

Arkansas Fire Protection Services Board

Minutes from December 12, 2012

Meeting held at Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

Members Present:

Larry Brewer	JP Jordan	Mike Scrima
Stacey Caplener	David Kirkpatrick	Jim Sierzchula
Shane Dallas	Rob Medford	Fred Taylor
Bob Davis	Chad Mosby	Jim Tolewitzke
Chris Jones	Rachel Nix	

Members Absent:

David Maxwell

Ex Officio/Reporting Guests:

Kendell Snyder, ADEM	John Blackburn, AFC	Richard Drilling, DFA
Amanda Gibson, Attorney General's Office		

Meeting called to order by Chairman JP Jordan. Kendell Snyder introduced several Arkansas Department of Emergency Management staff in attendance.

Chairman Jordan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. **MOTION:** to approve the minutes was made by Chris Jones. Second was made by Larry Brewer. Motion was approved.

DFA REPORT:

Richard Drilling reported that they are in the process of sorting and sending out all the year's checks. There was almost \$12 million collected this year and a little more than that was distributed because of fire department's getting certified and receiving previous funds. We should finish the year under \$1 million in the account. Drilling said thanks should be given to Kendell Snyder for helping so many fire departments get Act 833 funds that they have not received in a while.

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

Kendell Snyder reported that 891 fire departments were certified this year, almost 89% certified. This is up from last year. Miller County has successfully re-organized into nine separate fire departments. They have passed a Quorum Court resolution and submitted their certification applications. All funds issued to Miller County VFD have been accounted for. And site visits to these departments are scheduled for next week. Also, Snyder has made site visits to 6 other fire departments that have not been certified in several years and have become certified this year. Snyder informed the Board of several other activities he has been involved in recently to assist fire departments across the State. He advised the Board that Richard Drilling and he have been named in a lawsuit-Beebe vs. White County Quorum Court over distribution on Act 833 funds. Snyder advised that they had been assigned counsel and were working to remove them from the suit because neither is involved in setting County distribution schedules, which is the focus of the lawsuit. Snyder will keep the Board updated on this matter. And he announced the 2012 goals for the Fire Service Director's office. Lastly, Snyder informed the Board that Lodi Fire Department submitted a late application and requested that he ask the Board to consider their application. There was discussion about this issue from previous instances. Several members expressed concern about the need for the funding but the general consensus was that a president

can not be set of disregarding the program deadline. **MOTION:** to not approve this application due it being received after the program deadline by Jim Tolewitzke. Second was made by Stacey Caplener. Motion was approved.

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION:

John Blackburn reported on 3 issues: 1) the VFA grants have been awarded and AFC is working on the paperwork and sending out the reimbursement checks, 2) from Sept-Nov, the Federal Excess vehicle program has placed 39 vehicles, valued at \$2.566 million, and 3) during Sept-Nov, the 8 hour wild land course was taught in 18 classes, with 118 departments represented.

ARKANSAS FIRE TRAINING ACADEMY:

Director Rachel Nix informed the Board that there were 45 students enrolled in the Firefighter Standards school in January 2012, 40 students in Oct 2012, 50 students in January 2013 and already 38 students in the March 2013 school. The AFTA teaches 4 EMT classes each year, with a maximum of 20 students per class. Around November 7, SAU-Magnolia President Rankin met with Director Nix and several others and advised them that the AFTA Director would report to him directly now and not the SAU-Tech Chancellor Dr. Lampkin. There would be minimal involvement between the AFTA and SAU Tech. Nix advised that Dr. Rankin is working hard to improve the relations between the AFTA and the SAU system. He is working to heal the relationship. Dr. Rankin is working to improve the adjunct trainer process and working to improve recruitment of instructors by working with LOPFI to allow interested instructors to remain on the LOPFI retirement system and not start over with their retirement. Chad Mosby added that SAU will pay the matching employer fees and will not receive insurance turn-back funds. Bobby Davis asked the Director if an increase in Canadians is expected? Nix replied that they try to budget for 26 Canadian students a year but have not gotten to that number yet. And it is the AFTA policy that an Arkansas firefighter will not be denied a spot because of Canadian students. There is also discussion of hosting an all Canadian class. A Canadian student pays roughly \$5600.00 each to attend the AFTA's Firefighter Standard school. And in the future, the financial report that the Board receives will come from AFTA.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman Jordan reported that we have the issue of firefighter physicals to clear candidates for attending the AFTA's Firefighter Standards school. He advised that the AFTA will put together a proposal of what the AFTA would like to implement before the next meeting. This issue is because of a NIOSH recommendation.

Chris Jones asked for input into the type of physicals that are required by the SAFER grant program. Several members advised that you must follow the NFPA 1583 standard and it is very costly and there are limited physicians that perform this type of in depth physical.

Shane Dallas asked Director Nix about the status of increasing the Firefighter Standards school to 9 weeks. Nix advised that an increase in the length of the school would decrease the number of offerings that could be done each year and we already have more students than spaces. Director Nix has asked her staff to show that every minute is being utilized in the 8 week program before determining the need to ask to extend the program. Dallas also asked about the new curriculum changes at the Fire Academy. Nix advised that Delmar made a lot of promises but the AFTA never got what they asked for with the Delmar program. And Delmar has went out of business. IFSTA has a new version coming out after the first of the year and the AFTA is looking at moving back to the IFSTA curriculum then. If a department is currently using the Delmar program, they can continue on with it to test out. They do not have to change or start over with the IFSTA material. Nix said that they inherited the module-style class format that has been used for years. In the new IFSTA curriculum, the

training would be more chapter-based classes, which will be easier to teach during drill meetings or for shift training due to some being in shorter time periods. Also, the new curriculum will be developed for a student to complete the Firefighter I component and then take the FFI test, if they so choose. And then the student can complete the Firefighter II component and take the FFII test, if they so choose.

NEW BUSINESS:

Kendell Snyder presented the 2013 Act 833 Funding Guidance and Requirements packet with several improvements, for the Board to review. Snyder also advised that an on-line version of the forms is one of his goals for the coming year. He said forms that would auto-populate the last years carry over amounts would be helpful to many departments.

Chad Mosby informed the Board that there could be a move to making the first responder or Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) a certified course from the Arkansas Department of Health. And the course could be going from a 40 to an 80 hour course. He said that this Board should continue to monitor this change because most of the first responders in Arkansas are firefighters.

Chairman Jordan said it was time to set meeting dates and locations for 2013. The scheduled dates are 03/13/2013, 06/27/2013, 09/11/2013 and 12/11/2013. **MOTION:** to move the 09/11/2013 meeting to 09/04/2013 because of possible remembrance ceremony conflicts made by Mike Scrima. Seconded by Stacey Caplener. Motion was approved. The 2013 meeting dates and locations are:

03/20/2013 at ADEM, North Little Rock

06/27/2013 at Hot Springs Convention Center, Hot Springs

09/04/2013 at AFTA, Camden

12/11/2013 at ADEM, North Little Rock

Chairman Jordan announced it was time for the election of Board officers. The current officers were nominated and approved to serve for 2013. The 2013 AFPSB officers:

Chairman JP Jordan

Vice-Chairman David Kirkpatrick

Secretary Shane Dallas

Jim Sierzchula introduced the new President of the Arkansas Rural and Volunteer Firefighters Association, Mr. Jimmy Sullivan.

Miller County officials thanked the Board, Kendell Snyder, Director Rachel Nix and Richard Drilling in helping them through this re-organization process and in getting their Act 833 funding.

Stacey Caplener made **MOTION:** To adjourn meeting. Second was made by Larry Brewer.