



STATE OF ARKANSAS
FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES BOARD
 June 25, 2015 Minutes



Meeting held at Hot Springs Convention Center (Room 206) in Hot Springs, AR.

Members Present:

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| o John Blackburn, AFC | o David Dayringer, AAFC | o Chad Mosby, APFF |
| o Larry Brewer, ASFFA | o Tim Grimes, APFF | o Rachel Nix, AFTA (ex officio) |
| o Stacey Caplener, AAFC | o JP Jordan, AAFC | o Tim Stuckey, AAFC |
| o Michael Cossey, APFF | o Sheila Magness, ARVFA | o Jimmy Sullivent, ARVFA |
| o Shane Dallas, ASFFA | o Rob Medford, APFF | o Jim Tolewitzke, ASFFA |

Members Absent:

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| o Chris Jones, ASFFA | o David Maxwell, ADEM (ex officio) | o Lindsey Williams, AFMO (ex officio) |
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Reporting Guests:

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| o Kendell Snyder
ADEM State Fire Service Coordinator | o Sara Farris
Assistant Attorney General |
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Meeting called to order by Chairman JP Jordan at 10:00 am.

March 2015 Minutes

Motion to approve March 10, 2015, minutes as presented was made by Rob Medford and seconded by Larry Brewer. Motion was approved.

Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration Report:

Kendell Snyder, State Fire Service Coordinator, presented the DFA report in the absence of Richard Drilling, who was unable to attend the meeting. Coordinator Snyder reported that Howard Ball, who had been selected to replace Mr. Drilling at the end of the fiscal year, had died unexpectedly on June 15.

Coordinator Snyder reported that the DFA had distributed \$3,526,349.66 during the first two quarters of 2015. He also reported that the Act 1314 fund was down to approximately \$12,000 from an original total of \$3 million. Act 1314 of 2007 allocated money for fire departments for the purposes of maintenance and general operations, firefighting training expenses, purchase of firefighting equipment, and other expenses necessary to provide firefighting protection.

Arkansas Department of Emergency Management Report:

Coordinator Snyder reported that 425 fire departments had been certified. He also reported that he had been able to visit several chiefs meetings and that he had a busy legislative session. He was used as a subject matter expert during the session.

Coordinator Snyder reported that the chief of a department in Crittenden County is facing possible charges due to money mismanagement. It is unknown if the money involved is from Act 833, but that should be revealed as part of the criminal investigation.

It was also reported that the local prosecutor in Columbia County has received the investigative file pertaining to discrepancies found in the accounts of the McNeil Rural Fire Department. This case involves an account with Act 833 money. The Act 833 account was emptied of money but submitted invoices went unpaid. No criminal charges have been filed.

Coordinator Snyder stayed that there is no requirement for department's to maintain a separate Act 833 account or to use two-signature checks. Assistant Attorney General Sara Farris will research the legality of such requirements.

The Board discussed the possibility of requiring audits, bank statements or other proof of Act 833 balances from fire departments with large sums of carryover money without taking any action.

Coordinator Snyder distributed copies of a letter that had been sent to county judges, collectors & clerks from Mark Whitmore of the Arkansas Association of Counties. The letter outlines an alternative means for rural fire departments to collect fire dues via property tax statements without the need for a special election.

Lastly, it was reported that ADEM's information technology staff was very close to completing an online Act 833 application that would be made available through the ADEM web site.

Arkansas Forestry Commission Report:

John Blackburn, Rural Fire Protection Administrator, presented his report on property and equipment acquired from federal surplus and distributed to fire departments in the state. In the fiscal year ending June 30, the Commission had distributed 94 vehicles with a value of \$12,123,355 to Arkansas fire departments. As of June 25, the Commission had taught 78 wildland firefighting courses to more than 1,700 students from 682 fire departments during the fiscal year.

Administrator Blackburn said that the Commission was undergoing a standard review from the US Forest Service. Their last review was in 2007. The Forest Service conducted a site visit and inspected a percentage of the inventory kept on hand. A final report has not been issued but the reviewers seemed well-pleased in the agency's performance.

Arkansas Fire Training Academy Report:

Rachel Nix, Arkansas Fire Training Academy Director, reported that the International Fire Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) had conducted a site visit in the second quarter of the calendar year. She reported that the visit went well. The reviewers did make some recommendations for one or two programs, which the AFTA staff will implement.

Director Nix reported that Dr. Trey Berry will become the new president of Southern Arkansas University on July 1. He replaces Dr. David F. Rankin, who is retiring. It is hoped Dr. Berry will be able to attend the September AFPSB meeting on the fire academy campus in Camden.

Director Nix reported that during calendar year 2014, Arkansas fire departments responded to 204,749 incidents which were reported to and processed by the fire academy via the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

Director Nix introduced Wade Marshal of the Arkansas Professional Fire Fighters, who explained the need to determine and track the physical fitness of Firefighter Standards students and determine how it relates to their success in the fire academy. The academy plans to record students' performance in push-ups, crunches & a 1.5 mile run at the beginning of the Firefighter Standards course and compare it to their success or failure in the program.

Unfinished Business:

UNIVERSAL REIMBURSEMENT FORM – On June 10, Chairman Jordan and Coordinator Snyder appeared before the Arkansas Legislative Council. The reimbursement form and associated rules were approved. The form was filed with the Secretary of State's office. It will be available for use on July 25. The plan is to place the form on the ADEM web site and distribute it to all county fire coordinators.

New Business:

TEXT NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS – Text notification systems have been an approved expenditure for Act 833 money. Some concern has been expressed about continuing to pay for such systems because ISO does not approve them as a primary alerting & notification system. After discussion on the issue, Tim Stuckey moved that the board continue to allow Act 833 money to be used for such systems. Sheila Magness second the motion, which was approved.

TONTITOWN CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT – Coordinator Snyder reported that the City of Tontitown has disbanded their municipal fire department and once again contracted for service with the Tontitown Area Fire Department. Although no longer in existence, city fire department still has a NFIRS number and maintains a share of Act 833 money in Washington County although they have not filed an Act 833 application. Coordinator Snyder plans to meet with officials in Washington County on this matter. No action was required or taken from the board.

ACT 833 MONEY FOR SEARCH & RESCUE TRAINING – Fred Mullins, Franklin County Fire Coordinator, spoke to the board about possibly using Act 833 money for search & rescue training. He stated that rural fire departments are often used for search & rescue missions and availability of grants for training had diminished. Coordinator Mullins stated that the cost of a 16-hour class for 30 people was between \$2,100-\$2,500. There was discussion by the board that Act 833 money could only be spent on firefighting-specific training and equipment. Coordinator Mullins asked the board for their individual support to help find a funding source for search & rescue training.

Adjournment:

Rob Medford moved to adjourn the meeting. Shane Dallas seconded the motion, which passed unanimously at 11:15 am.