

Vermont State Firefighters' Association
Executive Board Minutes
Pittsford, Vermont
January 10, 2010

Meeting called to order by President Kristy Oxholm at 10:00 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: Kristy Oxholm, Timothy Girard, Fran Buck, Kevin Goodhue, Roger Young, Robert Arnebold, Al Barber, Charles Becker, Jim Breur, Tim Burgess, Bernard Dubois, Norm Flanders, James Ford, Dean Gilmore, Dick Harrison, Jake Hart, Ted Hopkins, Robert Kilpeck, Richard King, Melvin Monel, Allen Pike, Keith Ploof, Henry Prehemo, Robert Schlachter and Michael Taylor.

Members Excused: Ray Bushey, Matt Callaghan, William Elwell, Terry Farr, Don Howard, Walter Reed, Steve Revell, Craig Robideau, Michael Skaza and Charles Thompson.

Introduction of Guest: No guest present at this time.

Correspondence: No correspondence at this time.

Minutes: M/M by Jim Ford and seconded by Robert Kilpeck to accept the minutes of the October 18, 2009 meeting. *Motion passed by voice vote.*

Officer's Report:

President- Oxholm thanked everyone for their continued support. Everyone is always will to assist her when needed. Pleased to announce a \$100,000.00 grant from Senator Sanders. This grant is for recruitment and retention. This money will be dispersed in a mini grant by a selection committee. Senator Sanders likes cadet programs. Also thanked the Vergennes Fire Department for an excellent job saying farewell to our old friend Chief Ralph Jackman. Thanked Bob Kilpeck and Reverend William Elwell for all they do in helping departments in their loss.

First Vice-President- See attached.

Second Vice President- She attached.

Motion made and seconded to accept the Officers reports. *Motion passed by voice vote.*

Financial Report: M/M by Robert Schlachter and seconded by Norm Flanders. *Motion passed by a voice vote.*

County Reports: Windham County- Firefighter One will be starting soon. Brattleboro will be hosting an officer course soon. In November the county did a full scale training exercise.

No other county reports were received.

Standing Committees:

Awards: The secretary received two requests for the Community Service Award. The secretary read letters from the Bristol Fire Department nominating Joel Bouvier with 24 years of service and the Addison Fire Department nominating Jane Grace for 36 years of service. M/M Ted Hopkins and seconded by Dick King to award Joel Bouvier and Jane Grace the VSFA Community Service Award. *Motion carried by a voice vote.*

Benefits: Bernie Dubois stated that the committee would need more money and would need new members immediately.

Budget and Finance: All set.

By-Laws: No report.

Conference: Kevin Goodhue said that Franklin County is working very hard on the 2010 Conference. Goodhue and Tim Burgess will be going to St. Albans January 23 and 24, 2010 to meet with Franklin County to discuss all the arrangements.

George S. Gibby Scholarship: See report. Dick Harrison reported that there is a change in the rules. Any applicant who has a major or minor in firefighting will be give priority. M/M by Bernie Dubois and seconded by Alan Pike that the scholarship be awarded to a student in the fire or rescue field. *Motion carried by a voice vote.* The committee was instructed to put this in writing and present this to the executive board at the next meeting.

Judges Committee: Mike Taylor said that he would be meeting with the committee in April.

Membership: Membership dues are coming in. We have one new department.

Newsletter: In desperate need of articles. Will not print an issue if there is nothing to print. The committee is working on the ad billing.

Nominating Committee: No report.

Public Fire Safety Education Committee: No report.

Sports Committee: No report.

Yearbook Committee: Kevin said he is still in need of pictures or articles for the next yearbook. Please e-mail the pictures to him at kgoodhue@bennington.com or mail to him at his home address.

Temporary/Special/Active Projects Committees:

George S. Gibby Resource Library: No report.

Government Affairs: Dean Gilmore said that they have been dropped out of the loop. Will be scheduling a meeting soon.

Technology: The web site is www.vtfirefighters.org. They are updating information all the time. Sill looking into a mass notification to all members.

Training Committee: No report.

VSFA Vermont Fire Cadet Fire Academy: See attached. The 2010 academy is July 11-18, 2010.

VSFA Chaplains: Been real busy helping departments dealing with the many deaths. Anyone or any department that needs assistance please call. See attached report.

VSFA Historians: No report.

VSFA VT Fire Service R & R project: No report.

Reports of Representatives, Delegates or Department Reports:

Coalition of Fire & Rescue Services: No report given to the secretary.

Division of Fire Safety: No report.

E-911: Bob Schlachter said that they are working on all the updates. We meet soon.

Homeland Security Grant Advisory Committee: No report.

Memorial Advisory: A lot of work has been done. Will be laying the bricks down this year. Bricks are still for sale.

National Volunteer Fire Council: See attached.

State VCOMM: Al Barber stated that they are negotiating with Lifeline right now. The group is very busy and are meeting every other week. Just approved \$200,000.00 in pager grants. There will be another round. Al stressed that everyone should be applying for these grants. If for some reason the application is difficult Lt. Mike Manning of VSP will fill the application out for you. You must justify the need and have several quotes. You can purchase the pagers from any dealer, but they must be narrow band and at least two channels. The local match is 20%. All NIMS etc reporting must be completed to be eligible for these grants.

Al said they may do another round of portable and mobile radios. Base stations are not included in this grant. However, the group would take emergency requests. Example-if a base station was struck by lightning etc. Al said that they may have public works involve with radio interoperability. Al stated that if anyone has any questions regarding VCOMM please contact him directly.

Vermont Fire Service Training Council: Al Barber stated that this group is more of an advisory group than anything else. It is designed for career departments' not volunteer departments. He also said that emergency driving maybe taken out of Firefighter 1 and put some where else.

Unfinished/Open Business: M/M by Keith Ploof and seconded by Norm Flanders to print the new bylaw books on 8 ½ by 11 paper in three ring binder form. *This motion passed by a hand vote with 17 ayes and 4 nays.*

New Business: Treasurer Roger Young discussed the proposed 2010 budget.
-The decals have gone up in price. VSFA paid out \$14,000.00 in death benefits in 2009.
-The benefit is \$2000.00 per death and there is only \$10,445.50 in the benefit account and \$20,256.88 in the C of D which will allow us to pay out only 15 death benefits this year before the total account is depleted. This account will need more money.
-This will be the last year for the \$8,000.00 grant for the cadet academy. Should find another funding source.
M/M by Robert Schlachter and seconded by Robert Kilpeck to accept the 2010 VSFA budget as printed. *This motion passed by a voice vote.*

M/M by Dean Gilmore and seconded by Richard King to raise the price of the VSFA decals to \$1.00. *This motion passed by a voice vote with one no vote.*

President Oxholm will appoint a special committee to brainstorm on how we can raise money for the benefits committee and the cadet academy. This committee will meet and report back to the executive board at the next meeting.

President Oxholm stated that the 2010 committees stayed the same as last year.

Richard Harrison stated that he did not know about Chief Ralph Jackman passing. He said there must be a better way of informing members who have no access to e-mail.

Other Business: Nothing at this time.

M/M by Al Barber and seconded by Tim Burgess to adjourn at 11:52 AM. *Motion carried by a voice vote.*

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Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin G. Goodhue", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin G. Goodhue
Secretary

The Next Executive Board Meeting is April 11, 2010 at 10:00 AM.

Menu- Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes, Baby Carrots w/ chocolate cake.

All lunches are scheduled for 11:30 AM

Vermont State Firefighters' Association



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January 10, 2010

Hello,

I hope everyone enjoyed the Holidays with family and Friends and are now ready to meet the challenges of the New Year.

To finish out 2009 I was very happy to attend the Division of Fire Safety annual Calendar judging, held at their Headquarters in Berlin, Vt. I would like to Congratulate all the students from all over Vt. who took the time to imagine and color scenes for twelve months of Fire Prevention.

I was invited to take part in a Round Table discussion on Recruitment and Retention on Firehouse.com Pod cast put on by Doug Kline. The panel was made up of people with long histories in the Fire Service from around the country. It was quite interesting to listen, discuss, and share ideas on this issue.

As always please remember those members and families of the Fire Service that have passed on in 2009 and those that have past in the beginning of 2010. Our thoughts are always with you.

Sincerely,

Timothy Girard
First Vice President

1/10/10

VICE PRESIDENTS REPORT

Good Morning,

Since things have been rather quiet, I have been working on the VSFA Cadet Academy for 2010 which will run from July 11th-July 17th, and we will again accept 48 cadets.

I am also working on the SVRFS which will be in Rutland on May 2-3rd at Mill River High School.

The brochure will be coming out soon.

In the past few months we have had officers meetings, wakes and funerals.

I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and look forward to 2010.

Respectfully submitted

Fran Buck

Vice President

JAN. 10, 2010

GEORGE S. GIBBY SCHOLARSHIP.

VSFA WILL GIVE THE CANDIDATE
STRONG CONSIDERATION FOR A
MAJOR OR MINOR IN FIRE SCIENCE.

Richard J. Harrison

VSFA Chaplains Report
January 10, 2010

I am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving as Chaplain to the VSFA. While I cannot make it to the meetings on Sunday morning I do hold you all in my prayers. I also wanted to update you on things I have been involved in. I attended the recent funeral for Peter Coe. I visited briefly and offered any support that he would like as they work through this difficult time. I also attended the calling hours and funeral services for Chief Jackman. I provided a listening presence for some present, as well as encouragement for those dealing with the logistics. In addition I have worked to reconnect with some departments and family members who I met while dealing with some of last years Line of duty deaths and funerals. If you of a department in need of support from these deaths I am always willing to help.

In addition I am willing to join Chief Kilpeck and any others for pre funeral planning. This does not mean I will or need to be involved in the service, (but I am willing if needed). However I feel I can especially be of help by supporting those who are grieving in the midst of planning. I am also a trained peer supporter in Critical Stress Management which often becomes an issue here too. It is also a time where I can connect with those present who may need some support down the road. When a line of duty or sudden death occurs I may not have contact information to reach out so I am relying on you who are serving around the state to extend the information.

I am currently preparing a course for the Addison County Regional School titled LODD: Lessons Learned in VT. It will lightly address the need for prevention of different incidents we have encountered as well as the need for taking care of ones self. It will also focus on some of the challenges faced in planning and leading services and caring for a department in times like this. I will be talking with department leaders and some family members who now have experience in this area to prepare the course. If you have any wisdom or challenges that think others should know of, or people that might be helpful for me to talk to please let me know. My number is 802-453-2321. The cell is 802-349-3028. And the email address is rescueme97@yahoo.com. I hope the meeting goes well and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Last but not least if you know of other chaplains either clergy or lay people serving departments around the state and can pass on their contact information, please do. I would love to begin to develop a data base and network of those serving in this capacity.

Respectfully Submitted

Bill Elwell
Chaplain

Robert J. Kilpeck
NVFC State Director
29 Walnut Street
Brandon, VT 05733-1140
802-247-3646



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hearthealthy
FIREFIGHTER



7852 Walker Drive, Suite 450, Greenbelt, MD 20770

To: VSFA Executive Board

FROM: Robert Kilpeck
NVFC Director

DATE: January 10, 2010

Since our last Board Meeting, there have been no NVFC meetings. The Washington Office and staff have been watching a number of pieces of legislation that will have an impact of the fire service. They have provided a great deal of information and been asked to testify before different committees.

I will be in Baltimore next Friday, Saturday and Sunday attending the Executive Committee Meeting. The Spring Meeting will be held in Washington and the Fall Meeting will be held in Bloomington, Minnesota.

I was asked to assist the Shoreham Fire Dept. with the death of Firefighter Peter Coe. Met with the department the next night, reviewed all the things required to make sure that nothing got overlooked as far as reports, benefits and notifications. I also assisted with planning the funeral, and meeting with the Funeral Director. This was a tragic accident that could happen to any of us, be it an accident like this or any LODD, the fire department needs assistance. This is something that I think the VSFA should be the lead organization to go out and assist the department and its members.

I was asked to come to Addison County and assist Bob Jenkins and the Vergennes Fire Department with the passing of Chief Ralph Jackman. I did and the turnout to remember and honor Ralph was great, the church holds six hundred and it was full.

There is more and more discussion within the fire service about, the increasing trend of Volunteer Fire Departments becoming Combination Fire Departments. NFPA's U. S. Fire Department Profile report shows that between 2005 and 2007 the number of mostly-volunteer combination fire departments increased by nearly 22 percent. The 2008 profile reveals a slight decrease in the number of mostly-volunteer combination departments, down from 4,989 to 4,830, which is likely explained by some of these departments moving to mostly-career status. With the weak economy that we are in right now, who knows what will happen in the next couple years.

In my opinion this is something that the volunteer fire service needs to be aware of and be a part of the discussions when their governing bodies bring this issue to the table. In some parts of the country, consolidations of fire departments have happened and are happening. I have a very good friend that was the Chief of a very large volunteer fire department in Wayne Township, IN. They were told at a department meeting that, effective in two weeks their department would be dissolved and taken over by the career department next door. This was done by the Township Council and the City Council and made public after the fact. The Chief and the members learned of this at the meeting for the first time. The day of doing business as we have for the past 50-100 years is coming to an end. Point being, don't fight change be a part of it, or be left behind

I have been invited to attend the Memorial Tribute and Remembrance Conference February 12 & 13, 2010 in Tampa, Florida. This conference is being hosted by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

Some of the topics to be covered are;

Assisting Survivors, PSOB, Memorial Criteria & Support, Local Assistance State Team, Corporate Partnership Programs, Better Business Practices-meeting the Sarbanes Oxley Federal Regulation. It is my hope that I can gather some good information that may help here at our State Memorial Site and the committee. I think the VSFA needs to take a more active roll in the committee. The fire service representation at last years service was nothing like it should be. If you are going to honor someone and have their name on a stone, it needs to be done before the service not after.

I was asked by NVFC Chairman Phil Stittleburg to represent the NVFC on the NFPA's Northeast Regional Fire Code Development Committee, which I have agreed to do. There are four regional groups, the Northeast, Northcentral, Southern and Western. My first meeting will be a full day meeting January 28, 2010 in Baltimore, MD. There are 31 codes that are up for review in the 2010 Fall Revision Cycle. The Public Comment period ends on March 5, 2010. You do not have to be a member of NFPA to comment or submit changes to these or any of the NFPA codes. In the back of every NFPA code book you will find the form to use should anyone want to submit a comment or change.

Combination Fire Departments; An Increasing Trend

Over the past decade, a number of historically all-volunteer fire departments have been hiring career personnel to supplement their ability to deliver in a timely fashion a sufficient number of adequately trained personnel to the scene of an emergency; particularly during weekdays when many volunteer firefighters are at work. According to NFPA's *U.S. Fire Department Profile*, between 2005 and 2007 the number of mostly-volunteer combination fire departments increased by nearly 22 percent, from 4,092 to 4,989. The 2008 profile reveals a slight decrease in the number of mostly-volunteer combination departments to 4,830, which is likely explained by some of these departments moving to mostly-career status (the number of mostly-career and all-career departments both increased slightly between 2007 and 2008) and a weak economy making it difficult for more volunteer departments to hire career staff. This trend will most likely continue and department leadership will need to watch for the warning signs for a changing department and know how to meet the challenges and welcome the opportunities of moving from a volunteer to a combination department.

Traditionally the shift from volunteer to combination departments has been fueled by population growth in a jurisdiction, but we are seeing an increasing number of volunteer departments that are struggling to recruit and retain new volunteer personnel given modern training standards and the significant time commitments that they impose, particularly on new recruits. For the first time ever the *2008 U.S. Fire Department Profile*, published this year, revealed that a majority of firefighters serving in communities of 2,500 or less are over the age of 40. This encompasses more than 400,000 firefighters in all and approximately 45 percent of the total number of volunteer firefighters in the country. To put that in perspective, in 1987 approximately 65 percent of firefighters serving those communities were under the age of 40. As we look to the future, this trend is sure to continue unless innovative methods are employed to recruit and retain younger volunteers. The NVFC has developed retention and recruitment tools to address these issues as well as launched the National Junior Firefighter Program to attract youth to our services. The NVFC's Fire Corps program has also proven to be a great recruitment mechanism for departments across the country.

Resources:

"Guide to Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures for Fire and EMS Departments" published by FEMA in 1999. SOG's will be a critical aspect of a transition.

Leading a Combination Fire Department by Joe Maruca
http://www.nvfc.org/files/documents/Leading_a_Combination_Fire_Department.pdf

Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Departments by VCOS
http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/vcos_RibbonReportRed.pdf



NFPA Report Shows Dangerous Aging Trend in Firefighters Protecting Small Communities

For the first time since the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) began tracking the age of firefighters by community size in 1987, the majority of firefighters protecting communities of fewer than 2,500 are 40 years of age or older. In 1987, more than 63 percent of firefighters protecting communities of 2,500 or less were under the age of 40. There are slightly more than 400,000 firefighters (out of 1.15 million total) protecting communities with populations of 2,500 or less, including 399,000 volunteer firefighters.

"For years volunteer fire departments across the country have been reporting that it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit and retain new members," said National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) Chairman Philip C. Stittleburg. "Given what we have been hearing from our members, this report is disheartening but not at all surprising."

There are a variety of reasons that younger people are not joining volunteer fire departments in the same numbers as in the past. Many young people leave rural areas for better employment opportunities in more densely populated areas. Those who remain in small communities are often forced to commute long distances to and from work, reducing the free time that they have available to commit to the volunteer fire service. Perhaps most significantly, more stringent training requirements in recent decades have dramatically increased the initial time commitment for new volunteer firefighter recruits.

"Increased training standards make firefighters more effective at their job and ultimately reduce losses of life and property from fire," said NVFC Health and Safety Committee Chairman Kenn Fontenot. "At the same time, we have to be realistic about how we structure training delivery -- how it is funded, where and when it is offered, and attitudes towards training -- to ensure that volunteer fire departments aren't forced to choose between adequate staffing levels and adequate training."

In recent years, many communities have begun incentive programs to improve recruitment and retention efforts, providing modest benefits to volunteer personnel in the form of stipends, pay-per-call and training, length of service award programs (pension-like programs), and non-monetary benefits ranging from awards banquets to gym memberships. The NVFC supports several federal bills that would make it easier for local communities to provide recruitment and retention benefits, including the following.

The Volunteer Emergency Services Recruitment and Retention Act (H.R. 1792)

This legislation, introduced by Congressmen Peter King (R-NY) and Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) would simplify the requirements for length of service award programs and reduce the administrative burden on both governmental agencies and potential sponsors by using existing statutory and regulatory schemes. Under H.R. 1792, a service award program could be treated as an "eligible deferred compensation plan" if the program sponsor meets certain requirements and elects to do so. The legislation would not create any new service award programs or require changes to existing service award programs, but simply provide increased flexibility for program sponsors.

The Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Reauthorization Act (H.R. 3666)

The Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act (VRIPA) was signed into law on December 20, 2007, amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude tax benefits and up to \$360 per year in other benefits provided to volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel from employment taxes and wage withholding. VRIPA expires at the end of 2010 and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Congressman Dave Reichert (R-WA) have introduced H.R. 3666, the

Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Reauthorization Act (VRIPRA), which extends the tax exemption through 2013 and expands it to cover up to \$800 per year in benefits.

The Fire Grants Reauthorization Act (H.R. 3791)

This legislation reauthorizes the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program. SAFER funds (required by law to be at least 10 percent of the amount appropriated each year) can be used to fund recruitment and retention activities. The U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 3791 on November 18.

In addition to working on federal legislation, the NVFC operates several national programs designed to increase the capacity of fire departments. The Fire Corps program assists departments in the recruitment and retention of non-operational volunteers, who perform various fire department tasks and functions, allowing firefighters to focus on emergency response. The National Junior Firefighter Program helps volunteer departments engage young people who can potentially become active firefighters when they reach the required age.

"We need creative solutions to recruit and retain the next generation of volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel," said Stittleburg. "The world that we live in is changing and if we don't adapt to meet new challenges, fire protection in thousands of communities across the country will suffer for it. Hopefully, reaching this unfortunate milestone will serve as a wakeup call for fire service leaders and elected officials across the country about the importance of re-doubling efforts to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters."