



Kent Appelhans, Chair
Mark Marchetta, Sr., Vice Chair

Dr. Carol Cunningham, State Medical Director

FIREFIGHTER & FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR TRAINING SUBCOMMITTEE

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

Meeting of May 11, 2021

MINUTES

Committee Meeting Location: via Microsoft Teams® videoconferencing

I. Welcome – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 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: Rob Wagoner, Executive Director of the Ohio Division of EMS, James Burke, Chief of EMS Testing & Education; Ted Kienzle, EMS Program Administrator II; and Jayn Mayton, EMS Administrative Professional IV
- d. Public Present: Jack Smith, Ohio Fire Academy, State Fire Marshal's Office

III. Open Forum

Chair Thomas opened the floor to any topics the Subcommittee members may wish to address. There were none.

IV. Review and approval of the Firefighter & Fire Safety Inspector Subcommittee Meeting minutes of March 9, 2021

The meeting minutes from the January 19, 2021 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 March 9, 2021. Vice Chair Wright – First. Mr. Guenther – Second. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

V. Executive Director Wagoner report

Executive Director Wagoner stated that his report pertains to the volunteer firefighter course pilot that is running in several sites, the IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health) training, and the possibility of entry on fire grounds for volunteer firefighters. He recently met with Marshal Reardon and Representatives Baldrige and Cross, to discuss a number of volunteer firefighter issues related to training and recruitment. As for retention issues, this piece will be made clear after July 1st, which is when the extensions granted under House Bills 197 and 404 expire. There is much support within the legislature to increase recruitment of volunteers and to make the volunteer system safer. There was discussion in the legislature of forming a task force to review how to assist those departments that are challenged with personnel, with special attention to those needing help during the weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with responding to fires that would possibly require entry. The chief legislative officer from the Department of Public Safety joined the meeting as well. Marshal Reardon was very encouraged by the responses. The subcommittee will be kept apprised as this matter goes forward.

There was verbiage within the www.ems.ohio.gov website stating that FFII is required for career firefighters in Ohio. After researching the history of that statement, nothing conclusive was found as to its origins, so it was modified on the website to be qualified by “typically” and now reads that FFII is typically required.

Having no questions, Executive Director Wagoner concluded his report.

VI. State Fire Marshal Report

Mr. Smith remarked that he would be touching on the same topics that Executive Director Wagoner did, as the State Fire Marshal’s Office has been working with the Division of EMS on volunteer recruitment and certification. There have been a number of requests to the office about what constitutes needing to be certified, such as whether driving is permitted without a certification. It seems like there is a groundswell of people trying to circumnavigate the certification process and what needs to be done in an effort to recruit staffing. The Director’s office has been focusing on those issues. The Ohio Fire Academy is very busy. The off-campus schedule is booked through the rest of the year already, due to working through a backlog brought about by COVID interruptions. The on-campus classes are starting to fill back up as well, although the online and hybrid presences remain more robust. Of the 90 courses offered, approximately 30 of them are completely online, didactic, or lecture-based. Other than the current COVID processes that are currently in place, we are ramping back up to full swing. There were no further questions.

VII. Ohio Fire Organizations Reports - Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors (OSFSI)

There was no report as Mr. Belcher was not in attendance.

VIII. DEMS Fire Education Report

Mr. Burke reported that this education report ties into today's agenda items under New Business and Other. The fire education section is continuing to work with fire charters, both through organized meetings, or through individual communication, to assist them with details involving the upcoming expiration of HB 404, and to assist in transitioning into in-person learning for the majority of classes, except Instructor level courses or FSI.

The testing system database has been updated with some new ADA features. Some charters have brought to EMS' attention new issues created by the update, so the EMS section is currently working with the DPS IT staff to remedy those problems. The IT department has been very helpful with solving issues arising from new processes.

As Executive Director Wagoner mentioned in his report, discussions regarding the volunteer course are underway with the legislature and possibly a task force. This subcommittee will be involved with that discussion in the future. Ted Kienzle has done a great job of updating the Volunteer FF practical skill sheets to bring them in line with recent FF I and II changes. Further discussions about the course as a whole are also currently underway, the results of which will be sent to the subcommittee for review and opinions, as well as to the program directors again for their input, before anything is implemented.

Regarding the JPRs and skills check-offs, Mr. Burke had a good phone conversation with Mr. Belcher yesterday discussing how some of the FSI checkoffs have differed in the past with Volunteer FFI and II by requiring 100% pass rates. More information will be given later in this meeting under the other agenda item, but anything that comes out of continuing discussions will be brought to the subcommittee for their review and input.

That concluded Mr. Burke's Fire Education Report.

IX. Old Business

Mr. Burke stated that he has nothing for Old Business. Mr. Kienzle answered Chair Thomas' question about new updates on the trial programs. He stated that while he doesn't have any new numbers for the volunteer courses, he does have numbers for the LFI courses. The approximately four courses with the new curriculum went very well. The grandfathering rule ended as of April 1st, so now there is no more grandfathering, and anybody that is taking the LFI now has to go through the whole course.

There were no further comments under old business.

**X. New Business
Volunteer Firefighter Course**

Mr. Burke stated that, pursuant to Executive Director Wagoner's report, information on the volunteer firefighter courses will be conveyed to the subcommittee along with other course and skill sheet updates, as conversations continue with the legislature and the proposed task force.

There were nothing further under new business.

**XI. Other
JPR and Skill Sheet Check-offs**

Mr. Burke reiterated that revisions to skill sheets will be sent out to all subcommittee members once they are updated. The volunteer courses are still under review, with more changes expected. With the FSI, Mr. Burke and Mr. Kienzle have had discussions with Mr. Belcher about the prior 100% pass rate requirement, as in the past, and with the Ohio Fire Academy about bringing the FSI more in line with the FF I and II as far as pass rates and everything else that also needs to be covered. Further discussions are in the planning stage; as those conversations continue, the subcommittee will be kept apprised of developments.

XII. Recap of Action Items

Chair Thomas noted there were no action items to review, and no new items for our next meeting's agenda.

After the last agenda item, some of the subcommittee members shared updates from their agencies. Chief McLean said that the Ohio State Firefighters' Association, on the educational side, is starting to reschedule some of their one-day seminars that were offered in conjunction with the Division of EMS. The Instructor Inspector CE was given along with another class. There are career centers who have funds set aside to offer these seminars. Most likely these seminars will be offered in the late summer or in the fall.

Mr. Cullison notified the subcommittee members about plans being made for the Firehouse Expo coming up in September of this year. The State Fire Marshal's office is one of several agencies that are going to set up booths at the Expo. Mr. Cullison advised Mr. Burke to let him know if the Division of EMS wants to set up a booth there.

XIII. Adjournment

Chair Thomas requested a motion to adjourn at 10:35 p.m.

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

Next meeting:

Wednesday, July 14, 2021
Being held at the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Conference
Hilton Columbus at Easton
3900 Chagrin Drive
Columbus, OH 43219
Room: The Juniper B & C

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.