

## **MINUTES**

Nevada State Board of Fire Services

October 11, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Location:

Nevada State Fire Marshal Division - John C. Dorff Memorial Conference Room  
107 Jacobsen Way, Carson City, Nevada

### Board Members Present:

Jayson Andrus (via TEAMS)  
Stephen DiGiovanni (via TEAMS)  
Rian Glassford (via TEAMS)  
Charles McCall (via TEAMS)  
Thomas McCleister (via TEAMS)  
Stephen Neel (via TEAMS)  
Dale Way

### Board Members Not Present:

Mark "Pete" Briant  
Mike Dzyak  
Kacey KC

### Others Present:

Nathan Hastings, Deputy Attorney General (via TEAMS)  
Connie Etchison, Executive Assistant, State Fire Marshal Division  
Joe Rodriguez, State Fire Marshal Division  
Dennis Pinkerton, State Fire Marshal Division  
Nicole Hoekstra, State Fire Marshal Division  
Tom Martinez, State Fire Marshal Division  
Rich McKnight, State Fire Marshal Division  
Mike Heidemann, Nevada State Firefighters Association  
Ryan McIntosh, Central Lyon Fire  
Rich Harvey, Central Lyon Fire  
Richard Brenner, SERC (via TEAMS)  
Kelli Baratti, Nevada Fire Chiefs Association (via TEAMS)  
Brandilyn Baxter, SERC (via TEAMS)  
Linda Bingaman, Carlin Volunteer Fire Department (via TEAMS)

1. **CALL TO ORDER** (Non-Action Item.)  
The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Joe Rodriguez.
2. **VERIFICATION OF NOTICE OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETING LAW**  
(Non-Action Item)  
Joe Rodriguez confirmed compliance with the Open Meeting Law
3. **ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS; verification of quorum** (Non-Action Item)  
Joe Rodriguez called roll. Seven (7) board members were present. A quorum was established. Introductions were made.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT** (Non-Action Item)  
There were no public comments.
5. **ELECTION OF A STATE BOARD OF FIRE SERVICES CHAIRPERSON**  
(Discussion/For Possible Action)  
Stephen DiGiovanni made a motion to elect Dale Way. Charles McCall seconded.  
Motion carried.
6. **APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 22, 2023 MEETING MINUTES** (Non-action item)  
Stephen DiGiovanni made a motion to approve the minutes. Thomas McCleister seconded.  
Motion carried.
7. **WELCOMING OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS.** (Non-action item)  
New board members are Rian Glassford, Deputy Fire Chief for Clark County Fire; Stephen Neel, Fire Chief of the Moapa Valley Fire District; and Charles McCall, retired fire service. They each gave a little bit of their background.
8. **STATE FIRE MARSHAL ADVISOR REPORT** (Non-action item)  
Joe Rodriguez stated they were hopefully going to be bringing on new inspectors down South. He knows there's a lot of work to be done down there. Recently, they had their Public Safety Event in Winnemucca. For everything that was going on, it was a good turnout. We did everything we could on our end. We had all our staff out there, our training bureau, our fire prevention folks and it was a good turnout overall. NAC workshops will be coming soon.
9. **STATE FIRE MARSHAL DIVISION TRAINING ADVISORY REPORT** (Non-action item)  
Dennis Pinkerton stated that the State Fire Marshal Training Bureau was present at the Nevada State Firefighters Association Annual Conference in Elko. We conducted live fire training with a new Drager live fire trailer, and we also had our SCBA/Confined Space Trailer there and held a SCBA Confidence contest to see who had the best time. Our State Fire Marshal training team conducted live fire training at Smith Valley Fire Protection District on August 5th, and trained the firefighters that were there from Smith Valley and Mason Valley Fire Protection District. Other training was fire training at FireShowsWest at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, and that was in conjunction with our Hazardous Materials Track of the conference. There have been many other training events and many upcoming events. Collaboration activities with regional and federal partners include the FEMA Safer Grant for firefighter recruitment

and retention and have contracted the services of the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator. Dennis Pinkerton also stated that they have started the re-accreditation process for their International Fire Services Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) accreditation. This process includes a site visit to review the entire certification system which includes review of test banks, skills tests and test policy and procedures. Staff have been busy validating all test banks to the approved curriculums and validating all skills to the Job Performance requirements within the adopted NFPA's. The site visit is scheduled for April 2024. They will need to meet to adopt changes or recommendations, if any, soon after that date.

**10. NEVADA STATE FIREFIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION ADVISORY REPORT (Non-Action Item)**

Mike Heidemann stated their conference was very successful at Elko. We had 163 participants, which was pretty good for us. Prior to the conference, Tom Martinez talked about the maze and how to get people more interested in using it and asked about a competition. We decided to sponsor a plaque to give to the Fire Marshal's office. Following up on the last Board of Fire Services meeting, we're still very interested in following through with the ability for the State Fire Marshal to get certification to Mine Rescue Teams in fire. They do a lot of mutual aid with the volunteer fire departments and to be able to have them trained and certified the same as the people they're working with is a win-win for all. Legislative priorities coming up we're going to look at increasing workers' comp volunteers from \$2,000.00 that it has been since 1991, we're going to try to get it up to \$4,000.00, which is still way less than it should be given the way it's compounded over the years for everybody else. I have identified a potential sponsor for that one. And then I've entered into a couple of different conversations with PFFN (Professional Fire Fighters of Nevada), and I want this one to be a statewide Public Safety Officer benefit, because to my knowledge, there is no line of duty death benefits in the State of Nevada other than tuition wave at state institutions. So, we're looking at putting together something where if we have a line of duty debt is a \$100,000.00 benefit, which would we think will fly very quickly because it would include EMS providers, it would include paid volunteer law enforcement. It's just something that we've missed a vote on in Nevada. The other thing that working with the PFFN is to reestablish the Memorial Board. The new memorial is in Carson City. It still has a few issues with it being fixed, hence there are no memorial services this weekend. But they're establishing a new Memorial Board through the PFFN with some new bylaws. The current Memorial Board is now defunct. So, that should be coming down the road pretty quickly. In regard to the Safer Grant, just going out and gaining information from volunteer fire departments on how we can help them out with PPE and physicals. We have a survey that is semi-successful. We're almost six months into it, even though the grant was awarded on November 20<sup>th</sup>. There's been little hoops and games getting things going. As I talked to some of the more rural counties, some of them aren't even sure how their little fire districts are established. This is really getting interesting and maybe opened up a can of worms, so when the big one hits, liabilities and things like that are covered.

Stephen DiGiovanni asked if there is any push legislative-wise for any appetite to give an incentive to increase our volunteer workforce as far as doing half-off registration or anything like that. It's really hard to get volunteers, it's hard to get these new, younger folks to give free time. So, it's looking if there's an appetite at all on the state level to provide incentives, the DMV or something like that needs to be able to increase our workforce as far as our volunteers.

Mike Heidemann stated there's a few different programs nationwide out there. There's one to give property tax discounts to volunteer firefighters, which would be something to go through the state, but up to each local jurisdiction to implement that. There are some that have rebates at the DMV.

Stephen DiGiovanni stated if you look at like the amount per system for volunteers, that obviously comes from the budget from the fire departments, so something that doesn't affect these small rural fire departments that don't have that budget to be able to contribute, so something that comes from the state level or local level or county level for a property tax or DMV credit. For our organization, we provide stipends, pay per call, but we're very fortunate where we have a good tax base, but there's a lot of other rural small rural departments that don't have that.

Mike Heidemann stated he would be down in his area in a couple of weeks and he would look him up and have that conversation. And I feature it being kind of like the PERS because the PERS is for volunteers, it can be anywhere between \$150 a month to \$2,000 a month goes wage and that's for the state, but then each jurisdiction can decide what their local government can afford. I think it should go kind of along those same lines and I actually see that potential increasing once we increase the workers' comp that that purge has a potential to increase for the ones that are at the max now.

#### 11. **NEVADA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION ADVISORY REPORT** (Non-action Item)

Rich Harvey stated in 2023, the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association debut their new logo. It's Southern and Northern Nevada merged into one, which is kind of what our mission statement is there. We also hired a new Executive Director. Ms. Kelli Baratti is the Executive Director for the Nevada Fire Chiefs. Rich Harvey spoke about the Nevada Fire Chief's mission and they were also actively engaged during the 2023 Nevada legislative session. Also participating with the Western Fire Chiefs Association Insurance Initiative and so, we've been actively engaged with the Nevada Division of Insurance to ensure that everybody has wildfire coverage, availability, and affordability. You've all heard about the problems with fire insurance in California. They're upside down basically. In some places, they're finding it hard to get insurance. Others are fighting hard to keep it. That problem is migrating into Nevada. 8.5% of the insurance applications were denied. Same thing's happening in Incline and Southwest Reno, 1.4%. We are having our constituents unable to get fire insurance. The Nevada Fire Chief has been working closely with the Insurance Commission to ensure that that is available. Mount Charleston down South has the same problem. We've been nurturing our partnerships and we're also partners with the Public Safety Broadband Technology Association. Our goal is to foster those relationships to provide the training and the coordination of the different entities

across Valley. Rich Harvey spoke Natural Disaster Prevention for Protection Program NDPP and the Northern Nevada Code Amendments

12. **STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSION - SERC MEMBER** Non-action Item)

Richard Brenner stated about two-and-a-half months ago, he received a phone call from Jon Bakkedahl, the Emergency Manager from Carson City. He had talked to Billy Samuels, the Deputy Chief in Clark County Fire. We were discussing foam and the legacy type foams and some of the problems associated with them. They wanted to see if SERC could help them, from the standpoint of disposing of the foams and buying new foams. The three of us talked about expanding the group. We reached out to Reno and Sparks. We were meeting every Thursday where we had 20-25 people that were e-mailing and usually our phone calls were at least five, six, eight people on the call. I've done some research on this, and various states are doing takeback programs. I was very impressed with New Hampshire and Colorado, Arizona and Alaska are doing this, and the federal government hasn't basically restricted the use of legacy type Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) foams. And it's probably not going to occur for quite a while, at least another year. We're still working on trying to come up with a new foam for the FAA for airports. But in my research, New Hampshire has really kind of led this and they've worked with their legislature to give money, so that each county can bring their foam to a designated area of the fire department, and then they pick them up. They have a company that's going to pick them up in Ohio and destroy the foam appropriately. In Colorado, they expanded a little bit the industry, which I thought was really good, looking at the fuel terminals, asphalt plants, airplane hangers, and trying to bring industry into it. So, what I wanted to kind of do is talk with you really quickly that we're going to try to formalize this. Our next SERC meeting is October 26th and we're going to put a group together, you're welcome to participate in that meeting. I'll send Connie the agenda and what we're trying to do is, right now, since the legislature's out in session for a while, moneywise, we're looking at possibly first doing a survey to see how much of the old Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) is out there, and then, maybe going to interim finance to try to help us, dispose of that properly. We want to know what we have out there before we go to enter finance. I have reached out to NDEP to that Division Environmental Protection, and they have put a plan together. It's called the Final Nevada PFAS Action Plan, and they have a working group, and I'm trying to get a fire department member on that working group. So, PFAS are out there, it's just not in firefighting foam, they're all over. They're in our turnouts anything after 1990, there's PFAS. What really, what I'm trying to do is just again, make you aware of it and solicit your participation. I've spoken with Stacey Giomi who's a retired fire Chief from Carson City, and I'm reaching out to NACO, Nevada Association County Officials. I'm trying to get legislative support too., so that if we do go to interim finance, we've got a collaboration, I should call it, as a strategy of where we're going to go with this.

13. **PUBLIC COMMENT** (Non-Action Item)

There was no public comment.

14. **ADJOURNMENT** (Discussion/For Possible Action.)

Steve DiGiovanni made a motion to adjourn. Jayson Andrus seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.