TENNESSEE FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
Annual Conference

Murfreesboro, TN, August 4, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President Biggs at 1217 CT. David Woody opened the meeting with a prayer and Ken Reeves led the pledge of allegiance.

Board members present: President Brian Biggs, Melvin Martin, Ben Wexler, Matt Henderson, Eddie Phillips, James Fountain, Jamie Summers, Richard Hartfield, Eric Turner, Ken Reeves, PJ Duncan, Ronny Beasley, Lee Turner, David Bell, and Eric Mitchell.

Welcome: President Biggs welcomed all in attendance and thanked all the vendors.

First-Time Attendees: Chief Richard Hartfield made a list of the first-time attendees.

Elections:

- Chief Brian Goss presented the slate of candidates and explained the voting procedures. President Biggs and By-Laws Chairman Steve Cross highlighted the proposed changes to be voted on during the election.

- Chief Goss presented the list of unopposed officer candidates and cast a vote for them during the Board Meeting on Tuesday August 2nd:

  President – Melvin Martin, Hardin County FD
  1st Vice President – Ben Wexler, Worriers Path FD
  2nd Vice President – Ronny Beasley, LaVergne FD
  West Board Member – Brett Sipes, Dyersburg FD
  East Board Member – Lee Turner, Jefferson City FD
  Treasurer – Eddie Phillips, Ret., East Ridge F/R
  Secretary – Matt Henderson, Sevierville FD

  The above were elected by acclamation due to no opposition.

  The Middle Board was contested by Jeff Beaman, Gallatin FD and Brian Collins, Brentwood FD for two seats. The top vote will be awarded the three-year term with the second receiving the two-year term. Also on the ballot will be an opportunity to vote "yes" or "no" for the proposed by-laws updates.

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After the secret ballots were tallied, Brian Collins received the Middle Region three-year term, Jeff Beaman received the Middle Region two-year term and the proposed changes for the by-laws were approved.

Reports from Association Officers:

- Treasurer's Report: Eddie Phillips reported there is $115,197.20 in the General Account. The Conference account has $84,933.25. The Special Projects Account is $21,328.77. The TNPERI Account is $59,431.08. All in all, things look very good.

- Conference Report: James Fountain reported a full house, roughly 70 vendors and 194 attendees. James reminded everyone that the annual conference fee covers registration for our quarterly meetings. Our Fall meeting will be held in Johnson City October 21-23, 2026, the Board/Business meeting will be on Friday morning. Please book your room early. See attached conference schedule.

- Board Report: In the Board of Directors meeting the following were approved by motions:
  - The appointments for 2026-2027 were approved. David Woody – Chaplain, Executive Director James Fountain, Executive Co-Director Brian Biggs, Member-at-Large Eric Turner. The chairs will remain mostly the same, Joshua Evans will lead the Legislative Committee, and Billy Roach will lead the Volunteer Committee.
  - The 2026-2027 budgets were approved.
  - Board approval of minutes from the Spring Quarterly in Gatlinburg.
  - Life Membership for Chief Richard Griggs, Ret. Covington FD and Asst. Chief Mark Willbanks, Ret. Knoxville FD were approved by a motion.

- Fire Marshal's Office: No report.

Old business – None.

Reports from Associated Organizations:

- Northeast Regions Chiefs- September 3rd East TN Chief Development Conference.
- East TN Chiefs- No report.
- Southeast Region Chiefs- No report.
- Upper Cumberland Chiefs- August 29 & 30 is Upper Cumberland Weekend.
- Middle TN Chiefs- August 14th meeting at MTAS, Leadership Conference August 20th.
- West TN Chiefs- August 18th Leadership Conference.

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- Midsouth Chiefs- Monthly meetings continue and are well attended.
- TFACA – Ben Wexler reported August 10th begins the next recruit class, onsite facility upgrade work has begun, the burn building has been named in honor of Chief Charlie Lewis, and Smokey Mt. Weekend is June 11-13th.
- Commission – Eric Barlow reported NFPA 1020 compliance is underway selecting books, HMA & Fire Plans Examiner update coming soon, ARFF training is soon to come, Online testing still making progress to complete, and their next meeting is August 17 &18th.
- MTAS – Steve Cross Public safety training is available, free multi language training is available, and salary study information is available.
- CTAS- No report.
- NFPA – Jeremey Criner- No report but delivered some great training this conference.
- TN Fire Safety Inspectors- Annual conference in Murfreesboro December 1-4th.
- TN Firemen's Assoc.- Gary West reported their conference is September 10-13th in South Pittsburg, come and checkout their maze trailers and available training for free.

Committee and Sections Reports:

- Audit Committee: Matt Henderson- The committee met in April, review was good, no concerns.
- Chaplains Section- David Woody reported two upcoming classes in Northeast TN with free admission and another class in Arlington. David also asked members to keep us posted about firefighter deaths. Contact him, Barron, or Matt.
- Codes Committee– PJ Duncan- No report.
- Communications Committee – Amy Maxwell reported traffic has increased lately and thanks to everyone who has submitted information. We have seen an increase of 2,000 followers since last year. Please send Amy updates from agencies and associations.
- Community Risk Reduction- Jason Driver reported 53,000 smoke alarms installed with the State investing over one million dollars last year. Community risk assessment; a new story book is coming soon. Accidental fire deaths were 40 for the year which is down by half. The Fire Loss Symposium is scheduled for September 15 & 16th. Rescue Squad Recognition Act: You must be a recognized Rescue Squad to apply for State Rescue Squad Grants.
- EMS – Jeff Beaman reported they have sent out a First Responder survey, please complete this survey. Changes in EMS licensure-one hour of mental health training is now required. CEU issuance is going through a revision; guidance is available on the State's website. TFCA Board Members are now sitting on the EMS Board.
- Executive Committee Report: Matt Henderson- No report.
- FF Health & Safety – Rich Hartfield reported no meeting this conference. Beginning this Fall and conferences moving forward we will be hosting a morning wellness walk.
- TN FF Memorial – Gary West reported the Annual Firefighter Memorial Service will be hosted October 10th from 4-6 PM. Plans for a pavilion and tool storage structure are in the

works for the site. A huge thanks to everyone for chipping in to keep our memorial looking great.

- Homeland Security – No Report.
- Legislative Committee – Josh Evans reported he has received many suggestions for the upcoming legislative session.
- Membership – Barron Kennedy reported 552 members for the year.
- Mutual Aid – Eric Mitchell and Ronny Beasley presented awards and letters of recognition to vendors who stepped up and some going above and beyond to provide PPE, tools, and equipment to responders dealing with the 2024 flooding in Eats TN. Awards were presented to NAFECO, Siddons-Martin, and SAFE Industries
- Professional Development – Ronny Beasley thanked everyone involved in delivering leadership training across the state. The committee is currently working on an Executive Fire Officer Program as a long-term goal, more to follow.
- SAFER Report- Essie Phillips reported the grant is going well, TFCA is one of the leaders in the nation for recruitment and retention of firefighters. You will soon see a statewide marketing campaign to aid in recruiting firefighters.
- TPERI Section- Ken Tuggle/Eddie Phillips reported TPERI is growing strong and their kickoff training has begun in Middle & West TN, East and Northeast TN training is coming soon. This training is for hazardous materials and pipeline emergencies. Instructors are needed, see the website for more information and to request training.
- SEFCA – State Director Brian Biggs/International Director Brian Goss- Goss reported FRI is next week in Kansas City and there have been some recent staff changes.
- Volunteer/NVFC- Melvin Martin/PJ Duncan- Melvin Martin reported the NVFC Annual Conference will be held in June, this is a great conference to attend. The grant preview is complete and he expects grants to be awarded in September. VCOS is another great conference to attend November 12-15th in Clearwater Fl, register now!

Other Business:

- President Brian Biggs thanked the Board for their help during his term as President. President Biggs then presented Distinguished Service Awards to Chief Jamie Summers and Chief Ken Reeves for their years of service as board members and the leadership they have provided to the Tennessee Fire Service.

Chaplin Woody closed in prayer.

Adjournment at 1407 CT. Respectfully submitted: Matt Henderson, Secretary

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