

WNCAFF Quarterly Meeting
Newdale Fire Department (Yancey County)
July 21, 2021

18:35 – President McMurry called the July quarterly meeting to order with 96 members representing 17 counties.

President McMurry introduced Chief Tracy Cox of the Newdale Fire Department who welcomed the association to Yancey County and the Newdale Fire Department.

Pledge of Allegiance: Josh Laws, Newdale Fire Department.

Invocation was given by: Josh Laws, Newdale Fire Department.

Meeting recessed for the meal. Meal Sponsor: Atlantic Emergency Solutions.

19:10 – Becky Rawls from Atlantic Emergency Solutions addressed the association. She introduced staff members who were in attendance. Becky spoke about the assistance that was provided to her after her house was lost to a hurricane a few years ago. At an association meeting members of the association presented Becky with gift cards that they had won as door prizes for her to use in rebuilding her house. Becky presented the association with two gift cards with stipulation that the association pays it forward, like it was done to her.

19:20 – Past President Recognition: President McMurry presented Past President Brian Piercy with a gift from the association and thanked him for his work as president in 2020.

19:20 - **President McMurry recognized the 2021 WNCAFF Officers.**

- President Todd McMurry – Polkville Fire Department
- 1st Vice President Robert Griffin – Edneyville Fire Department
- 2nd Vice President Shane LaCount – Mooresville Fire Department
- Secretary Anthony Penland – Swannanoa Fire Department
- Treasurer Dean Coward – Saunook Fire Department
- Past President Brian Piercy – PG Fire Department
- Foothills Region Director – Earl Withers III – Dallas Fire Department
- Highlands Region Director – Bryan Buchanan – Waynesville Fire Department
- Mountain Region Director – Geoff Woolard – Mooresville Fire Department

2020 Firefighter/Company Officer/Chief of the Year Awards

- Volunteer Chief of the Year: Jerry Starr, South Iredell Fire Department.
- Career Company Officer of the Year: Nathan Bowman, Cherryville Fire Department.
- Volunteer Company Officer of the Year: Darrell Adams, Dallas Fire Department.

19:30 – Loren Pittman from Civic Federal Credit Union spoke about the products that Civic offers and the promotional contest that is being conducted by Civic. Civic is giving away a new F-150 Hybrid Lightning Truck and Grill. Loren introduced Bill Carter and Sherry Helewski.

19:41 - Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports

Motion moved by Kevin Mundy and seconded by Curt Deaton to accept the secretary's report as mailed, emailed and/or posted to the website. Motion Passed.

Motion moved by Quentin Cash seconded by Joey Webb to accept treasurer's report as presented. Motion Passed.

19:45 – Agency Reports

NCSFA – Tim Bradley

➤ Relief Fund

- The Treasurer's Financial Report is due October 31st, based upon the year close at June 30th. Please remind them the system is open for them to begin submitting the report on line.
- In addition, this year the Chief will again submit the Certificate of Eligibility at the same time they are doing their roster at year end, rather than a separate report in October to OSFM. The submittal is integral to the roster system on-line. That report, like the roster, is due by January 15th.
- Each year staff spends the last week of October trying to contact Relief Fund Treasurers to get their reports submitted. If they are not submitted the local relief fund will not receive a check in 2022. Please help us by telling Chiefs to remind their Treasurers to submit the report and bank statements.

➤ Conference Update

- The 2021 SAFRE Conference is back on and scheduled for Aug. 11th -14th, 2021 at the Raleigh Convention Center. The Conference will be held without Covid restrictions; however, we would request anyone not vaccinated to please wear a mask.
- Attendees will enjoy a free exhibitor floor again this year and we have extended Saturday's hours till 2pm. Free conference tee shirts will be given to all full conference registrants, thanks to our shirt sponsors – Rhinehart Fire Services.
- On Thursday, August 12, during the SAFRE Opening Session we will once again be honoring those members of NCSFA who have achieved either their 25 or 50 Years of Service by presenting them with an NCSFA Service Award pin. If you have reached one of these milestones, please join us and get your service pin.
- The lineup of education sessions is top notch this year and is being pushed out on all social media platforms. The speaker and topic lists are generating a lot of discussion and exciting surrounding this year's conference.
- Our keynote speaker this year is Commander Scott Waddle, commanding officer of the USS Greenville when it collided with a Japanese fishing boat, killing all 9 on board. His message of "Failure Need Not Be Final" is one we can all get a lot from these days.
- Our banquet, as always is being held on Saturday night, and our Memorial Service & a candlelight memorial service will be held Thursday afternoon. Please remember to sign up for banquet.
- The On-Line registration ends July 28th. Anyone interested in attending the banquet should purchase a ticket by then as well.

- The golf tournament has been moved to September as a separate event. Please follow our web site for announcements on how to sign up for the Golf Tournament, which will be held in Hickory Sept 13 & 14.

➤ **Insurance Renewal**

- The NCSFA Board renewed our Line of Duty Death Insurance and our Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance this year for our membership. One improvement was an increase in the seatbelt benefit from \$10,000 to \$12,500 in the case of a vehicle crash. The total cost of the insurance is \$756,752, or \$13.60 per member. Some of this cost is supported by our Relief Fund receipts we receive each year, but the majority is borne by membership dues.
- The benefits provide \$50,000 LODD (except for Cancer) benefit, and a \$25,000 Death and Dismemberment Insurance. The AD&D is double indemnity if the death is a traumatic death at the scene of a working incident.

➤ **Legislative Report**

- The NC General Assembly may not adjourn their 2021 long session until August, since there are a lot of bills and work still needing to be completed. Currently they are still in session.
- We are still working on key bills, primarily our priority which is a firefighter cancer insurance bill (HB 535). Hopefully we can get it included in the budget when the House and Senate go into conference to finalize budget negotiations. We are still actively trying to tie down a funding source. Initially it may be funded out of the general fund, but our hope is to find a more permanent resolution.
- Since many of our issues relate to budget, we'll know more when the House releases its version and they two Chambers begin negotiations.
- We requested a financial Covid relief amount to be distributed to FD not eligible for municipal relief, and it appears hopeful this may be included in the DOI budget.
- Fireworks, which we oppose, hasn't moved or been scheduled.

➤ **Staying Active Legislatively and Capital Impact**

- Right now, we have 1104 active Advocates on Capital Impact. That means out of 50,000+ firefighters, just over 2%.
- We would prefer to have many more, but the system is designed to allow people to join, not force or bulk sign them.
- If you want to keep up with what's going on and be a part of promoting and getting good legislation passed, join up. At the very least it will give you weekly updates and contact information for all of your representatives.
- Log on to NCSFA, click on the Legislative Banner called Capital Impact, or look under the Legislative Flag. Provide your email, design your own password, and provide your home zip code. It allows for much more, but that is all that is required. It takes less than 3 minutes.

➤ **First Responders Day: September 11**

- Please remember and start planning events for First Responder Day, September 11th. This is a designated holiday in NC, established in 2017 by the General Assembly.

NCAFC – Joey Webb

- **2021 Mid-Winter/Spring Conference**
 - Successful Mid-winter/spring conference 2021 with 276 attendees and 74 vendors.
 - **Annual Award Winners**
 - Career Fire Chief of the Year
 - William Hunt - Shelby Fire & Rescue
 - Career Fire Officer of the Year
 - Jenna Daniels - Summerfield FD
 - Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year
 - Johnny Joseph - Puppy Creek VFD

- **Annual Chief's Breakfast**
 - 18th annual Chief's breakfast is Thursday August 12, 2021 @ 7:00 AM – reservations are required. Please sign up on the NCAFC web site – registration cutoff is July 30, 2021.

- **Annual Business Meeting**
 - The NCAFC annual business meeting will be held at the SAFRE conference August 12, 2021 @ noon.
 - There will be a minor by-law change voted on at the conference (posted on the web site).

- **Executive Development Program**
 - NCAFC Executive Development is the last week of September and October. The course is currently full, we have a wait list.

- **House Bill 435**
 - This is the NCAFC License Plate Bill. Any help you may provide to get this bill passed would be appreciated. Please contact your local Senator to ask for support.

- **2022 Mid-Winter Conference**
 - January 24 – 30, 2022.
 - Embassy Suites/Concord Convention Center.

NVFC – Quentin Cash

- **Finances**
 - Revenue is diverse and comes in from federal grants, corporate partnerships, sponsorships, and memberships. Through May, revenue is up and expenses are down. This will level out over the year as membership revenue tends to taper off through the end of the year.
 - We've recently been awarded several new grants including FM Global and Johnson Controls and we've been invited to apply for a grant with the General Motors Foundation. Corporate members continue to be engaged and interested.
 - Staff is working on a revision to the 2021 budget that will be presented at the fall meeting. This will account for changes in grants and corporate funding including increased revenue in some areas, as well as removing the FY19 FP&S Grant that was not awarded last year.
 - Total net assets as of May 31, 2021 are double what they were in 2019 (\$1,874,983 in 2021 versus \$937,431 in 2019)

➤ **Governance**

- The NVFC has embarked on implementing its 2021-2025 **strategic plan**. The Committees and Goal Champions are working towards the goals laid out in the plan.
- The Nominating and Bylaw Committees have collaborated to propose a **revision to the bylaws** that will be discussed by the Executive Committee today. The proposal includes both administrative changes (removing the department membership the board eliminated last year) as well changes designed to simplify and streamline the election process. This will also be talked about during today's meeting.
- Tom Miller had submitted a **Freedom of Information Act Request** on behalf of the full board seeking 5 years' worth of federal grant information. This was compiled and sent to the full board.

➤ **Staff**

- The **Program Coordinator position** has been filled and NVFC's newest employee, Maggie Mojab, will start on July 21. She currently works for the Society of Fire Protection Engineers and is very experienced in coordinating in-person and online training, webinars, as well as event planning, her educational background is in psychology/mental health and she is trained in mental health first aid which will benefit our efforts in behavioral health in the fire and emergency services.
- The NVFC typically conducts a 3rd. party **compensation study** every 4-5 years to ensure our compensation is in line with industry standards. We are due for this again in 2022. Staff will develop an RFP and provide options to the Executive Committee for firms to conduct this study.

➤ **Membership**

- Membership is strong and at its highest level in NVFC history, with North Carolina leading the way! At the spring meeting the board approved an increase in dues from \$18 to \$21 that will go into effect January 1. The Membership Team is putting a communications plan in place to communicate this plan to our members and encourage early renewals before the rates go up.
- Volunteer Voices, NVFC's online forum for members continues to be very active with questions, answers, and best practices being shared.

➤ **Corporate Partners**

- Corporate partners continue to be engaged and new corporate contacts are continuously developed. We currently have relationships with over 40 companies – ranging from giveaway programs, sponsorships, to fully-funded projects such as the Anheuser Busch emergency water drinking program.

➤ **Training**

- The NVFC held our 7th annual **Health & Safety Training Summit** virtually in May. This was our highest attended Summit with over 200 attendees.
- Our first **Recruitment & Retention Experience** is coming up in September in Cleveland, Ohio. The Work Group will also meet prior to this event to brainstorm for future goals and activities for the Make Me a Firefighter Program. This Work Group includes 5 directors, as well as representatives from sister organizations such as the NFPA, IAFC, NAFTD, Women in Fire, and NAHF.
- Thanks to the **Motorola Foundation**, the NVFC will hold its first ever training dedicated to new/prospective recruits on August 18. This online event will feature a session on what it's like to join a department, including a day in the life of a volunteer, administrative opportunities, juggling work/family/volunteerism, and of course, the benefits of volunteer.
- NVFC continues to offer our **Train Strong webinar series** with 11 webinars having taken place this year through June 30, reaching over 2,300 participants.

- **In-person training events** are ramping up again post-pandemic. David Bullard taught multiple courses in Washington State in May. NVFC is hosting a course on our Psychologically Healthy Fire Department project at Firehouse Expo in September, with more events to follow. We continue to focus on priority topics such as behavioral health, health & safety, recruitment/retention, and leadership.
- **Communications/Outreach**
- We are moving forward with the 2021 edition of the Firefighter Strong Newsletter to be published in September. The focus will be on recruitment and retention topics, mailed to all U.S. volunteer/combination departments and distributed at the Recruitment & Retention Experience. This is made possible by our SAFER grant.
 - NVFC has made great traction in outreach and name recognition in recent months. This includes a feature story on the Today Show (airing twice), as well as coverage in USA Today, Newsday, and numerous local stations. We have seen an uptick in outreach from highly recognized news outlets seeking subject matter experts to speak on various topics such as the condo collapse in Florida, wildland firefighting, harassment in the fire service and more. This is a testament to the reputation of the NVFC as a leader in the national arena.
- **Areas to Watch**
- **Business continuity** is important to the success of the NVFC. The organization has experienced several challenging events in the past several months including a cancer diagnosis for our Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs and the sudden, unexpected death of long-time CEO, Heather Schafer. Management is putting contingency plans in place, when possible, to ensure continuity of operations. This includes cross-training current staff, and/or identifying contractors who can step in on a temporary basis, as-needed.
 - **Increased meeting expenses.** After the hotel industry struggled throughout the pandemic, we may be privy to side effects such as increased meeting rates, added expenses in event insurance, and other ramifications. As the result of the pandemic, our 2022 spring meeting hotel location notified the NVFC that they are selling the hotel and it will not be available for our meeting. Staff is working with the Conference Committee to identify alternatives in the area, of which there are several.

OSFM – Davie Summey and Norman Franklin

- **Administration**
- The North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal implemented a cancer registry located in OSFM 24. This is intended for command staff to report cancer cases and deaths. The data will help state leaders to understand how cancer is affecting the fire service and what resources are needed. Commissioner Causey is requesting that fire chiefs log into the fire & rescue service page and participate in the registry.
- **Fire Grants**
- Closed out the 2020 Grants.
 - 2021 grants announced on May 17, 2021.
 - Closing out 2020 Rescue Grant. Only 8 extensions are left to complete.
 - Issued 50 more fire grants this year from last year.
 - Completed a podcast episode for Pocket Tools.

➤ **Ratings and Inspections**

- Conducted 73 Surveys and Inspections
 - 17 – 9s Inspections
 - 56 – Surveys
- Inspection staff using new GIS mapping program that was developed in house.
- Inspection staff now offering online classes Preparing for Ratings and Inspections.
 - Two classes will be offered every other month.

➤ **Fire and Rescue Training**

- Classes are being scheduled at the state training center in Stanly County.
- 1,558 students as of March 2021 with an average cost of \$28.41 per student.
- Working with commission staff to create more podcast.
- Returned to normal operations June 2021.
- **Upcoming events and projects**
 - Starting live fire audits July 2021.
 - Staff will be attending SAFRE in August.

➤ **Fire and Rescue Commission**

- Will be hosting an NFA Command and Control of Incident Operations class.
 - September 20-25, 2021.
 - Pinehurst, NC.
- Will be hosting an NFA Plan Review for Fire and Life Safety class.
 - Monroe, NC
- Trying to secure another class for Water Based Plans Review.
 - Fall of 2021.
 - Forsyth County.
- NFA NC State Weekend
 - November 19-21, 2021.
 - Information sent out on July 1, 2021.
- Image Trend Fire Bridge RMS software is being updated to elite version with a planned release date of July 12, 2021. The Image Trend Records Management System is available to all fire departments, rescue squads and county fire marshals at **no cost**.

➤ **Injury Prevention**

- Shannon Bullock, Division Chief of OSFM Injury Prevention retired after 28 years of service with the state of North Carolina.
- Had a successful Safe Kids Conference in Concord.
- **Smoke Alarm Saturday**
 - 3,368 homes were checked.
 - 2,781 alarms were installed.
 - 573 homes were without alarms.
- Staff hosting Operation Medicine Drops Events.
- Staff hosting Hot Car Events and will continue these events across the state during the summer.

NCFLSE

- **Western Meeting**
 - August 2, 2021.
 - Asheville Fire Department

- **2022 Conference**
 - February 13-17, 2022.
 - Great Wolfe Lodge, Concord NC.

NCFFF – Rick Wood

- **Memorial Service**
 - **SAFRE Conference**
 - Thursday August 12, 2021.
 - 3:00 p.m.
 - Raleigh Convention Center/Ballroom C.
 - **Annual Memorial Service**
 - August 28, 2021.
 - Nash Square, Raleigh NC.
 - Will be honoring the 2019 and 2020 LODD.

20:11 - Old Business – Nothing to discuss.

18:55 - New Business

1. Bylaws Review

- Bylaw changes will be presented at the October meeting with a vote to be held at the January 2022 meeting. There are areas of the bylaws that needed to be updated.

2. Nominating Committee

- Brian Piercy, Trevor Lance, Andy Webster and Rick Livingston will serve as the 2021 nominating committee.
- Anyone interested in serving on the executive board for 2022 needs to contact one of the nominating committee members by September 15, 2021. The position of Foothills Director position will be open due to the individual moving to 2nd Vice President if elected. Bylaws state that the treasurer and secretary positions are to be voted on each year.
- **Regional Representatives: NCSFA/NCAFC**
 - Interested members who would like to represent the western region of the NCSFA and NCAFC need to let the nominating committee know of your intentions by December 15, 2021.

3. Scholarships

- **Gene Gladdin Memorial Scholarship:**
 - Hudson Boone, Spruce Pine Fire Department.
- **Dean Coward Scholarship:**
 - Jon Eaker, Shelby Fire Department.
- **WNCAFF Scholarships:**
 - Leena Brittain, George Hildebran Fire Department.
 - Kaylee Messick, Champion Fire Department.

4. Next Meeting

- October 20, 2021
- Salisbury Fire Department Station 6
310 Cedar Springs Road
Salisbury, NC 28147

Meeting adjourned at 20:35

Submitted: Secretary Anthony Penland