



Dudley H.A. Wright II, Chair  
Kent Appelhans, Vice Chair

Dr. Carol Cunningham, State Medical Director

## FIREFIGHTER & FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR SUBCOMMITTEE

### STATE BOARD OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL, FIRE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

**MEETING of September 8, 2020**

#### **-MINUTES-**

**Committee Meeting Location:** via Microsoft Teams® videoconferencing

#### **I. Welcome – Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.

#### **II. Roll Call**

- a. Committee Members Present: Timothy Thomas (Chair); Dudley Wright (Vice Chair); TJ Cullison; Jeremy Guenther; Bill Mastroianni; and Phil McLean
- b. Committee Members Absent: None
- c. DPS and EMS Staff Members Present: Robert Wagoner, Interim Executive Director of the Ohio Division of EMS; James Burke, Chief of EMS Fire & Education; Doug Orahod, EMS Fire Testing Coordinator; Ted Kienzle, EMS Program Administrator II, and Jayn Mayton, EMS Administrative Professional IV
- d. Public Present: Jack Smith

#### **III. Open Forum**

##### **Review and approval of the Firefighter & Fire Safety Inspector Subcommittee Meeting minutes of July 14, 2020**

The meeting minutes from the July 14, 2020 Firefighter Fire Safety Inspector Training Subcommittee meeting were reviewed. No changes were suggested or requested. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

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***ACTION: Motion to approve the Firefighter Fire Safety Inspector Training Subcommittee meeting minutes from July 14, 2020.*** Vice Chair Wright – First. Mr. Cullison – Second. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

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#### **IV. Interim Executive Director Wagoner report**

Interim Executive Director Wagoner provided a brief report on the activities of the Ohio Division of EMS (ODEMS). Monthly calls continue with the Ohio Department of Public Safety's (ODPS') administration, the Ohio Fire Chief's Association (OFCA), and others. Recent concerns have been with us for a few months: the ongoing need for personal protection equipment (PPE), which has been on backorder since March; and the handling of protests, which are occurring throughout the state and which present a challenge as related to COVID-19 precautions. The development of the biennium budget for the 2021-2023 time period is underway, in spite of significant issues resulting from this year's COVID-19 response.

At the request of Chief Wright, ODEMS is working with ODPS and information technology and security groups to research other platforms for hosting virtual meetings. Currently, the only approved platform is Microsoft Teams. Interim Executive Director Wagoner will keep the subcommittee posted on developments.

ODEMS has submitted the application to Pro Board for reaccreditation. The final step is a visit where Pro Board reviews our documents. We anticipate scheduling that visit in the near future.

Lastly, Chief Thomas and Interim Executive Director Wagoner will be attending five separate events honoring the five Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame recipients in the month of September. More on that will be covered in agenda item VII, below.

#### **V. State Fire Marshal Report – Jack Smith**

Mr. Smith presented the State Fire Marshal Report. He first provided updates on the Ohio Fire Academy's (the OFA's) progress throughout the COVID-19 period. The Firefighter I & II classes which were interrupted in March are now just finishing up, safely and successfully. Courses in the planning stages to be offered before the end of the year are Firefighter I & II and EMT courses. Our fire officer series is very successful. We have completed four classes which are 100% online, and have just rolled out the fire safety inspector course online. It filled up in four hours, with a waiting list of 100. We are working to accommodate them all as quickly as possible.

Marshall Kevin Reardon is in his third month as the new State Fire Marshal, and has hit the ground running. He has been very supportive of all the innovations OFA has created in this challenging environment. As there were no questions, Mr. Smith concluded his remarks.

#### **VI. Ohio Fire Organizations Reports**

##### **a. Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors (OSFSI) – Mr. Belcher**

Mr. Belcher was not present, so no report was given.

##### **b. Other**

There were no other reports.

## **VII. DEMS Fire Education Report**

### **a. Ohio Hall of Fame Fire Service & Ohio Fire Awards**

Jayn Mayton updated the Subcommittee on the events that are scheduled for the Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame recipients. All five are scheduled in the month of September, at the recipient's chosen venues. Interim Executive Director Wagoner and Chief Thomas will be attending each event in person. The State Fire Marshal's office is handling all public information, and will be posting information about the award recipients in the near future. Chair Thomas provided further details, and that all events will be completed by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September.

### **b. Revisit Approval for Hazard Recognition Officer (HRO) Skill Sheets**

The "HRO skill sheets review" agenda item was continued from the last meeting to allow time for further reflection and discussion. Mr. McLean presented his concerns that the attempt to bring the HRO skill sheets up to a level that meets the NFPA standard would exceed the initial intent of this class. Originally, it was designed to bring onboard others who could conduct inspections at a lower level than those holding the current fire inspector certification. Thus, firefighters would have an awareness of potential hazards that are typically found on a fire site and bring that information to certified safety inspectors, if available, or to more experienced firefighters to investigate further. A discussion ensued exploring the requirements that would have to be covered in order to reach the NFPA Inspector I standard, within the 40 hours allotted for the HRO course. There was concern that expanding the course beyond its original intent would detract from the usefulness of a mid-level HRO. The question was raised as to whether it is really necessary that all the certification courses that are created in Ohio align with the NFPA standard. While this is an acknowledged goal, is it feasible to allow the HRO course and certification to be an exception?

Mr. Burke pointed out the advantage of creating certifications that always meet the national standard, which is a nationally recognized level for certifications. Mr. Orahood informed the subcommittee that any concerns over Pro Board's possible recognition of an HRO certificate are irrelevant, because Pro Board does not have an equivalent for it. However, if the HRO certificate meets the Inspector I NFPA standard, regardless of what it is called, then Pro Board would accept that accreditation.

Additional discussion will occur to determine if HRO will meet NFPA Inspector I or not and the results will be brought back to the committee.

## **VIII. Old Business**

### **a. Instructor I and Instructor II**

A work group will be formed which will look into creating an Instructor I and II certification that will combine the topics and skills of fire, EMS and law enforcement. A request was made for some committee members to step forward who would like to meet online, mainly reviewing issues that arise, to work with some of the members of the EMS Education Committee. This work group will start working in the next few weeks. Mr. Mastroianni and Vice Chair Wright volunteered. Mr. Cullison offered to be available as needed, as his schedule permits.

## IX. New Business

### a. Live Fire Instructor Course

Mr. Burke presented the Live Fire Instructor Course report. The curriculum of the Live Fire Instructor course needs to be updated; it is being reviewed to keep it fresh. In the instructor section for Jones and Bartlett, there is a live fire section which is very good and up to date. We have spoken with Mr. Johnny Mason at Great Oaks, and he has agreed to help develop and run a pilot program there using their current curriculum with upgrades to meet our live fire standard. It was agreed that pilots are proven to be very beneficial in developing a new curriculum.

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***ACTION: Motion to proceed with the pilot for the live fire instructor course as agreed with Great Oaks.*** Mr. McLean – First. Mr. Cullison – Second. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

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## X. Other

### Columbus hosting the Firehouse Expo

Mr. Cullison shared with the Subcommittee that OFA is hosting the Firehouse Expo in Columbus, with Firehouse magazine in 2021 and 2022. A call for papers just went out. If anyone needs the link to more information on that event, just contact Mr. Cullison and he will be glad to forward that.

### LFI Course Packet

Mr. Kienzle and Mr. Larry Ables from Sinclair Community College have been discussing the fact that the course packet states that anybody entering a live fire course has to have a letter of recommendation from a fire chief. The problem with this is that right now a lot of firefighters who are retiring are being used at charters for live fire training, or who would like to but cannot be put into a live fire course without a fire chief's signature. In OAC 4765-24-15 (C) (4) it refers back to our course packet. There is nothing that states that it has to be a signature from a fire chief only. A suggestion was put forward to add into the course packet a line that says a fire chief or a program director may write a letter. After general discussion, it was agreed this would be a valuable addition to the course packet.

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***ACTION: Motion to adapt the live fire course packet language to reflect that a program director or fire chief can sign for permission to a live fire course.*** Mr. Cullison– First. Mr. McClain – Second. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

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## XI. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

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***ACTION: Motion to adjourn the meeting of the Firefighter Fire Safety Inspector Training Subcommittee at 10:47 a.m.*** Mr. McLean – First. Mr. Wright– Second. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

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**Next meeting:**

November 10, 2020  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
via Microsoft Teams® videoconferencing