

**Vermont Fire Service Training Council**  
*Minutes of the October 11, 2018 Meeting*

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The meeting was held at the Division of Fire Safety Central Office Berlin and called to order by John Marcus.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Organization Representatives**

Vermont Career Chiefs Association	Troy Ruggles
Secretary of Education	Rob Evans (phone)
Vermont Fire Chiefs Association	
Commissioner of the Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation	Lars Lund (late)
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	Les Burns (proxy) – call in
Vermont Domestic Insurance	Jeffrey Pryce
Division of Fire Safety Director	Michael Desrochers
General Public	John Marcus – Vice Chairperson
Commissioner of Public Safety	Thomas Anderson

Visitors: Peter Lynch, Michael Skaza, Jessica Pomainville, William Jones, Terry Farr

**Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was made by Estey and seconded by Ruggles to accept the previous meeting minutes of March 28, 2018. Motion carries unanimously.**

**Commissioner of Public Safety-**

The Governor has been taking his cabinet around the state to each county, they have been to about seven or eight. The point of this is to get boots on the ground and out of the Montpelier bubble. They typically meeting with Law Enforcement in the morning, and Fire Departments, EMS, and Emergency Management in the afternoon. Discussions include the number of hours it takes to get trained to be a Firefighter and difficulty recruiting that both EMS and Fire Departments are having.

The Commissioner spoke of a new school security grant program that will provide 5.5 million dollars, four million dollars of that is to be spent on infrastructure. Items covered under this grant may include locks and PA systems. One million dollars has been reallocated from Homeland Security to help with firefighter/EMS/law enforcement exercise/planning/training it is a two and half year grant program.

Public Safety has received \$400,000 from Department of Justice for a School Safety Tipline

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that is geared toward students, faculty, and parents.

Bruce Martin is going to be speaking at the Governors Education Conference.

The Commissioner encourages people to look for the planning/exercise/training and provide input.

**Report from the Executive Director of the Division of Fire Safety (Michael Desrochers)**

Patricia Moulton, President of VTC, is holding a meeting to discuss the Fire Science Degree program and the following topics:

- 1) Is the program still viable because financially they are just breaking even?
- 2) What has changed in the fire service over the last 10 years?
  - a. If the program was in Chittenden county, would that would allow more live in arrangements and provide students with a better feel for the Fire Service culture.
  - b. How much EMS has changed over the years and that more Career Departments are requiring EMS licensure.

Troy Dare, who runs the dry hydrant grant program is going to be leaving his position within the next year. This was retracted later.

GJ Garrow has been promoted to Regional Manager in Rutland. He was the Chief Plumbing Inspector for the past 20 years. Interviews for his replacement, are scheduled however the position was moved to Williston due to the amount of work that they have in that area.

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

Seven of the eight Firefighter I, II, I/II programs that were awarded have received the minimum student numbers to be held. The one in Lyndonville was cancelled. With the Lyndonville Firefighter I not being held the VFA will be offering a Firefighter II Program to Glover Fire Department.

Approximately 200 students are in currently enrolled in a Firefighter I, II or I/II Program this year. Last year, we started with 230 students.

A Fire Instructor I program is going to start at Saint Michael's College soon. There are spots for one or two more students in that program.

A Fire Instructor I program will start in the middle January in Poultney.

Our second Instructor Development Day will be held on January 12<sup>th</sup> and have an Instructor coming from outside of the area on that day. The Chief of Training encourages anyone who may want to attend or send people to let us know.

Instructor Evaluations have begun, and Bill and Terry are the Leads for that. They were started in

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September and they will do two instructor evaluations per month. Each Instructor will have a performance evaluation every two years.

Four new Instructors have been hired. Our first Fire Training Service Training Specialist was hired. Instructor Kim Julow has resigned after working for the Academy for 13 years. Taylor Josephson is no longer Instructor for the Academy.

The Flammable Gas Control curriculum is still under review and is progressing slowly

The 2017 edition of NFPA 1001, Professional Qualifications Standard for Firefighter has been released and we are awaiting the release of new curriculum from the publishers to begin our review.

We have released a new course Writing for the Fire Service. This course will be offered at the beginning of every Fire Officer program and will also be offered as a stand-alone course. We will be delivering this course for the second time in Brattleboro and several VFA instructors will be attending as a Train the Trainer.

The Entry Level Firefighter course is being formatted now. They hope to have to a review committee by November 6<sup>th</sup> and have the review committee submit their final recommendations.

- 1) No money is going to the development of the Entry Level Firefighter curriculum. The Division of Fire Safety is funding it and no money is coming out of the Special Fund.
- 2) The VFA will provide Train the Trainer sessions to local training officers and then hand the course off to them for local delivery.

Completion of the Entry Level Firefighter course does not apply towards completion of a Firefighter I program.

The Technical Rescue Committee continues to be active and is providing guidance on the direction that the VFA should take regarding the delivery of technical rescue training. The VFA will be submitting an application to the Pro Board seeking accreditation of our Rope Rescue Awareness and Operations program.

We have received an extension on our 2016 AFG grant and have expanded the grant project to include the purchase of rehabilitation equipment, and an upgrade to the breathing air cascade system in the Drager trailer.

Our 2017 AFG grant will provide us with a new tow vehicle and rescue mannequins. The mannequins will be life-like and we will be providing a mannequin in every Firefighter I trailer, it will also provide additional mannequins for live fire training, technical rescue, and thermal imaging training.

The Vermont Fire Academy finished the last fiscal year slightly over budget. In this year's budget we are holding to eight Firefighter programs and in an attempt to stay within budget. In the budget request for next year we asked for a curriculum developer and were turned down. As an alternative, we are seeking an \$60,000 to do curriculum development using part time employees.

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46 instructors have attended Exertional Heat Illness Prevention training over five different sessions. A weather station has been ordered for monitoring environmental conditions during training. We will be revising our rehabilitation program and we will be looking at scheduling alternatives to avoid training during high risk weather conditions.

The East Cottage project is on hold pending the assignment of a project manager. We are tracking this project closely as BGS moves forward.

The Fire Academy is getting busier and busier. Two weeks ago on a Saturday, Classroom 1 was full with the NVFC Small Town Fire Chief Seminar. Simultaneously in Classroom 2, which didn't exist two years ago, we were holding a Wildland course as a part of Firefighter I. We also had a live fire exercise taking place at a burn building that we didn't have two years ago. On this day there were about 80 students at the Academy. Days like this are the result of hard work by the Vermont Fire Academy staff over the past two years.

### **Report from the Council Chair:**

No Report

### **Statute and Rule Revision:**

Director Desrochers stated that the Division of Fire Safety would handle the rule revision submission as soon as the documents were received from the Chair of the Council.

### **Unfinished Business:**

PADO has been updated and we are now offering the IFSTA third edition curriculum. We have received accreditation for Pumping Apparatus Driver Operator and Mobile Water Supply. The first pilot of this edition has been completed with seven students enrolled, six students taking the certification exam, and five students have gained certification. The student feedback was good, but students indicated that they needed more time for practical skill work.

Aerial is not being offered at this time, Fred Probst, our newest Fire Service Training Specialist is working on the curriculum. The standard has changed since it was last offered. Even if the Fire Academy was to get it back online it would not happen until after July 1, 2019 due to resource demands. Our Accreditation has to be extended to the new edition, we need to validate a new test bank, and then it can be offered. The Academy is working at full capacity with respect to both instructors and funding.

The Fire Instructor I Challenge exam process has been conducted three times and average exam scores were: 91 on the written, 79 on the Cognitive presentation, 82 on the Psychomotor presentation, and 90 on the Random Skill station. After piloting this Challenge exam, the Vermont Fire Academy does not see the need for the random skill station. This is based on the performance of the candidates to date. The bulk of the JPR's in 1041 are tested in the two speeches. The random skills that are left are very basic tasks that do not seem to challenge the candidates.

**Tom Estey makes a motion to remove the Random skill from the Fire Instructor I Challenge exam, and John Marcus seconds it. Motion carries unanimously.**

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The Fire Inspector I/II program was approved three years ago, but the Council Rules do not give the Fire Academy authority to recertify to this level. The Fire Academy is asking the Council for an interim rule while the Council Rules are being revised. A handout is circulated outlining the proposed recertification requirements. The interim rule for recertification would be the same as it would be once the Rules are amended.

11:25 am Rob Evans ended call, still have a Quorum.

**A motion was made by Ruggles and seconded by Estey to approve the interim Rule for Fire Inspector recertification as proposed in the handout. Motion carries unanimously.**

**New Business:**

Chris Corbin presented a proposal from the PFFV to add content to our Firefighter I curriculum that would place greater emphasis on physical wellness and responder mental health. All were in favor of this offer. Corbin will notify the PFFV of the intent to include this information in the Firefighter I curriculum so that they can forward the information to the Academy for review.

The Hazardous Materials Training Standards have changed. Previously, we have based our Hazardous Materials Programs on NFPA 472, which outlines what you need to know as a responder. The NFPA has released NFPA 1072, which is the Standard for Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Emergency Response Personnel Professional Qualifications. Since this is a Professional Qualification Standard, we must adopt the standard and certify our responders to it. Pro Board has mandated that we must be accredited to this standard by December 1, 2018. A new test bank has been acquired and validated by a subject matter expert group. The Academy has applied to the Pro Board to extend out accreditation to this standard and is seeking Council approval to certify personnel to this standard instead of NFPA 472.

**A motion was made by Lund and seconded by Estey to approve certifying personnel to NPFA 1072 for Hazardous Materials Awareness, Operations, and Mission Specific Competencies and to discontinue the practice of certifying personnel to NFPA 472 after receiving Pro Board Accreditation to the new standard. Motion passed unanimously.**

The curriculum development is complete for the new Rapid Intervention Crew course using the Jones and Bartlett curriculum. There is no testing component beyond quizzes and practical skill as this is not a certification program because no professional qualification standard exists for this topic. The course has been broken into three modules. There are no prerequisites for Module 1.

The following prerequisites are required by NFPA 1407, Standard for Training Rapid Intervention Crews for Modules 2 & 3:

1. Students must be a minimum of 18 year of age since they will be required to transfer to and from a ladder at a height.
2. Students must have training that is compliant with or equal to that prescribed by NFPA 1001 for Firefighter I.
3. A Rapid Intervention Crew Leader must be a minimum of Fire Officer I.

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The course can be delivered in one of two ways:

1. One continuous course delivery in approximately 44 hours. This would consist of either full eight hour days or four hour evening sessions.
2. Broken into modules to include:
  - a. Module 1: Performing self-rescue, calling a Mayday, and activating a RIC. This module is a mix of classroom and practical skill based.
  - b. Module 2: Rapid Firefighter Egress and moving a downed Firefighter. This module is very hands on and lecture/demo based.
  - c. Module 3: RIC search techniques and rescue actions.

VFA would like to pilot the continuous course delivery schedule with a career student group and the modulized delivery with a volunteer student group. Instructor refresher training will need to occur prior to the delivery of the pilot courses and it believed that this can be accomplished in one single-day session.

**A motion is made by Estey and seconded by Ruggles to endorse the pilot delivery of two RIC courses, each using a different delivery method.**

During discussion of the motion, it was stated that there is funding to conduct the Train-the-Trainer and two pilots. The host locations for this course are limited because the prop is time consuming to put together and you need a big building to house it. The prop can not be set up outside. Module 1 can be done anywhere Module 2 and 3 have limited locations. The Fire Academy is one location that can host all modules of the course.

**Motion unanimously passed.**

Standard Operating Guideline Discussion:

1. Non-discrimination (Endorse) – This guideline is required by Pro Board.

**Motion to endorse the non-discrimination Endorsement SOG made by Lund and seconded by Marcus. Motion carries unanimously.**

2. Eligibility to Test (Approval) – This is a revised version of a previously approved SOG. The changes allow students who are part of technical school programs to have 15 months to complete live fire. This allows those who are not 18 years of age at the time of completing their program to come back and test once they are of age and can complete the live fire portion of the program. Section (b) 5 adds a fee for out of state challengers.
  - a. Lund pointed out that there are two section 5 (b) i's.

**Estey makes a motion to approve with the change that the second 5(b) i becomes 5(b)ii, seconded by Lund. Motion carries unanimously**

3. Live Fire Eligibility (Approval) – This is a previously approved SOG that required a

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change to Section 1(b), so that the Eligibility to Test SOG and this SOG mirrored one another.

**Lund makes a motion to approve with the updated language, seconded by Ruggles. Motion carries unanimously.**

4. Stakeholder Representation– This guideline allows all interested parties to have a stake in our training, this is also required by Pro Board.

**Motion to endorse is made by Ruggles, seconded by Estey. Motion passes unanimously.**

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

**Coalition Report: (Absent)**

Ken Morton is the new President of Coalition

**Vermont Career Chiefs: (Ruggles)**

No Report

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

No Report

**Vermont Fire Chiefs: (Absent)**

No report

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

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

All Fire Departments were notified of a grant that is available that allows for the purchase of Wildland Firefighting gear. Grant applications are due at the beginning of October. A chainsaw training program will be offered through ANR. Two sessions will be offered and limited to ten students. ANR will pay for half the student cost and the department will need to pick up the other half. Tess Greaves who manages forest fire risk announcements is retiring and ANR will have to figure out how to replace her.

**Department of Education: (Evans)**

No report, left the meeting early.

**Department of Health: (Simpson)**

Looking forward to the next Fire Instructor program and working to offer a bridge to EMS Instructor Coordinator following that program.

The Department of Health EMS Conference with a Resuscitation Academy will be held at Jay Peak and information is available on their website.

Simpson announced that it is her last meeting since she is leaving state government and starting a new position.

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**Department of Labor: (Burns)**

VOSHA will be staffing the EOC for the upcoming exercise and there will be a follow-up at the alternative site at Camp Johnson. VOSHA likes the idea of the newly released Writing Workshop.

**Vermont Domestic Insurance: (Pryce)**

No Report

Todd Cosgrove provided a Vermont Hazardous Materials Response Team update where he provided a review of VHMRT Incidents/Reports this year. He reported that the team is working closely with a joint response with Canadian partners. He is looking forward to a formal exercise in 2020.

**General Public: (Marcus)**

No Report

**Election of Officers:**

Corbin and Marcus are willing to continue serving as Chair and Vice Chair respectively.

**Tom Estey nominates Chris Corbin as Council Chair and Lars Lund seconds it, Motion passes unanimously.**

**Tom Estey nominates John Marcus as Council Vice-Chair and Ruggles seconds it, Motion passes unanimously.**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am at the Vermont Fire Academy in Pittsford.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting, passes unanimously.**