



## **DVFA EXECUTIVE MEETING**

**Delaware State Fire School**

**March 14, 2021**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic the March 14 DVFA Executive meeting was held at the Kent Fire School campus and was broadcast to the Sussex and New Castle sites. The table officers were at the Kent site in Dover.

Thanks to the Fire School and especially Kim O'Malley for hosting this meeting and doing the necessary work to broadcast to the New Castle and Sussex sites.

A quorum was present: 12 companies from New Castle, 13 companies from Kent and 12 companies from Sussex

Call to order at 10:05 A.M. by President Jay Jones

Invocation offered by Guy Hudson

Pledge of Allegiance led by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Dan Carrier

Roll Call of Officers by Secretary Elmer Steele

- [X] Jay Jones, 75, President
- [X] Dan Carrier, 19, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President
- [X] Ken Ryder, 48, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President
- [X] Elmer Steele 81, Corporate Secretary
- [X] Terry Whitham, 46, Treasurer
- [X] Ray Stevens, 88, Assistant Treasurer
- [ ] Past President – Director
- [X] Ron O'Neal, 83, Sussex County Director
- [X] Jim Arrington, 72, Sussex County Director
- [X] Tom DiCristofaro, 13, New Castle County Director
- [X] Richard J. Perillo, 12, New Castle County Director
- [X] Jim Woznicki, 53, Kent County Director
- [X] Gerald Manley, 44, Kent County Director

All Officers are present and/or accounted for at one of the three meeting sites

### **DVFA Staff**

- [X] Warren Jones, 16/86 Executive Manager

## **Report of Officers**

### **President Jones: (copied and pasted from written report)**

Since our last meeting I've logged only a few thousand miles due to a lot of phone and zoom meeting calls. I am glad to see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. We are continuing to get closer to in person meetings. I am pleased we were able to somewhat come together today.

Due to time I'll leave the Legislative part of this report to the Executive Manager Warren Jones.

I have notified the different County Association, that the State, County and Municipal governments are receiving stimulus monies from this last COVID-19 relief bill passed last week. Please seek out additional support if needed, the DVFA is here to assist you from these entities.

We are dealing with the Insurance Commissioner's office on 3 issues: Funding distribution, legislation dealing with cancer presumption, and also rescue billing. He is aware and his staff has been assigned to work on these issues, it is a slow process, but we will continue to work on this with their office. We have policies and procedures in place and we will follow those per his request. We hope for the best we will report back.

Anyone wishing to attend the Delmarva Volunteer Firemen's Association Convention, in Berlin, Maryland, it is on schedule for April 30th and May 1st. See Elmer Steele for more details.

I'm hopeful our next meeting will be in one location or at least in the same format as today. This meeting will be on June 13th.

I want to thank the fire school director and his staff for making today possible. I wish everyone a happy and safe in St Patrick's Day. Thank you for your confidence in me as your DVFA President.

### **First Vice President Carrier:**

- Attended numerous in-person meetings, zoom meetings and conference calls
- Re-appointed Life Safety committee and Scholarship committee for another year.

#### **Life Safety**

Guy Hudson, 90, Chair  
Ron Marvel, 87, Co-Chair  
Charles Boyer, 46  
Robert Yerkes, 52  
Steve White, 49  
Randall, 81  
Joe Mullen, 18  
Anthony Carnavale, 2,21  
Dwayne Pearson, 30  
Ginni Tice, LADVFA, Sussex  
Bobbi Albright, LADVFA, Sussex  
Karen Workman, LADVFA, Sussex  
Patricia Carnavale, LADVFA, NCC  
Ann Marie Kyrstopolski, LADVFA, NCC  
Penny Genty, LADVFA, Kent  
Muriel Gillespie, LADVFA, Kent  
Mike Lowe, DSFS

#### **Scholarship**

Ron O'Neal, 83, Co-Chair  
Ken Ryder, 48, Co-Chair  
Anthony Guzzo, 19, Co-Chair  
Bill Tobin, 89  
Dan Carrier, 19  
Alan Robinson, 44  
Ginni Tice, LADVFA, Sussex  
Karen Gebhart, LADVFA, NCC  
Tara Wilbur, LADVFA, Kent  
Kim O'Malley, DSFS  
Mike Lowe, DSFS

### **Second Vice President Ryder: (copied and pasted from written report)**

At this point I need to compile a report to cover where I have been and what has transpired since we were here in July of 2020. I've finished posting my events and reviewed my report that covers meetings, miles and the hours. It appears I've been travelling a lot less and attended far fewer events. For the most part all of it has been travelling locally within Kent County. The trips to meetings in New Castle and Sussex have all but ceased to exist so we have in a lot of ways lost touch with each other.



We final had a meeting...a zoom meeting of the R&R Task Force on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Most of the suggestions to date were reviewed and I should add that the basic list provided by Warren & the DVFA last year was adopted as the criteria to consider going forward. It needs some tweaking but all in all it provides a blue print of options. Our next meeting...a zoom meeting... is on Monday March 15<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm. Hopefully this next meeting will be a turning point to finalize the recommendations coming from the Task Force.

This is going to take the cooperation of the volunteer fire service statewide, our associations and the State of Delaware Legislative process working in tandem to implement these solutions here in Delaware. We must continue finding solutions because failure for the volunteer fire service is not an option!

I've had another area of concern...the insurance distribution formula for last year. So far to date our request to the commissioner for an explanation has had no success. We were told there didn't appear to be anything wrong with the calculations. At this point we are probably 30 days or so from this year's distribution. There is no chance that we can have any input now...we just have to wait and see what happens. Giving the benefit of the doubt here we can say this is in part due to the COVID situation.

The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary committee has provided the Delaware Fire Service with great mementos of this achievement in the form of books in hard cover edition for \$20.00 and soft cover edition for \$10.00 along with a custom designed Challenge Coin for \$10.00. In Kent County see Deb Lawhead, Bill Carrow or myself to discuss and purchase. In New Castle see 1<sup>st</sup> VP Dan Carrier and in Sussex see President Jones.

In conclusion, the DVFA Scholarship Fund. So far through February & March we have been promoting it. The deadline for submissions this year has been set for Wednesday March 31<sup>st</sup>. The information and applications are on the DVFA website for interested fire company and auxiliary members.

Advise your members seeking education and training to take advantage of this program. They could come away with some real help. It's not hard but you do have to apply.

I'll summarize my report by the activity items noted....report my attendance for 25 events, travelled 279 miles ....40 hours in-service. These are the ones recorded for this quarter.... Let's see where we go for the next one!

**Secretary Steele: (copied and pasted from written report)**

- Not much to report for this quarter
- Spent a lot of time at home, trying to stay safe and healthy
- Just starting to get out a little, but being very careful
- Finally got the 1<sup>st</sup> dose of the COVID – 19 vaccine. No side effects
- My 2<sup>nd</sup> dose is scheduled for next week. Hope it goes well
- Event schedule is listed below
- 4 events, 315 miles, 13 hours

**Treasurer Whitham: (copied and pasted from written report)**

As of February 28<sup>th</sup>, we record the following balances:

Operations checking account- \$ 142,236.65

M&T Money Market- \$ 163,057.04

Expenses since July 1<sup>st</sup>, to date have totaled \$ 67,784.29. All expenses are in line with the six (6) month budget review. The telephone budget might run slightly over due to the use of the conference line.

The financial review has been completed by Bumpers & Company. Due to the pandemic, it has been hard getting the budget committee together to review. All the non-profit tax forms have been submitted to the IRS along with the State of Delaware franchise tax.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, we wired \$ 2,029,400.02 to Northern Trust to cover year 2020 pension. We made a conscious decision not to charge late assessments due to the slowness of the mail delivery.

As of the end of February, the Crawford Financial account value is \$ 252,523.32. We also transferred \$ 100,000.00 into the Money Market account. Keep in mind some of those funds are dedicated for upcoming projects. It will soon be time for the Finance & Budget committee to start working on FY 21-22 budgets. Remember that there will be a dues reduction of \$ 500.00 per company that would have normally been dedicated to the conference.

Question from Tom DiCristofaro regarding not charging late fees this year due to slow mail delivery. What happens next year when a company says they mailed it, but it did not arrive on time. President Jones instructed the Treasurer to meet with the committee to formulate a plan of action for next year.

**Assist. Treasurer Ray Stevens: (Conf. Treasurer's report-copied and pasted from written report)**

1. As of the above date, we record the following Conference Accounts Balances
  - Conference Checking Account \$ 6,010.99
  - Conference Money Market Acct. \$100,752.95 \*
- The Money Market Account **INCLUDES** funds for the new Conf. App, funds received from the State Amb. Association and the DVFA Members 2021 Dues.
2. All Conference 2020 refunds totaling \$27,108.00 have been made to everyone along with a Thank You letter for their support.
3. Likewise, the DVFA also received Refund Checks from both Dover Downs and the D.J. totaling \$25,000 and \$525.00 respectively.
4. At Present Time, the 2020 Conference shows a DEFICIT OF \$10,205.00 as follows:

Income: (Souvenir Sales to date)	\$1,015.00
Expenses: Office Supplies, Cost of Souvenirs	
Social Media Advertising	\$11,220.00
<b>DEFICIT</b>	<b>10,205.00</b>
5. Conference 2021 - 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup>

**Motion by Glenn Gillespie and second by Steve White to accept the Officer reports and spread them upon the minutes. Motion carried**

**Executive Manager Jones: (copied and pasted from written report)**

**SB63 Foam Bill:** After a phone call from Fire Chief Hopkins of Milton we contacted the sponsors and added an amendment to the bill covering our liability when we are cleaning our foam equipment.

**Presumption Legislation:** It is in the pipeline. There was a friendly amendment we were contacted about to add the three ambulance companies to the bill. We agreed and it should be coming out pretty soon.

**Commission Legislation:** HB82 is a piece of Commission Legislation which just came out to change the term limits of the commissioners.

**Governor's Bond Bill:** There is \$2 Million in there for First Responder Radios, \$1.5 Million added to the Revolving Loan Fund and the Rescue Tool Money.

**Governor's Office:** We have been working with the Governor's Office on adding additional money for the radios, getting vaccinations for all our members including Associates and Auxiliary and the lost income because of COVID.



**Recruitment and Retention Task Force:** The Task Force has met this year. They have approved a plan to move forward with. Some of the details still need to be worked out. Once those details are finalized, the final report will be completed, legislation will be drawn up and it should be passed this year. Once the final report is completed, we will forward it to all the fire companies. The plan parts are as follows:

1. Have the fire school develop a Recruitment and Retention Training Class for Fire Company Officers, Membership Committees and Fire Company Recruiters.
  2. Establish an AmeriCorps Program through the Delaware Volunteerism Office to promote Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment.
  3. Hire another Staff Member at the Fire School who will manage the Recruitment and Retention Program and the AmeriCorps Members.
  4. Copy the GEMS Program in Sussex County and install it in all the school districts throughout the State. The AmeriCorps Members and their Manager would be responsible for the GEMS program.
  5. The DVFA would pay for and maintain the Recruitment and Retention Website
  6. City of Wilmington: Have the City Legislators and Council encourage youth in Wilmington to join the Volunteer Fire Companies bordering the City of Wilmington.
  7. Have the Vocational High Schools in Delaware offer firefighting, EMT and EMR classes in their CTE Programs.
  8. Have classes taught at the Fire School qualify for college credits.
  9. Offer a Tuition Reimbursement program for graduate and under graduate studies at Delaware Colleges and Universities similar to the law enforcement program.
  10. Increase the State Tax Credit to \$1,000.00.
- That is the highlight of the plan the details need to be finalized and accepted.

**By-laws change:** We have a by-law change that is coming out to address the situation with the officers which occurred last year. The bylaws committee is working on this. We will send it out 30 days or more prior to our next meeting so you can vote on it at the June Meeting.

## Committee Reports

### State Fire Prevention Commission – Ron Marvel: (copied and pasted from written report)

The following are the highlights of the December, January and February Fire Commission meetings.

- The Commission has been busy during this 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter supporting the vaccine efforts for first responders. Commissioners and staff have assisted these efforts in every area available to us.
- OEMS has a stock of PPE, Gloves, Goggles and Face Shields for companies that are not able to get them from their supplier. Reach out to OEMS through their request form provided by them.
- Paul Eichler reported to the Commission that a non-profit organization has begun reaching out to fire and ems companies regarding a Partners in Public Safety Solutions. This program was developed by a retired New Castle County Police Officer and intended to enhance mental health care for first responders.
- The Commission is coming to the end of the EMT recertification period and would like to remind everyone that EMT certifications expiring in 2021 are due to renew by March 31, 2021.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> half traffic funds were distributed \$33.68 per PCR.
- The Commission met with Gov. Carney for our annual meeting.
- HB82, allowing for some changes in the Commission terms and getting financial assistance for drug & alcohol abuse in the emergency medical field, was released to the House floor.
- Protocols have been accepted and 1518 EMT'S have passed the on-line test.
- The quarterly scratch report was accepted.

\* The next Commission Meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2021.

**Advisory to State Fire Marshal – Grover Ingle: (copied and pasted from written report)**

- COVID-19 Agency Operations – The Office of the State Fire Marshal is fully operational. The offices are being staffed with minimal employees and the public is still prohibited from entering the buildings. The employees not assigned to the division offices are working remotely. All services are being delivered efficiently during these unprecedented times with necessary modifications. The Governor’s orders, Department of Public Health (DPH) and Center Disease Control (CDC) guidelines including but not limited to social distancing and face coverings are being followed. Employees or anyone permitted to enter the buildings are required to complete a temperature and wellness check as well as wear face coverings in common areas and when in contact with other persons in the office. On March 1, 2021 we resumed in-person inspections following the required guidelines and the Deputy Fire Marshal’s have returned to working from the office as well as remotely.
- Fire Fatalities – There is one fire fatality for 2021 and a smoke alarm was present, no fire suppression system was present or required by code. In 2020 there was 10 fire fatalities, six had no working smoke alarms and four had working smoke alarms and all 10 had no fire suppression systems or were they required by code.
- Deputy Fire Marshal I New Castle County/Sussex County – Kathryn Haddaway graduated from the New Castle County Police Academy on January 14, 2021 and has been assigned to the Fire Investigation and Code Enforcement Discipline in New Castle County. Currently she is in field training assigned to Deputy Fire Marshal III Henry T. Alfree. Interviews for the vacant Sussex County Deputy Fire Marshal I position will be taken place on March 15 & 17, 2021.
- Fire Protection Specialist I Sussex County - John Colpo begins employment with the Office of the State Fire Marshal on March 15, 2021. John is a member of the Lewes Fire Department where he currently holds the position of Assistant Chief.
- Administrative Officer Kent County – Christine Galaska has been promoted to Administrative Officer effective January 4, 2021.
- Office Manager Kent County – Lora Crowley has been promoted to Office Manager effective March 1, 2021.
- Administrative Specialist I Kent County – Currently there are two vacant positions in Kent County. Interviews to fill those positions are scheduled for March 23 & 24, 2021.
- Joint Finance Committee Hearing – On February 16, 2021 we had our hearing before the Joint Finance Committee. Our budget proposals for FY 2022 were computer license for our Salesforce program, funding to replace computer switches that are near the end of their life cycle and funding to replace the Arson Van. The requested items were included in the Governor’s recommended budget for FY2022.
- State Fire Prevention Commission Regulations (SFPR’s) – Updates to the SFPR’s has been published in the February Register of Regulations. The public comment period closed on March 3, 2021. The proposed changes will be discussed at the Commission meeting on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 and the next actions will be determined.
- DFIRS Reports - We continue to work with each Company on their submittals and cleaning up the data. E-NFIRS went live the end of October 2020. There are still some minor issues that are being solved but no major issues at this time.



**Advisory to DSFS – Robert P. Newnam: (copied and pasted from written report)**

1. Speaker Seminar none scheduled due to COVID-19
2. Instructor's workshops to be scheduled as required
  - a. Vehicle Rescue Instructors held a Video workshop this Month
3. Budget Hearing was held on February 16<sup>th</sup> — Conducted by Video – went well.
  - a. Includes one-time funding for Data Switches 60k
  - b. DSFS Record System 80k, yearly
  - c. Number of questions on student attendance
4. Bond Bill Hearing to be scheduled —video
  - a. Generator for New Castle Division 1.2M (recommended)
  - b. Concrete repairs — SCBA building pad 75K (recommended)
  - c. Rescue Tools (recommended) 2 companies and DSFS (recommended)
5. Certification Testing — Pearson VIJE test site at Dover Center operational
6. Washer/Dry for Instructor & Ins. Aide gear installed at Sussex Division
7. Grounds generator replaced at the Dover Center, now natural gas.
8. Conducting training by use of Zoom, WebEx, Facebook
  - a. Financial Overview class conducted
  - b. Injury Prevention programs presented to schools
  - c. Building Construction class conducted in-service with zoom attendees
9. DSFS staff is working on the future while ensuring learning and skill levels are maintained.
10. DSFS staff and Instructor's support and effort — your school has been operation al and providing in person training since last fall.
  - a. Training and re-certifying EMTs
  - b. Conducting classes at both the Dover Center and the Divisions
  - c. An in-service at your stations
  - d. With your support, dedication to training by the Officers and Members education has continued, and will continue.
    - Accepting health checks, masks, smaller class sizes, meals to go (a hit)

**DVFA Conference – Dave Ruff: (text message)**

The DVFA CONFERENCE Committee will be having a Conference Call meeting tomorrow night March 15th at 7:00 P.M. to discuss the planning of 100-year Anniversary of the Delaware Volunteer Firefighters Association Annual Conference.

**Life Safety – Guy Hudson: (hand written note)**

- The committee will be going over the matching funds requests and turning them over to the Fire Commission.
- We have the first place winners from Sussex and Kent Counties for the poster and essay contest.
- We will be figuring out judging and a ceremony in the near future.

**Recruitment & Retention – Ron O'Neal: (copied and pasted from written report)**

The Recruitment & Retention Committee's activities have been unfortunately severely curtailed by the COVID pandemic. There has only been 1 recorded request for information from the Firefighter.Delaware.gov website since January 1, 2021. Hopefully, once the Governor reduces or lift's the restrictions associated with the pandemic, firehouses will be open again and the Committee can resume attending events around the State.

Working in conjunction with WBOC on an event arranged by President Jay Jones, the Committee was able to present a short interview shown on DelmarvaLife in mid-February, with the focus on volunteering in the fire service. Many saw the interview as it was shown on TV twice, and as of March 8, Terry Ayers of WBOC had collected social viewer numbers for the spot:

DVFA Facebook - 778 views (311 engagements, 9 likes, 48 shares)  
DelmarvaLife Facebook – 365 views (4 shares) in 4 days

WBOC has again reached out to the Committee and is willing work with us on future projects in order to promote the volunteer fire service.

**Scholarship – Ron O’Neal: (copied and pasted from written report)**

The scholarship application package for 2021 has been placed on-line on the DVFA website and notification of that package has been sent to fire service representatives across the State by the DVFA Executive Manager. Deadline for applications to be received at the Fire School in Dover is March 31, 2021. Once all applications have been received, the Scholarship Committee will be meeting to review the submissions and award the scholarships.

As of March 14, 2021, there is \$9,390.82 available from the DVFA Foundation’s Scholarship Account to be distributed towards the selected scholarship applications.

**Communications:**

The following communications were received and were summarized by Secretary Steele

- Card from Leslie Bird thanking us for her Scholarship
- Delegate and Alternate changes from the following companies: Ellendale, Elsmere, Belvedere, Magnolia, Cheswold, Minquas, Carlisle, Port Penn, Clayton and Georgetown.
- Letter from Odessa advising of the dissolving of their Auxiliary.
- Letter from Carlisle and Clayton with reference to the officers not being changed.
- Letter from Kent County Levy Court reference the Community Services Grant.
- Letter from Bowers about the loss of income because of the Pandemic.

**OLD BUSINESS**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

- *Motion by Tom DiCristofaro and second by Richard T. Perillo that the State Fire Poster and Essay Awards program be renamed to honor Mike and Winnie Rush, so with that being said, the motion reads **The Mike and Winnie Rush State of Delaware Fire Safety Poster and Essay Awards program.** Motion carried unanimously*
- Question was raised regarding the surf fishing tags. Can there be a sticker just for park entrance for those that don’t want to go on the beach to fish? President Jones stated that this can be looked at, but it will take legislation to make any change to the law.



## PAYMENT OF BILLS

Treasurer Whitham highlighted the bills to be paid.

3/12/21  
Accrual Basis

Delaware Volunteer Firefighter's Association  
Expenses by Vendor Summary  
December 1, 2020 through March 12, 2021

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	<u>Dec. 1, '20 – Mar. 12, '21</u>
Amtrust North America	118.00
AT&T Mobility	149.51
Bumpers & Company	7,762.50
Canon	542.64
Chief Technologies, LLC	480.00
Comcast	1,433.94
Delaware State Chamber of Commerce	500.00
Dolly Ingram	2,055.00
DVFA Conference	30,000.00
M&T	1,312.99
Northern Trust Company	2,029,400.02
Pratt Insurance	4,447.00
RR Donnelley	15,051.00
Steve Austin	115.55
U.S. Postal Service	<u>204.00</u>
TOTAL	2,093,572.15

*Motion by Steve White and second by Glenn Gillespie to pay the bills as presented.*

**Motion carried**

## GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

NONE

Benediction offered by Guy Hudson

### ADJOURNMENT

It was regularly moved by Steve White and seconded by Guy Hudson that the March Executive Meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM

Next meeting will be June 13, 2021

**Respectfully submitted,**  
*Elmer B. Steele*  
Elmer B. Steele  
Corporate Secretary

I hereby attest that this a true copy of the proceedings of the Delaware Volunteer Firefighter's Association Executive Meeting held on March 14, 2021.

**Attest: Warren F. Jones**  
Executive Manager

**Jay Jones**  
President