



FIREFIGHTER & FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR TRAINING SUBCOMMITTEE

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

Meeting of November 10, 2020

MINUTES

Committee Meeting Location: via Microsoft Teams® videoconferencing

I. Welcome – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 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, Executive Director of the Ohio Division of EMS; James Burke, Chief of EMS Fire & Education; Doug Orahoad, 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

Chair Thomas opened the floor to any topics the Subcommittee members may wish to address. Hearing none, he congratulated Executive Director Wagoner on his promotion from Interim Executive Director to Executive Director.

IV. Review and approval of the Firefighter & Fire Safety Inspector Subcommittee Meeting minutes of September 8, 2020

The meeting minutes from the September 8, 2020 Firefighter Fire Safety Inspector Training Subcommittee meeting were reviewed and approved.

MOTION: Motion to approve the Firefighter Fire Safety Inspector Training Subcommittee meeting minutes from September 8, 2020. Mr. McLean – First. Mr. Guenther – Second. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

IV. Executive Director Wagoner report

Executive Director Wagoner's report consisted of three matters that are COVID-19 related, and others covering recent activities of the Ohio Division of EMS (ODEMS).

First, regarding the Pro Board reaccreditation process, Pro Board has extended their accreditation deadline by one year, in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic environment. Our Pro Board accreditation is now valid through December 31st of 2021.

Executive Director Wagoner then reported on the ODPS budget and staffing issues for Ohio DPS. Final budget decisions, including staffing within the Division of EMS, will be based upon the results of the 2021 budget and the biennium budget report, which was due on October 14th. Currently there are eight vacant positions within the division, and will be nine in December. The division will request at least four of those positions be filled, in order to have at least some relief. Executive Director Wagoner recognized the efforts of the staff at the Ohio DEMS, and in particular Chief Burke and his education staff, in keeping EMS and fire education going forward.

Executive Director Wagoner's third COVID-19 related report concerned House Bill 197 (HB 197), which has provided emergency relief to Ohioans since March 27, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes the extension of professional licenses for those who cannot get them renewed. Expirations of fire and EMS certifications between March 9 and November 30, 2020, were extended to December 1, 2020, at which time House Bill 197 also expires. Executive Director Wagoner requested that all Subcommittee members review their firefighters' expiration dates. For those who fall under the HB 197 extension, make sure they are able to renew their certifications by December 1, 2020, so that they do not find themselves in an expired status on that date.

Executive Director Wagoner stated that there are still grants available for personal protective equipment (PPE) reimbursement for EMS agencies, which are retroactive from January 1 through December 31, 2020. There is a maximum of \$1,500 per agency. The Board carved out \$450,000 and earmarked it for helping agencies to reimburse unanticipated costs of PPE this year due to COVID-19 safety protocols. There is more information on the EMS website.

Also in flux is the future ability to meet virtually. House Bill 197 explicitly permits government entities such as the State Board of Emergency Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services (EMFTS) to hold public meetings remotely and with transparency, on a temporary basis. Currently the Ohio legislature is discussing whether to conduct meetings virtually or only in person after HB 197 expires. Also, with HB 197 sunseting, the educational staff will be reinstating audits for renewals as of December 1, 2020.

Lastly, Executive Director Wagoner announced that on November 17, 2020, there will be a rollout of an online update to the program director, proctor and educational applications. There will be more information on this later in the meeting.

V. State Fire Marshal Report – Jack Smith

Mr. Smith reported two topics from the State Fire Marshal's office. The first is that they have been working to resolve an issue that arose from schools bringing children back to school in split attendance. This doubled the need for fire drills, from approximately three to six a year. The Marshal's office received significant resistance to the added responsibility from some localities. They understand the situation now and are moving forward, according to the code.

Also, with the advent of the mini pop-up tents for outdoor dining, there have been reports of hazardous conditions with those that do not meet fire code. The State Fire Marshal's office is working diligently on informing restaurants on which ones to purchase in order to meet fire code. There is also a tendency to put propane heaters in them, which is unsafe. Mr. Smith reported that progress has been made on this issue.

Mr. Smith reported the Fire Academy is about halfway through their first two-week Firefighter I course. Also, an EMT class graduated very recently. The direct delivery classes are being handled on a case-by-case basis, as there is no reimbursement for travel now. As far as online class delivery, the total of students from the beginning of COVID-19 up to a few weeks ago comes to over 600 firefighters who have been trained online, spanning the entire fire officers' series. The Fire Academy is in the second iteration of the fire safety inspector class online, which is going very well. That concluded Mr. Smith's report.

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

Executive Director Wagoner reported the concluding results and impressions of the Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame award presentations. He and Chief Thomas travelled to venues hosted separately by all five of the HOF recipients, which had to comply with COVID-19 social distancing requirements. There was a limit of ten total attendees, which created intimate and respectful ceremonies. The recipients were humbled by the honors and appreciated the presentations occurring in their own communities. Chief Thomas thanked Ms. Mayton for her coordination of the events, and echoed Executive Director Wagoner that the individuals receiving the awards were honored by their visits and appreciated receiving the awards with their peers.

Ms. Mayton added that the video communications teams of both the ODPS and the State Fire Marshal's offices are collaborating on a video comprised of still photos taken during all the presentations. This will unify the disparate events into one video

presentation, and reinforce to the public that this is one event. The Subcommittee members will be notified when the video is available.

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

Mr. Burke stated that Mr. Kienzle met with Mr. McLean after the last Subcommittee meeting due to continuing concerns about the HRO skill sheets. Mr. Burke invited Mr. McLean to report to the Subcommittee members about the meeting, and Mr. Burke requested there be a motion to approve of the skill sheets, to be effective January 1, 2021. Mr. McLean reported that he and Mr. Kienzle reviewed most of the HRO curriculum, coming to the conclusion that it does meet the NFPA standard. In talking with Chief Thomas after the meeting, our only further discussion is that the name does not indicate “inspector level”.

Chair Thomas added that after speaking with Mr. McLean, it appears that the content of the skill sheets meets the plan that was originally set out under the HRO system. He requested a motion to approve the HRO skill sheets.

MOTION: Motion to approve the skill sheets of the Hazard Recognition Officer course as they are presented to the Subcommittee. Mr. McLean – First. Mr. Cullison – Second. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

a. Administrative Rule Review of Amendments to OAC Chapter 4765-22, 4765-20-10, and 4765-21-09

Mr. Burke brought the Subcommittee’s attention to the handout that was emailed to the members, detailing the administrative rule review of amendments to chapters in the OAC dealing with reciprocity. These amendments will be presented to the EMFTS Board in February, 2021. Mr. Burke requested that the Subcommittee members review the proposed amendments at this time and contact Mr. Burke or Chair Thomas if there are any questions or concerns.

ACTION: Review the handout, “Administrative Rule Review of Amendments to OAC Chapter 4765-22, 4765-20-10, and 4765-21-09” and reach out with any questions or concerns.

b. Additional items to Report

Update on COVID-19 affecting schools, and IT system upgrade: Mr. Burke reported that there are now quite a few schools being affected by COVID-19 outbreaks, having to close their schools temporarily and move more training online. The hard work of the EMS staff and the IT department on a system update will aid program directors with increased online activity. The goal of the system upgrade is to streamline program directors’ processes in vetting students’ qualifications and administering courses and tests. The system will be launched on November 17th. More information is reported in Item IX, below.

VIII. Old Business

a. Instructor I and Instructor II

Mr. Burke reported on the progress of the workgroup which was formed in September. The workgroup has met once already and has another meeting scheduled for this coming Thursday. They will be looking over OAC rules, and will share their progress at the next meeting.

b. Live Fire Instructor Course Pilot Report

Mr. Burke referred the Subcommittee to the letter from the Great Oaks Career Campuses' Fire Academy that was emailed to the members before the meeting. He thanked Great Oaks for piloting the Live Fire Instructor Course for the division. Great Oaks' pilot class utilized the live fire chapters in the 3rd edition of Jones & Bartlett, and the results will now provide the ability to create a course objective packet for the live fire course, such as there is for most of the other classes, instead of maintaining a physical course that would need to be updated on a regular basis. Mr. Burke requested approval to create a course objective packet based on this pilot which will be forwarded to the Subcommittee for their review before the next meeting, and see if it can be approved to replace the current course. Chair Thomas agreed with the proposal, with the suggestion that the course objective packet can be underway before the next meeting if the Subcommittee members get in touch with the Mr. Burke and Mr. Kienzle individually as soon as possible with any questions.

ACTION: Subcommittee members will review the handout from Great Oaks and contact the Division of EMS with questions or comments, in order to facilitate completion of the course objective packet to be discussed at the next FFFSI Training Subcommittee meeting.

c. Volunteer Course Pilot Report

Mr. Burke asked Mr. Kienzle to speak on the volunteer course pilot project which was conducted by three charters. Mr. Kienzle stated that three schools participated in the pilot: Apollo Public Safety Academy, Wellston Fire Department Training Academy, and Newton Township. Apollo ran three pilot courses with a first time pass rate of 90% and a third cumulative of 100% for all three of their courses. Wellston only ran two volunteer courses this year, and both of them were really the pilot program. Their first time success rate was over 65%, which was good, but they had a third time cumulative which was down around 75%. Newton Township was about the same, a 65% and a 75% for their three courses. So, there has been some success in some and not in others. The narrowing of the information that is already being presented is helpful, but perhaps it could be narrower in focus, or perhaps there needs to be consideration about moving forward.

Mr. Burke added that right now there is only a small subset of data to look at. He requested the Subcommittee to allow the division to work with the program directors of those charters who are piloting the project, to narrow the focus and run a few more, and look at a broader subset before making a decision.

Chair Thomas expressed that it was reasonable to increase the size of the test program, as some are having a little bit of success. Continuing the test mode and fine-tuning the programs that are still struggling with the effective ones, should benefit the program. Chair Thomas asked the Subcommittee members if there were any

objections to the Division of EMS continuing with the pilot program at this point. There were none. Chair Thomas recommended continuing with the pilot, and the Subcommittee will look forward to following the progress.

Chief McLean commented that, from his personal use and experience, the teaching guides that are available for instructors really work out well.

ACTION: The Division of EMS education staff will continue with the Volunteer Course Pilot as recommended.

IX. New Business

System Database Training

Mr. Burke reported that the IT upgrade to the EMS system database training is scheduled to launch on November 17th. This is an ambitious upgrade which will streamline and simplify much of the data entry that goes into the course dashboard for charters. The education staff has three training meetings scheduled with large groups of program directors throughout the state. The proctor manual has also been revised to reflect the changes. The purpose of this upgrade is to simplify how courses and student information are entered.

X. Other

Adjournment

Chief Thomas reminded the Subcommittee that the legislature must make a determination on whether there will be continuing ability of the EMFTS' committees to meet virtually, so the January meeting venue is pending the legislature's ruling.

He requested a motion to adjourn at 10:37 a.m.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn was forwarded. Mr. McLean – First. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Next meeting:

January 19, 2021
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Venue To Be Determined