

Louisiana Fire and Emergency Training Commission

Meeting Minutes – 4/12/23

Monday, April 24, 2023 @ 3:00pm
LFCA Conference, Hilton Garden Inn Lafayette/Cajundome
2350 W Congress St., Lafayette, LA 70506
(337)291-1977

Call to Order

Pledge and Prayer

Roll Call

| <u>COMMISSION MEMBER</u> | <u>PRESENT</u> | <u>ABSENT</u> | <u>ZOOM</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| Bryan Adams | X | | |
| Butch Browning | | X | |
| Brandon Davis | | X | |
| Russell Di Salvo | X | | |
| Stephen Guidroz | X | | |
| Ken Himel | X | | |
| Matt Lee | | X | |
| Brian Lindberg | | X | |
| Chad Major | X | | |
| Louis Romero | X | | |
| Dan Wallis | | X | |

Motion: Motion was made to adopt the minutes from the February 28, 2023 meeting with no objections.

Deputy Superintendent's Report:

Chief Stone stated that Chief Wallis was at the National Fire Academy and that Ken Fowler was on annual leave. He reported that the 3000 gallon per minute pump has successfully been moved from Pine Country to get serviced and tested then will be moved to FETA. Holiday Village Fire Department offered to donate a gas prop to FETA, however, we cannot accept donations, we have offered them \$5,000.00 for the mobile prop. The recruit dorm is moving forward, we now have a modern projector in classroom 5, and will move forward with changing out equipment in classroom 1. Repairs are complete to our breathing apparatus compressor.

Municipal Report:

Chief Stone gave the Municipal report in Chief Fowler's absence, he reported on the weekend fire school, and that the first two (2) purchases were made with the

2022 AFG grant funds. We will be adding more props, a new EMS cart and bunker gear with the 2023 grant. Chief Stone added that we will be close to the \$3,000,000.00 needed for the self-generated revenue. He also reported that Fire Officer IV is still under review with IFSAC, also, we will be submitting vehicle extrication awareness, operations and technician to IFSAC for approval. We have had repairs and will have a few more done to the ModX. He also stated that the class numbers are continuing to increase as well as the FETA cert class passing rates.

- Russell DiSalvo asked what kind of funding is the AFG grant. Chief Stone answered that it is just under \$500,000.00 and that we have to do a 10% match, but because some of the prices are higher now our match will be more than the 10%.
- Louis Romero said that he is having a lot of people asking about an equipment show, Chief Stone said that we are going to try to have an equipment show for January, 2024.

Industrial Report:

Sam Colon gave the February, 2023 Industrial Report, highlighting that there were 356 students, 264 class hours. He stated that we are getting more HazMat equipment to improve training, and are having instructors go to more training to bring back to FETA what they learn. Fire Brigade Team Leader class is being requested more, we are in the process of making 1081 more industrial related, Industrial Incident Safety Officer is another class that is different than municipal. He states that we are also getting request from out of state clients for training at FETA. Sam explained how we are in the process of reorganizing the field for training to better suit different classes going on at the same time. A power point will be ready for the next Commission Meeting to explain this more.

- Bryan Adams asked where we were with the certification of the props. Sam stated that the props are all up and running, all are certified.
- Chief Stone stated that we have some industry willing to sponsor or build new props. He stated that if we can get the props away from the municipal side of field, we will not have a problem, industry and/or municipal classes needing the same prop at the same time.
- Chad Major wanted to know if a plant sponsors a prop, what will they expect in return, Chief Stone guesses that they may expect to teach their people without being charged.
- Chief Stone mentioned that next month FETA is hosting the OSHA practical side of the class on Trench Rescue, we are purchasing the materials to build the trenches for the training, there will be 100 students.

- Chief Stone also said that Trans Care has also contacted us regarding train derailments, we will get with BRAMAS to see if they will help sponsor that training.

Certification Report:

Steve Billman gave his year to date and February 2023 reports. He explained that the LSU system is up and running for now, it had been down. He spoke with OTS, they advised that the LSU system is very old and will need a bridge until a permanent system is put in place. He also stated that a copy of a proposal regarding the 90-day testing wait period went to each commission member. Steve did run the proposal by CAC for approval, but they do not meet until the first week of May to actually vote on it.

THE NEW PROPOSAL: *After a 2nd attempt at a test and fail, wait 15 days, supply documentation from their AHJ stating that they studied the material then they can have a 3rd test, after this point the policy will state that you do not get another attempt until proof of a formal class.*

- Russell DiSalvo asked what is meant by formal class, is that a 40-hour class? Steve explained that it is however, the department Training Officer/Chief will set up the class, as long as the Training Officer/Chief confirms that the test taker has attended a class, that is all that we will require.
- Chief Stone asked Steve to let the Commission know that OTS has assigned us a project manager for our computer system, and that he is operating on Windows 7. Steve let them know that the project manager said that it is pretty urgent to get the certification system bridged/updated.
- Chad Major asked the difference between the current policy and the proposed testing policy. Steve explained that the difference is that currently when someone is unsuccessful on a second attempt, they have to wait 90 days to start the testing cycle all over again. We are proposing to add a third attempt after 15 days of the second failure, if you fail a third time you will not be allowed challenge the test and you will have to have proof that you sat in a class before you can test again. Chad also wanted to know if this will apply to every certification level. Steven explained that it will other than a disclaimer for the FETA Recruit Academy, they will continue to follow the original policy of 2 fails and you are out of the class.

Finance Report:

Chief Stone reported that we are in the process of sending more invoices out. He then gave the February, 2023 report. He stated that January through March, 2023,

not including the last week and a half of March, we are owed \$894,370.00 from industry, those numbers are not reflected on the February report, it is only actual deposits. Chief Stone stated that Work Force Development gave us our first reimbursement check for \$30,950.00. There is an approval chain to go through before we can reimburse the students, Work Force Development wants to continue with this program in the future.

Commission's Report:

He said that Legislature starts on April 10.

Old Business:

Chief Stone said that Registration is moving forward, Dina has moved to Emergency Services and that Chief Wallace has secured \$850,000.00 for new equipment for USAR and Emergency Services. He said that the manufacturer of the registration system has already billed us \$53,000.00 for the first 2 ½ months of support, and that Major Carter has given the approval to pay that.

- Chad Major said that he will be asked, if this is the same system that has been being created all this time? Chief Stone responded that it is. Chad asked about the off the shelf system that had been mentioned in previous meetings, Chief Stone let him know that that will be for Certification, the one that we are being charged for is only Phase I for Registration. We have been given a Project Manager, Nick, from OTS to help with the Certification system and to back up the current Certification system weekly because it is so old. Nick is also going to help with a bridge system for Certification until a permanent system is ready.
- Louis Romero said that he has been receiving phone calls about the new system's test emails going out to different departments, the emails have test invoices attached but do not specify to those getting them that they are ONLY a test. Chief Stone answered that those receiving the test emails should not pay them. Louis also said that these test emails have a phone number on them that says to call if you have questions, that number doesn't work. Chief Stone asked Samantha to check on that number.
- Chad Major wanted to know the timeline on DBS, Bryan Adams said that the original answer was July, August. Chief Stone is concerned that DBS is not training us. Chad asked if it specifies in the contract that we should receive training, Major Carter would know that information but is so busy training across the state.
- Ken Himel asked if the Registration software is totally different from the Certification software? Chief Stone explained that it is but that they should be able to communicate with each other. Ken commented that they just redid all of their record management system with three

systems that all work together, and is that what FETA's goal is. Chief Stone stated that that was the original goal for phase I and II, but that there are several other programs out there that do what Certification needs and are much cheaper than the \$1.2 million. In fact, ACADIS is already being used by the State Police Academy and is already in the DPS system and is worth looking at.

- Chad Major added that at a meeting with some folks at the capital recently, FETA's system was brought up, the direction that the state wants to go in is to have every state entity's technology able to communicate with each other rather than every entity having their own. The Legislature wants to stick with DBS, even though there are other systems out there, this one would be the one that every state entity will use.
- Bryan Adams asked why can't FETA take a donation and if FETA has asked for any money from Capital Outlay? Chief Stone replied that Chief Wallis told him that DPS is not allowed to take donations and that the only money asked for was for USAR equipment.
- Russell DiSalvo agrees that the system that State Police is using should work for FETA so that the systems can communicate with each other. Chief Stone explained that that is the system that we are looking at for the bridge system for Certification but not Registration. The DBS IMS system Phase I is what we will use for Registration and that it may be another year before all of our data is input in the system. Chad commented that if our contract does not specify that DBS enters our data, we should hire student workers.
- Louis Romero asked Chief Stone where Civil Service is with all of the employee classifications? He explained that it is in progress, job descriptions are still being formulated to submit to civil service, none of FETA's employees are classified as of yet.
- Louis also wanted to know how many districts still do not have managers, Chief Stone answered, there will be 2 managers for the whole state, Nick Palmer and TK Devall. The state will be broken up into two areas, the northern part and the southern part. Louis stated that before there were 7 regions and that in the last 3 to 4 years, region 4 has not had a manager. Chief Stone said that we are now trying to get resumes for an instructor in the western part of the state so that we can have a full time instructor there. All of the instructors will be classified with job titles, Deputy Fire Marshals. This title allows us to keep the instructors and their current salary as they are, Civil Service's classified Instructor's salaries are much lower than we currently pay ours. Chief Stone also stated that Chief Cooper is working with the Civil Service Commission regarding employees that have applied for their current jobs but do not qualify, per Civil Service, for them. Chief Cooper is also working on the Hazardous

Duty Retirement System. He also mentioned that we recently went through a payroll audit and are working on corrections found in the audit. He announced that we will now have two timekeepers, Christy Abshire and Tracey Ramirez.

New Business:

Chad Major stated that he will talk to Dan and LJ, if there is some one-time money that is needed, now is the time to get it from the Legislature. He will go and ask for the money, he just needs to know what we need, how much of it and the cost. The Legislature has a lot of money available and now is the time to ask for it, \$1,000,000.00 is a drop in the bucket for what they have. There is well north of a billion dollars just sitting there, Chad knows that FETA has needs, he just needs to know what they are? Chief Stone said that we need a one story burn building, the one that caught on fire was never replaced. Chad said why not have a multi-story burn building, but he needs to know exactly how much, because of a move for FETA already being talked about it will need to be mobile, we will not want to leave those kind of assets at the present location. Chief Stone will get with Ken Fowler for more specifics on the burn building. Chad said he needs this information immediately. Chad also said that at the leadership meeting tomorrow, Friday, March 31, 1013, he needs a priority list, with breakdowns of items, quantity, cost and reasons.

Next Meeting Date:

May 16, 2023 @ 10:00am @ FETA

Motion: Motion was made to adjourn. it was seconded.

Future 2023 Meeting Dates:

May 16, 2023 @ 10:00am at FETA

Adjourn:

4/24/2023 Minutes Approved

Chad Majors