

Minutes of the January 27 2014 meeting held at the Vermont Fire Academy in Pittsford.

**Roll Call:**

| <u>Organization Representatives / or Sub</u> | <u>Ex-Officio Members</u> |
|--|---------------------------|
| Vt. Career Chief Assn.                       | Troy Ruggles              |
| Dept. of Education                           | Absent                    |
| Vt. Fire Chiefs Assn.                        | Absent                    |
| Dept. of Forest, Park & Rec.                 | Lars Lund                 |
| Vt. Professional FF                          | Aaron Collette            |
| Dept. of Health                              | Christopher Bell          |
| Vt. State FF Assn.                           | Al Barber                 |
| Dept. of Labor                               | Absent                    |
| VT Domestic Insurance Rep.                   | Gary Ouellette            |
| Division of Fire Safety                      | Designee Robert Patterson |
| General Public                               | John Marcus               |
| Committee Chair                              | Neil Fulton               |

Visitors: James Litevich  
Terry Farr  
Dan Zimmer  
Michael Skaza  
William Jones  
Christopher Corbin

Introduction of Christopher Corbin who is Collette's recommendation as the new PFFV representative on the Council since Collette will be resigning March 1.

Discussion of October meeting minutes. Fulton said the comment about the RIT program was under the Statues and Review Committee but should have been under Curriculum. Collette agrees. Another note is the Council approves the Responder Safety program only as a make-up opportunity for a student who cannot make the live classroom. Use the option with discretion; students should be urged to attend the live course. ***Ruggles makes a motion to adopt the minutes with those edits. Passed unanimously.***

**Report from the Division: Bob Patterson (Deputy Director):**

- New truck for the Haz Mat team has been ordered.
- Discussion of the hiring freeze that have been placed on Division positions.
- Discussion of creating a VT Fire Inspector program with Michael Skaza.
- Patterson and Desrochers will be visiting the Massachusetts Fire Academy about Fireworks. Vermont laws are lacking around fireworks.
- Discussion of the bills being worked on in legislation that involve the Division.
- Discussion of solar power regulations and signage.

**Report of the Chief of Training: James Litevich**

- Discussion of hiring freeze and how VFA is down on staffing.
- Discussion of the handout that has current student numbers on it.
- Discussion of the handout and the classes currently going on.
- Still working on finding a host for the second Aerial program.
- Discussion of the VT Fire Inspector program and how the program will be to the Fire Inspector II level. Hope to have a pilot program to bring to the Council at the next meeting. This will replace the DFS class they are currently teaching. The new program will cover more common residential issues than the current NFPA program.
- Discussion of requiring some sort of recertification process for anyone who is a VT Fire Inspector once the program is Proboard.
- Discussion of student numbers being up for the last three NFA programs we have delivered. Mention of other upcoming NFA sponsored courses.
- Tech Rescue programs are moving forward with Dan Gedney running them. No classes are scheduled until April.
- VTC live burns start on April 6 with four burns scheduled for that location.
- Digester project at VTC is still in motion.
- Discussion of the plans to change the current complex into a Conference Center. Commissioner of BGS, Public Safety and Executive Director of Police Academy will meet to establish who will be in charge of speaking for three groups so legislature sees unity on the complex.

## Committee Reports

### Curriculum Committee – Neil Fulton

- Discussion that a SME group will be put together to review any new curriculums. This process is going to replace the current Curriculum Committee review process; therefore, the committee will no longer exist. Thank you letters will be written to all who have served on that committee.

*The Council is adopting the SME module of curriculum adoption as discussed at the October meeting, disbanding the Curriculum Committee with a Thank you from the Council.*

*Motion made by Ruggles, seconded by Barber. Motion carries unanimously.*

- Everyone thanks Fulton for his time and dedication.
- Discussion of when the Council will be approached within the new process. A one-page scope of a new program will come before the Council prior to Litevich putting together an SME group.
- Discussion that the VFA will look to “canned” programs to be the base for any new curriculum creation or adaptation and then the SME’s will massage it into Vermont needs.
- Discussion...have any current VFA instructors had the NFA Course Development class?

### Statute & Policy Review Committee – Fulton

- Discussion of the where to find the Council Rules and Statutes and that they need to be revised.
- Barber requests that the Rules and Statutes be e-mailed to Council members so that they can review them before the next meeting prior to taking action.
- 

### Unfinished business:

- The RIT program will be published on March 28 2014. Discussion of coordinating an SME group will begin as soon as it is released. Collette would like to see a fall delivery if it is published on time.
- Discussion of the Mask Fit Testing of students in the Level 1 programs.
- Discussion if the sponsoring department should be the responsible party for student since they have an employee/employer relationship where the VFA does not have that relationship with the student.
- Discussion that the other part of the Mask Fit Process is the Medical questionnaire/physical.
- Discussion of Firefighter Fitness.
- Discussion that students may choose not to enroll in the programs if faced with a medical questionnaire.
- Discussion that the application process should include pre-requisites such as mask fit testing and medical questionnaires.
- Discussion that if the Council requires mask fit testing the VFA may not be able to fulfill their part of the obligation because the VFA does not have every kind of mask and it might require going to each location more than one time to do retests.
- Discussion of the liability issues around the VFA providing mask fit testing.
- Suggestion by Collette that the Council does not take action on the issue but instead that the VFA create some type of hybrid program within the SCBA module that teaches and informs departments/students about mask fit testing and medical questionnaire.
- Ruggles goes further and suggests that Lead instructors may request that the VFA come to a class and be willing to fit test some students to show them what it is all about as an educational tool for students to take back to their department.
- Discussion whether Mask Fit Testing should be a requirement within the VFA recertification process.
- Council would like to see the VFA push information out regarding fit testing. The Council will not take action.
- New VOSHA manager is Dan Whipple.
- Al Barber is going to reach out to Dan to get him more involved with the Council.
- Collette would like to put together an SME work group to revamp the Flashover program.

### New Business:

- Discussion of where the LP Gas program stands and how natural gas needs to be added to the program.
- Discussion of how Todd Cosgrove took charge of revising the LP Gas program two years ago but when Cosgrove left the revision was placed on the back burner due to staffing levels at the VFA.
- The LP program needs to be fast tracked through SME’s to be revised.
- Is there a three or four hour awareness level natural gas program that can be put together so as to make fire departments aware of issues they may run into when dealing natural gas?
- Discussion of how Center Learn works and how EMS has been able to deliver more continuing education courses than in the past.
- Center Learn has Fire Training classes and the EMS department has been approached by departments to turn on the Fire classes so that those that hold EMS certification can utilize those classes as well for continuing education.
- Neil shares that under the Rules of the Council that if the Chair requests to be removed from duty the Vice Chair takes his spot, leaving the Vice Chair empty until a new one is elected.
- Neil announces that John Wood has retired and would like to say thank you for all of his hard work and see the Council send a thank you to him as well.

**Department of Education: Absent**

**Department of Health – Christopher Bell**

- EMS is working on writing REHAB guidelines and what an EMS provider can and cannot do when it comes to Firefighter Rehab.
- EMS will be hosting some instructor/coordinator courses.

**Career Chief's report – Troy Ruggles**

- May 16<sup>th</sup> the Career Chiefs will hold a seminar called: Handling the Bad News, Survival Techniques for the Digital Age at Lake Morrey. The guest speaker is David Statter.

**Vermont State Firefighters Assn.: Al Barber**

- VCOMM grant funds came out on Friday January 24; about 1.6 million was handed out.

**Vermont Chief's: Wendall Mansfield**

- No report

**Dept. of Forest, Park & Rec. – Lars Lund**

- Lars is looking to find a statute that sets who is the AHJ when it comes to Wildland Fire Grounds in VT.
- Lars will be reviewing the statutes in regards to Town Fire Wardens.
- Discussion if Fire Wardens are required to have ICS 100 and 200.

**Professional Firefighters- Aaron Collette**

- No report

**Insurance: Gary Ouellette**

- December 20<sup>th</sup> VT Domestic Insurers met with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Financial Regulation and discussed what was going on with the Fire Service Council and that no increase of funding requests would be coming from the Council.
- Asks what the process is to replace Gary Ouellette on the Council since he has taken a new position. Paperwork must be submitted to the Governor's office and then reviewed and approved.

**General Public – John Marcus**

- Asked if there is truly an issue with 9-volt battery starting fires. Discussion follows.

**Other Business:**

- Collette thanks the Council.

*Collette makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Barber. Motion to adjourn passes unanimously.*

Next meeting scheduled for **Monday, April 28 at the Division of Fire Safety in Berlin** at 9 am.