



MBFTE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: November 9, 2021

TIME: 10:07 a.m.

LOCATION: Elk River Fire Department

Board Member	In Person	TEAMS	Teleconference	ABSENT
Reno Wells – Assoc. of Townships		X		
Dean Wrobbel – League of Cities	X			
Rick Loveland - MPFF	X			
Vacant - MSFDA				
Chip Lohmiller - MSFCA	X			
Roger Ihrke – League of Cities		X		
Chris Ford - MPFF	X			
John Peura – Public Member		X		
Robert Dixon Jr - MSFDA		X		
Roxanne Altmeyer - MSFDA	X			
Jim Fisher – Assoc. of Townships		X		
Gavin Peterson – MSFDA	X			
Becki White - MSFCA	X			
Natascha Hennen - MSFDA		X		
Jim Smith – SFM - DPS	X			

Guests: DeeDee Jankovich (MnFIRE), Wayne Kewitsch (MnFIRE), Steve Shapira (Century), Patrick Kelley (M-State College & University Office), Steve White (SFMD Fire Service Specialist) and Jessica Ziemann (DPS Fiscal)

Staff: Steve Flaherty, Executive Director, Margaret Koele, License Coordinator

I. Call to order – Dean Wrobbel, Chair

a. Meeting attendance roll call shown above

b. Agenda

i. Added under new business discuss board members for appointments open

1. Rick Loveland motioned to approve the agenda with additions, Reno Wells second the motion

- a. **Roll call vote, motion carried**

II. Approval of minutes from May 11, 2021

- a. Rick Loveland motioned to approve the minutes, Chip Lohmiller second the motion
 - i. **Roll call vote, motion carried**

III. Reports

- a. Treasurer, John Peura
 - i. Financials in order as presented
 1. FSA balance, Marshal Smith
 - a. \$4,936,781.35
- b. Executive Director, Steve Flaherty
 - i. We just wrapped up MSFCA conference being strategically placed between the SFMD booth and VectorSolutions booth. This worked well to move fire people between all our booths with questions. They were able to get any technical questions answered regarding the online training program, plus we signed up to email 25 new departments for the core version program. We are near 5000 firefighters training on the site. We were busy all day at our booth
 - ii. We are moving forward with two cohorts for the Leadership course that will start in January and wrap up in April. The cohorts are full
 - iii. We have Fire Officer Schools coming up in February & March
 - iv. We are working with MnFIRE on their HomeTown Heroes funding that was awarded through legislation and ended up in the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). We are working with OJP to get the grant moving forward through MBFTE. They are hoping to have the funds legislatively changed to go through MBFTE rather than OJP next fiscal year. MBFTE will receive \$10,000 from the grant for administrating the program for them
 - v. Margaret Koele is working with MNIT on moving our programs to the state secure digital server. This is an expense that the board will need to fund going forward
 - vi. Reimbursements are on track the same as last year
- c. Training Committee, Chair Chip Lohmiller
 - i. Nothing to report as we have moved all training business to be handled by the Executive Committee
- d. Executive Committee, Chair Dean Wrobbel
 - i. The committee decided at the last board meeting to move training business to the Executive Committee and that committee will meet prior to the board meeting in 2022
 - ii. The Executive Committee needs to stay intact, per the bylaws
 - iii. The committee discussed and approved the recommendation to the board for the migration to the state cloud digital secure server, should be approximate cost of \$45,000 for five years (\$9000 per year)

- iv. Statutory membership was discussed to possibly add language that members need to be in good standing with organizations they represent to be recommended to the board
 - v. The committee had a quorum to be able to approve the last few meeting minutes that were not approved due to no quorum for those meetings
 - e. Licensing, Chair Rick Loveland
 - i. FT - 2282
 - ii. PT – 137
 - iii. POC – 1167
 - iv. VOL –324
 - v. Unaffiliated – 23 (active licenses renewed and the individual is no longer affiliated with a department but will remain licensed until expiration)
 - vi. 11 - applications in process
 - 1. Margaret Koele, License Coordinator commented that the 11 applications had been processed after the agenda was printed and there are currently 4 more waiting for payment
 - f. Fire Service Specialist Report – Steve White, SFMD FSS
 - i. The Fire Service Specialists have spent a lot of time across the state on training and types of training that departments can get more creative with for reimbursement that is available. The reimbursement document that Steve Flaherty and Margaret Koele put together for what can and cannot be reimbursed is very helpful and well received by departments
 - ii. The FEMA grants are open and we have seen some nice awards granted. We have been working with departments on grant writing and identifying needs for the grant. Norman County was able to get items that were much needed in that area through this grant
 - iii. Through the civil unrest and wild fires up north we have been working with establishing building relationships across the state with departments and training providers

IV. Old business

- a. VectorSolutions MBFTE Enterprise Site – Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
 - i. 32 of 87 departments that are premier subscribers
 - 1. 1200 firefighters have access to the MBFTE core enterprise site information
 - ii. Additional input request
 - 1. As the enterprise site host we can put training videos and information on the site for these users to have access to.
 - a. Currently we have basement fires video on the site for viewing by users
 - 2. We have Reached out to Becki White, who is familiar with the program and asked her to get more training information to put on the enterprise site

V. New business – Dean Wrobbel, Chair

- a. At Large and Treasurer will be voted at the first meeting held in 2022
 - i. New at large member replacing Jon Kahnke (if appointed)
 - 1. No appointment has been announced as of yet
 - ii. Members reappointing

1. Reno Wells will not be seeking reappointment, we appreciate his service on the board. He has found a replacement to be recommended by the Association of Townships and this has been addressed with the Governor
- b. Meeting time change for 2022
 - i. Executive Committee 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. prior to board meetings
 - ii. Board meeting 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
 1. Food for meetings 2022
 - a. We need to have members be accurate when stating they will be attending the meetings in person or via Teams. We have had members cancel in person the day before and day of meetings. The food orders are placed well in advance of the meetings with special expenses created, with minimums having to be met for delivery to the meeting location
 - b. The board members want to continue food for meetings
- c. Moving of website/database to the digital secure state cloud – Dean Wrobbel, Chair
 - i. Approximate cost of \$45,000 for five years (\$9000 per year), for MNIT to manage site
 - ii. We will keep our programmer to maintain the site, plus a MNIT team of four to security scan and deploy changes to the cloud on our behalf
 1. Rick Loveland asked if this can be budgeted in, since it was not brought up when budget was voted on in August
 - a. Steve Flaherty commented that we can adjust the operating budget higher than \$245,000, if necessary. Checking last year budget at the end of the fiscal, we would be able to support this cost. We are and will continue to be web based with the same way we have been conducting business, just moving server locations
 - b. Natascha Hennen commented that we have to make this move to the state server and there is no choice, correct?
 - i. Margaret Koele, License Coordinator replied that we do have to move to the state cloud server, as we are a state board
 1. Recommendation was made by the Executive Committee to approve the \$45,000 cost for five years (\$9000 per year)
 - a. Natascha Hennen motioned to approve the cost for moving the website/database to the state digital secure cloud, Reno Wells second the motion
 - b. Dean Wrobbel asked to amend the motion to approve up to \$15,000 for this fiscal year and ask the MNIT team to submit more specific costs for next fiscal year budget and do by fiscal year costs rather than five year cost
 - i. Natascha Hennen and Reno Wells approved the amended motion

**c. Roll call vote taken and motion carried
unanimously to approve the funding for the
migration to the state for up to \$15,000 cost this
fiscal year**

- d. 299N statute updating for representing members of organizations on the board – Rick Loveland
- i. Discussion that members description, in statute language, include that they be in good standing of the organization they represent on the board
 - ii. Discussion in changing members appointments to be Commissioner appointed like FSAC vs Governor appointed
 1. The MPFF lobbyist representative would like the MSFDA lobbyist to take the lead this on if want to go forward, as they are the ones currently impacted by the current language
 2. This could turn into a political issue if move from Governor to Commissioner appointment, but will have more discussion on this with the organization Presidents to see where they stand on these changes and moving forward
 3. The associations should be vetting for their own diverse candidates to recommend for board seats
 - a. Marshal Smith commented the Governor's office is setting up an appointment team for outreach to boards and committees
 - i. The timing might not be right to move to Commissioner appointment
 - b. Dean Wrobbel commented that he agrees with the Marshal and it is difficult to open statute not knowing what will happen during the process. We are looking at diversification, but we do not have control over the Governor appointments, even with recommendations from the organizations
 - c. Steve Flaherty, commented that it is important to have recommendations of people that are in good standing with these organizations and having representation at this table on the board. We deal with a lot of funding that goes through our board across the state and in the spirit of diversity an appointment team can appoint people that have no clue about the fire service or no affiliation with the organizations they would represent, but would get appointed on the basis of diversity. This could be an MPFF member appointed on that basis, but does not belong to the MPFF as a member, which could really work against the mission of this board. Currently the Governor can appoint anyone, as the statute does not specify it has to be a member in good standing, and once appointed would not un-appoint.
 - d. Chris Ford, MPFF commented that the fire service is 98% white male, so how do you get diverse candidates to fill these appointments

- i. Steve Flaherty commented that he has had several conversations with the Governors' office on that topic, as well as with the Presidents of the organizations, regarding trying to find diverse candidates to fill the appointments. They outreach the best they can to find people that will fit the diverse recommendation from the state
- e. Natascha Hennen commented that MSFDA and President Yurczyk mission is about recruiting diversity and representing the rural areas vs the metro areas. I want to thank the board for taking this battle on and having representatives that are affiliated with their organization. I keep reminding everyone at every meeting that we are here to represent our organization MSFDA, MSFCA, The League of Cities and The Association of Townships. You are not here as an individual and need to be aware of what your organization stands for, what their mission statement is for, and act accordingly
- f. Rick Loveland commented that there are different aspects of diversity, which would also include out state vs metro and does not just mean gender or ethnic background. We need to have a sit down with the appointment team with all the organizations involved on this board. I believe the vetting should not be done by an appointment committee. It is an organizations responsibility to reach out to their members to recruit for diversity. We will meet with all the organizations and discuss the issue and how we want to move forward legislatively
- g. Margaret Koele, commented that the staff would keep the board informed once the appointment team is established and we get a meeting set up with them
- e. Rick Loveland motioned to approve 2022 calendar, Chip Lohmiller second the motion, roll call vote and motion carried unanimously
- f. Dean Wrobbel went over the marketing design for what we do and do not reimburse for, which is also being made into magnets. Also went over the google analytic report of the traffic on our website and web pages for the last fiscal year to date

VI. Public Comment

- a. Wayne Kewitsch, MnFIRE wanted to thank the MBFTE & SFMD on the programs and helping with the grant funding through OJP

VII. Adjourn 11:37 a.m.

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