



v 11/5/10 @ 12:30p

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH
LANSING

ANDREW S. LEVIN
ACTING DIRECTOR

**MICHIGAN FIRE FIGHTERS TRAINING COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Bureau of Fire Services
Constitution Hall
Park Place Hotel
300 E. State Street
Traverse City, Michigan 49684

APPROVED MINUTES

October 22, 2010
1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Cousins, Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association
Michael Deprez, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs
Ron Farr, DELEG, State Fire Marshal, Council Member Ex Officio
Timothy James, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs
Cliff Messing, Vice-Chairman, Michigan State Firemen's Association

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kevin Pirlot, Chairman, Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union (excused)
Randal Agruda, Michigan Municipal League/Michigan Townships Association (excused)

BFS STAFF PRESENT

Joseph Grutza, OFFT Director
Gary Crum, Region 2 Supervisor
Mary Egner, Recording Secretary
Mike Greis, Curriculum Specialist
Dan Hammerberg, Region 1 Supervisor

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Approximately 45 Michigan fire service instructors attended today's meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Vice-Chairman Messing called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. A quorum was determined present.

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BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES
525 WEST ALLEGAN STREET, 4th FLOOR • P.O. BOX 30700 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
Phone (517) 241-8847 • Fax (517) 335-4061
www.michigan.gov

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman James, supported by Councilman Farr, to approve the meeting agenda. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Work Session of August 11, 2010, at 10:00 a.m.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Cousins, supported by Councilman Deprez, to approve the August 11, 2010, work session minutes as submitted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

B. Regular Business Meeting of August 11, 2010, at 1:30 p.m.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Cousins, supported by Councilman James, to approve the August 11, 2010, regular business meeting minutes as submitted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. OFFT DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Joseph Grutza

Prior to presenting the Director's Report, Director Grutza thanked the Michigan State Fire Instructors Association for the honor of being able to hold today's MFFTC meeting in conjunction with the MFSIA annual conference. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the work they do in instructing our classes. He also encouraged their questions and comments during today's Council meeting.

County Training Allocations to FY 2011:

Director Grutza advised that the Fiscal Year 2011 county training funding allocation letter has been sent to the County Training Committee (CTC) chairpersons. The minimum per county allocation of \$2,250 for FY 2011 is the same as it was for FY 2010 and FY 2009. The CTC chairperson is responsible for surveying his or her county to determine which courses to direct their county's funding to. He indicated that the funds must be encumbered by January 1, 2011; or the funds will be returned to the Office of Fire Fighter Training. As in the past, priority should be given to funding basic Fire Fighter classes. Ultimately, the OFFT will defer to the needs of the county as advised by the CTC chair. In addition, counties are encouraged to work together to receive maximum benefit from the funds, including co-sponsoring cross-county training.

Announcement of New Training Coordinators:

Director Grutza announced that the OFFT received approval to fill four Training Coordinator positions in Region 1. The following people have been selected for these positions: Thomas Philipps, Timothy Russell, Charles Bouth, and Robin Arlt. Their responsibilities include administering the Fire Fighter 1 and 2 exams and evaluating instructors. They will be attending a training session with other Training Coordinators and OFFT staff next week.

Reciprocity:

Director Grutza reported that on October 18, 2010, he attended a meeting of the Michigan Fire Coalition regarding Senate Bill 1468, which would allow reciprocity to individuals who successfully completed fire fighter training during military service and/or in another state. The MFFTC will be addressing reciprocity in its task of writing administrative rules. Part of the discussion with the Fire

Coalition centered around how PA 291 compares with the MCOLES (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards) Act—the police training act. The MCOLES Act was distributed at the Coalition meeting, and the Coalition was asked to review it to see if there were parts of it they would like to see reflected in Act 291. Upon their review, the Coalition members are to forward their information to Director Grutza, and he will put together an information sheet.

Councilman James encouraged everyone present to meet with their respective associations and have them submit their information to the Coalition so that the information can be taken into consideration.

Director Grutza added that at the next regular business meeting of the MFFTC, there will be an update of where we are in the rules re-writing process.

Meeting on Part 74:

Paul Hufnagel from the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union and Dave Purchase from the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs sent a letter in 2007 to the rules people requesting that the Part 74 rules be looked at again. The first meeting of the Part 74 Fire Fighting Advisory Meeting was held on October 19, 2010. Part 74 talks about the equipment and NFPA standards to be followed by fire fighters. Director Grutza distributed to the Council members a copy of the Part 74 meeting agenda, a list of the Part 74 committee members, and a copy of Part 74. In addition, he provided a copy of a handout provided at that meeting outlining the administrative rules process. He indicated this would be a valuable document for our own rules re-write process. Director Grutza indicated that both Dave Purchase and Paul Hufnagel will be invited to the next meeting on Part 74 to provide input.

Southeastern Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs:

Director Grutza said the bureau had received a letter from the Southeastern Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs (SMAFC). The letter referred to the Big Rapids Department of Public Safety running an unsanctioned Fire Fighter 1 & 2 program earlier this year where the students were composed of public safety administrators from around the state. The SMAFC viewed this course as an accelerated program, not complying with the intent of the State Fire Fighter 1 & 2 program. The Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council discussed this issue at prior Council meetings, and one of the actions taken was to update our Training Coordinator policy prohibiting Training Coordinators from participating in this type of classes. Councilman Cousins asked Director Grutza to send the SMAFC an acknowledgement letter advising them that the Council is working on addressing this issue.

State Fire Marshal Farr said there had been several challenges regarding the employment of the people participating in the exam for the above course as well as challenges as to the expected outcome of the written exam and practical skills exam. He reviewed all documentation and said that all of the people who went through the challenge exam were legitimately employed by a municipal agency. State Fire Marshal Farr also said that he and Mike Greis went to the exam site the day of the exam and stayed there the entire time to monitor both the written exam and the practical skills portion. There were no shortcuts that took place that day. It was a very legitimate exam—well run and well administered by competent individuals. He believes the Training Coordinator policy and re-writing the rules as Director Grutza mentioned earlier will help in the short term to control situations like this in the future. As the rules stand today, though, this challenge exam met MFFTC standards.

RTC Issue:

Director Grutza indicated that at the August 11, 2010, MFFTC meeting, the Council members approved the motion to permit the regional training centers to sponsor and conduct additional courses to the registered pre-service students. It was not clarified at that time when the courses could be taken. Since the August meeting, Director Grutza received a call from an RTC asking when the students could take these classes; and he is looking for guidance from Council.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Cousins, supported by Councilman James, to require students to successfully pass Fire Fighter 1 & 2 prior to taking any of the courses on the list read by Director Grutza. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Discussion on the motion: Matt Majestic, Training Coordinator/Oakland Community College, said that they have been putting into their program the basic vehicle extrication class and have only been able to enroll one or two students who happened to be sponsored by a department. He asked Council to consider allowing those students who are currently enrolled in the program to be able to participate and receive credit for this class while in the Fire 1 & 2 program. Otherwise, they won't be able to get credit for this class. He went on to say that in these economic times, this course makes the students that much more marketable. Councilman Cousins said what he was trying to avoid was the students taking additional OFFT courses before taking Fire Fighter 1 & 2. Rob Ginther, Oakland Community College, suggested that some of those classes could be taught concurrently with Fire Fighter 1 & 2; however, input from one of the OFFT Region Supervisors indicated that logistically, it would be impossible to hold the courses for processing while waiting for the FF 1 & 2 results.

State Fire Marshal Farr requested that this issue be put on the agenda for discussion at the next Council meeting.

Relocation of OFFT Region 1 Office:

The OFFT Region 1 office, Dan Hammerberg/Region Supervisor, will be moving FROM Marquette TO Escanaba soon.

Mary Egner's Retirement:

Director Grutza announced that Mary Egner, his Management Assistant and Recording Secretary for the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council, will be retiring at the end of December. He thanked her for her years of service to the fire service. State Fire Marshal Farr indicated that her position has been identified as a critical one, and he is doing everything he can to replace her position 1:1.

5. FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT – Ron Farr**Introduction of Council Members:**

State Fire Marshal Farr introduced the Council members and the organizations they represent to the guests at today's meeting.

BFS Conference at the Ralph A. MacMullen (RAM) Conference Center:

State Fire Marshal Farr told the Council members that the entire bureau staff will be meeting at the RAM Center in Roscommon next week. He said even though staff members may have communicated with each other over the phone, this is the first time some of them will have actually met each other. He is looking forward to opening this communication and believes it will lead to more consistent and efficient processes. He also indicated that the OFFT Training Coordinators will be attending the bureau meeting as training is an important issue that will be addressed.

State Fire Marshal Farr also noted that eventually all of the field inspectors will be working out of their homes; and having laptops, they will be able to work from their cars as well. Many of the field staff will be attending a presentation on the new inspection program that the bureau has purchased. He anticipates this will be up and running shortly. The current software program is no longer stable; and should it fail, the Department of Technology, Management & Budget has advised that they will not be able to fix it. With the implementation of this new program, we hope to have a smooth transition.

Fiscal Year 2011 Budget:

State Fire Marshal Farr stated the budget for FY 2011 is the same as it was for 2010, and the county funding allocation is the same as it was last year. In addition, he said that he was recently advised to start preparing for Fiscal Year 2012. He is uncertain about what will happen to the FY 2012 budget because much of it is contingent upon whether the fireworks bill passes. If it passes, though, more money would be available for the Bureau of Fire Services which supports fire training programs in Michigan. The bill is currently in Senate committee, and the issues of fees and tent sales are still being discussed.

MFFTC Work Sessions and Regular Business Meetings:

State Fire Marshal Farr thanked the MFFTC members for participating in the work sessions prior to the regular business meetings. He told the guests in the audience that the Council members have found them to be very valuable. He also invited and encouraged everyone to attend the work groups as well the regular business meetings.

6. INSTRUCTOR APPLICATIONS

A. Instructor Applications – October 2010

Staff presented the following Instructor applications for the Council's consideration:

- 20 new Probationary Instructor applications
- 2 upgrades to Certified Instructor

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman James, supported by Councilman Cousins, to approve the instructor applications as submitted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Oakland Community College Combined Regional Emergency Services Training (CREST Center):

Director Grutza stated that the Oakland Community College CREST Center is seeking approval to present a Company Officer series as part of a pilot program that incorporates the use of a video conferencing inter ops network that allows for instructional presentation in real time. He said this issue had been discussed at the August MFFTC meeting, and Council members had asked OFFT staff to look into the issue of what the National Fire Academy's position was on delivering the class using this technique. He included a revised proposal from the CREST Center in the Council members' meeting packet addressing issues Council members brought up at the August meeting.

Robert Ginther from the CREST Center explained the differences between the original proposal submitted and this version. Director Grutza added that one of the Council members had

requested contact with the NFA to find out their view regarding offering this course on line. Mike Gries contacted them, and they said there was no problem with their courses going on-line as long as we do not eliminate information from them. Mr. Greis said that the NFA's reaction was that the information from the books must be retained in the books, e.g., we can add to the books but not subtract from them. They saw no problem with this method of delivery; however, NFA asked that our office monitor the program to ensure compliance with our policies and procedures.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman DePrez, supported by Councilman Cousins, to allow the Company Officer series to be offered via videoconferencing as proposed in OCC's most recent pilot program proposal received by Director Grutza. **MOTION CARRIED.**

B. Instructor Policy:

Director Grutza indicated that the latest version of the Instructors Policy is included in the Council members' meeting packet. The Council members asked for the opportunity to present this draft to their respective organizations for additional input before taking action on it. No action was taken on the proposed revisions to the instructor policy at today's meeting.

State Fire Marshal Farr suggested making this a priority at the next work session and putting it on the regular business meeting agenda for action. If anyone would like a copy of the draft instructors' policy, he asked that they send an e-mail request to Director Grutza.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2011 MFFTC Meeting Schedule - PROPOSED:

The Council members reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for 2011.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Farr, supported by Councilman Cousins, to approve the proposed 2011 MFFTC meeting schedule as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Deward Beeler, on behalf of the Tri-Township Fire Department and the instructors, thanked the Council members for re-instating the Mutual Aid Tanker Shuttle program. He and Chief Caudill from the Watersmeet Fire Department delivered one in Wakefield. It was the first time Gogebic County had done a county-wide Mutual Aid Tanker Shuttle program. He said it was an excellent class, with a lot of participation; and he believes this class is a valuable tool for the Michigan fire service.

Don Bigger, Michigan Fire Service Association, thanked each of the Council members for making the trip to Traverse City. He went on to say that having the MFFTC meeting in conjunction with the MFSIA annual conference is a benefit to the fire instructors attending the conference.

Councilman Tim James thanked Ms. Egner for all her support and said she will be missed by the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council.

Councilman DePrez also thanked Ms. Egner for the guidance and support she provided him as a new Council member. He went on to say that the input received from the associations the Council

members represent has made it possible for the MFFTC to move forward with various issues. He encouraged the associations to continue providing input and feedback so that various issues can continue to be addressed.

Councilman Cousins expressed his appreciation for Ms. Egner's guidance when he was a new Council member. He also stated how proud he is to serve as a Council member. He went on to thank State Fire Marshal Farr and Director Grutza for their efforts in having the Training Coordinators included in the Bureau of Fire Services full-bureau staff meeting.

Vice-Chairman Messing thanked Ms. Egner for her years of service to the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council. He also thanked State Fire Marshal Farr and Director Grutza for all of the work done by the Bureau of Fire Services/Office of Fire Fighter Training. He thanked all of the guests for attending and expressed his appreciation that the Council was able to meet again this year in conjunction with the Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association's annual conference.

10. ADJOURNMENT

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Cousins, supported by Councilman James, to adjourn. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

APPROVED:

Shaun Abbey
Chairman

Council Member

Joseph A. Grutza, Director
Office of Fire Fighter Training

2010 MEETING SCHEDULE – remaining meetings

December 8 @ 10:00 a.m. – Wednesday

Location: 525 W. Allegan Street; Hutchinson Conference Room (Lower/Atrium Level, South);
Lansing, MI 48913

10:00 a.m. – Work Session

1:30 p.m. – Regular Business Meeting