

VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD

Full Board Meeting
Friday, February 26th, 2021
Meeting held electronically through Google Hangouts
12:00pm

A regular meeting of the Virginia Fire Services Board was held on February 26th, 2021 at 12:00 pm. This meeting was held electronically through Google Hangouts as a result of the State of Emergency initiated by the Honorable Ralph Northam, Governor of Virginia. Board Chair, Walter Bailey facilitated this meeting and the Board had a constituted Quorum.

Board MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephanie L Koren Harry L. Day
James Alan Calvert Dennis Linaburg
James Moore Stokely Jerome Williams
Bettie Reeves-Nobles Keith H Johnson
Walter T Bailey Robert Farrell
Ernest H Little James Davis Poindexter
Scott Garber

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Rick Gregory
David Collins Hankley

GUESTS PRESENT

Larry Gwaltney Mike Collins
Johnny Nugent Michael Barakey
James Eicholtz Mike Lilly
Mike Matthews Nathan Ramsey
Scott Simpson Steve Dishman
Erin Rice Linda Hale

Deputy Secretary Shawn Talmadge

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT

Travis Rickman Brook Pittinger Joshua Davis

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Garrett Dyer Briant Atkins Michael Reilly
Theresa Hunter Bill MacKay Vanessa Copeland

CHANGES IN THE AGENDA

No changes were proposed

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were offered during the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of the previous meeting minutes motioned for approval was made by James Calvert and seconded by Ernie Little, unanimous agreement from the committee to approve the previous meeting minutes.

Liaison Reports

Training and Operations Update

The Branch continues to work with implementing Cornerstone on Demand (CSOD) and currently has over 40,000 individual profiles in the platform. The decommissioning of FSTRS on February 1st has had a significant impact on staff. On that date the “public facing” access to FSTRS was eliminated. Student records from FSTRS are still available to VDFP staff and going forward will be retrievable by VDFP staff. This was not an action that was initiated by VDFP but by VITA based on IT related security concerns. Despite after a year of asking stakeholders to upload a copy of their FSTRS transcript to CSOD, the agency is averaging about 225 requests for assistance per week.

The adoption of a long range training calendar is going well. Funded training up to June 2022 is now loaded into CSOD. There are many advantages to this to include; visibility to future training, allowing a student to strategically plan their training progression, localities to address Career Development scheduling, reduction in cancelations, etc. CSOD is configured to automatically send email

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confirmation of enrollment as well as reminders that a student is enrolled in a future class. For any class, once it is closed out by the Instructor and Division Chief (usually less than 2-weeks from completion) the student can immediately print a Certificate of Attendance. Certification Certificates from one of the 23 courses that are IFSAC and/or Pro Board accredited will be produced by Quality Assurance staff and sent to the successful student.

Training and Operations like all of the agency was significantly affected by the events of Calendar Year 2020. In late March the agency made the difficult decision to curtail in-person funded training. This moratorium remained in effect until the summer and resulted in significant impact to the overall training effort. When compared to 2019 the numbers are down in all dimensions. However, despite this, the agency still generated impressive numbers in support of the roughly 40,000 firefighters in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- The agency was forced to cancel 291 classes in CY20. These are classes that to-date have not been rescheduled. Factors effecting this include, inability to find time on the calendar, locations still having training prohibitions in place, compliance with COVID policy, and instructor availability.
- There were 17,249 students that attended VDFP programs in 2020. This is down from the roughly 26,000 that attended classes in 2019.
 - 158 ARFF students
 - 1,796 from Division I
 - 2,001 from Division II
 - 906 from Division III
 - 857 from Division IV
 - 3,425 from Division V
 - 1,227 from Division VI
 - 3,610 from Division VII
 - 3,046 attended HTR programs
 - 215 attended VFMA programs
 - 8 attended QA related training
- The agency delivered 1,202 programs in 2020. This is down from the roughly 1,600 individual classes that were delivered in 2019.
 - 26 ARFF programs (average attendance = 6.1 students)

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- 160 in Division I (average attendance = 11.2 students)
 - 158 in Division II (average attendance = 12.7 students)
 - 77 in Division III (average attendance = 11.8 students)
 - 58 in Division IV (average attendance = 14.8 students)
 - 229 in Division V (average attendance = 15.0 students)
 - 91 in Division VI (average attendance = 13.5 students)
 - 235 in Division VII (average attendance = 15.4 students)
 - 153 HTR related (average attendance = 19.9 students)
 - 13 VFMA related (average attendance = 16.5 students)
 - 2 QA related (average attendance = 4.0 students)
-
- The agency delivered an estimated total of 663,465,536 training hours in 2020. This number is derived from: Number of classes (1,202) times the number of students (17,249) times (32) hours per class. 32 hours was used as a class average. Some are as little as 16 up to Firefighter I which is 150.
 - In 2020 the agency was accredited for 16 courses by both IFSAC as well as Pro Board. The agency was accredited by The Pro Board only for an additional 7 courses. This resulted in a total of 23 courses be accredited by IFSAC and/or Pro Board.
 - For 2020 most of our training related number are down at least 25% when compared to 2019. Overall training hours saw the greatest decline as the demand for and logistics associated with longer duration classes (Firefighter I & II as well as the Officer and Instructor series) was greatly affected by cancelations and withdrawals related to the pandemic.

Risk Management Branch Report

- **Regional Firefighter Cancer Seminar:** Presented by First Responder Center for Excellence through a Federal Grant will be held on March 27, 2021 at The Glen Allen Performing Arts Center.

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Training Injury Numbers for FY21 through 2/22/2021:

VDFP Training Injuries:	MO –Injury From Fall: 1 FY Total: 3
Since FY Beginning: 21	MO -Exhaustion/Over Exertion: 1 FY Total: 3
Week: 1 Months Total: 4	MO- Struck By: 0 FY Total: 1
Live Fire Training: Week: 1 FY Total: 2	MO – Strains, Sprain, Pain: 0 FY Total: 10
	MO – Burn : 0 FY Total: 0
Program :	MO – Other: 0 FY Total: 4
MO-Firefighter Series: 1 FY Total: 12	
MO – Mayday Operations: 0 FY Total: 1	By Division:
MO -- HMO: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 1: 0 FY Total: 0
MO- TRT: 0 FY Total: 7	MO Div. 2: 1 FY Total: 10
MO – VFMA: 0 FY Total: 1	MO Div. 3: 0 FY Total: 1
MO – DPO : 0 FY Total 0	MO Div. 4: 0 FY Total: 1
MO – Marine: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 5: 0 FY Total: 0
MO ARFF: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 6: 0 FY Total: 1
MO – Other: 0 FY Total: 0	MO Div. 7: 0 FY Total: 0
	MO Specialty: 0 FY Total: 8
	FY: (FMA: 1 TRT: 7 Marine: 0 ARFF: 0)

VDFP COVID 19 Agency Impacts (since 3/2020)

Date	2/17/2021
Positive Tests/Presumptive Positive	20
Close Personal Contact/Contact with Individual Testing Positive*	46

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Contact with Contact	9
Quarantines in Training Programs from Positives Tests	55
Training Programs Paused or impacted from Exposure	10
PPE Exposure (Employee using provided PPE) No Quarantine	8
Pre-existing Conditions	1
Other/Symptomatic**	5

Glen Allen HQ COVID Outbreak Mid -January

VDOF Report

Virginia Dry Hydrant Program

FY2021 brings about significant changes for Virginia's dry hydrant program. The program's long-term contractor is no longer affiliated with the program, and the VDOF has shifted to the use of two newly developed contractors to complete the needed work. There remains a backlog of yet to be completed projects from FY2020 and FY2021, but the agency has been in contact with all of the program applicants to keep them updated on the progress, and the project work is now ongoing. The program is now back on track to have all projects completed by this coming summer.

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program (VFA)

The DOF is now accepting applications for our Volunteer Fire Assistance grant program. The program is designed to provide 50% matching funds to assist with the purchase of wildland and structural PPE, equipment and training. The funds are specifically targeted to Virginia's rural volunteer fire departments. Full details are available on the VDOF website. In 2020, 109 fire departments received more than \$221,000 through the VFA program.

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Spring Wildfire Season

From a calendar standpoint, Virginia's spring wildfire season officially began on February 15th, however activity has been almost non-existent thus far, with only 4 fires for 11 acres for CY 2021 to date. The wet weather that prevailed during most of last year also helped to make 2020's wildfire activity the second lowest on record in terms of number of wildfires, with VDOF records going back to 1914. In calendar year 2020, the VDOF suppressed 389 wildfires, which burned 5374 acres. The ongoing wet weather, and continued prediction for more of the same into the early summer, looks like it will keep things in our favor, from a wildfire standpoint, for at least the first half of this year.

The agencies 4 pm prescribed burning exemption program received more than 120 requests for this spring, which plan to control burn more than 14,000 acres across the Commonwealth. Exemptions are authorized under the Code of Virginia for burns which control exotic or invasive plant species, help to manage natural heritage resources, or for the improvement of wildlife habitat which cannot be completed at other times of the year.

Statewide Wildfire Training Academy

May 26 – May 29, 2021 based out of Longwood University. Nearly 300 students will take advantage of the 7 different course offerings, which include coursework focused on wildfire suppression, fire behavior, prescribed burning, and emergency incident management. This year's coursework will use a combination of in person and virtual learning opportunities to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Registration will open in early March, with information available from the VDOF website.

Motion: Lee day made the motion Keith Johnson made the second to approve the liaison reports

REPORT FROM THE VDFP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Executive Director Reilly was honored for his distinct service to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs by acting Executive Director Garrett Dyer. Garrett Dyer gave a status update for the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and the work that is currently being done.

FIRE EDUCATION & TRAINING COMMITTEE

- A. Report from the Training and Education Committee
 - i. The Chair gave his report on the current status of education and Training in the commonwealth and some of the items that are currently being worked on in the agency.
- B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - i. There was a follow up discussion on the Charlie Singleton Award that was approved at a previous meeting. There was confusion as to the extent of the award and whether or not the award would be attached to the Governor Fire Service Awards. It was concluded that the clerk Travis Rickman would get with Jimmy Calvert to hammer out the final details for the awards to create a better structure for the award. Scott Garber notified that all 10 divisions should be included which would add HTR, the VFMA, and the ARF.
- C. NEW BUSINESS

FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL COMMITTEE

- A. Report From The Department of Forestry
 - i. Dry Hydrant program has a new contractor
- B. Report from The Codes and Standards Subcommittee

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- i. Ernie Little discussed the memorandum of understanding between BHCD and VFSB and that they are working to make some changes to that document. The committee asked Travis Rickman to send out the MOU to the committee one last time to have edits for the next meeting to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

ADMINISTRATION, POLICY, AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

- A. Report from Administration, Policy and Finance Committee

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- i. **Topic: Gender Neutral VFSB Rules of Procedures changes- 2nd Reading**
Discussion: N/A
Motion: Stephanie Koren and seconded by Bettie to approve the gender neutral board policy and procedures
Action: To adopt the changes to the Rules of Procedure

NEW BUSINESS

LIVE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

- A. Report from the Live Structure Committee

The Chairman of the committee discussed the meeting and the main conversation to deal with the impingement protection issue which will be voted on at the next meeting of the Live Structure Committee in October.

- B. Unfinished Business

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i. **Topic:** The Structure Group price quote on the cost for a vendor to conduct a feasibility study for the use of brick tiles in the class B burn room

Motion: Motion was made by Lee Day to approve the expenditure of \$28,500 to the Structure Group to study the need for Fire Bricks in an entire burn room.

Vote: Unanimous to approve

C. New Business

i. **Topic:** Rockbridge County one year no cost grant Extension

Motion: Motion was made by Lee Day to approve the Rockbridge County one year no cost grant Extension

Vote: Unanimous to approve

ii. **Topic:** City of Suffolk one year no cost grant extension

Motion: Motion was made by Lee Day to approve the City of Suffolk one year no cost grant extension

Vote: Unanimous to approve

iii. **Topic:** Prince George one year no cost grant extension

Motion: Motion was made by Lee Day to deny the Prince George one year no cost grant extension

Vote: Unanimous to deny

iv. **Topic:** Halifax Burn Building

Motion: Chief Keith Johnson motioned to allow Halifax to submit an application for funding to repair the Halifax burn building seconded by Scott Garber; A roll call vote was called for.

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Vote: Ayes:

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James Alan Calvert
James Moore Stokely
Walter T Bailey
Harry L. Day
Keith H Johnson
Jerome Williams
Robert Farrell
Scott Garber

Nays:

Bettie Reeves-Nobles
Stephanie L Koren

8Yes 2 No; the motion was approved

Not voting:

David Collins Hankley
Ernie Little
James Davis Poindexter
Rick Gregory

Request from Keith Johnson: Past precedents of burn buildings that go out of compliance and then come back in for the next meeting for April 16th.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIR

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FULL BOARD BUSINESS

A. Unfinished Business

B. New Business

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn by Lee Day and seconded by Jim Stokley, committee adjourned

Clerk of the Committee: Travis Rickman

REVIEWED BY:

Brook Pittinger
Deputy Executive Director