

Louisiana Fire & Emergency Training Academy Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: July 25, 2024

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Crowne Plaza (Chairman’s Library) 4728 Constitution Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70808

1. Call to Order/ Roll Call Roll call - 10:02 AM

<u>COMMISSION MEMBER</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>ZOOM</u>
Bryan Adams	x		
Michael Kimble	x		
Brandon Davis			x
Russell Di Salvo	x		
Stephen Guidroz	x		
Ken Himel		x	
Matt Lee		x	
Brian Lindberg	x		
Chad Major	x		
Tracey Normand	x		
Louis Romero		x	

2. Meeting Prayer and Pledge

3. Adopt Meeting Minutes from June 27, 2024. The minutes from last month’s meeting were adopted with no objections.

4. Administrative Report:

- a. **Superintendent:** Chief Woody began with an update from the Fire Academy and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to represent the team. He and others from the fire marshal's office attended meetings in the Northwest part of the state to gather information and discuss the future of the Academy, which resulted in valuable feedback and ideas. Additionally, Deputy Superintendent Kleinpeter traveled to LSUE to present a National Fire Academy certificate, recognizing their commitment to delivering curriculum using the FESHE (Fire Emergency Services Higher Education) model, which aligns with the Academy's curriculum to translate for college credit. This recognition will soon be featured on social media.

We recently hosted students from the Governor's Fellowship Program, giving them an overview of the Academy's programs, a campus tour, and basic hands-on skills to familiarize them with what we do.

The high school program is also gaining popularity, with five new programs set to start in the fall. This initiative is expected to benefit both municipalities and volunteer firefighters. During the meeting, a question was raised regarding the minimum age requirement for high school students

participating in the program. It was clarified that students can participate in skills training, except for the live burn component of Firefighter I, which is reserved for students aged 17 and older. Other non-live fire skills, such as hose dragging and ladder climbing, are encouraged for younger students to help them build experience toward their future careers.

- b. **Academy Operations:** Chief Martin expressed gratitude for serving alongside the superintendent and the team. He introduced Ms. Laurie Johnson, who recently transferred from OSFM and joined the FETA certification team. Laurie is currently undergoing internal training and will eventually take on the role of registrar and provide training coordinator support.

Chief Martin also reported that preparations have begun for the accreditation site visits scheduled for 2025. The team and the superintendent are actively involved in updating and refining certification and accreditation policies to ensure readiness and address any deficiencies.

A question was raised about whether departments would receive a template or guidance to prepare for site visits. It was clarified that the current focus is on accreditation policies for the certification and accreditation process, which will be made public once finalized. The goal is to make the process transparent and accessible.

We welcomed six current instructors into the test proctoring pool. Efforts are ongoing to refine certification and accreditation modules to improve workflow efficiency for both the department and its customers. Additionally, the team is standardizing the curriculum to ensure consistency and alignment with test materials.

Maintenance and grounds projects are underway to improve the campus's appearance, and a new key control system is being developed. The department is also working on establishing testing labs at both the Baton Rouge and Pine Country campuses, with further updates expected in the coming months.

- c. **Municipal/Regional Training:** Chief Kleinpeter gave the report. There have been 35 classes with 532 students in the northern region. In the southern region, there were 94 classes with 1,031 total students. This month, FETA received the Flashover prop; since advertising the prop, FETA has had several requests for it. We are currently finalizing procedures for it. LFI and LFIC are coming in the next few months, as well as Inspector I and II, with over 200 people signed up for the NFA Officer classes. The grant has been awarded to get a mobile extrication prop as well as a mobile ventilation prop. There are also two new Max Fire props coming as well. Our KFT prop from Baker will be in the regions in mid-October; all basic FF JPRs can be done with this prop.

There was a question about the cost for training with the railroads and Chief Kleinpeter advised that there would not be a cost. Chief Adams said that the railroads received a grant and one of the things they had to do was give back to the community with training.

- d. **Recruit Academy:** Chief Kleinpeter stated that the Recruit Academy lost one recruit. Currently, there are 10 recruits left. These recruits will graduate August 16, and class 187 will start on September 3.

- e. **Technical Training:** Chief Kleinpeter gave the report and mentioned that we are still in the process of hiring a Technical Rescue Manager. We are updating our curriculum and have a confined space class scheduled.
- f. **EMS Training:** Chief Martin gave the report. The theme of July was EMR and EMR-R. We started the Paramedic refresher with 10 students, and our EMT class is going into its final testing stage, which will soon be completed. Chief Martin gave kudos to Blance and his crew for not only providing service to our city but our staff and students. Chief Lindberg asked if FETA would get to a point to teach Paramedic, and Chief Woody stated that it is a goal for FETA to get to that point. They would also like for it to be offered to North and South Louisiana. Chief Major asked if the practicals had been completed for EMT, and Chief Martin stated if not, they are in the process.
- g. **Virtual Training:** No report given
- h. **Industrial Training:** Chief Stone gave the report. In June we had 222 students. Because of the excessive heat, there is a decrease in classes with 7 Hazmat Tech refreshers. Our E3 tanks are topped off and waiting for the first of the classes to start back up. Our staff is working on bringing the Fin Fan Cooler up and running as well as burning off leftover diesel in some of the props. Chief Stone gave props to Ricky Gary and his staff for the great work they are doing.
- i. **Certification and Testing:** Steve Billman gave the report for Certifications and again introduced Laurie to the board. We are at a little over 7,800 people with accounts in Acadis. Currently, we are working on getting the skills assessment moved over to Acadis. Within a few weeks, we will be able to roll out that new function within Acadis and show our skills evaluators how to do it. The pass/fail rates for the month of June were not good. It is not clear as to why there was a drop in scores. The challenged exams did report to do worse than ones that took a class with the exam however it is skewed data. Major asked how we could clean up the data, and Billman replied that it would take time to clean it all up. Laurie was invited to tell them about herself. She stated she has worked for the state for 15 years and has been with the Fire Marshal's office for four years.

Chief Martin mentioned that within the next few months, the verbiage will start changing to match the new results we will be getting from testing. In a brief discussion between several members, it was determined that the test curriculum would be provided to instructors so that we are all teaching the same thing.

Chief Woody added as a reveal that we have partnered with the Naval Air Station in New Orleans to deliver ARFF certification again. The classes will be offered on their campus through us. Chief Adams mentioned that this was going to be a minimal cost to us. He also mentioned that we will be working with the International Marine Investigators Organization to partner with them to provide marine investigations, in return they will help repair our tugboat prop.

- j. **Financial Report:** Katie Elliott gave the report. In June we had an income of \$306,826.03, Municipal Income (June): \$20,675.80 | Fiscal Year-to-Date: \$325,098.78, Certification Income (June): \$14,255.00 | Fiscal Year-to-Date: \$167,595.00, Industrial Income (June): \$271,895.23 | Fiscal Year-to-Date: \$2,843,552.56. Total Fiscal Year Income: \$3,336,246.34

5. **Commission Chairman Report:** Chad Major stated that there was nothing to report under the Chairman's report.
6. **Old Business:** Nothing reported.
7. **New Business:** Chief Adams stated next week the Fire Marshal's office will be interviewing a full time Grant person who will mainly focus on grants for FETA. The swift water pool was downsized to a 30x60 and the entire amount of the funds will be available next year. Chief Kimble commented about the USAR status. They recently were able to comprise a list of all the equipment available in the state. There was some issues that will be brought to the board for guidance but they are happy about the status thus far.
8. **Next Meeting Date:** August 22, 2024 at FETA
9. **Adjournment:** A motion was made to adjourn with no opposition at 10:48 AM.

Approved on: 8-22-24

Signature: 