

TENNESSEE FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Winter Combined Board of Directors and Business Meeting

Jackson, TN – 7 February 2025

Members present: Brian Biggs, John Tallent, Rich Hartfield, Jamie Summers, Ben Wexler, Lee Turner, Scott Boyd, P.J. Duncan, Jay Moore, , James Fountain, David Woody, Eddie Phillips, Barron Kennedy, and about 30 guests.

Opening: President Bigga called the meeting to order at 9:26 CST, David Woody opened with a prayer and Rich Hartfield led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Minutes: The Board/Business meeting minutes from Kingsport were approved by motion.

Recognitions: Past Presidents Mike Stanford and Jerry Crawford were present and received their Past President badges. Dale Burriss's son and Lynn Murphy's sister received their badges. Dennis Rutledge and Charles Carter's badges will be presented by Boars Members.

First time Fire Chiefs attending: Cory Comstock, and nine others were first-time attendees at the Jackson meeting. Four were at the Board/Business meeting.

Reports from Association Officers:

- **Treasurer's Report:** Eddie Phillips said there is \$133,057.96 in the General Account, \$78,929.10 in the Conference Account, and \$117,565.99 in the Special Projects Account. He explained what bills were paid. We are in sound financial condition thanks to members, vendors, corporate sponsors, and cuts to expenses. He explained to us various expenditures.
- **Conference Report:** James Fountain presented future meeting dates and locations. The Spring 2025 meeting will be at the Park Vista in Gatlinburg on April 22-25, 2025. The Annual Conference will be July 15-17, 2025, at the Embassy Suites in Franklin with the SEAFC. The Fall '25 (October 21-25) meeting at Meadowview in Kingsport.
- **Fire Marshal's Report:** Jason Driver reported for Mike Bell who had to leave. He reported the results of the VEAFT grant from all grand divisions. He also reported on vacancies in the SFMO. Also working on the Get Alarmed Program.

New Business:

- Life Memberships for Chief Roger Robinson of the Alcoa FD and Assn. Chief James McMillen of the Arlington FD were approved by a motion.
- Eddie Phillips presented a resolution passed by the Executive Committee concerning our LODD benefit. Basically it limits coverage to Departments that have an active membership in our Association. It covers Killed in Action, responding to, and/or returning from a call. The Association Officers will make the final determination. The resolution was approved by the full Board vote on a motion.

Old Business:

- SAFER Update – Eddie Phillips reported that things are going well. The grants have been very successful thus far. They hope this continues and becomes more available to more departments.

Associated Organizational Reports:

- **Academy** - Jason Sparks reported for TFACA. The recruit class begins Feb 24. There will be a 80-hour two-week Firefighting class on campus beginning May 12. The 95' mid-mount platform is due to arrive in May. Fire Chief Orientation Schedule for 2025, SMW May 31 – June 1, Upper Cumberland Weekend September 20-21, and TFA September 27-28. The residential burn prop is underway. There are still many free classes for Volunteers.
- **TN FireFighter Commission** – Heather Zimmerman reported on many numbers from Commission tests.
- **NFPA** – Jeremy Criner is our Regional Director. He works with Adam Wodzinski of the SFMO. NFPA will be at Bristol race in September. The NFPA Conference & Expo will be June 16-18 and Deputy Chief Marcus Beasley won complimentary full registration. The TN Fire Safety Summit will be at the Memphis Fire Museum April 10.
- **TN Firemens Association** – Cory Comstock reported the Annual Conference will be in Jackson September 25-28. There will be many good classes and Commission written and practical testing. The Shady Brady Ride will be April 5. Thanks to TFCA for supporting TFA.
- **MTAS** – Donald Pannell spoke about the many training opportunities through MTAS and CTAS. There are many resources available including the Language Center. All these classes and dates can be found on their web site. Please take advantage of them.

Committee and/or Section Reports:

- **Accreditation & Credentialing:** - Jason Powell reported there were classes on updates to the Self-Assessment Manual and online applications. Several Tennesseans received new designations in 2024. A CPSE representative will be in Gatlinburg for a class in April.
- **By-Laws:** - Steve Cross said there will be a minor change this year and will be discussed in Gatlinburg.
- **Chaplains:** - David Woody spoke briefly about upcoming opportunities.
- **Codes:** PJ Duncan reported the SFMO has filed the rules and regulations, and the 2021 codes will go into effect April 17 with many modifications. Many codes issues are being addressed by legislation instead of the normal codes adoption processes.
- **Communications:** - Amy Maxwell reported on the good number of departments that have signed up to clean the Memorial. Now it's done every two weeks. Need classes or information sharing??.... Email her at amym@hamiltontn.gov
- **EMS** – Jeff Beaman reported the members of the State EMS Board’s First Responder Committee are finally filled by Kory Green from Dresden FD and Debbie Patterson from Memphis FD, and their first meeting will be March 17, 2025. The EMS Board has recognized the need to overhaul the current EMS Rules & Regs, but this process may take several years.
- **FF Health and Safety** – Rich Hartfield said the committee is talking about future posters. They are also looking at a smaller committee of 2 or 3 from each Grand Division to concentrate on Safety, Health and Wellness.
- **Legislation** – David Windrow reported the Fire Department Day on the Hill is scheduled for Feb. 11, 2025. We are in favor of SB288/HB482 to add three cancers. We are opposed to HB414 dealing with churches/schools and HN 85/SB160 dealing with billing cities for ambulance services.
- **Membership** – Barron Kennedy reported 506 members, which is the largest number at this time of the year. About 35 have still not renewed their membership.
- **Mutual Aid** – Eric Mitchell reported the new Ready-Op forms for collecting contact information was rolled out and a short tutorial was held about its use. The Hurricane Helene response was discussed, and improvements were also discussed. The reimbursement process was outlined.
- **Professional Development** – Jamie Summers reported that planning is underway for the Annual Conference and other Quarterly meetings.
- **SEAFAC** – Brian Goss reported the planning for the Joint Conference is going well. Great speakers have been lined up including Gary Sinise as the keynote speaker. Former IAFC President Donald Black has been sworn in as Deputy Fire Director of the US Fire Administration replacing Dr. Loei Moore Merrell who resigned. I will be submitting the TFCA career and volunteer Fire Chief of the Year for consideration as the SEAFAC.
- **TNPERI** – Eddie Phillips reported on their meeting where Stephen Hart with Perseverant explaining how the system will work for Tennessee. The system tracks operators, responders, and training. The Treasurer’s report of \$6,476.06 was approved. There was much discussion on the recruitment and training of instructors. Lists of operators and responders need to be updated. All voting members need to be members of TFCA
- **Volunteer/NVFC** – PJ Duncan reported on the recipients of the recent SFMO grant. The Federal grant programs are on hold due to an Executive Order.

President’s Moment: Brian Biggs reported that Chief John Tallent is still having serious medical issues and will be retiring from the Madisonville FD in June and will not be able to complete his Presidential succession. The Executive Committee voted to freeze the President and the two Vice President’s positions for 2025-2026 and elect a replacement 2nd VP in July. A minor By-Laws change affecting nominations may be needed. The EC voted to recommend to the Board that the TFCA match the West TN Chiefs \$750 to help with scholarships to specialized training at the TFA Conference.

Adjournment: There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 CST.

Respectfully submitted: Barron Kennedy, Secretary