

Vermont State Firefighters' Association
Executive Board Minutes
Pittsford, Vermont

January 20, 2008

Meeting called to order by President Michael Greenia at 9:30 AM.

All in attendance stood for Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

A moment of silence for all deceased members was observed.

Roll call was taken by the Secretary.

Members Present: Michael Greenia, Kristy Oxholm, Kevin Goodhue, Roger Young, Robert Arnebold, Charles Becker, Jim Breur, Fran Buck, Timothy Burgess, Ray Bushey, Bernard Dubois, Terry Farr, James Ford, Dean Gilmore, Richard Harrison, Jake Hart, Edward Hopkins, Ralph Jackman, Jim Larrow, Edward Paige, Gene Perkins, Allen Pike, Keith Ploof, Steve Revell, Alan Ridlon, John Savage, Robert Schlachter, Michael Taylor, Charles Thompson and Debbie Tumielewicz.

Members Excused: Second Vice President Timothy Girard, George Gibby, Fred Jackman, Robert Kilpeck and Walter Reed.

Introduction of Guest: No guest present at this time.

Correspondence: A thank you note from Ann Thomayer regarding Edward Haddad. A letter from the Upper Valley Regional Emergency Services Association supporting an additional state fire training site at VTC in Randolph was received. (see attached)
A letter from George S. Gibby wishing the VSFA all the best in 2008 was received.

Minutes: M/M by Ralph Jackman seconded by Timothy Burgess to accept the minutes of October 7, 2007. Motion passed by voice vote.

Officer's Report:

President- See attached.

First Vice-President- See attached

Second Vice President- None.

Financial Report: See attached. The 2007 Cadet Academy was questioned. It was explained that the 2007 Chair opened a cadet academy account at the Chittenden Bank and deposited all the tuition checks into that account. It was stated that the checks were made out to the VSFA. The VSFA Treasurer called the Chittenden Bank and explained to the bank what the situation was. At that time the Chittenden Bank immediately closed the account and mailed a check to the chair (since his name was on the account). This check was given to the VSFA Treasurer by the chair. The chair did spend money out of this account before it was closed and the VSFA Treasurer does not have a record of what was spent out of this account. The VSFA Treasurer must do a 990 and asked the chair to send him an accounting of all expenses. To date nothing has been given to the VSFA

Treasurer regarding the checks or debit card amount that was taken out of that account. It was asked what are the officers doing about this? The President said that the officers are proceeding. The VSFA Treasurer gave a brief history of the petty cash account. He said what was suppose to happen was that a petty cash account would be set up with \$1,000.00 and every time there was a draw from the account a receipt would be handed over to the VSFA Treasurer and he in turn would put money back into the account, this way there would always be \$1,000.00 in the account and the VSFA Treasurer would always have an accounting of what was being spent.

M/M by Dean Gilmore seconded by Jim Bruer to accept the financial report. *Motion passed on a voice vote.*

County Reports: Lamoille County stated that they want everything at the Vermont Fire Academy in Pittsford; however, they are also in favor of satellites through out the state. Lamoille County is in the planning stages of bringing back the county fire school.

Rutland County- Bob Schlachter said the county hosted a meeting for the Coalition academy outreach. Also, Bennington and Rutland County will be hosting the Southern Vermont Regional Fire School again this year. It will be sometime in September.

The President requested all the dates of county events so he can have it on our web page.

No other county reports were received.

Standing Committees:

Awards: No report.

Benefits: It was stated that Senator Sanders office is very interested in helping us.

Budget and Finance: Treasurer Young passed out 2008 budget. To be discussed later.

Conference: Kevin Goodhue stated that Rutland County is on track. Bob Schlachter said that the VSFA must provide a certificate of insurance. A meeting is scheduled at end of February. Will go over the weekend schedule at that time.

George S. Gibby Scholarship: No report.

Membership: Roger Young reported that membership is coming in. See attached report.

Newsletter: Jake Hart questioned the ads and the ad income. He quickly figured that there is over \$2400.00 (probably more) of income that has not been paid. Some businesses are receiving free ads. We have ads in the Responder of businesses who have not been in business for over a year. Kristy Oxholm said she is waiting for someone to

come up with a rate change. She also said the committee is always willing to take on new help. No one is knocking down the door yet.

No reports from the By-laws, Judges, Nominating, Public Fire Safety Education or Sports Committees.

Temporary/Special/Active Projects Committees:

Government Affairs: Dean Gilmore reported that he and Bernie Dubois as well as others did go to all nine county meetings throughout the state. He would like a contact list from us and an up to date list of who is on this committee.

George S. Gibby Resource Library: No report.

Technology: The web site address is www.vtfirefighters.org. President Greenia said that the committee is looking into new things and expect to see changes soon. D. Gilmore said he would like one e-mail address for each county and in turn that person can notify all other county members. Steve Revell suggested we should do a Google group.

VSFA Vermont Fire Cadet Fire Academy: See attached. Chuck Thompson said that he did not get any records from the 2007 VSFA Cadet Academy nor did he use any money from the Chittenden Bank account. Chuck said he was hurt when he was accused of doing that. K. Goodhue said that he never heard that at all and that to his knowledge no one ever accused him of doing that. R. Young said he believes that no one took any money, but he needs a record of expenses. C. Thompson said he would give R. Young a copy of everything he has. Robert Arnebold stated that in years passed everyone used their own money or credit cards and when receipts were given to the Treasurer a reimbursement check was issued. He also said he believes that no money was taken from the Chittenden Bank account. President Greenia made it very clear that no one is accusing anyone of misappropriation of funds or theft of funds. VP Oxholm echoed his statements.

No reports from the Training Committee, VSFA VT Fire Service R & R project, VSFA Chaplains or the VSFA Historians.

Reports of Representatives, Delegates or Department Reports:

Coalition of Fire & Rescue Services: Steve Revell reported that the Coalition has been very busy. He talked about the White Paper regarding recruitment and retention. All legislators and department chiefs now have copies of the White Paper.

Legislator luncheon went very well. It was attended by many legislators but a poor turnout from firefighter. He thought the invitations went out to late. We have many

friends in Montpelier. Governor Douglas and Lt. Governor Brian Dubie as well as the speaker of the house were all in attendance.

New proposed legislation-

- Communicable disease bill.
- Smoke detector bill.
- Emergency response and expense bill.
- Co-pay for non emergency ambulance bill.
- Cancer presumption bill for fire investigators and inspectors.

Jim Larrow passed out brochures explaining the new cancer presumption law for all firefighters, career and volunteer. Robert Schlachter stated that the presumption cancer bill requires you to have documented proof that you are cancer free and that there are deadlines to meet as well.

To date 2.5 million is still set aside for the classroom/office building in Pittsford. VTC in Randolph will be a satellite site. Dick Harrison said that he felt it was good to have two sites. 10 to 15 years ago it was the VSFA's goal to have eight or nine training sites around the state. With the price of gas today the more sites the better. S. Revell stated that the one thing that came out of the nine county meetings is that everyone wants training in their own county.

S. Revell stated that the Coalition goal is stable funding, stable funding and stable funding.

Please send in all your request for training even if you know it will not be funded. This way the academy will know just how many requests are out there.

Terry Farr stated that there are ten firefighter ones which are very expensive, the haz-mat and flashover classes are still free. The academy is short on instructors.

C. Thompson said that it would be nice if each individual department could have the mobile training trailers at their departments. T. Farr said all you have to do is fill out the paperwork. The forms are all on their web site.

B. Dubois stated that VSFA is a major player in the Coalition.

Division of Fire Safety: No report.

E-911: Bob Schlachter stated that the new IP system is up and doing well. Any issues call him. The next E-911 meeting is this Tuesday.

Homeland Security Grant Advisory Committee: R. Schlachter stated that less money will be coming to Vermont. The larger cities are getting the larger amounts. Approximately 3.5 to 4 million should be received this year.

Memorial Advisory: To be taken up under open or unfinished business.

National Volunteer Fire Council: Robert Kilpeck is at a NVFC meeting today. However, it was reported that the Safer Act has once again passed with an increase. President Bush must sign it. A tax credit for emergency responders is being discussed.

State VCOMM: D. Gilmore said he read an article in Livin.com talking about VCOMM regarding their licenses for towers etc. Things are happening that we are not being told the truth about. We will check with Al Barber.

Vermont Fire Service Training Council: No report.

Unfinished/Open Business: Grave markers policy- A handout with the proposed policy was handed out. R. Arnebold asked if the markers would be in lieu of flowers. President Greenia said yes it would be in lieu of flowers. M/M by Jim Larrow and seconded by Jim Ford to accept the proposed policy. *The motion passed by a voice vote.* See attached. A copy of this policy will be printed in the Responder and possibly the web page as well.

Emergency Call List- K. Goodhue will have a copy for everyone by the March meeting.

New Business: Budget- The legislative initiative amount discussed. The Coalition representatives want the figure to be \$2,000.00 not \$500.00. It was asked if the dues amount on the income side could be raised by \$1,500.00 it then would cover the extra \$1,500.00 on the expense side for the legislative initiative, this would balance the budget. At this time a M/M by R. Schlachter and seconded by Ed Paige to approve the budget for the 2008 calendar year. Discussion continued on the budget. VP Oxholm said the legislative initiative is not Coalition money.

-It was asked if the grave markers difference was in the budget? Treasurer Young said they were not.

-Fran Buck asked if the 2008 VSFA Cadet Academy has zero funding can the committee still proceed? Treasurer Young said he will still have to pay the bills.

-D. Gilmore asked why are there lines in the budget that show zero. Why are they still on the budget if they show zero for the budgeted item?

-Ted Hopkins said that we used to accept everything. That's how all this came about. It's your responsibility to ask for your committee's money.

-Other committees don't have to ask to spend the money, why does the legislative initiative (Coalition) have to. It was stated that the legislative initiative is not a committee. It is a line item to be spent on any legislative initiative that the VSFA supports not just the Coalition.

-S. Revell- the legislative initiative was \$1,600.00 and only spent \$500.00 in 2007. It was stated the Coalition must send a bill. The \$500.00 was requested and \$500.00 was given.

The \$1,600.00 was not paid because a bill was not given to us, although \$1,600.00 is the normal request. They now need \$3,600.00.

K. Goodhue said he thought the VSFA Coalition representatives were doing an excellent job and that we should support them

A M/M and seconded to increase the revenue side on the Membership Dues line by \$1,500.00 to \$51,500.00 and increase on the expense side, the Legislative Initiative line by \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00.

R. Schlachter asked what this extra money would be used for. Mostly a lobbyist was the answer. *The amended motion passed by a voice vote.*

With no further discussion on the original motion the amended budget of \$53,500.00 *passed by a voice vote.*

1-800-FIRELINE- The NVFC would like to have this in all 50 states. They do have \$500.00 to put towards it. They also have materials to help with the marketing of the 800 phone line. President Greenia stated that the line was not marketing properly when we had it five or six years ago. It was decided to table this to our next meeting on March 2, 2008.

Coalition- M/M Jim Larrow and seconded by Dean Gilmore to pay the Coalition \$1,100.00 (with an invoice) from the 2007 budget.

-Charles Becker stated that you don't pay out of an old budget.

-Treasurer Young stated that the books closed on December 30, 2007.

-D. Gilmore said that all other Coalition members have paid their contributions.

-Richard Harrison stated that the VSFA should pay all bills from the past.

Motion passed by a voice vote with one opposed.

Coalition/Budget- M/M by Jim Larrow and seconded by Ralph Jackman to have the appropriation for the Coalition be a separate line item in the budget. *Motion passed by a voice vote.*

Time of Meeting- C. Thompson stated that he thought the 9:30 AM meeting time was too early especially for those who had to travel long distances. He would like to see it changed. M/M by Bernie Dubois and seconded by Ralph Jackman to have the March meeting and all future executive board meetings start at 9:30 AM. *Motion passed by voice vote.*

Lunch- The question came up if lunch was necessary, it is expensive and some people leave right after the meeting. C. Thompson and Ray Bushey both thought we should continue to serve lunch. No other action taken on this subject.

Life Membership Award- At this time Treasurer Young presented past Secretary Robert Arnebold with his life membership to the VSFA. A standing ovation took place.

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There being no further business to discuss a M/M by Michael Taylor and seconded by Tim Burgess to adjourn the meeting at Noon. *Motion carried by a voice vote.*

Respectfully submitted

Kevin J. Goodhue
Secretary

**Next VSFA Executive Board meeting is
March 2, 2008 at 9:30 AM at the Vermont
Fire Academy in Pittsford.**

Classroom #3