

## Louisiana Fire and Emergency Training Commission Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

November 8, 2012

#### Commission Members Present:

Mike Arnold	Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association
Michael Donahue	Chancellor's Designee from LSU
Louis Romero	Professional Firefighters Association of Louisiana
Karen St. Germain	Louisiana State Representative, Governor's Appointee
Dwayne Thevis	Louisiana State Fire Fighters Association
Boyd Westbrook	Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association

#### Other Attendees

Chuck Albert – LFCA  
Wayne Cruse – FETI  
Kathe Jones - FETI  
Alan Joos - FETI  
Carey King – FETI  
Christine Melancon – FETI  
Eddie Pyle – FETI  
Lori Ramezan – FETI  
Eddie Tessmer – FETI  
Stephanie Thevis – Richard Voluntary Fire Department

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karen St. Germain at 3:04 p.m. Minutes from the September meeting were accepted. The October minutes will be voted on at the next meeting.

The group said the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with prayer.

#### Financial Subcommittee Report

Commissioner Boyd Westbrook reported that the Financial Subcommittee met and put something together that is easier to understand than the ledger LSU keeps. They broke out initial expenses and noted the restricted funds. Next, they identified the self-generated funds, such as the media fund. They left out Gustav funds, because they're exhausted and noted the FEMA funds, which are municipally based grants for training. Westbrook concluded that a budget of \$3.1 million is what they're anticipating, with \$70,000 coming from Pine Country. He added that the \$70,000 is constant; everything else is an estimate.

The 2012-2013 DHS grants are almost done, Westbrook reported. Any excess funds go into the FETI plant account used for capital improvements. That is also a restricted fund. A total of \$214,000 goes to LSU for indirect costs. The administrative account represents 56% of the budget; the industrial facilities account represents 44% of the budget.

Westbrook concluded that the whole amount is budgeted and there are some unfunded positions.

Director Michael Donahue clarified that the positions are funded, but not filled.

"If industry increases what they do out here, that's less we have to pay and it frees up money on the municipal side," said Westbrook.

#### **Certification Program**

Westbrook explained that FETI can budget up to 50% of its anticipated revenue on the certification program. It costs about \$56 per certificate, but industry pays \$80 each for them, a charge on par with Texas and Mississippi. The more certifications a department has, the better its insurance rating.

#### **FETI Equipment Show**

THE FETI Equipment Show will be held January 25-26, 2013. FETI charges vendors \$200-\$250 per booth space, but some money comes back to them. We host as many as need. Corporate sponsors pay \$500. If the Fire Marshal or St. George's wants to come in at no charge, we make space for them. If a vendor wants to do a demo, we charge a field usage fee. We charge less than the Chiefs Association.

St. Germain requested that the subcommittee continue to stay on top of this to see if it can be improved.

#### **Stakeholder Survey**

In the absence of Butch Browning, Donahue reported that he had inquired about the cost of having the survey vetted and hosted by LSU's Public Policy Lab. He said the lab would vet and host the survey for \$1500, and if they did, it would be statistically significant and valid. He added that the lab could track IP addresses to eliminate duplicates. He suggested the subcommittee meet to take a first run at determining what questions to ask in the survey.

Westbrook commented that he wanted department-based surveys with opinions that are owned. He suggested getting a survey to each department, delivered to the chief, who would then take ownership of it.

Donahue responded that the regional staff is collecting the email addresses and contact information in chief meetings and building a database.

An audience member commented that FETI could expect a 25% return by email. He suggested going to meetings and getting the surveys done there.

That method would be applied after the first email wave, Donahue replied. FETI will examine the results of the first attempt and then follow up with hard copy surveys and stamped self-addressed envelopes.

Dwayne Thevis commented that it's like pulling teeth to get information out of people about what they want.

St. Germain advised doing a combination method and having patience.

Donahue added that by having the Public Policy Lab administering the survey, they would know how many responses are needed to have statistically significant data.

Westbrook noted that the commission was formed because people were complaining. He said when he hears people complaining at chiefs' conferences, he will ask them why they didn't participate in the survey.

St. Germain approved of the cost of hiring the Public Policy Lab, but added she likes the idea of showing up and getting people to complete the survey on-site.

Donahue said that students working for the Public Policy Lab would call non-respondents. He reiterated that the subcommittee needs to meet to determine what information they want, so the Public Policy Lab can develop the questionnaire.

Thevis said the subcommittee would meet next Monday.

St. Germain said the committee should emphasize the positive in its explanation of why FETI needs to know who respondents are.

#### **Approval of FETI Director Job Description**

St. Germain reported that she had met with Chancellor Jenkins several times to request that the job description not require a degree. She will have another meeting with him, Jason Droddy and a representative from Human Resources soon. She said she would email the chancellor's decision to the commission.

Donahue noted that commission members could discuss the matter by email, but Open Meetings law forbids voting by email.

St. Germain explained that she had made the arguments that FETI training is not a degree program and that Act 596, which created the commission, should not be frustrated by LSU procedures. She moved the item to the December agenda.

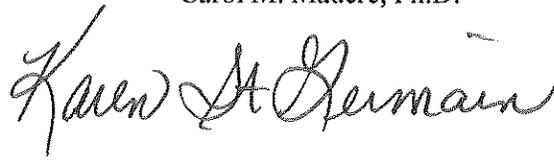
#### **Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2012.

Minutes submitted by:

Carol M. Madere, Ph.D.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen A. Germain". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the "Approved by:" label.