

WNCAF Quarterly Meeting
Ranger Fire Department (Cherokee County)
July 19, 2023

18:32 – President LaCount called the July quarterly meeting to order with 126 members, representing 14 counties, present.

President LaCount introduced Ranger Fire Department Chief Michael Taylor, who welcomed the association to the Ranger and Cherokee County.

Invocation was given by: Hiwassee Dam Fire Department Chaplain Rev. Bob Boozer

Pledge of Allegiance: Ranger Junior Firefighters Trenton Beavers & Zack Fancis.

NC State Senator Kevin Corbin addressed and thanked the members for the service that they provide to the citizens of North Carolina. Senator Corbin represents senate district 50, which includes the counties of Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, and Transylvania.

President LaCount recognized the 2023 WNCAF Officers

- President Shane LaCount – Mooresville Fire Department
- 1st Vice President Earl Withers III – Dallas Fire Department
- 2nd Vice President Bryan Buchanan – The Upper Hominy Fire Department
- Secretary Anthony Penland – Swannanoa Fire Department
- Treasurer Dean Coward – Saunook Fire Department
- Past President Robert Griffin – Edneyville Fire Department
- Mountain Region Director – Trevor Key – Collettsville Fire Department
- Foothills Region Director – Tim Tench – East Lincoln Fire Department
- Highlands Region Director – Zac Cicillian – Skyland Fire Department

18:44 – Meeting recessed for the meal. Meal sponsor: Atlantic Emergency Solutions. The meal was catered by Smoky Mountain BBQ Murphy, NC.

19:25 – Meeting reconvened.

19:25 – Treasurer’s/Secretary’s Reports

Treasurer Dean Coward presented the treasurer’s report. Joey Webb moved seconded by Quentin Cash to accept the treasurer’s report as presented. Motion Passed.

The April meeting minutes were emailed out to the association and posted to the website. Rick Livingston moved seconded by Todd McMurry to accept the secretary’s report as emailed and posted to the website. Motion Passed.

19:30 – 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 and to submit their bank statements as well.
- 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 and bank statements submitted. If they are not submitted the local relief fund will not receive a check in 2024. Please help us by telling Chiefs to remind their Treasurers to submit the report and bank statements.

➤ **Relief Fund Use**

- During the last year there were 582 requested uses of the local Relief Fund totaling \$2.7 million dollars. We continue to see an increase in request and uses of the relief fund. The highest use is Destitution or Financial hardships followed by supplemental retirement funding requests. The increased use follows the General Assembly guidance in 2014 that we either use it or lose it.

➤ **Conference Update**

- This year's dates for the SAFRE Conference are August 9-12, 2023, and we will be back at the Raleigh Convention Center. We have a great lineup of classes and hands on trainings for you this year. Our keynote speaker is baseball legend, Ned Yost, World Series winning manager AND member of Dale Earnhardt Sr.'s 7th championship pit crew. The SAFRE expo floor is completely sold out and will feature some exciting new exhibitors. As always it will feature the latest in apparatus, gear, fire service technology and so much more. Whether you come every year, or this will be your first time, we encourage and challenge you to bring a friend with you to SAFRE this year so we can introduce it the next generation of firefighters. The SAFRE week is a great opportunity for fellowship, mentorship, and leadership from/with your peers in the fire service. What can you learn, what can you teach and who can you meet? Join us Aug. 9-12 at SAFRE 2023!
- On Tuesday of this year's conference at 12:00 noon we will have a combined Summit of the State and Regional Boards to discuss current issues. This will include the Eastern Western, Piedmont, NCSFA, NCAFC, and staff from OSFM.
- 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.

- On Thursday, August 10th, 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.
- 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.

➤ **Legislation**

- **Legislative Day:**

- Legislative Day was a success with one of the biggest groups we've had in years.

- **Legislative Priorities**

- Legislation has been busy this year.
- The NCSFA and the NCAFC's held a joint Legislative Committee meeting in December to discuss legislative priorities for the upcoming session. 1st Vice President Richard Pulley from the NCSFA chaired the meeting. Several Legislative Priorities were discussed and decided upon. There will obviously be other bills that are introduced affecting the fire service, but the priorities established by the committee are:
 - **Increase in Fire and Rescue Pension Benefits. This would include a \$5 increase in benefits with a \$5 increase in premiums. SB 728 has been introduced increasing the pension to \$200 per month, but did not make crossover, but HB 270 with a \$5 increase has passed the House and may be included in the budget. A potential increase of more is an option, but until the budget is released we won't know much more**
Secure continuation funding for the Cancer Insurance Pilot Program going into the future. We have met with legislators and have identified a funding source. Introduced as (SB 326). It passed the Senate and hopefully will be heard in the House or included in the budget.
 - **Revise the Background Check Law for the fire service allowing alternatives for applicants who have lived in NC for five years and exempting junior members. (HB 378) which has passed the House and Senate is in the House for concurrence. If they concur then it would go to the Governor for signature.**
 - **Continue to pursue the use of blue lights on the rear of fire apparatus. This is being met with continued resistance from law enforcement groups.**
 - **Oppose any legislative increase in use or sell of fireworks. The Fireworks bill introduced did not crossover.**
 - **Monitor and discuss any additional legislation introduced.**
- ***** Indicates NCSFA/NCAFC Priority**
- [H 0055](#) | Fire Investigation Law Revisions. Passed House and in Senate Rules. Expands the investigative powers of the State Fire Marshal related to Arson.
- ******* [H 0270](#) | Death Benefits Parity/Fire & Rescue Increase. Passed House and in Senate Rules: Increases Fire and Rescue Pension Benefits
- [H 0363](#) | The Gabe Torres Act. Passed House in Senate Rules. To expand those eligible under the public safety employees' death benefits act, and to honor the life of Gabe Torres, a Raleigh police officer whose life came to an end after a tragic act of violence on October 13, 2022, while he was on his way to work. This would allow travel to and from duty as well as to and from training to be considered covered under the LODD act.

- [H 0370](#) | Responsible Firefighting Foam Management Act. Passed House in Senate Rules - Robert Davis: To forbid use of firefighting foams containing PFAS chemicals for firefighting training or testing purposes. This only covers training and testing of class b foam, not its use in actual emergencies.
- [*** H 0378](#) | Firefighters Criminal History Record Checks. Passed House in Senate Rules Hugh Blackwell: Providing that counties and cities may have criminal history record checks for firefighter applicants who have been residents of the state for five or more years conducted through the clerk of superior court or a third-party vendor and providing that the criminal history record checks requirement shall not apply to junior members under eighteen.
- [H 0387](#) | Medal of Valor Award for First Responders Engrossed and Presented to the Go Charles Miller: To award the "Medal of Valor Award" to a first responder upon recommendation from the highest-ranking official within a department or agency employing first responders. The Governor may award up to two medals of valor to first responders each calendar year. The Governor may also award one Medal of Valor to an entire unit once each calendar year. If two recipients have already been awarded for the calendar year, the Governor may award a third recipient under special circumstances. The Medal of Valor 16 Award shall be for first responders that have performed great acts of heroism, while under threat of personal risk to their safety, beyond the call of duty in the field. For the purposes of this subdivision, a "first responder" includes any firefighter, paramedic, law enforcement officer, emergency medical services personnel, or rescue squad member."
- [H 0488](#) | Code Council Reorg. And Var. Code Amend Mark Brody Engrossed and Vetoed: Reorganizes the building code council and create the residential code council and amends various provisions of the North Carolina state building code and land development regulations.
- [H 0565](#) | Study Volunteer Firefighter Incentives. Passed House in Senate Rules Jarrod Lowery: Directs the department of insurance and the labor and economic analysis division of the department of commerce to study ways to incentivize the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.
- [H 0633](#) | Shine Like Hailey Parade Safety Act. Passed House in Senate Rules Frank Sossamon: Enact the "shine like Hailey parade safety act" by amending the motor vehicle laws of the state to impose safety requirements for operation of a parade vehicle, that no less than 7 days prior to the parade they be inspected by police and fire for registration and insurance.
- [H 0661](#) | Emergency Services Peer Counseling Privilege. Passed House in Senate Rules Matthew Winslow: Expands the scope of various peer support group counselor provisions.
- [H 0707](#) | Assaults on First Responders & Social Workers. Passed House in Senate Rules Reece Pyrtle: Increases the punishment for committing an assault with a firearm against certain emergency, medical, and law enforcement personnel; to increase the punishment for committing an assault against an executive officer, a legislative officer, or a court officer and inflicting serious bodily injury; and to increase the punishment for committing an assault or making a threat against an individual employed by or acting on behalf of a county department of social services.
- [S 0053](#) | Hotel Safety Issues [Ch. SL 2023-5](#) | Vickie Sawyer: To clarify that occupants of accommodations provided by hotels, motels, or similar lodgings do not create a tenancy and are not subject to chapter 42 of the general statutes and to clarify that these occupancies are governed by the statutes relating to inns, hotels, and other transient occupancies.

- ***** S 0326** | Firefighter Cancer Ins/Alt Crim Rec Check/WC. Passed the Senate in House Rules Todd Johnson: Funds the North Carolina firefighter cancer insurance program within the department of insurance by amending the current percentage distribution of the gross premium assessment and to set retained earning limits for the volunteer safety workers' compensation fund.
- **Staying Actively Legislatively and Engagifi**
 - Right now, we have 2104 active Advocates on Engagifi. That means out of 50,000+ firefighters, just over 4%. 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 Engagifi, 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 Responder 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

➤ **Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs' Conference**

- The NCAFC along with New Hanover County Fire Rescue and Wilmington Fire Department co-hosted the Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs Conference in Wilmington, June 13 – 15, 2023. Thank you to New Hanover County Fire Rescue and Wilmington Fire Department for their outstanding job. We are proud to say that the Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs Annual Volunteer Fire Chief Award has been renamed as the Len Needham SEAFCA Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year Award. Well-deserved by Chief Needham, one of our past presidents.

➤ **Recruitment and Retention**

- Reminder that NCAFC has been awarded another Recruitment and Retention grant to assist North Carolina Volunteer Fire Departments with their initiatives on recruiting and retaining members. Chief Tracy Mosley is heading up the grant and information and the application is on the NCAFC web site. A workshop will be held at SAFRE in Raleigh next month.

➤ **NCAFC License Plate**

- North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs License plates are now available to NC Fire Officers interested in purchasing one. The information and DMV Form are located on the NCAFC web site.

➤ **SAFRE Conference Participation**

- The North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs will be participating in the Annual SAFRE Conference next month in Raleigh; we hope you will drop by our booth. We will also be hosting the annual Chief's Breakfast on Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 7:00 AM. Pre-registration is requested.

- **NCAFC Executive Development Program**
 - The North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs Executive Development Course will be held at Kernersville Fire Department the last week of September and last week of October of this year. We have a great course line-up. Registration will open this week.
- **NCAFC New Eastern Director**
 - We would like to welcome our new Eastern Carolina Firefighters Association regional director the NCAFC board, Chief Allen Wilson from Surf City Fire Department.
- **NCAFC Mid-Winter Conference**
 - The North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs Annual Mid-Winter Conference will once again be held at the Embassy Suites and Conference Center in Concord NC. The dates are January 30 – February 2, 2024. More information on registration, awards, and hotel reservations are forth coming.

NVFC – Quentin Cash

- **NPR**
 - Has just released an interesting article about the aging of the volunteer fire service, featuring NVFC Chairman Hirsch.
- **Wingspread Summit**
 - Phil Stittleburg who represented NVFC at the Wingspread Summit in WI. The Summit's focus was advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the fire and emergency services.
- **US Fire Administration**
 - Has just released the new update for “Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services” which the NVFC had major input. It can be found at: [USFA Releases New Manual on Retention and Recruitment \(fema.gov\)](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/newsroom/2023/09/20/USFA-Releases-New-Manual-on-Retention-and-Recruitment).
- **Training Summit**
 - Our Oklahoma City Training Summit sold out and went well in was in the third week of June.
- **NVFC Drinking Water**
 - NVFC recently announced and will be delivering 37 departments in North Carolina canned drinking water for VFDs for wildfire response through our partnership with Anheuser Busch (www.nvfc.org/water). They are actually working on filming two departments in NC receiving their deliveries.

➤ **Legislative Priorities**

- The board adopted some new legislative priorities. These are good to be familiar with, particularly within your own associations and as you are working with members of Congress. Please refer to the attached legislative report for details.
 - **Appropriations Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)**
 - **OVERVIEW:** The AFG program provides funding to fire departments and some non-fire-based EMS agencies to purchase equipment, training, and apparatus. The SAFER grant program provides assistance for the hiring and retention of career firefighters as well as recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. Both programs direct funding to recipients based on criteria established by the fire service and a competitive, peer-reviewed grant process. **CURRENT STATUS:** Congress provided \$360 million each for AFG and SAFER in FY 2023, same as the level provided in FY 2022. The NVFC is advocating for \$405 million for each program in FY 2024.
 - **U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)**
 - **OVERVIEW:** The USFA provides training to more than 100,000 fire and emergency services personnel each year. USFA also performs research and collects data specific to the fire service and fire service activities and educates the public on the importance of fire safety. The long-term health of USFA and its National Fire Academy (NFA) are critical to the fire service. **CURRENT STATUS:** Congress provided \$58.3 million for USFA in FY 2023, a \$5.1 million increase over the level provided in FY 2022. The NVFC is advocating for \$60.331 million for USFA's base budget, as well as \$12.5 million for data management and IT upgrades in FY2024.
 - **Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)**
 - **OVERVIEW:** VFA is a grant program that provides funding to rural fire departments on a 50/50 cost share basis to pay for training, equipment, and protective clothing to help them prepare for wildland fires. VFA is administered by the U.S. Forest Service and funds are distributed by state forestry agencies. **CURRENT STATUS:** Congress funded VFA at \$21 million in FY 2023, a \$1 million increase over the level provided in FY 2022. The NVFC is requesting \$22 million for VFA in FY 2024.
 - **National Firefighter Registry (NFR)**
 - **OVERVIEW:** In 2018, a law was enacted directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to develop and maintain a National Firefighter Registry for the purpose of collecting relevant history and occupational information that can be linked to available cancer registry data in existing State cancer registries. The purpose of the Registry is to improve our knowledge of how and why firefighters contract cancer.

➤ **Giveaway Programs**

- It's that time of year and many of our giveaway programs are in full swing and we need your help spreading the word about these valuable opportunities!
 - **CSU Scholarship**
 - Application period is open until August 17, 2023.
 - **CHEMTREC HELP**
 - Award application period is open until September 1, 2023.

➤ **To Do List**

- **Join the [National Firefighter Registry for Cancer](#):** One of the greatest things you can do as representatives of the NVFC is to lead by example. Join the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer and encourage your departments, colleagues, and friends to do the same. A direct link to the registry is [here](#).
- **Spread the Word about NVFC's Hazmat Training:** The NVFC's PHMSA grant-funded hazmat train-the-trainer program has dates scheduled through the end of 2023. Check out the calendar with registration links (updated as they are confirmed) at <https://www.nvfc.org/hazmat/#Sites>. We encourage you to attend and promote this training if you're local or able to travel. These courses are offered free of charge and are for anyone interested in learning how to teach about hazmat topics in their community (no instructional experience required). Questions? Contact Rachel at rachel@nvfc.org.

OSFM - Terry Young

➤ **New Office**

- The new office is open and operational at 1429 Rock Quarry Road. All staff returned on July 5th.

➤ **Inspections/Grants**

- 73-Fire Department Inspections were completed for the second quarter.
- Fire Department Inspection program is on a five-year cycle.
- New Pre-Survey Packet is now on the website.
- 31 Inquiries were completed for ISO in the second quarter.

➤ **Everyone Goes Home Program**

- There were 18 Everyone Goes Home Classes conducted across the state in the second quarter. Total attendance in all classes was 251 students.
- The Team qualified seven new EGH instructors on May 10th and 11th 2023. Two new advocates were added to our team in May. Retired Battalion Chief Jamie Vaughan from the Rocky Mount Fire Department and Chief Stephen Barney from the Hawtree Fire Department. We welcome them to our team.

➤ **Commission/RPD/Training**

- Important Dates:
 - Sept 7, Cert Board Meeting – Kernersville FD
 - Oct 10, Fire Rescue Commission Meeting – Location TBA
- Upcoming Classes:
 - NFA Weekend Registration is live and on the website. Nov 17-19, 2023. Online registration and payment is required no later than September 30, 2023.
 - Aug 14, FIT Fire Investigation Technician, AB Tech
 - Aug 21, Haz-Mat Technician, Greensboro FD
 - Aug 23-25, Fire Instructor III, AB-Tech Community College (seats still available)
 - Aug 28, Fire Officer III, Sampson Community College
 - Sept 18/19, Written Exam Only Q School, Rowan Cabarrus Community College
 - Oct 3, Firefighter Only Q School, Guilford Tech Community College
 - Oct 20, NC Extrication School, Sandhills Community College
 - Oct 24, Trench Qualification, Fayetteville Emergency Training Center
 - Nov 3, Technical Rope Rescue, Rowan Cabarrus Community College
 - Nov 6/7, Written Exam Only Q School, Pitt Community College

- Updates
 - TR Committee has been approved by the Fire Rescue Commission, TR update is moving forward.
 - May/June certifications issued: 2,559
- **Injury Prevention/Risk Reduction**
 - Theme for Fire Prevention Week is Cooking Fire Safety – October 8- 14 2023.
 - Please turn in your smoke detector reports to Jason Nesbit

North Carolina Fallen Firefighters' Association – Rick Wood

- **North Carolina Fallen Firefighters' Memorial**
 - The 18th Annual NC Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service was held on Saturday May 13th at the Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Nash Square in Raleigh. 22 inductees and their families were honored.
 - Due to the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial being moved to the 1st weekend in May, the NCFFF had to move our State Memorial Service to the following weekend and due to event scheduling in Downtown Raleigh, the NCFFF Board has determined that the Annual State Memorial will now be the 2nd Weekend in May.
 - Pictures and videos of the 2023 Memorial can be found on our website at www.ncff.org
- **Piedmont Regional Director**
 - Tim O'Loane, retired Fayetteville Captain, has replaced Robert Templeton as the Piedmont Regional Director.
- **SAFRE Conference**
 - Memorial Service
 - August 10, 2023 starting at 3pm in Ballroom C.
 - A candlelight service will be held at the firefighters' memorial in Nash Square at 8:00 pm.
 - If it is raining, Chaplain Dana McKim will hold the service under the awning across the street at the entrance to Raleigh City Hall.
 - Informational Session
 - NCFFF Board Members will present an informational session on Friday August 11th starting at 10am in room 205 at the Convention Center. The purpose of this session is to pass on information on the Mission of the Foundation, who makes up the Foundation and ways fire departments, organizations and others can help.
 - Expo
 - NCFFF will have our merchandise booth set up during the SAFRE Expo and also a second booth on information about the Foundation and the NCFFF Volunteer Logistical Support Team.
- **2023 NCFFF Executive Board of Directors**
 - Rick Fleming, President firedoc127@yahoo.com (704)754-7257
 - Mike Brown, 1st Vice President, michael.brown@smithfield-nc.com (252)450-5876
 - Rick Wood, 2nd Vice President, richmondwood1966@gmail.com (828)674-1899
 - Kathy Guyer-Martin, Secretary, kathy.guyermartin@gmail.com (336)416-1752
 - Lisa Welch, Treasurer, vermontgirl1962@gmail.com (704)796-5862
 - Kevin Davis, Marketing Director, kevindavis0139@gmail.com (910)358-1497
 - Dana McKim, Chaplain, Dana.McKim@ncfff.org (336)817-2676

➤ **2023 Board Members**

- Jeff Harkey , Board Member/PIO, cfp700@carolinafirepage.com (919) 449-5148
- Glen Coley , NCFS rep. glen.coley@ncagr.gov (336)302-0661
- Mike Williams, OSFM rep. mike.williams@ncdoi.gov (919)368-0643
- Adam Moore, Piper Liaison, dochalliday8580@gmail.com (336)590-2009
- Bryan Southard, Board Member yadkinconcretefinishing@gmail.com (336)469-5421
- Don Hussey, Board Member, dhussey@nc.rr.com (919)795-8287

➤ **2023 Regional Directors**

- David Swain, Piedmont Director dfd1339@yahoo.com (919) 818-4635
- Tim O’Loane Piedmont Director toloane@aol.com (910)987-3584
- Bob Benfield Western Director, rben333@aol.com (828)217-1416
- Dennis Mathney Western Director dgmathney@bellsouth.net (828)287-6854
- Jeffrey Shaw Eastern Director, jt.shaw@yahoo.com (252)532-2648
- Kevin McDonald, Eastern Director, KMcDonald@nhcgov.com (910)617-4423

➤ **Email Contact**

- NCFFF Board Group email board@ncfff.org
- Please feel free to reach out and contact any of the Foundation Board members if you have questions, need assistance with funeral or memorial service planning.

➤ **NCFFF Board Meetings**

- August, SAFRE Conference, Raleigh.
- September, Verona FD, Onslow County.
- October, NC State Fair Booth, Raleigh.
- November, Annual Meeting Cleveland FD, Cleveland NC.

North Carolina Emergency Management – Larry Hembree

➤ **Swift Water Deployment – Vermont**

- We are grateful to our partners in Buncombe County, City of Greensboro, and City of Charlotte for being willing to deploy on short notice to the State of Vermont to support catastrophic flooding in their state.
- The teams, along with two NCEM employees, traveled overnight Sunday to the impacted area and began missions immediately upon arrival. The teams continue to stay engaged and we are in communication with the State of Vermont on additional on ongoing needs.
- Thank you to those who deployed and also to those resources who remained in North Carolina ensuring we are protected here, as some flooding may be expected in NC this weekend.

➤ **State Animal and Agricultural Response Team Hurricane Preparedness Meeting**

- North Carolina Department of Agriculture Emergency Program Division cordially invites you to attend the upcoming Hurricane Preparedness Meeting hosted by the North Carolina State Animal and Agricultural Response Team ([NC SART](#)).
- This meeting provides a unique opportunity for all stakeholders with jurisdictional authority or an interest in supporting animals and the agriculture community during disaster situations. The meeting will take place on Tuesday, 25 July 2023 from 9:00 – 11:30 am at the Steve Troxler Agricultural Sciences Center located in Raleigh at 4400 Reedy Creek Rd (Training Room). A virtual option will be provided using MS Teams. [Please register using this link.](#)

➤ **North Carolina House Bill 814 – Emergency Management Modifications**

- Governor Cooper signed [House Bill 814](#), Emergency Management Modifications into law after passing unanimously in the General Assembly.
- This bill provides a number of technical corrections to GS 166a and other statutes to support the efficient and effective work of the Division.
- We are grateful to the General Assembly and Governor for their ongoing support of the Emergency Management program in North Carolina and will work with our stakeholder to implement many of the modifications.

➤ **Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop Dates Announced**

- To build off the lessons learned from last year's Branch based IPPWs, NCEM is pleased to announce six regionally based integrated preparedness planning workshops in September and looks forward to your participation.
- Each IPPW will collaboratively discuss training, exercise, and planning needs in your communities to build the next year's training and exercise plan.
- Please register for an IPPW that meets your schedule at the links below:
 - **EBO: 12 September**
 - Sampson County Emergency Services
 - 13:00-15:00: [IPPW](#)
 - **EBO: 15 September**
 - Bertie County NC Cooperative Extension
 - 10:00-12:00: [IPPW](#)
 - **CBO: 14 September**
 - GTCC Guilford County
 - 13:00-15:00: [IPPW](#)
 - **CBO: 20 September**
 - Nash Community College
 - 13:00-15:00: [IPPW](#)
 - **WBO: 5 September**
 - Catawba Valley Community College
 - 10:00-12:00: [IPPW](#)
 - **WBO: 19 September**
 - McDowell County Emergency Services
 - 13:00-15:00: [IPPW](#)

➤ **Community Awareness Briefings**

- Please mark your calendar for upcoming Community Awareness Briefings (CAB), provided by the DHS Office of Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3), in collaboration with North Carolina Emergency Management.
- CAB briefings are currently scheduled for 3 August 2023 in Statesville, and 28 September 2023 in Asheboro.
- The CAB is a mini-training session that provides community stakeholders a framework to decrease the risk of targeted violence and terrorism by establishing and expanding local prevention networks.
- CP3 uses a public health-informed approach to targeted violence and terrorism prevention; and administering the TVTP Grant Program (more than \$50 million since 2020) to state, local, and tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations on an annual basis.
- Registration is open in [TERMS](#) for Community Awareness Briefings (CAB) in Statesville and Asheboro, and other professional development training on targeted violence and terrorism prevention. Training availability is limited. Please register to attend as soon as possible.

- **FEMA Announces Training Grants on Rural Community Preparedness**
 - FEMA released the funding notice for \$6 million in competitive grants as part of the Fiscal Year 2023 Homeland Security National Training Program, Competitive Continuing Training Grants to support and target training solutions for state, local, tribal and territorial partners.
 - The funding notice is posted at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Grants will be available to applicants through a competitive process to help improve the nation's ability to respond to and recover from all-hazards events through training. Applications are welcome from state, local, tribal and territorial governments, along with eligible non-profit organizations to include colleges and universities.
 - This year, program focus areas consist of select priority areas with associated emerging threats and gaps that align with strategic priorities. Recipients are expected to incorporate strategic priorities into their training curriculum and training delivery funded through the program to build capability across the nation. For the first time in history of the program, FEMA selected a stand-alone focus area to "Build Tribal Capacities to Improve Readiness and Resilience," as well as another focus area in "Rural Preparedness for Equitable Outcomes."
 - Local governments, tribes and qualified non-profit organizations can apply directly to DHS/FEMA for this grant, and the application period closes on 7 August 2023 at 5p.m.
 - 7. 2023

- **Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement Template**
 - North Carolina Emergency Management has updated the North Carolina Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement to provide additional flexibility for adopting jurisdictions when there is a need to share resources across jurisdictional boundaries. Please see the attached memo for more information.
 - Specifically, the agreement will allow for resource sharing without the requirement of a local State of Emergency declaration. Jurisdictions are encouraged to promulgate the updated Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement to provide the additional flexibilities allowed in the revised template. Previously signed agreements remain in place and are available to support resource sharing during locally declared States of Emergency.
 - The template for the updated version of the Statewide Mutual Aid agreement can be found [online](#). If your jurisdiction intends to utilize the updated template, you can find instructions to initiate the agreement [online](#). Please direct any questions or comments to Tiffany Jackson, NCEM Mutual Aid Coordinator, at tiffany.jackson@ncdps.gov or to your assigned NCEM Area Coordinator.

North Carolina Fire and Life Safety – Jeannie Wood

- Western Meeting
 - August 16, 2023
 - Asheville Fire Department

- SAFRE Conference
 - Fire and Life Safety will have a booth at the NCSFA SAFRE Conference.
 - State Council Meeting
 - August 9, 2023
 - Raleigh Convention Center Room 204

➤ Annual Conference

- February 28 – March 1, 2023
 - Great Wolf Lodge in Concord
 - More Information can be found at www.ncosfm.gov.
 - Wanting to recognize past members at conference. If you know of anyone or you yourself is a past member please share their names so that an invitation can be sent.

19:58- Old Business

1. Nominating Committee Report For 2024 WNCAF Officers

- Past-President Robert Griffin reported the nominations for the 2024 WNCAF Officers that are up for election at the October 2023 meeting.
 - 2nd Vice President. One nomination, Trevor Key – Collettsville Fire Department.
 - Mountain Region Director. One nomination, Garrett Huffman – Alexander County Fire Marshal's Office

20:00 - New Business

1. Meeting Dates For 2024

- January 17, 2024: Mooresville Fire Department (Iredell County)
- April 17, 2024: Millers Creek Fire Department (Wilkes County)
- July 17, 2024: Waynesville Fire Department (Haywood County)
- October 16, 2024: Bills Creek Fire Department (Rutherford County)
- Meeting locations for 2025 have been filled, if any department would like to host a meeting of the association in 2026, please reach out to 2nd VP Brian Buchanan at firemedic1138@aol.com.

2. Annual Awards Due by November 17, 2023

- Nominations for the WNCAF Fire Chief and Firefighter of the Year awards are due no later than Friday, November 17, 2023.
- The WNCAF awards both a volunteer and career fire chief of the year as well as both a volunteer and career firefighter/company officer of the year.
- Nomination forms are located on the website at www.wncaff.com.

3. Annual Scholarships

- The WNCAF awards four annual scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 dollars. A discussion was held about increasing the amount by \$500 dollars per scholarship. This would increase the four annual scholarships to \$2,000 dollars per scholarship.
- In accordance with the bylaws of the association the executive board can make a recommendation to increase the number of scholarships given based on the financial status of the association. This recommendation must go to the association for approval. Joey Webb moved seconded by Quentin Cash to increase each annual scholarship from \$1,500 dollars to \$2,000 dollars. Motion Passed.

4. Next Meeting

- October 18, 2023
- Mills River Fire Department
5400 Boylston Highway
Mills River, NC 28759

Meeting adjourned at 20:15

Submitted: Secretary Anthony Penland