

**Louisiana Fire and Emergency Training Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2015**

Commission Members Present:

Charlie Metcalf	Louisiana State Firefighters Association
Michael Donahue	Chancellor’s Designee from LSU
Donald Milligan	Louisiana State Firefighters Association
James Wood	Louisiana Fire Chief’s Association
Chad Major	Professional Firefighters Association of Louisiana
Louis Romero	Professional Firefighters Association of Louisiana
Martino Latino	Louisiana Fire Chief’s Association

Commission Members Absent:

Karen St. Germain	State Representative
Butch Browning	State Fire Marshal

In Attendance:

Loree Ramezan	FETI
Christine Melancon	FETI
Carey King	FETI
Rusty Leonard	FETI
Clay Crain	FETI
Eddie Pyle	FETI
Eddie Tessmer	FETI
Adam Cline	Louisiana Fire Chief’s President
Nick Palmer	FETI
Wayne Cruse	FETI

The Louisiana Fire and Emergency Training Commission was called to order. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Charlie Metcalf. Invocation led by Donald Milligan. Chad Major called the roll and announced that a quorum was present. The meeting began.

Director's Report

Mr. Casey began his report. He stated that a notice went out to the users of the Fire Academy recruit school. They had met with the group last year and as well, they met in smaller groups with the majority of the chiefs this year. A significant increase would go into effect in January. Roughly, the fee for the sponsoring fire department currently was \$2,500 which covered about 30% of the cost of the program for their students to go through. The rest of that had been coming out of the statutory funding. With the new class in January, the class would rise to about \$4,500 which was 45% for the sponsoring agency and still 55% of the statutory funding. They had not encountered a huge outcry over the increase because it was discussed with everyone before it was put into place. He stated that they had not lost

any clients, but had actually gained a few. He commented that they had officially added TIMS to the program and extra fires to the course to provide as much realism as possible for the students. New electronic and technological features had been added. The question was asked if there pricing was still competitive with other programs around the surrounding states. Mr. Casey stated that it was. Texas A&M was \$11,000 and that did not include materials, room, or board.

Charlie Metcalf asked if there had been a decision made on adding the EMT class. Mr. Casey stated that they were working hard to lay it out for the departments, and there seemed to be interest in it, but not the commitment needed for it. Charlie Metcalf asked if there was an EMT class already on campus. Mr. Casey stated that there was EMT, EMTA, but not paramedic at this time. It was being done on an accelerated basis but not on an emersion basis for existing firemen. Mr. Louis Romero stated that he had had several people ask him why they had stopped the night burn for family night before graduation. Mr. Casey stated that it was for safety reasons. They changed it to running evolutions so that the families could see things better and because the location where the night burn had been taking place was not well lit or convenient.

Next, at the request of Mr. Donahue, Mr. Casey briefed the board on the new weather station that had been set up. It had the ability to connect with their smart phones so they could check the weather conditions at any time or location. They were working on getting some more shading for the students for their health and safety. The weather stats were tied to their policies and procedures so it was important for the instructors to have this ready information.

He moved on to discuss the AFG's. They have not been approved or disapproved but they had high hopes that they would be approved soon and they would get the funding they had requested. There was probably another month and half before they would find out anything definite. Next, he discussed the new Class A mobile prop. He went over the details of the prop. He stated that it should be ready by the end of June. They had spoken to the company who had gotten the bids, Fireblast, for the sedan, gas cylinders, pipes, gas meter, etc. which would be in a trailer, and they were set to complete all of these things around the same timeframe at the end of June.

Mr. Casey then stated that there had been some progress on the Recruit Academy Woman's Dorm since he had written his Director's report on Monday. They were getting ready to go out to bid. They had their package together, but it had not been seen yet. There were two vendors that he was hoping that they would consider using that were inexpensive and sturdy. It had been a lengthy process, but it was drawing to a close and should go out to bid soon. He stated that as soon as they could get the plans, they would circulate them so everyone could see them. Mr. Donahue asked if they were looking at a relatively short manufacturing period. Mr. Casey stated that if they chose to go with either one of the vendors he had suggested then the process from purchase order to delivery was a month.

At this point, the chairman asked if there was any questions or discussion on what had been covered so far in the director's report. None was voiced.

New Business

Mr. Casey then began the discussion on some bad information that had been circulating. There was some concern that there was going to be a massive cut on the one night drill nights. There was a cut made but not a big one. They were actually still doing more than they were two years ago because more parishes were participating now in the program. They were still doing more training than they

were in past, but less per parish. They were attempting to consolidate that by doing all the drill nights for the year in the Firefighter One program. There was more value in doing it that way because it was going toward accredited and certified training and it would not be costing FETI anymore for doing it this way.

They were working on rolling out the new Hybrid Firefighter One in bits and pieces. At the end of the third round of the course, they should have all the parts up and rolling. The new curriculum was electronic so it could be done on a tablet or Kindle. It was based on the Jones and Bartlett platform, but directed to Louisiana specific conditions and standards. The students could still have a hard copy if they wanted one. There was only two days of physical classroom time. Steve was working with them to make the testing process and accessibility smoother and the content more streamlined.

Mr. Casey moved on to discuss the formation of the strategic planning committee. He proposed the commission start a strategic planning process for the training programs. A lot of decisions had been based on input from the local chiefs and fire stations and local associations. The current format did not lend itself to a lot of flexibility or brainstorming. Today, he wanted to propose the idea and then at the next meeting discuss it in more detail. He proposed to appoint a planning committee comprised of PIAL, local training officers and fire chiefs throughout a decent geographical range, individuals serving the local associations, some volunteer and some career individuals, etc. that would answer back to and involve FETI. He suggested that the commission presently make the proposals and then let it be brought back to the committee to be discussed. Initially, the timely issues such as the Firefighter I program and the field delivery would need to be addressed. He stated that they could come back and address Fire Officer, Fire Inspector, Instructor, and some of the special training programs.

In the past, they have tried to go to the local association meetings, but there was generally very little input at all which was the reason that this committee needed to be formed. Mr. Chad Major suggested they consider using training officers on the committee because they would be able to provide the best input. It seems that what the different areas in the state want in the course are very different. Mr. Casey felt that as they moved ahead, they would need to have a uniform Firefighter I program, but there was more than one way to do it. They were already trying out the structured Hybrid class, and then there was another version that they would be trying out that was geared toward one or two people.

Mr. Milligan suggested that they choose six regional chiefs and five FETI members, allowing the LSFA and three organizations to pick the regional chiefs so that there would be equal representation in the voting. Mr. Donahue clarified that this was not a voting committee, but only informational. As well, after the committee met and discussed items, the goal was for them to go back and meet with the constituency and bring back input to the committee for a second or a third meeting. Mr. Donald Milligan felt that different organizations needed to be represented on the committee and also each region should have someone representing their interests so that no matter the size of the fire department or facility, everyone would have fair representation.

Mr. Major summarized that at the end of the day it was going to be the committee's responsibility based on the information that was received from the people within the region to formulate a plan and bring those plans and suggestions back to the commission. Mr. Steve Gervais felt that it needed to be productive and not be a fighting ground and that the committee should be comprised of a good mix of all kinds of people. Mr. Martin Latino asked what clout this committee truly would have and where did it end. Mr. Casey explained that the committee would bring back recommendations for the commission to decide to implement or not. It was a lot to discuss so they would take on a little at a time. The

committee was certainly not powerless though. It would influence the direction the commission would take in the future.

Mr. Nick Palmer pointed out that when there was a complaint about changes in the future, the committee would serve as a protection of sorts because PIAL could say that they did an unprecedented involvement of the fire service in the state before the changes were made. Mr. Steve Gervais stated that he felt it would be beneficial if the committee could even come up with a five to ten year plan because in the long run, it came down to money and looking ahead to see what changes would cost and planning for the future.

Mr. Casey stated that he was hoping to finalize the committee at the next FETI meeting in June and he would like to see the committee meetings commence in July. He would like to start with one day sessions, have the first meeting in July, then let everyone go back and make changes and discuss it. Then, they would come back with a recommendation in August. This ended the discussion about the new strategic planning committee.

Mr. Charlie Metcalf asked if they were supposed to make suggestions about the people who would be appointed to the committee before the next meeting. Mr. Casey stated that if the nominees could be made before the meeting that would be great, but they did need them no later than the next meeting.

Motion was made to form the strategic planning committee by Mr. Charlie Metcalf and was seconded by Mr. Martin Latino.

Motion passed.

At this time, no more questions were voiced and discussion of the Director's report ended.

Certification Report

Mr. Steve Gervais stated that he did not really have any updates. He was going to put some things together, but since their fiscal year would be ending and they were having a meeting in June, he would have the fiscal reports and presentation of some data on the module 1 for Firefighter I that was just completed in Avoyelles Parish for the commission then. Mr. Donald Milligan asked what the pass percentage was for this modular testing. Mr. Steve Gervais stated that it was above 50%. The second round of testing was actually 75%. Some of the tests were set to be regenerated this year. Firefighter I had been regenerated already and Hazmat was set for June. Hazmat was very difficult and there was a huge leap from Hazmat Awareness to Hazmat Ops. They were working on these issues from the testing aspect.

Mr. Major asked if there were any questions regarding the certification report. No questions were voiced. There was no discussion.

Financial Report

Mr. Donahue stated that he had sent out two months details to everyone. He pointed out that the municipal side of their business was upside down by \$150,000. Fortunately, the statutory dedicated money came in ahead of their projection. They received \$3,172,454. It was a 1% increase even though

their expenses have far exceeded 1% growth. With the money received, he felt that after adjustments were made, they should come out potentially at around \$75,000 positive.

There were some discussions regarding one of our instructors seeking office with one of the firefighter associations. He checked with LSU and they stated that no state employee should run for elected office due to conflicts of interests. Specifically, the issue revolved around lobbying. State employees cannot participate in lobbying and the instructor withdrew his name from seeking office with the professional association.

No questions were voiced. There was no discussion.

Old Business

No old business was addressed.

New Business

No new business was addressed.

Chairman's Report

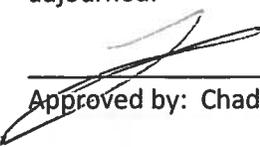
Mr. Major presented his report. He stated that the legislature was back in session. The bills that there were questions on were House Bill 762 and 523. These bills affected the debt fund. At present, the bills were not moving and did not look like they would. There was a lot of work done on the front end on 523 and some of the co-authors had started to pull their names off of it. He did not believe the legislature had the will to do that at present, but it was a day to day thing there. Today, all committees were cancelled and the house was taking up all the tax bills that had made it out of committee. The governor had signed an agreement saying that he would not raise any taxes which had painted himself into a corner so to speak because not enough money was coming in and costs continue to increase. 70% of the state's funds were stat debt so they could not be tampered with. They were protected funds. It had started out at about 20%, but had evolved over the years.

FETI, Fire Marshall, State police, Civil Service, etc. funds were all stat debt and they were all on the chopping block. Schroeder backed off his bill and said that he was not going to move it. The bill by Kirk Calvin which is Bill 762 was not scheduled to be heard. The committee for the bill did not want to move the items. The legislature was trying to hurry and move on the tax bills so when the governor vetoed them then they could override his veto before they went back out of session and not have to come back in. In his opinion, Mr. Major did not feel like any of the stat debt funds were on the chopping block which included FETI. The legislature just didn't have the will to support doing it. It was an election year, as well.

Mr. Major asked if there were any questions regarding the chairman's report. No questions were voiced. There was no discussion.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 16th.

Motion to adjourn was entertained Mr. Major, moved by Mr. James Wood. No objection. Meeting was adjourned.



Approved by: Chad Major

9-16-15

Date: