

Firemen's Legislative Federation Saturday, September 9, 2006

Attendance sheet is attached.

In the absence of President Mike Whitzel, Vice President, Robin Johnson called the meeting to order.

Miles Dooley gave the Invocation.

Report of Delegates From Other Organizations

Robin Johnson reported that the State Association Convention is coming up. The parade will be on Saturday.

Robin went on to review what State Fire Commissioner, Ed Mann, who attended the Federation meeting Friday night, told the Board in his update. Ed talked about the State Grant program. The first payments were sent to the bank on August 17th. There are about 600 applications that have some type of problem, but his staff is working on them. Next years grant will probably be running about the same time. They are still working on getting permanent legislation so a State Grant is automatic each year. Fire Companies are able to apply for the grant even though they have not completed the final report. The Commissioners office will not release the money however, until the final report is received.

Ed talked about the construction at the academy. There have been some staff changes. Rita Wessel has retired as of June and Gary Fulton has been appointed as the curriculum specialist.

Ed also talked about SB 1236. Ed testified at the hearing on the bill. The bill creates a grant program for mergers and consolidations of fire companies.

Bob Timko, NVFC, also attended the meeting Friday night and gave his report to the Board. Bob told the group there have been some concerns over the Federal Fire Grant Program. There has been a delay in receiving the money, but people will start seeing it about the first week of October.

The NVFC is trying to educate people on what to do in case of emergencies; how to evacuate and what to take, etc.

The PSOB criteria for heart attacks and strokes will go into effect on September 11. There is a back-log of about 200 applications, but he expects them to be taken care of quickly. You can now get all the PSOB forms on line at www.psob.gov.

One of the new pieces of legislation that was introduced was to clarify the tax status of LOSAP. They needed to get some type of change to the Federal Tax Code for pension like programs for volunteers to make it easier. Representative King, out of New York, introduced HR 627. It doesn't have any new programs, but has clarifications. If you want to see what they are you can go to the website and look up the bill.

The Fire Core program is still going on, however, they did change their toll free number: it is 1-888-FCINFO1. The phone number in the brochure is wrong.

Bob invited anyone who attends the CFSI dinner to attend the NVFC meetings in the morning if they are in Washington early enough.

Board of Directors

Fred McCutcheon, Chairman of the Board of Directors, gave his report. Fred talked about the strategic planning meetings and the proposal from Dr. William Jenaway which came out of those meetings. The proposal is to develop a communication plan. After some discussion, Norm Bowser made a motion to go forward with the first year of the plan and to proceed further as needed; Miles Dooley seconded the motion. There was some discussion on the motion. Fred explained the proposal again. A question was asked about whether the money was in the budget. The money was not in the budget for 2006. **The motion was carried with Dave Anderson and Tom Savage abstaining.**

Fred went on to discuss the concept which was put to the Board on Friday night. Chief Konkle explained the concept. There would be a partnership between the Legislative Federation and PFESI. It is a follow up mechanism to the communication plan. Dale Myers made a motion to accept the concept and for the officers of the Legislative Federation to meet with the officers of PFESI to develop a plan; Chuck Murphy seconded the motion. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

The Pittsburgh Fire Expo is going to have an Advisory Board, and they called the office to see if anyone from the Federation wanted to be on the Board. Robin Johnson made a motion to appoint Fred McCutcheon to the Advisory Board; Miles Dooley seconded the motion. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Fred continued on with the meeting by explaining that the organization proposed to establish the Ivan Meeker Leadership Award. A copy of the requirements was handed out. Dale Myers made a motion to establish the award; Dave Anderson seconded the motion. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Robin Johnson told the group that they want to have the award established by next year and give it at the November SWAB meeting. A plaque will be given to the Meeker family at the SWAB meeting this year. The question was asked about why the award is

being presented at the SWAB meeting instead of at the Annual Dinner. Don Konkle explained that PFESI is asked by several groups to present awards at the dinner and if PFESI allows one group to do it they would have to allow all of them to.

Officers Report

Second Vice President Mike Liles told the group that he has been working on the by-laws. There are a few problems to fix before they are voted on. Hopefully they will be ready by the November meeting.

Robin Johnson asked for a motion to be entertained to hold the officers elections in November. Fred McCutcheon made a motion to postpone the elections until November; Norm Bowser seconded the motion. A question was asked about whether a person had to be in attendance to be elected. The person does not have to be in attendance, but a confirmation of acceptance is needed.

Financial Secretary, Joe Schmitt gave the financial report. Joe told the group he plans to put the expense voucher on the website so anyone who needs one may go to the website and print one out. Joe also told the group that anyone sending in an expense voucher needs to have receipts with it.

There was discussion regarding paying expenses for a couple of helpers from the Pittsburgh Fire Expo. There was not a previous motion to pay for their expenses. Joe told the group if you know something like that is going to occur you should get a motion to pay the expenses just so all the bases are covered. Dave Anderson made a motion to pay the expenses for the helpers; Chuck Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Tom Savage made a motion to accept the financial report; Dale Myers seconded the motion. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Legislative Report

Tom Savage reported that Comcast and Verizon have been invited to speak at the SWAB meeting later this afternoon and everyone is invited to stay and hear what they have to say regarding SB 1247. The Bill provides for State-issued cable franchises.

Tom went on to tell the group that he believes there is a chance of getting some legislation passed from SR 60 if everyone keeps working on it. Tom has met with the staff from the Governors office and also the committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness of both the House and Senate. The group discussed what was needed to get SR 60 legislation passed, who they should be talking to and what they could do to bring attention to the issues.

There was some discussion on Relief. Auditor General, Jack Wagner and his staff showed an interest in working with the firefighters to determine how to improve the relief program.

A question was asked about the VLAP funds. Tom told the group the loan volume went down and that there are now enough funds to support the program.

Old Business –None

New Business

Ernie Rojahn made a motion to have the Budget and Management Committee meet with Ulrich Mauser to develop a spending plan for the Legislative Federation. It had already been determined from discussions with Ulrich Mauser that more of the funds will be expended than is coming in. Discussion took place on the Federation funds and income. Fred McCutcheon seconded the motion. A couple of people spoke to the motion and encouraged people to vote no because it would not do any good and would just defeat the purpose of the organization. **The Motion was Defeated.**

It was requested that a receipt book be made available at the Pittsburgh Expo.

The nomination form will be put on the website.

Joe Deeney made a motion to pay the bills; Chuck Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Good of the Order

Robin Johnson told the group he thinks the organization is moving in the right direction and people need to get involved more to keep it moving.

Dave Anderson made a motion to adjourn; Nelson Brenneman seconded the motion.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Penny Biter
Recording Secretary