

**Vermont Fire Service Training Council**  
*Minutes of the March 28, 2018 Meeting*

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The meeting was held at Division of Fire Safety Headquarters in Berlin on March 28, 2018 and called to order by Vice Chairperson Marcus at 10:01 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Organization Representatives**

Vermont Career Chiefs Association	Collette (proxy)
Secretary of Education	Northern (phone)
Vermont Fire Chiefs Association	Wendall Mansfield
Commissioner of the Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation	Absent
Professional Firefighters of Vermont	Absent
Commissioner of the Department of Health	Lindsey Simpson
Vermont State Firefighters Association	F. Tom Estey
Commissioner of the Department of Labor	Burns (proxy)
Vermont Domestic Insurance	Pryce
Division of Fire Safety Director	Joe Benard (proxy)
General Public	John Marcus – Vice Chairperson
Commissioner of Public Safety	Tom Anderson

Visitors: Peter Lynch, Michael Skaza, Jessica Pomainville, William Jones, Terry Farr, Mrs. Mansfield and John (Pecker)Heffernan

**Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was made by Northern and seconded by Collete to accept the previous meeting minutes of December 5, 2017, December 14, 2017, and January 8, 2018. Motion passes.**

**Commissioner of Public Safety – Tom Anderson**

The Division of Fire Safety budget is doing well.

John Marcus asks if there will be money for the Fire Service to go towards School Safety Right now schools are being assessed by either State Police, Sherriff, or Local PD to see where gaps are in school security. Money will be going toward planning and hardening schools if needed. Four million dollars has been earmarked for capital improvements in schools. There will be a grant process for eligibility for some of those funds. DPS is trying to reallocate some Homeland Security money for school safety initiatives.

**Report from the Executive Director of the Division of Fire Safety (Joe Benard)**

The Director of the Division is testifying today in an attempt to secure 1.8 million dollars for the renovations of the East Cottage.

Annual Report of the State Fire Marshal is complete and available.

Tier II money has dramatically gone up and more companies are reporting and complying.

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A summary was given of Fire Investigation Unit and Haz Mat Team responses this past year. The Firesafe802 grant is underway. The purpose of the grant is to be able to provide smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the homes of the most vulnerable populations. The Division has worked with the Red Cross in Williamstown and Rutland City to get the alarms in homes in those communities. In Williamstown over 600 detectors were installed. The grant is for \$340,000, this includes a temporary employee, trailer, tools, detectors, and handouts. If one is installed a home inspection will be done the and homeowner will receive some recommendations if needed

Heffernan asks for clarification on what the Director of Fire Safety was testifying for. He thought that the Director was asking for one million dollars this year and 75,000 dollars next year for the windows. No one is quite sure if they were trying to condense the project, the Director should have more information at the next meeting.

### **Report from the Chief of Training: Peter Lynch**

Firefighter II programs have been completed. There was one in Rutland and one in Windsor, 44 certifications were issued.

Firefighter I and Firefighter I/II programs are moving into the busy season.

It is time for organizations to start thinking about what training they would like to see in the next training year.

Fire Instructor I programs have both ended. 25 students completed the program and six have started the process to become Fire Academy Instructors.

One person has successfully completed the Fire Instructor Challenge and another two are registered to take the Challenge exam.

Fire Officer I/II program has started in Pittsford, this year will be considered the Southern year and there are 16 students in the class representing nine departments and there are a couple of volunteers taking the program.

NFA Direct Delivery requests have been filed with the NFA and the VFA is waiting for approval.

The Firefighter I Challenge will be on June 5<sup>th</sup> and the Firefighter II will be held on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

Twelve Instructors were hired last year and the Vermont Fire Academy hopes to hire that many if not more in 2018.

The Fire Academy is booking courses and programs into September so the Fire Academy is trying to find a way to meet the demand and is asking requestors to work together to fill a request.

The Vermont Fire Academy has four practical sessions and twenty-three instructors working this Saturday which is not abnormal in the Spring time.

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The Curriculum Developer position was approved by the Chief of Training, the Division Director and the Commissioner; however the proposed Public Safety budget was reduced by the Governor. The Academy has had to prioritize curriculum needs and keep the current curriculums up to date. Alex Northern offers to help with this.

The Academy has been using working groups to get work done on curriculums. A writing workshop for the Fire Officer has been added to the Fire Officer program. A Fire Officer student and project manual have been revised for the Fire Officer curriculum.

The Fire Instructor Challenge package has been put together, piloted, and is under revision to make improvements.

The update to the Flammable Gas (LP) course is the next priority.

NFPA 472 has been replaced by NFPA 1072, the Vermont Fire Academy needs to have adopted 1072 by December of 2018. The Vermont Fire Academy will need to make changes to our accreditation and submit to Pro Board.

The Vermont Fire Academy is asking to add two more job descriptions one of which is a Specialist, which would allow the Fire Academy to hire people to work on special projects like curriculum. The Second is a position called Assistant Site Coordinator this position would help with the tear down, clean up, equipment maintenance and perform other duties.

RIC course is still in the works and is in high demand. The VFA is trying very hard to get the First Module out before the end of 2018.

Entry Level Firefighter money was removed from the budget along with the Curriculum Developer position. The Director said that he would come up with the money to fund the course.

The Homeland Security Grant did not clearly include funding opportunities for fire training so the VFA was unable to get additional funding for the Flashover courses. The VFA is able to carry over money from previous grants for this year. If the VFA is unable to get money next year the VFA may have to cut back on Firefighter I and II programs so as to fund Flashover deliveries.

The VFA intends to apply for leftover HSU money to use on PADO and Flashover trainings.

Kevin Lane is now in charge of HSU funding. Stake holder input will be taken June 4 through June 8.

In 2017 the Fire Academy put forth twelve initiatives and a lot of work was done, however it was a hefty amount of work. The 2018 initiatives are either a continuation from last year or they are new. The 2018 initiatives are Strategic Planning (continuation), Standard Operating Guidelines (continuation), Assistance to Firefighters Grant to purchase Rescue Tools, Entry Level Firefighter course, East Cottage renovation, identifying the needs of the Vermont Fire Service in Officer training, computer based scheduling for instructors, instructor performance evaluations, Rapid Intervention Crew course, working group to work on Firefighter I and II curriculum

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updates.

**Report for the Council Chair:**

No report.

**Statute and Rule Revision:**

No report.

**Unfinished Business:**

The Vermont Fire Academy will be holding a one-day instructor course/train-the-trainer, to bridge/refresh instructors to the new PADO standard. They will be ready for the PADO Challenge exam at the end of May.

**New Business:**

Standard Operating Guideline Discussion:

1. Course and Program Access (Approval)– this is required by Pro Board and it guarantees open access to all courses and programs.

**Motion to approve the Course and Program Access SOG made by Estey and seconded by Mansfield. Motion passed.**

2. Instructor Adherence to Curriculum (Endorse) – A guideline to instructors requiring them to teach the curriculums that have been approved by the Council or courses that have been approved by the VFA to provide consistency. Instructors are able to adapt but not modify the intent or objectives. Instructors are allowed to suggest modifications and a process is in place for the VFA to approve modification of approved material.

**Motion to endorse the Instructor Adherence to Curriculum SOG made by Estey and seconded by Marcus.**

Collette asks how this is policed? There was a discussion that the lead instructors and training coordinators would be doing that through course and program monitoring.

**Motion passed.**

3. Student Adherence to Mask Fit Policy (Endorse) – established when registered students have to adhere to our mask fit policy which complies with respiratory protection.

**Motion to endorse the Student Adherence to Mask Fit Policy SOG made by Collette and seconded by Estey. Motion passed.**

4. Instructor Expectations (Endorse) – formalizes what we have been doing and sets expectations.

**Motion to endorse the Instructor Expectations SOG made by Northern and seconded by**

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**Collette.**

Discussion of the State of Vermont Employee Handbook and if it is referenced. It was explained that the State of Vermont Employee Handbook is written more for classified positions so the VFA felt the need to write their own guidance to address part-time (temporary) employees.

**Motion passed.**

5. Requesting and Awarding Courses and Programs (Update / Approval) – 2a allows exceptions to approve requests made with less than 45-days notice based on available resources. It will allow for departments who are paying for a training event to decide who is allowed to register, provided that it complies with Age Requirements and Prerequisites SOG.

**Motion to approve the updated Requesting and Awarding Courses and Programs SOG made by Northern and seconded by Collette. Motion passed.**

6. Course / Program Student Min/Max Requirements (Update / Endorse) – Change in Section 2 – the maximum for programs over 30 hours is 40. Change in Section 8 was that courses will now accept outside applicants to count towards student minimum provided there are at least eight firefighters sponsored by a Vermont Fire Department. The next change allows departments who pay for training to not to have to meet the minimum student number.

**Motion to endorse the updated Course/Program Student Min/Max Requirements SOG made by Estey and seconded by Burns. Motion passed.**

7. Registration Process (Update / Endorse) – had to be changed to align with Course/Program student minimum/maximum requirements. There are agencies outside of the fire service who we provide training to so section 11 was added. Last change was in section 13 allowing those who paid the training to register students at their discretion as long as they comply with all other eligibility requirements.

**Motion to endorse the updated Registration Process SOG made by Estey and seconded by Northern. Motion passed.**

8. FYI SOG. Questions / Comments – There were no comments on the FYI SOG's

**Coalition Report: (John Heffernan)**

The coalition met with the Governor and discussed the Blue Light Bill and Recruitment and Retention.

They found out that the Blue Light Bill was stalled because the Police Chief's Association was against the Bill because the Bill did not allow them to put red lights on the back of their cruisers. The Police Chief's Association will support the Bill provided they add that.

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There was another Bill that was looking to take the Fire Service off an EMS Council and the Coalition opposes it.

Capital Punishment Bill is still being worked on. It would make the penalty for murdering a First Responder the same as for murdering a Police Officer.

The Governor has agreed to help the coalition put together a Public Service Announcement to help with recruitment and retention. The Director would like the announcement to have a phone number where interested people could call to get information on how to become a firefighter.

The Coalition spent two days at the State House. One day was with the Rural Fire Protection Grant Program and the second day was a Coalition sponsored a meet and greet which allows them to talk to legislators.

### **Vermont Career Chiefs: (Collette)**

The Career Chiefs met last week in Brattleboro. The focus was on behavioral health and wellness in First Responders. The IAFF and PFFV are going to do a presentation to the group about their peer counselor program that they have developed in Vermont. The IAFF has a more formal program that the President of the PFFV is going to try to work with the IAFF to allow it to come to Vermont. They are unsure if the program is limited to career firefighters. The PFFV is trying to work with Emergency Management to get an additional day (September 6) at the Emergency Management Conference to conduct this training.

ASHER (Active Shooter Hostile Event Reaction) NFPA 3000 document is being released. It is more of a community based approach. Rarely does the NFPA develop a document outside of their normal process to meet an emergency need which is why it was an accelerated process.

HSU is not going to allocate any money out of the 2018 grant for PPE. Some Departments have spent department money to purchase needed PPE.

### **Vermont State Firefighters Association: (Estey)**

The VSFA convention will be held on July 21 & 22 in St. Albans.

VSFA is trying to recruit new membership and is willing to work with Career firefighters and EMS providers.

The VSFA Chaplain is applying for a grant to train and support a peer support group to assist in providing Critical Support to help Fire, EMS, Police, and Corrections. The grant is coming from the FEMA - Assistance to Firefighters – Prevention and Safety Grant Program. Middlebury Ambulance is going to be the financial administrator of the grant if they get it but it will be a multi-disciplinary undertaking on a state-wide level.

### **Vermont Fire Chiefs: (Mansfield) –**

**They have not had a meeting for a year – no report**

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**Professional Firefighters of Vermont: (Corbin) – Absent**

**Agency of Natural Resources: (Lund) – Absent**

**Department of Education: (Northern)**

The Annual Career Panel is coming up at the VTC Fire Service Program which is a panel of Officers from around the state that come and simulate a hiring panel to help get the students ready for the job market.

VTC lost a former student in a car accident last month.

Twelve new students are enrolled in the VTC Fire Science Program in the Fall.

The State of Vermont has reached last in the United States in funding for Higher Education, which is affecting a lot of colleges. VTC will be cutting eight of the thirty-eight programs over the next five years, two have already been cut. Northern would like to see the Paramedicine and Fire Service paired programs together.

**Department of Health: (Simpson)**

EMS has agreed to hold the bridge course between the VFA Fire Instructor program and EMS Instructor Coordinator Program, there are six students who want to take it.

The Resuscitation Academy was held on March 17, High Performance CPR was taught to 60 people. The EMS would like to hold the class at the Fire Academy in the future.

EMS week is coming up.

EMS will be offering continuing education hours for Instructor Coordinators. 12 hours of continuing education is required for Instructor Coordinators.

Updated EMS Protocols will roll out on April 1 and then all agencies must implement them by July 1.

Northern asks when the new protocols will be available for applications on iphones? It should be done by the end of April.

**Department of Labor: (Burns)**

No Report

**Vermont Domestic Insurance: (Pryce)**

No Report

**General Public: (Marcus)**

No Report

The next meeting is scheduled for June 27<sup>th</sup> at 1000 at the Vermont Fire Academy in Pittsford.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Collette and seconded by Estev. Motion passed.**