



STATE BOARD OF FIRE SERVICES

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 12, 2020

CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal

2251 Harvard Street, Rm 441, Sacramento, CA 95815

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- *Mike Richwine, State Fire Marshal, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal, Chair
- *Jerry Davies, California Fire Safe Council and Insurance Industry, Vice Chair
- *Craig Tolmie, Chief Deputy Director, CAL FIRE
- *Ed Foster, California State Firefighters Association
- *Moke Simon, County Government
- *Frank Lima, California Labor Federation
- *David Rocha, California Metropolitan Fire Chiefs
- *David Gillotte, International Association of Fire Fighters
- *Michael S. Williams, California State Firefighters Association
- *Robert Magee, City Government
- *Michael Smith, California Fire Chiefs Association
- (* attended via Zoom Virtual Meeting)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Dan Terry, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee
Mark Ghilarducci, Director, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
Brian K. Rice, California Professional Firefighters
Pete Muñoa, CAL FIRE Firefighters, Local 2881

STATE FIRE MARSHAL STAFF:

- *Andrew Henning, Division Chief, State Fire Training
- *Kevin Chan, Special Assistant to the State Fire Marshal
- *Joseph Bunn, Fire Training Specialist III, State Fire Training
- (* attended via Zoom Virtual Meeting)

GUESTS:

- *Brian Marshall, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
- *Scott Vail, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
- *Taral Brideau, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee
- (* attended via Zoom Virtual Meeting)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mike Richwine called the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) meeting to order at 1334 hours.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was held, and quorum declared at 1337 hours.

3. INTRODUCTIONS

Self-introductions of staff and guests were conducted.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Mike Richwine asked for approval of the Minutes of the May 29th, 2020 meeting.

It was moved by Member Jerry Davies Gillotte to approve the meeting minutes; motion seconded by Member Mike Smith. Motion was carried unanimously at 1339 hours.

Chair Mike Richwine asked for approval of the Minutes of the August 20th, 2020 meeting, with administrative edits.

It was moved by Member Mike Williams to approve the meeting minutes with edits; motion seconded by Member Moke Simon. Motion passed with majority vote at 1340 hours. Member Mike Smith abstained from voting since he did not attend the August meeting.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

6. CONSENT ITEMS

Chair Mike Richwine requested to approve the reaccreditation of the San Diego Fire – Rescue Department, the Santa Rosa Junior College, and City College of San Francisco.

It was moved by Member Mike Williams to approve the consent items; motion seconded by Member Ed Foster.

Motion was carried unanimously at 1342 hours.

A request was made to discuss consent items six and seven of the consent items separately. Chair Mike Richwine called for a motion and a vote on items four and five, which were the FSTEP Course Updates and Retirements and the Firefighter 1C Reference Text, Wildland Firefighter, Principles and Practice, Second Edition.

It was moved by Member Jerry Davies to approve the consent items; motion seconded by Member Craig Tolmie.

Motion passed with majority vote at 1345 hours. Member Mike Williams abstained from voting.

Andrew Henning requested the approval of consent item six, the Chief Fire Officer Certification – Associate Degree Requirement. The Chief Fire Officer Certification associate degree requirement was a requirement for the legacy Chief Officer Certification that State Fire Training (SFT) originally adopted back in 1983. It was retired in 2016 when SFT transition to a new curriculum model, and its replacement was the Chief Fire Officer. In order to be certified, people had to meet the associate degree requirement, which has been a requirement for up to 30 years. This proposal temporarily allows additional experience and college credits, but not necessarily an associate degree, to meet the current associate degree requirement. This is in line with some temporary transitions into the SFT system. A few months ago, the SBFS passed the mid-career, which allowed people to transition into SFT at a rank appropriate level. This allowed a person to take the Chief Fire Officer courses without having to start at the

bottom of the company officer courses. There was also the Fire Fighter II (FFII) tenured path, which allows people who aren't Fire Fighter I (FFI) certified to get their FFII certification.

There are four options listed in the staff report in this proposal. The first option is the current requirements for Chief Fire Officer that are essentially the same as what we had for the legacy Chief Officer Certification. The second option is to allow people who have 60 semester units, but not a degree, to apply for the Chief Fire Officer certification. It increases the required amount of experience that they have in the fire service and as a supervisor or an officer. The third option only requires a total of 45 semester units, but increases the amount of required experience. The fourth option allows for the use of a certificate of achievement from a California Community College, which was found to be equivalent to 60 units, along with the amount of experience required from the second option.

This idea was brought up through the steering committee, which originally focused on SFT recalibrating some FFI certification processes, but it morphed into bigger global SFT changes to make the system more user friendly. After some discussion that the Statewide Training Education Advisory Committee (STEAC) had on the current proposal, and after a close vote, the decision was to retire this temporary allowance on December 31, 2022. The initial proposal was to retire the temporary allowance on December 31, 2024.

Chair Mike Richwine entertained a motion to approve the Chief Officer Certification Requirements with an expiration date of December 31, 2022.

It was moved by Member Mike Williams to approve the consent item; motion seconded by Member Jerry Davies.

Member Mike Smith asked Andrew Henning if he could you provide any insight into why the vote at STEAC was close and what was the opposing viewpoint to the longer period.

Andrew Henning responded that the pros and cons were divided. There were in depth discussions on the amount of time needed to complete all the certification courses. The biggest argument to have the temporary allowance retire in 2024 was a reduction in the courses offered due to COVID-19. There is a comeback in the amount of courses through the host agencies offering State Fire Training courses, but the training periods have still been shortened because of COVID-19 and extended fire seasons. Typically, the peak demand of courses is between February and May, and then demand tapers off quite a bit over the fire season. The argument to have the shortened date was concerns over setting a precedent to allow longer retirement periods when modifications are made to the SFT system. An example is the FFII tenured path that has a very short turnaround time. It retires on December 31, 2021. The mid-career proposal that was approved would push it to 2024, solely to give more people time to get into the courses, so if people were promoted in the next year or so, they would have time to complete the courses.

Chair Mike Richwine asked if there was any other discussion on item six. Hearing none, a vote was called.

Motion was carried unanimously at 1353 hours.

Chair Mike Richwine requested Scott Vail to present the proposal for the CICC'S Physical Fitness Description.

Scott Vail stated that when they did their first go through with the CICC'S qualifications guide, they left out the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) joint labor management wellness fitness initiative, which were intended to

be included. They were in the process of rewriting the guide, but when it came up, given how long it takes to rewrite the guide, they thought it would be important, especially given some of the injuries and accidents that have happened over the years, not to overlook this. It was an opportunity to incorporate it into the guide, which had been neglected to be done for the last 10 years.

Chair Mike Richwine asked for clarification for the members. He asked if it was a baseline medical evaluation, instant wellness and fitness program, and an evaluation tool to determine if an individual can meet the position they're being qualified for is outlined in the guide.

Scott Vail confirmed that it was and added that the four levels of health and fitness have always been in there as a guideline. What was added was the utilization of the IAFF/IAFC joint wellness fitness initiative language and the baseline medical evaluation comprehensive wellness fitness program evaluation tool, which had been dropped out in the last year. After review, they realized that was an oversight.

Chair Mike Richwine asked for a vote to approve item seven.

It was moved by Member Jerry Davies Gillotte to approve the consent item; motion seconded by Member Moke Simon.

Motion passed with majority vote at 1358 hours. The votes were 8 yes (Richwine, Tolmie, Davies, Gillotte, Rocha, Lima, Smith, Simon, Magee) and 2 no (Foster, Williams).

7. PROGRAM AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Andrew Henning requested approval of the Emergency Vehicle Technician (EVT) 1, 2, & 3 (2020) – Curriculum and Certification Update, which is the replacement for the fire mechanic legacy SFT courses. State Fire Training brought a 2016 version of EVT through STEAC and State Board of Fire Services and, partnering and working with the California fire mechanics, needed more time to be able to implement the new EVT courses. The fire mechanic courses were scheduled to retire at the end of 2020 and, due to fire mechanics not being able to get the courses they needed to finish the certification tracks because of the pandemic, the fire mechanics course and certification requirements were administratively extended to the end of 2021. Staff decided when the new NFPA standard, which is used as the benchmark for the EVT, was recently updated, the goal was to update EVT within two years. Since the EVT curriculum never really launched, it was decided to do the administrative update of the EVT courses to the most current NFPA standards to avoid having to redo it in a year or two with potential impacts to curriculum. The changes were administrative for the most part. They worked with the California fire mechanics to review the changes. The other thing they did after speaking with the mechanics was to merge a few of the four hour and six hour courses from the previous approval into single courses. It was more economical for the student, met the needs of the fire mechanics, and met the needs of SFT. This is just an administrative update based on the new NFPA standard.

It was moved by Member Mike Smith to approve the certification update; motion seconded by Member Mike Williams.

Motion was carried unanimously at 1403 hours.

Andrew Henning provided an update on the Hayward Fire Department (ALA) Accreditation Expiration. Hayward Fire Department was scheduled to go through their ALA re-accreditation process, but decided to let their accreditation lapse as they are building new drill towers and are not currently hosting academies.

Chair Mike Richwine asked if they're going to come back after the building new training center.

Andrew Henning confirmed that they will reapply once they are ready to start conducting FFI academies again.

Andrew Henning gave the Title 19 Update. SFT is finally at the tail end of implementing their new fee adjustment. The new fee will go into place on January 1 2021. He informed the Board that all courses with a final course day on or after January 1, 2021 will be on the new fee schedule. The new fees will be \$75 for FSTEP and \$140 for CFSTES. Additionally, there's no longer a course processing fee that was previously an \$8 fee per course. SFT has historically never charged for instructor registration or skills evaluator registration. However, starting on January 1, there will be a fee for both of those services. It is the first fee adjustment since 2008, and it is desperately needed to cover operating expenses of SFT and to ensure that they are able to provide the California fire service with the appropriate level of coverage and customer service.

The other title 19 update in process is a new certification that was approved by SBFS. They are in the process of moving the California Burn Boss certification and the curriculum requirements through the Office of Administrative Law, and are making progress to formally adopt into regulation. It's anticipated that the public comment period will begin on November 20th and will go through January 4th for a 45 day public comment period. When that notice or when the public comment period is official, they will send out a notification via the State Fire Training E-News.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Chair Mike Richwine addressed the Board about the California Highway Patrol (CHP) collaborative training video. He delegated this to State Fire Training and, somewhere along the line, it got delegated back up Chair Mike Richwine. He attempted to reach out to his contacts and found out that all of his contacts were retired. (Scott Silsby and Commissioner Stanley.) So he's asked Andrew Henning to make contact with the training chief of CHP and to begin discussions about the need for development of the training video and to request the training chief to move it up in the CHP organization. He is looking at scheduling a meeting to conceptually talk about development. That is the goal for 2021.

9. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

10. ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

Member Jerry Davies brought up the Fair Plan as a topic of interest for the Board. The Fair Plan is the last source of insurance for people who cannot buy insurance in areas where companies have left due to the fires. The use of the plan is supposed to be reducing, but it is actually growing. They have expanded their items of coverage and provide good coverage for people in communities where people can't get insurance, at a higher premium. No discounts are offered, but it will provide coverage until people can find a policy in the mainstream market. There are a lot of communities where fires have struck and a lot of homeowners either received non-renewals or will not be renewed for their next term. Member Davies asked that any inquiries related to that issue be referred to him.

Member Jerry Davies also gave an update on the Fire Safe Council's work with the watershed districts and communities in the state. The work will start in 2021 and he will provide a report to show the types of resources in each community. They are going to put up offices in communities where people can receive training.

Member Jerry Davies' final update was regarding the US Forest Service \$2.4 million grants. Eighteen communities have received money towards rebuilding and hardening communities for future fires.

Chair Mike Richwine asked the Board if they were interested in having someone the Department of Insurance to address this at the next board meeting with a presentation. The Board Members were interested in having this added as a new business item on the next meeting. Member Davies agreed to make arrangements to have someone present.

Member Craig Tolmie gave a quick summary of the recent wildfires. As of Monday morning, there have been 9,177 wildfires that have burned within the state consuming 4,194,148 acres. CAL FIRE's five year average for this time year is roughly 5,502 fires. This fire season was about 4000 fires above average. The siege that began on August 15th has now come to an end. However, there are still burnable conditions in many parts of the state. Six of the top twenty largest wildfires have burned this year. There have been a total of 32 fatalities associated with the fire siege, three of those being first responders. Damage assessment has verified 9,358 structures have been destroyed during the siege.

Member Jerry Davies asked if there was a percentage of containment for active fires.

Member Craig Tolmie responded that all CAL FIRE managed fires have been contained and information on federal fires is available on the Inciweb website.

Member Dave Gillotte informed the Board that the IAFF convention would be held virtually in January of 2021 because of COVID-19. The agenda will address both legislatively policy and fire service policy, setting the tone of what the organization will be doing at the national level for the next two years. He hopes to see a lot of favorable support, legislatively, at the national level. From the organization's point of view, and from a training perspective, anything that expands from the California legislature to the federal level will be pushed through the labor organizations.

Member Dave Gillotte also commented on behavioral health. IAFF is trying to get the West Coast Center of Excellence completed. But until then, they are trying to use the behavioral health committee layered into all of their training protocols and to bring on other centers of excellence that aren't IAFF, but are certified and rated through their behavior health Task Force, to give them some credibility so health insurance agencies will pay for members. They are having conversations about Kaiser Blue Shield, Anthem Blue and any other insurance carrier to bridge the gap for insurance.

Member Frank Lima spoke about the nation campaign. He brought up places like Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina, where they don't have the right to collectively bargain. In North Carolina, it is against it's against the law for a chief to talk to a union president over working conditions. He stated that the conditions in California is a blessing. He hopes to have good influence in Washington DC and the capitol.

Brian Marshall gave an update on behalf of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). COVID-19 is the number one priority that we're working on. He mentioned that they are looking for ways the California Fire Service can help administer a vaccine through firefighter paramedics and other safety personnel. They just started having meetings on that and will provide an update. Another piece of news is that they are getting ready to start delivering twenty-seven new Type 3 and seventy-nine Type 6 fire engines to the California fire service as part of the Blue Ribbon Commission. The engines will boost their mutual aid assets.

The first draft of the Blue Ribbon Commission report was given to him and he will be giving an update on that as well.

Member Mike Williams asked if the Board be interested in taking on the issue of for-profit fire companies engaging in protection of fixed assets for insurance companies, railroads, agriculture, and any other industries, similar to the way private patrol operators are regulated through the Department of Consumer Affairs. He mentioned Assembly Bill 2380, which addresses some of this. However, since a large portion of this centers around training and Incident Command Systems (ICS), he want to know if this is something the Board should be taking on.

Chair Mike Richwine asked if he is talking about focusing on the training aspect.

Member Mike Williams confirmed that he was talking about training, certification, and licensing, similar to what is done with private security. Where there is a qualified manager who meets a set of circumstances training standards, takes a test, undergoes background, and is licensed accordingly. The company is validated and licensed and the individuals that participate are also licensed, meeting certain minimum standards and undergoing mandatory testing.

Chair Mike Richwine asked Brian Marshall and Member Craig Tolmie for a perspective from the state level on recognizing these firefighting assets.

Brian Marshall reported that CalOES is putting together the regulations that go with the legislation, which are being completed and are at the Governor's Office. He hopes they will be finalized by early next year.

Chair Mike Richwine asked if the Board Members would be interested in a report from CalOES on the status of that legislation and assets at the next meeting.

Member Dave Gillotte provided his perspective. The first one was from a training and safety point of view and what those standards look like. He stated that this was something that labor should be intensely involved in and that there are ways to integrate the for-profit fire companies. He mentioned the importance of including the California Professional Firefighters (CPF) and to use legislation to set training standards for fire fighters and for private fire protection companies.

Member Craig Tolmie stated he would be interested in hearing the CalOES report.

Chair Mike Richwine agreed to have CalOES provide an update on the regulations at the next meeting.

Scott Vail stated that they are to begin working on the CICCIS qualifications. They will be bringing in Urban Search and Rescue Qualifications and will also be bringing hazardous materials (hazmat) to cover a broader variety.

Chair Mike Richwine provided the State Fire Marshal update. OSFM was heavily involved in damage inspection, with over 40 Deputy State Fire Marshals that doing DINS work throughout the state at the various fires. Wildfire Planning and Engineering has been very busy with the land use planning defensible space inspections and subdivision review, among other things. The State Fire Marshal's office is also working with the Department of Insurance. The office is filling many critical chief and deputy positions. It has been a very productive past two or three

years of State Fire Training improvements in alignment with national standards and accrediting bodies IFSAC and Pro Board.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public in attendance.

12. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Quarterly meetings in 2021 will continue on a quarterly basis beginning with February 18th.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Mike Richwine adjourned the meeting at 1437 hours.