it and it has received 4.6 out of 5 stars.

The National VWS grant closes out December 2. Ms. Willemsen and Ms. Lexie Coulson have done a great job getting some unique data out of the grant. The grant held its final meeting with pilots here at Symposium in the Sun. The meeting went well. Many of the pilots have joined the VCOS and have taken the BH&H and FROG courses.

The grant also released 3 new courses each 1 hour. The report from the summit will be released shortly. Also, Chief Black along with Ms. Monica Willemsen did an amazing VCOS Talk highlighting the grant.

Mr. Spencer Cheatham is finishing up the VALS course. This course allows individuals to do pieces of it or the entire offering. This also has a 2 day in-person aspect to the course. The first test of the in-person course will be in February.

Finally, the Tennessee VWS grant is creating a 2 part course on mentoring that will be launched in 2019.

Symposium in the Sun – Chief Windisch and Ms. Sara Stehle

An open discussion on Symposium in the Sun took place. Many expressed that this year was the best Symposium in the Sun yet. It was warned that returning speakers should always provide new presentations to prevent staleness. The discussion centered around how the event can be used to sell and market the VCOS better. Many who came into participate with the Yellow Ribbon Course didn't know about VCOS. It was recommended that the smaller rooms be utilized to hold more VCOS courses for attendees. It is important to find a balance with self-promotion.

Other feedback included:

- There were many great presenters, but there was a concern that Symposium in the Sun may want to incorporate more operational sessions.
- Speakers should be willing to share their presentations with attendees
- Confusion on how to provide speaker specific feedback
- More content specifically on creating and running a combination department
- Presentations or workshops that provide more specific in-depth information on how to do the job
- Attendees loved the facilitated dialogue with Ms. Vickie Pritchett and would like to see more interactive sessions like it.

Ms. Sara Stehle provided an overview of Symposium in the Sun. Symposium in the Sun had over 700 attendees this year up from last year. The cost of food is going up. Initially Symposium in the Sun was to have a 20% increase in food. This increase was negotiated to be a 6% increase each year over the next 3 years. We are contracted 2019-2021. The Wyndham is a very nice hotel, but it isn't the right fit for VCOS. The exhibitor space isn't as nice, all of the networking functions would have to be at the pool, and there is no beach access. The Hilton provide more value.

A discussion took place about why the additional room blocks saw a drop coming into the conference, and how to remedy the situation.

Another discussion surrounded the registration cost of the conference and the rise of costs for the conference. The appropriate amount to increase and whether the increase should apply to all registration types were discussed. There was also a recommendation of providing a multi-member registration discount.

Action item: Chief Windisch and Ms. Stehle are to work together to analyze the data on attendees and provide a full report in February on their recommended increase.

Symposium in the West – Chief Collins

Symposium in the West will be focused on organizational wellness. The Symposium in the West committee is looking at hotel locations and will present them along with making a selection recommendation in February.

iDELP and the Women Fire Chiefs Council are looking into doing a meeting in Phoenix in conjunction with Symposium in the West. Would most likely be approximately 30-40 people.

In February the VCOS Board will discuss goals and the future of Symposium in the West. This won't be about walking away from it, but about if it would be beneficial to modify it.

A discussion took place about marketing Symposium in the West to those that were waitlisted and unable to attend Symposium in the Sun.

Chair's Report – Chair Flynn

Chief Flynn congratulated Chief Yancey for receiving an ISO 1 rating and Chief Windisch for receiving an ISO 2 rating. He reminded the VCOS board that the February meeting will be in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The goal of the meeting will be to bring the VCOS back to its roots and connect with some local departments. Time will also be made for presentations on the Gatlinburg Fire.

A discussion took place about mutual agreements and what they may look like. The goal is to ensure that VCOS is promoting their supporters sufficiently. Some ideas on how the relationship between supporters and VCOS can further benefit both were discussed.

Action item: Ms. Bragiel Cozad to create a sample form for each scholarship and award application to help members prepare prior to entering SurveyMonkey.

International Director's Report – Chief Black

The next meeting for the IAFC Board will be at the IAFC in Chantilly, VA. The organization is working on growing their relationship with Saudi Aramco and are adding an office in Saudi Arabia.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report – Chief Windisch

Chief Windisch provided an overview of the financials and reminded everyone to use any outstanding airfares.

2019 Awards and Scholarships

It was recommended to discuss in February the amount of the scholarships along with the possible addition of a small department scholarship for Symposium in the Sun.

Action item: Ms. Bragiel Cozad to send out the master list with previous winners to the VCOS board and scholarship/award committees.

There was a discussion on how to improve the applications received and how they should be evaluated for each scholarship and award.

Action item: Chief Cowger was appointed chair of the scholarship and award criteria committee. Chief Yancey, Chief Collins, Dr. Jenaway and Mr. Siegrist will also serve on the committee.

It was recommended that the board or a representative reach out ahead of time and connect with the winners, perhaps take them out for lunch during the conference.

The new Chief James P. Seavey, Sr. Scholarship will have the family assist with the selection of the committee and the development of criteria for the scholarship.

Topic Breakouts

The VCOS board and guests broke out into groups to discuss specific topics to further the VCOS. The breakouts were as follows:

- Marketing of VCOS, Courses, and Scholarships
 - Lead: Chief Oettel
 - Chief Cook
 - Dr. Jenaway
- Project Applications
 - Lead: Chief Black
 - Chief Wall
 - Mr. Beecher
- Membership Survey Results
 - Lead: Chief Collins
 - Chief Yancey
 - Mr. Markle
- Funding
 - Rush lead
 - Catrambone
 - Cowger
 - Windisch
 - Skip
 - Do we need more
 - What do we do
 - What are the 3 things we need to do to get it done
 - Ed Mann
- Note Compiling:
 - Buckman

Action item: Expand on each topic and be prepared to report on your efforts at the February VCOS board meeting.

Each group summarized their discussions from the break outs.

New Business

- VCOS Yellow Ribbon Report Challenge Coins
 - Chief Flynn explained how the Michigan Association of Fire Chief have a challenge coin with a yellow rose that you can earn by saying a mental wellness pledge. They created this to get people involved and to help spread the message of mental health.

- Chief Catrambone conducted some preliminary research on doing a similar item for VCOS. He reviewed the 2 options for the coin with the board.

Action item: Chief Catrambone to get the cost for 500 vs 1000 for both coin options and report back to the VCOS Board.

- Proposal for New Ribbon Report
 - The VCOS Board discussed the proposal to create a new ribbon report on intergenerational leadership training within the fire service.
 - There is a lot out there on the topic and the team would need to make it unique.

Action item: Discuss topic further on the December board call.

- Bullying Taskforce requested \$5,000 for projects
 - The board discussed the request and decided additional information was needed to decide.

Action item: Chief Black to reach out to Chief Randy Larson for more information on the Bullying Taskforce funding request.

Old Business

- VCOS 25th Anniversary Celebration
 - A discussion on getting lapel pins to help recognize charter members, members of 25 years and past and current board members.
 - The cost of these pins was discussed.
 - VCOS Calendar for 2020
 - Would include VCOS Events
 - 12 pictures promoting the VCOS
- Code of Conduct

Action Item: Vote on the code of conduct for VCOS representatives on the December teleconference.

- Communications Committee
 - Created a successful VCOS promotional video
 - The next newsletter will be sent out the beginning of December, Mr. Mike MacDonald is putting together an article on Symposium in the Sun

Action Item: Articles for the newsletter are due November 22.

- A discussion on continuing the print newsletters took place.

Action Item: Do 4 more print newsletters then re-evaluate them.

- Lavender Ribbon Curriculum
 - Chief John M. Buckman III requested travel assistance to develop the Lavender Ribbon Curriculum

Motion by Chief Oettel and seconded by Chief Collins to approve \$2,000 for travel for Chief John M. Buckman III to develop the Lavender Ribbon curriculum. Motion carried.

- Member and Leadership Collaboration
 - Needs a marketing plan and webpage, but the course is ready to be delivered

Action Item: The Marketing Committee to work with Chief Buckman and Chief Strubel to create a marketing plan for MLC.

- BH&H and FROG Timelines
 - The stakeholder meeting for the courses will be in January
 - Hope to launch the updated courses at Symposium in the Sun 2019
 - There was a discussion on the planning of new course sessions.
 - It was recommended to create a clear process, evaluate the instructor list, develop a marketing plan, begin marketing the courses to divisions and state conference, evaluate funding, instructor pay and the registration process.

Action Item: Continue scheduling the courses.

Motion by Chief Yancey and seconded by Chief Catrambone to continue scheduling BH&H and FROG courses. Motion carried.

- Lavender Ribbon Report
 - A steering committee was established to guide the continued support of the report
 - Chief Juan Bonilla is the NVFC representative, Chief Timothy S. Wall is the VCOS representative and Mr. Scott Beecher of Ward Diesel.
 - A sub-committee to develop curriculum was established
 - Chief John M. Buckman III is the VCOS representative and Chief Brian McQueen is the NVFC representative
 - They are creating a 15-30 minute presentation, Webinars and a Train-the-Trainer
 - Tentative Timeline
 - December the group will have the curriculum meeting
 - February the group will host a webinar
 - Goal is to do the first pilot of the 15-30 minute presentation at Symposium in the West
 - At the NVFC meeting would hold the train-the-trainer
 - Potential at FRI to do it if we can get a time slot
 - Goal is to have a solid program to be taught at Symposium in the Sun 2019
 - Financial Support
 - The IAFC will be collecting the sponsorship money for the support of these efforts and managing it
 - Will need to account for the increase in staff time
- Connexions
 - A discussion took place about promoting the Yellow and Lavender Ribbon Reports at the next one

Action Item: Chief Flynn to contact Ms. Leslie Distler and learn more about potential future collaboration

- OSHA Request for Recommendations

Action Item: Submit Captain Theresa Knops to the Executive Committee for review

Roundtable, Announcements and Updates

Chief Windisch: Is there any truth to the rumor of the sections being charged G&A instead of staff time?

Ms. Ameen: I haven't heard anything about it.

Chief Black: It was discussed by the IAFC Board in August. The IAFC Board decided to not act on it, instead we discussed how to manage a budget with those in need of additional assistance.

Chief Oettel: Congratulated everyone on another great conference. I would like to remind everyone that as board members we are extremely identifiable, and it is important to show respect and engagement during presentations. If we need to be on our phone, we should step out of the room. The conference was a success, and everyone I spoke with said it was amazing.

Many stated their gratitude to staff and congratulations on another successful conference. Chief Flynn thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

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

The meeting adjourned November 11, 2018 at 5:35pm. The next call is 12/12 at 4pm ET.