

UTAH FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
MINUTES
September 10, 2014

Attendees – A copy of those in attendance is included with the Minutes.

Welcome, Call to Order, and Introduction of Executive Committee and Guests – Gil Rodriguez, President, called to order the Regular Utah Fire Chiefs Association Meeting beginning at 8:30 am on Wednesday, September 10, 2014, at the Sheraton City Centre, 150 West 500 South, Salt Lake City, UT.

License Plate Grant Program & State Fire Marshal's Report - Coy Porter reported that the License Plate Grant is now open. Smaller departments can ask for the cost for Winter Fire School to be covered. Widgets for larger departments are on a lower level of need. The total revenue generated by the fund is \$135,000. All counties are represented based on an equal share irrespective of size or number of plates.

The UVU grant has now been finalized.

Michael Phillips from the Cedar City FD has now been set on the Fire Prevention Board.

Standards and training are meeting this morning and will be here later.

Site visits will be made to various training facilities. A request has been made to do a class in a local high school in Davis County. They are not supportive of the high school program.

The Vigilant Guard will hold a full scale exercise in Salt Lake City November 3rd – 6th. It will be based on an earthquake scenario.

Messages from the Fire Chiefs Association are sent out in email blast – the members of the Executive Committee are all volunteers.

Firefighters Credit Union - New Website and Invoicing Process for USFCA - Thomas Gourdin from FFCU gave a presentation on the website. They are providing it free of charge. There is a scrolling ad where sponsors can help support the cost of maintaining the website. All are invited to register with the State Chiefs; the data will be kept in the website. If you register now, you will be good for the remainder of this year as well as the entire next year. If any members wish to have something on the site, they can provide suggestions to Thomas. For any questions, please contact Thomas.

POST Certification for Dispatch Centers - Statewide Standard / APCO Rep. - The representative from POST, Deborah Mecham, asked for the association to support a common standard for all of the PSAP's in Utah. They have a proposal to change the POST certification statute, providing that all Utah dispatchers be POST Dispatcher certified statewide. She provided handouts with additional information. A copy is included with the Minutes. Deborah has met with police and sheriffs and is now meeting with fire to ask for their support in how certain legislation should be proposed. PSAP's throughout the state have sent employees to be certified as instructors. Presently the training is free; the only costs are for backfilling and overtime costs for the individuals to become certified. The police & sheriff's departments have given verbal support; they will follow up with written support. POST has gone out to some of the rural

centers to do the training and it has been paid for by the salary of the dispatcher in the PSAP. If there are any questions or suggestions, contact Deborah Mecham.

Review and Approval of September 11, 2013 Minutes -Motion was made to approve the September 11, 2013 Minutes as written by Michael Jensen, seconded by Bob Zanetti; motion passed.

Reports of Committees and Board Members -

President's Report - Gil Rodriguez' report is included above.

Secretary/Treasurer Report - Jess Campbell gave the financial report for 2014. The bank account will be left with Bank of the West for one more year and then it will be moved to the Firefighters Credit Union. All can go to the website to register and pay the dues and the funds will go directly into the USFCA account and the credit union will be helping with the financials.

Legislative Report - Dave Spatafore reported on the following:

Medicaid reimbursement for Ambulance service - they are looking at increasing the amount of what the costs are and what is being paid by Medicaid, looking to do a statutory change.

Retirement - about one month ago, they met with Rich Cunningham with other representatives from police & 911 & fire. He wants to look at trying to go back to countering the effects of legislation of what happened 3 years ago – the percentage of change and the waiting period not having to be made to get another job.

Government Communications Task Force - the mission is to look at DTS as a regular service without having a duplication of service and an overlap; they are trying to consolidate. UCA is now the service provider. The UCAN infrastructure is becoming obsolete. The problem is a state problem and the state needs to develop the methodology to solve the problem along with the costs. They are trying to convince the legislature to come up with some type of funding and what the relationship will be with UCA and the agencies. There is a possibility that the 911 surcharge could be expanded to help cover costs. They will hopefully have something to get with the legislature to solve the problems. The next generation of CAD issues also needs to be dealt with. The UCA board has pretty good representation from the fire side. If anyone has any ideas, concepts or thoughts, get with Tom & Mike because they are putting it together and then going to the legislation to handle it. The cost is \$150,000,000 - \$250,000,000 for a new radio system.

Funding of AED program - the goal is to expand the scope to have more AED's on the streets - K-12 schools, law enforcement, state institution employees, safety (not EMS). The application for the grant is through the Bureau of EMS. Chief Evans will get more info to put on the website & sent out in emails. The suggestion was made to go back to departments and local schools and do a joint request as a part of the match program. This is also for future years; the more money requested, the more will be given next year.

Utah EMS Report - Paul Patrick was not present.

Communications Report - Tom Kuhlmann reported that July 1 was the merger of UCAN with one agency that covers communication needs statewide. UCA is the result of the merger. The task force is meeting

September 11, October 16, and November 13. For more information, go to le.utah.gov – to get the minutes, handouts, etc. A meeting will be held Wednesday with UCA to take advantage of some of the technology changes that are available. Change takes time and with money, it will take approximately 5-10 years to get the system updated.

WFCA / IAFC Report - John Evans reported that the Bookstore is given \$982 in 6 months. They have teamed with IFSTA on an iPad format instead of having to buy manuals. Western has launched a new site to do online training.

State Fire Marshal's Report - Coy Porter handed out a copy of the report; a copy is included with the Minutes.

Standards & Training Report - Coy Porter reported that the Standards and Training Council is meeting this morning. They are currently working on a site visit (audit) of the non-affiliated Firefighter Training Programs around the state. They are primarily located at the various Applied Technology Colleges (ATC's).

Fire Marshal's Association of Utah Report - Brandon Thueson reported on the antifreeze issue. He said that a task force has reconvened and that they have brought in representatives from the Home Builders Association and the Fire Prevention Board. They voted to open a workshop in conjunction with the board and make a decision statewide as to where they want to go. They feel it is a no win situation and this is one that affects everyone. The 2015 code is being compared with the current edition.

NFPA ICC Report - Scott W. Adams - nothing to report.

Utah Fire and Life Safety Educator Association - Dean Hunt - nothing to report.

Utah Emergency Management Association (UEMA) - Will Lusk reported the new buzz word is Recovery. There is a big push to see what they can do to help the citizen's work through the process of putting their homes back together. UEMA spoke about the process of working with the State Fire Chiefs as well as the Red Cross to come up with a state process of recovery. He is looking for a couple of people to work on a task force. He provided a handout; a copy is included with the Minutes. They would like to come up with a small book that can be handed out by the local fire service or Red Cross. The book mainly contains a lot of information on working with contractors and insurance companies in recovering from the disaster. The manual is being put out right now. A handout with pricing was given and is included with the minutes. Extend the offer on behalf to join with UEMA and to put out a copy of the book. They are working to get the Utah Emergency Managers to promote it and have it become useful to the fire chiefs. They are working on certification programs to develop a state certification. So far, they are not currently being trained at the city level. Utah is developing a curriculum to develop the management and how to work effectively with fire chiefs. An annual conference will be held in Salt Lake City on January 7-8, 2015. They are looking at a mini conference next fall.

Division of Forestry - Tracy Dunford reported that they have been working on redoing their fire policy – how it is managed and how it is paid for. It will affect all fire departments. There is currently a conflict in the statute. Each entity is responsible to provide the service and pay for it, another statute says that any wildland fire that occurs on private land states that the county is responsible to pay for it. Senator Evan Bickers is going to take it forward to the legislature. There is now a resolution to strongly urge to come up with a statewide prevention, preparedness and suppression plan. This is different from what

has been focused on in the past. This is the first year that legislature has appropriated funds (has all been federal in the past). The conflict in statute is one thing, but also the current statute is not unavailable to the cities – it is only in unincorporated lands. It is a challenge for firefighters to have to deal with the cost. They would like to put the focus on the ground. They are working on a proposal to look to local governments, counties, and cities to provide the initial attacks on wildland fires. Any fire that goes beyond initial attack will go to the state (non-federal). They are looking to the stakeholders to drive a system that will really work for everyone involved. Counties that already participate should be held harmless, cities to participate will be eased into it. They want to maintain some type of an agreement like they have now – everything has to be in agreement with UAC and the Local Cities and Towns. They are going to emphasize prevention and preparedness. Looking at local government to continue to take things on as well, including training and certifying wildland firefighters. Programs are in place to help departments get up to the level of red card. They don't want to have to manage individual agreements with all towns & cities. (Look at the handout and cover bullets). They are asking to have an adoption of a wildland ordinance. They are now in the process of getting the word out that they want as much involvement that they can before sending it to the legislature. They have met with several and are planning to get with everyone and establish support from all entities. The code will be updated. Attorneys are looking through other statutes to make sure that everything is covered. A copy of the local government roles was handed out and is included with the minutes.

Old Business

Officer Designation Project - Kevin Ward reported that six supervisory officer designations were added. They are mirroring what is being done with the IFC. Seed money was acquired to get the program running. They are looking for good support from the different designations with experience, training, and certification. The process is listed on the UFRA website on how to go through the whole program.

Motion on Financial Contribution to Joint Council for Fire Caucus Luncheon - A motion was made by Chief Michael Jensen to donate a financial contribution to the Joint Council for the Fire Caucus Luncheon in the amount of \$1,000; motion seconded by Kevin Ward. Motion passed.

City Official Panel Discussion - Appreciation was given to the following for participating in the City Official Panel Discussion: Mayor Ted Eyre, Murray; Mayor John Curtis, Provo; City Manager Wayne Pyle, West Valley; City Manager Alex Jensen, Layton. A copy of the responses is included with the Minutes.

Good of the Order

Winter State Chiefs Meeting - January 7, 2015 @ 0900, St. George

Leadership Training - January 8, 2015 @ 0900 - 1500 (Lunch provided)

Winter Fire School - January 9 - 10, 2015

Educator's Association Annual Conference - November 14, 2014, U of U

Metro Testing Consortium closes on Friday

Chili Cook Off - Saturday at noon – Ogden Amphitheater

Adjournment

Discussion Panel Responses

The questions that were presented to the panel are listed below.

Those participating in the panel:

- Ted Eyre – Mayor of Murray
- John Curtis – Provo Mayor
- Wayne Pyle – City Manager of West Valley
- Alex Jensen – City Manager of Layton

1. What do you feel is an acceptable staffing level for the fire department in your city?

1.1 The staffing level in 2008 was difficult. The staffing levels came down; they offered an early retirement program. They are still down 2 individuals (around \$100,000) – currently run 3 on each apparatus.

1.2 The answer is always 10 more than they have – they try to get every department staffed.

1.3 Has worked well with their department – has always centered around the needs and budget. They took over the ambulance service within that city, based on the number of calls to coverage.

1.4 Based on what is needed in the community – sit down w/ chiefs and talk about the needs to the community, then work towards staffing at that level (not a national standard). They have also tried to be careful to be conservative in their approach – they haven't laid off a single person even through the recession. The National standards give mayors or city managers something to go to the city council with – it gives a little ammunition.

2. How do you think your ambulance service benefits the citizens of your community?

2.1 Got ownership of the ambulance service in 2009. Gave the city an identity and name.

2.2 The residents care about knowing that they have great care – PR perspective alone is a huge impact to the city.

2.3 Two big advantages: How they train and certify – a higher level of medical expertise; the other is they would no longer have situations where fire and ambulance don't arrive together. They have been able to make it financially not a drain on the rest of the city's expenses

2.4 Critical service in Layton. One of the most significant services, improving the level of care to the community.

3. In your opinion should the ambulance service be self-sustaining or should it be subsidized, if so to what degree?

3.1 Would like it to be self-sustaining, but not the most important thing – getting those who need the help to the hospital is. More important to know the value of everything instead of just the cost. Secondary to the value it provides to the residents.

3.2 Perfect. They had thought about raising business inspection fees – businesses came back and said that they pay a large property tax.

3.3 Almost a moot point – reason of quality. They knew it would be a controversial move – to have their cake and eat it too.

3.4 The objective is to have it be self-sustaining, but because of Medicare & Medicaid, that is not always possible. Need to run as efficiently as possible and subsidize as little as necessary

4. Where does the fire department rank in the city's priority of needs?

4.1 Critical piece of what takes place in the city. Their view tries to recognize that all services are needed. They don't give all to one department and none to others. All city employees first, then police, fire, and public works. The public safety service is the most critical service to the city.

4.2 They realized that all services are critical, but there definitely is a scale with public safety being a high priority. The other departments recognize it – working with the other departments to have a good relationship is very important.

4.3 Police & fire are the only two departments that meet directly weekly with the Mayor. If they fail in public safety, nothing else matters.

4.4 They recognize that the fire department has some very expensive needs every once in a while. They have a capital improvement project plan – no use it or lose it. Money left over at the end of the year can come from the capital improvement. Fire & Police is the most visible to the residents. They don't rank it but consider it very high.

5. How do you feel your Fire Department ranks in importance to your citizens?

5.1 The favorite & possibly the most important – public safety included.

5.2 Most important thing is to recognize that you are never off duty – everything is watched.

5.3 Highlighted on the news – firefighters coming back from a call, pulled over and helped someone – going above and beyond on the job. Fill the boot campaign \$20-\$25,000 – 100% goes towards Muscular Dystrophy. The elementaries look forward to the fire days with great anticipation – letting the community know that they really care.

5.4 Recognize who you are without your uniform.

6. How can the Fire Department improve service(s) to the community?

6.1 With a higher level of tension and strain of employees and residents. John has really gone out of his way to make sure that the crews do everything that they can to foster the thought process that they are great. Relationship with the residents is very important.

6.2 Always looking for ways to do what they do more efficiently – benefiting the entire community. Having the attitude of doing the finest job they can in the most effective way as possible.

6.3 Don't let anything slip – performance - comes from a belief that they are competent and professional and good at the craft, so that when the emergency occurs, that it will be taken care of in a great way. Cannot relax – education, dress, and attitude – best possible care.

7. How do you, as a city leader, gauge the effectiveness and success of your fire department?

7.1 Feedback from community – talking about the quality and care, feedback from the individual firefighters – getting the sense of those who work together about how they are being supported.

7.2 Staffing levels, dependent on the chief to make sure that the good stories (social media) come to the top – brag, brag, brag on social media, mayor, and city council.

7.3 Compare stats year to year, morale.

7.4 Look at resident's side, city side – internal, department side – morale, are issues dealt with or just swept under the rug? Keeping up the public perception.

Technology in the future –

8.1 Believe it will expand – unsure how. The use of technology and the access have the ability to enhance the services that are provided. A lot of ways to enhance the level of care on the street when we have infrastructure that will support it.

8.2 Its important to try to get the right equipment to the right place at the right time – always assess and see that happens. A lot of education and training going on in the city.

8.3 Historically, government doesn't adapt well. Change is coming rapidly. Can't fight the change. Help the teams embrace change.

8.4 The commentary points back to the reliance of the fire department. Burden & blessing of the department.

Challenges that are foreseen –

9.1 Not having the financial resources that are needed. Military – years and years of tradition uninterrupted by progress. Need a fresh approach to the current needs. Have to work as a crew, respecting others responsibilities. Had to learn in the most stressful situation to prioritize things in the most effective way that you can. Don't let tradition get in the way.

9.2 Great service

9.3 Taking the view that since you don't have the resources that would be like, to think that you can't provide the kind of service that should be provided with what they have. Complacency. The gift of unearned respect that firefighters have. Possibly to not do anything to allow that to be lost.

Operational procedures, physical fitness, etc

9.4 Struggle – don't use "This is the way that it has always been done" as an excuse. Leadership of the firefighters needs to make sure to have improvements happen.

Retirement Concerns –

10.1 The concerns of the Chiefs is that the career is turning into a job. Legislature – retirement benefits. First few years, adrenaline carries you through – how to prevent a revolving door. They need the long term motivation to stay for the long term. Is retirement gone for good? Fighting for that is important. It is a little reality of our times. Don't lose the dream – a reality of our society.

10.2 Retirement programs may not be there anyway. Have a personal plan in place.

10.3 Trying to improve that situation within the reality. Firefighters have a knack to be able to diversify. Don't depend on anything but yourself. Everyone has to have diversified ways to address that question.