

Congressional Fire Services Institute
National Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Hilton Washington
April 8, 2011

- Steve Austin call meeting to order. Conducted Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence for the DC firefighters seriously injured in fire the previous night. Introduced Bill Jenaway, CFSI President, for comments
- Bill Jenaway discussed dinner, introduced board members present. Recognized past NAC chairs
- Steve Austin: Current economic challenges difficult for fire service.
- Eddie Buchanan: Big thank you to Sean for the seminars
- **Bill Webb's report:**
 - Dinner acknowledgements. 1800 people – same as last year. Number crunching on dollar figures later. Looking to expand and enhance program. Called on Ron Siarnicki to discuss the NFFF 9-11 Memorial Stair Climb program.
- Ron Siarnicki
 - Began in Denver to remember 9/11 and the firefighters who died. Also physical fitness component, training component. Registration fee goes into 9/11 fund.
- Bill Webb
 - BBQ fundraiser supported by DC Fire BBQ team. 120 tickets sold in advance, 170 sold that night. We will do it again next year. Thanks to Lion and John Granby for sponsoring.
 - Awards program: Pleased with EMS Awards program and the organizations that were honored.
 - Next year's dinner is May 2nd and 3rd at the Hilton again
 - Looking for new ideas for dinner, workshops, transportation etc.
 - Fundraising report:
 - Associates Club Program doing well. Getting new individuals and organizations.
 - Always exploring other fundraising opportunities.
 - Outreach. Continue to go to trade shows and conferences
 - Caucus leadership: Big changeover. Many efforts for educating new members on what fire service is about. Reichert in, Lieberman will be retiring at end of this Congress. Numbers down in caucus. We will reach out for caucus recruitment.
- **Sean Carroll's report**
 - Thanks and acknowledgements
 - During 111th Congress, we had about 325 caucus members. We lost 62 during reelections. There are 112 new members and we're actively educating new faces. Engaged leadership. Continue to reach out. We need largest AND most active caucus. At about 275 right now.
 - Senator Lieberman had planned on coming to the Board of Directors reception; stuck in traffic by White House but sends regards.
 - Legislation:

- A lot of focus on FY11 Appropriations. We are still on a CR. House approved a one-week extension and full year defense spending. The extension expires midnight tonight. Senate needs to take action and President needs to approve. Hope it gets resolved and so we can move forward on FY12.
 - Earlier in the year, House approved full year funding with an amendment that restored funding initially cut from SAFER, FIRE grants. Already working on FY12 along with FY11.
 - Senator Lieberman reintroduced FIRE and SAFER reauthorization bill in the Senate a few weeks ago; joined by Senators Collins, Carper, McCain, Sanders, and Scott Brown. It's the same bill as the previous one and we're still talking to the House to see where we're going with it and what their priorities are for this Congress.
 - Legislative memo in packets. Questions?
- Steve Austin: Introduce Tim Manning: Deputy Administrator for Protection and National Preparedness at FEMA
 - **Tim Manning:** Discuss where they see things going:
 - Publicly unveiling Presidential Decision Directive 8: National Preparedness directive to set out timeline to review and revise all governing documents on how agencies, organizations, etc. work together.
 - Questions
 - Joseph Muhammad: With regard to the TCLs and current events in Japan on everyone's mind, what is being done from FEMA? Anything different as far as best practices or lessons learned? Also, are the USAR teams dispatched to Japan still there?
 - Tim Manning: No, they're all back. We're providing a lot of assistance to Japan, especially through DoD and USAID. System is a merit to the service. We're learning more every day as response continues. REPP Program to provide reasonable assurance that local communities will be safe in case of problems at nuclear plants.
 - Break
 - **Presentation: Julie Rochman, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety**
 - Will talk about only wildfire today. There are a lot of vulnerabilities in this country. Goals: To fill gaps, create science-based guidance, identify and promote workable, affordable solutions to vulnerabilities.
 - Our test center is the only one of its kind in the world.
 - A lot of their research is about embers and ember transport as it can be most devastating
 - Research meant to open a dialogue, and then go further
 - Questions
 - Shane Ray: What is the percentage of loss in wild fire vs. traditional home fires?
 - Julie Rochman: Still small, but the problem is "the great unknown."
 - Meri-K Appy: Do we know much about the demographics of loss?
 - Julie Rochman: I will say one of the best programs I've seen is the Ready Set Go program that is working with both rural and urban communities, less affluent, etc. to educate all populations. Issue for us is the people who want to stay and defend their homes because it's all they have or they don't like government and want to take care of things themselves. Vulnerable populations (with regards to income, etc.) not necessarily disproportionately affected.

- Steve Austin: Do you plan any future tests that fire service can attend?
- Julie Rochman: Reenter fire experiments later this summer. Will let organizations know when those burns will take place. They focus on the 4 perils of wind, water, fire, and hail, not just fire. They have to look at other risks too. They have videos online and will put up more.
- **Presentation: Panel Discussion on the Economic Challenges Facing the Nation's Fire and Emergency Services**
- Kevin O'Connor:
 - From federal to state and local levels, the fire service is under attack. We have to sit together and stay united on federal level. On the state and local level, pensions and bargaining rights are under attack. It's a significant and legitimate economic battle. We need to be vigilant and aware, and prepare to deal with it.
- Question: Shane Ray: How many firefighters have been laid off?
- Barry Kasinitz: 5,000
- Phil Stittleburg:
 - We're seeing a decrease in availability of volunteers, and a decrease in money. Money dedicated to equipment etc, and there's not much left in the budget. Fundraising is a challenge as well. Look to cost cutting, but long term impact won't be realized for a while.
 - Need to modify recruiting attitude for volunteers; right now exclude a portion of communities who want to volunteer but don't have time/want to risk being an actual firefighter.
 - Rethink how we do training; need to look at classroom training and how to make it more flexible for people
 - Demonstrate value of services to community
 - Focus on diversity in recruiting
 - Need to rethink how to best engage the "twenty-somethings"...fire service is aging, just like the general population.
- Mark Light:
 - One thing that's fairly common across fire departments: being a fire chief is not fun anymore. They are under attack and stuck in the middle. The image of the fire service is nowhere near what it used to be.
 - Another concern: As cuts are made, if bad things don't happen, it reinforces that those cuts should continue. We need to have data to support the importance of the level of fire protection
 - Need to improve the image of the fire service; what's the long term plan for rebuilding confidence in the fire service? Work on education and awareness in community, but unfortunately budget cuts force support staff cuts and programs to go out into community.
- Questions and Comments:
 - Shane Ray: How do we first admit to ourselves that we've spent beyond our tax tolerance?
 - Kevin O'Connor: Have to demonstrate the need and justify the services provided to community. We also need to look at sustainable best practices, and be cognizant of our image.
 - Phil Stittleburg: We're really the "all-service service." People look to us to solve a lot of problems. We need to educate them on what we do. It's no longer possible to do "more with less." Are we still able to provide same services? If you (the community) want them to continue, you need to find funding. It's a political decision.
 - Mark Light: Sometimes we're our own worst enemy as far as public perceptions go.

- Bill Jenaway: Elected officials are being told that the fire/EMS service are “low hanging fruit” and those can be first to go for budgets. Trying to challenge that and show the importance of public safety and community confidence. Also see rise in corporate thinking and importance of ROI. Encouraging consolidation. We need to think differently about how we prepare.

- **Committee Reports**

- By-Laws: No report
- Ethics: No report
- Programmatic: No report.
- Membership: No report

- Meri-K: Reminder of the importance of the Associate’s Club

- **Resolutions:**

- **May as Building Safety Month Resolution (International Code Council)**

- Sara Yerkes of the International Code Council: Develop programs and activities to promote nationwide building safety awareness – safer codes, better buildings.
- Sara Yerkes: Move to approve resolution
- Meri-K Appy: Seconds motion
- Motion approved without objection

- **Carbon Monoxide Detection Devices Resolution (National Association of State Fire Marshals)**

- Bill Spencer: Require residential carbon monoxide detection devices to meet applicable ANSI/UL standards
- Spencer moves to approve
- Paul Brooks seconds motion
- Sara Yerkes: offered friendly amendment in last paragraph: “recommend we add ‘and the provisions contained in the international residential code as part of an overall effort to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning’”; no objection from maker or seconder of the motion, so the modification is approved.
- Meri-K Appy: second friendly amendment: point of clarification: There are nationally recognized codes that aren’t ANSI/UL, we may want to make sure language doesn’t over specify. I would move that we change the language to “nationally recognized testing laboratory standards”
- Bill Spencer: Concern will be addressed.
 - Motion approved without objection

- **Smoke Inhalation Hazards Resolution (Fire Engineering)**

- No one to present the offered resolution
- Paul Brooks moves to accept
- Don Oliver seconds motion
- No Discussion
- Motion approved without objection

- **Nationwide Public Safety Wireless Broadband Network Resolution (International Association of Fire Chiefs)**

- Ken LaSala presents: We have a one-time opportunity to establish nationwide broadband network. Communications problem is still one part of the 9/11 report that hasn't been fully addressed. Need D-block to develop network.
 - Ken LaSala moves to approve
 - Doug Aiken seconds
 - No further discussion
 - Motion approved without objection
- **Presentation: Bill Bingham, National Society of Executive Fire Officers**
 - Presenting report on white paper about fire service image management. Lapses in moral character combined with media exposure and economic/political environment have put fire service in crosshairs of the public.
 - Repair and rebuild ethical behavior by increasing awareness and code of conduct.
 - Ask to support and join in the initiative
 - Steve Austin: What role can CFSI play in dealing with this issue?
 - Refer to ethics committee, discuss who will be involved.
- **Unfinished business**
 - None
- **New business**
 - Meri-K offers free resources for education and awareness programs.
 - Ron Siarnicki reminds that dates for Memorial Day Weekend activities are October 14th, 15th, and 16th.
 - Steve Edwards: "Since we have all the accumulated national fire service organizations here, I was wondering if we should take a position or vote to support that or do something of that nature to show that we have unanimous support, or we have strong support, from all the national fire groups to move the reauthorization of the FIRE Act forward."
 - Steve Austin: "Well that would be in order, we'll accept that motion"
 - Steve Edwards: "Thank you"
 - Steve Austin: "Do we have a second?"
 - Motion to second
 - Steve Austin: "We don't need any discussion on this I hope, but if you have something bring it up or forever hold your peace."
 - No discussion
 - Motion approved without objection

NOTE OF CLARIFICATION: This motion does not take the form of a resolution which would need to come before the Resolutions Subcommittee before being presented to the full committee. It does however, reaffirm CFSI's continued support for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Program. The motion does not make reference to any specific piece of legislation that has or will be introduced in the 112th Congress to reauthorize both programs. CFSI will continue to work with the other fire service organizations to develop a consensus position on reauthorization legislation that Congress will consider during the 112th session.

- Steve Austin: October 26th is date for Fall Meeting
- **Presentation: Nelson Bryner, National Institute of Standards and Technology**
 - Presentation on Reconstructing Fire Dynamics
- **Election of Officers**
 - Denny Compton: Terms of our officers are 2 consecutive 1 year terms. Chairman Steve Austin and Vice Chairman Eddie Buchanan eligible for second term
 - Chairman nominations
 - Don Oliver moves to nominate Steve Austin as Chair
 - Steve Edwards seconds the motion
 - Motion approved without objection
 - Vice Chairman nominations
 - Don Oliver moves to nominate Eddie Buchanan as Vice-Chair
 - Meri-K Appy seconds
 - Motion to close by Ron Siarnicki
 - Second by Doug Aiken
 - Vote in favor of Chairman Austin and Vice Chairman Buchanan approved unanimously.