

Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
December 8, 1996

The December meeting was called to order by President, Joseph Hojnicky, Sr.. The invocation was offered by Rev. Art Titus, followed by the flag salute lead by 1st Vice President, Donald Knight.

President Hojnicky announced that the DVFA would support the request from Mill Creek Fire Company concerning a request to help Wayne Steen. Representative Gilligan is preparing legislation to reimburse Mr. Steen. The chances of changing the Workmen's Compensation bill is nil. President Hojnicky also announced that it will be necessary to make your own reservations for the F.D.I.C. meeting. The American Cancer Society is looking for a way to honor members of the fire service for their support in aiding cancer patients.

President Hojnicky reported that the officers and directors met earlier in the day to discuss the Amabili letter and decided that this matter is in and should remain in the hands of the Delaware State Fire Prevention Commission. He asked that any fire company who wished to comment on this issue do so in writing to the Commission. He requested that a banquet be planned to honor Lou Amabili, utilizing a fire station central to the State.

Reports of Elected Officers

The written reports of the officers, outlining activities, meetings and other events, were submitted in written form and are attached to these minutes. John Mitchell moved, Robert Romig seconded, to accept the reports of the officers as submitted. Motion carried.

Steve Austin, Out-of-State Coordinator, asked to dispense with the regular order of business. He introduced Christine Schultz, DVFA liaison, who announced that State Farm Insurance would be donating another 911 simulator to the State Fire School and also Smoke Detector kits were available for each company to pick up at the end of the meeting. Steve then introduced Dr. Paul Davis, who announced that he will be conducting a clinic at the Delaware State Fire School to prepare for the Firefighters Combat Challenge, which will be held at the grandstand during the Delaware State Fair.

Dan Kiley announced that they have been authorized by the Commission to hire a second person to participate in the Child Firesetters Program. Special legislation maybe needed for this position. The U.S.F.A. Arson Unit Management Study made some recommendations, which were rated "well" to "good". A task force is needed to promote the awareness of arson problems. He then spoke of the recent tragedy in New Castle County. The fire and rescue efforts went well beyond

the call of duty. Efforts to step up the level of awareness of promoting the use of smoke detectors is critical.

Committee Reports

Communications: The State is working on the towers in Kent County. When the pilot program is completed and accepted, the rest of the fire service will be tested and put on line at that time. They are planning to meet with the other two counties so they can be compatible. Better rates are being negotiated for the use of cellular phones.

Communicable Diseases: Hep. B shots are progressing well (41 are registered, 13 are up to date; 10 have not responded, which is of concern to the Committee); the Committee will be meeting with Div. of Public Health to discuss Hep.B and tetanus inoculations, which will become available at a later date.

Computer Technology: Meetings have been successful; demonstrations on the "on-line" system will be conducted for the Commissioners and Committee; an effort is being made to have all fire companies on the "Internet".

State Fire School: The position of Director is now open for applicants; anyone wishing to make recommendations should do so in writing as soon as possible to the Fire Prevention Commission; would like to have this position filled in-house.

Conference Liaison: Thanked all who provided conference guidelines; however, they only received 3 responses out of 50; workshops will be held in February. Donald Knight reported that 169 conference surveys were returned, 5 were void (duplicates); all remarks on the surveys have been listed and given to the Committee.

Final Conference Report: Ted Doyle reported that they are waiting for corporate sponsors; he apologized to the Fire Chiefs for the way their meeting was handled; he was dissatisfied with the pictures used in the Memorial Service. He then thanked everyone for their help. President Hojnicky congratulated him on a job well done and presented him with a resolution to that effect.

Conference '97: Meetings will be held at Norman Tate's home (he is disabled at this time) the first Sunday of each month; the Committees will meet the second Sunday

DVFA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

December 8, 1996

Page 3

of each month at Magnolia. Educational opportunities are to be expanded and workshops are being planned; also, social activities, i.e. a dance on Friday night are being considered.. President Hojnicky asked that a budget be presented at the March meeting.

Fire Prevention: Fire Prevention awards are to be presented this date; the fire prevention system has been expanded; the non-existence of batteries in smoke detectors is a major problem in the State of Delaware; the Millsboro smoke house is available for viewing after the meeting.

Law and Legislative: Copies of new General Assembly members were distributed

Newsletter and Archives: Hall of Fame guidelines, which were based on the MD State Firemen's Assoc., have been received. Input, i.e. photographs, articles, letters, etc., for the newsletter is not being received; there are currently 14 subscriptions; ads are also requested and appreciated. President Hojnicky requested the listing of legislators be incorporated in the next issue. President Hojnicky then thanked Stacey Northam for her work during the Conference.

Permanent Memorial: Cracks and filling of bricks is needed; looking into having a highway sign installed designating the Memorial.

Recruitment and Retention: Working on installing a "800" number; a new logo is being adopted; place mats will be placed in restaurants; working on Public Service Announcement with Kyle Petty and final touches are being arranged on the recruitment tape, which is targeting the 16-25 age group.

Scholarship: Joe Heckler presented a check from Minquadale Fire Co. in the amount of \$1,000 to establish a "*Joseph W. Hojnicky, Sr. Scholarship Fund*"; the deadline for receipt of nominations is March 31; funding exceeded \$10,000 this past year; a check was received from Senator Roth for the Scholarship Fund.

State Fire Prevention Commission: Chairman Haley asked each fire company for comment on the proposed regulations for fire lanes and the LP gas controversy; requested input on how to better utilize/improve the New Castle and Georgetown facilities; meeting was held with Dr. Sylvester, Director of Public Health, concerning an agreement with the Fire School on the AED recertification; also working on the national registry and quality controls; there is a need for a new draft of the ambulance regulations. The Commission has received Lou Amabili's retirement notice and it has been accepted. Mr. Amabili has been placed on administrative leave until the end of December. Joe Murabito has been named

DVFA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

December 8, 1996

Page 4

Acting Director. The position of Director has been posted internally to full-time Senior Instructors, who, if interested, must apply by December 13, 1996. He reiterated the need to realize the contributions Lou Amabili has made to the Fire School and would like him remembered in a positive way.

Supplemental Funding: A report will be available at the March meeting; the insurance tax distribution method will not be discussed.

State Ladies Auxiliary: President Barbara Lewis reported that the day care fire prevention program is going quite well; she is attending all County meetings and stressing the need for recruitment and retention.

National Volunteer Fire Council: A meeting is being arranged with Senator Biden; FLSA is petitioning the Dept. of Labor; reactivating the Coalition; trying to get the regulations changed concerning surplus property; urged all to attend the VIP Program.

Partners in Progress: Allen Metheny stated the purpose was to coordinate corporate sponsorships; there will be a National Volunteer Fire Council grant training program for officers in Delaware in dealing with the press; also the Retention Program is being supported through the management of volunteer fire companies.

Communications:

The Secretary read all communications received and reported that all had been discussed at the Officers meeting and assigned to appropriated committees. These consisted of: a letter from President Hojnicky to DVFA Mutual Relief informing them that he has appointed Ray Krett as the Trustee from New Castle County, Indian River requesting each Company donate a patch to the Firemen's Historical Foundation of DelMarVa, Inc., Five Points, Volunteer Hose, Odessa, and Delaware City requesting total parade scores, Indian River notifying this Association of the selection of their delegates and alternates for the 1997 Conference, Delaware City requesting that typographical errors in names of members in the Annual Report and Conference program and requesting permission to sponsor a trophy for the Second best appearing Straight Aerial Apparatus to be called the Chief Emeritus Charles Neel Trophy, Resolutions presented by this Association to Hockessin and Delmar on the occasion of their celebration of sixtieth and seventy-fifth years respectively, Robbins Hose Company expressing their concern on the trend of financial distribution from the Fire Insurance Tax and requesting that the Association investigate alternative funding opportunities, letter from President Hojnicky to Robbins Hose responding to the preceding letter, New Castle Chiefs

DVFA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

December 8, 1996

Page 5

expressing their displeasure with the method of how the State Chief's meeting was orchestrated, specifically the treatment of the Speaker and refreshments following the meeting, Insurance & Financial Services, Ltd., requesting mailing addresses for the Presidents and Chiefs of the Fire Companies in Delaware for the purpose of expanding their insurance business, a memorandum from the National Volunteer Fire Council updating this Association on the activities of the Council, Memos from the Secretary to all DVFA Past Presidents and Fire Company Presidents requesting input on the Conference survey and Conference Liaison Committee Draft report, and the distribution of Parade score results and Officer's meeting update, Sussex County Fire Chiefs' Association echoing the concerns expressed by the New Castle Chiefs' concerning the social hour, presentation and refreshment situation of the State Chiefs meeting, Laurel Fire Department copy of a letter sent to the Chair of the Conference Liaison Committee expressing their concerns with the proposed Conference guidelines specifically the increased funding requested per company and the awarding of prizes on a statewide basis by accumulated points, copies of resolution presented to the family of the late John R. Pruitt and Five Points lamenting his loss due to sudden illness and Aetna Hose, Hook & Ladder which lauds their Fire Department on being named Fire Department of the month in September by the NVFC, from New Castle County Association informing us of their 75th Anniversary celebration to be celebrated in February 1997 and requesting this Association purchase an add for their program book, Department of Transportation informing the President of a Safety Management System meeting on November 25th and requesting his participation, letter from Kent County Firemen's Association expressing their position of opposing purple lights atop vehicles leading funeral processions, an invitation from Millsboro Fire Company announcing they are hosting the Annual Del-Mar-Va Convention in May of 1997, with an attached itinerary, from the Ladies' Auxiliary of the DVFA requesting that the Association allow the Ladies Auxiliary be allowed to share the Recruitment & Retention booth at the Delaware State Fair in July of 1997 and Wilmington Manor expressing their concern about statements allegedly made by the Chair of the Fire Prevention Committee.

OLD BUSINESS

The letter from New Castle County concerning Tax cut of \$3,000.00 per active member was referred to the Officers for review and recommendation. The Officers recommend this proposal be referred to the Law & Legislative Committee.

The method of Scholarship selection by the Scholarship Committee is currently being studied by the Officers. Further deliberations are required prior to a recommendation being offered for consideration by the members.

John Mitchell moved, Jon Cottrell seconded, that the President's legislative priorities be approved. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Jasper Lakey moved, Jeff Eisenbrey seconded, that the President appoint a Committee, in conjunction with the three county organizations, to organize a retirement party, at a central location, for retiring Director, Lou Amabili. Motion carried.

Charles Honey moved, John Bare seconded that the Association accept the Conference guidelines, with the incorporation of comments received from Member Companies and that any further changes be brought up at a future Executive Committee meeting. Motion carried.

Charles Honey on behalf of the Conference Liaison Committee requested \$500.00 for Committee expenses. President Hojnicky referred this request to the Treasurer and Finance Committee.

Charles Honey moved, John Bare seconded, that each fire company be assessed \$1,000 for Conference '97. After discussion, Mr. Honey was instructed to present a budget concerning this issue at the March meeting. The motion was declared out of order by the President.

Roland Neeman moved, Charles O. Smith seconded, that the DVFA donate a banner to the Ladies Auxiliary. Motion carried.

William R. Carrow moved, Robert Romig seconded, that the Ladies Auxiliary be allowed to share the Recruitment and Retention booth at the Delaware State Fair, July '97. Motion carried.

John Mitchell moved, Karl Walters seconded, to not support the purple light at funeral processions. Motion carried.

Payment of Bills

The Treasurer read bills totaling \$10,477.68, which were approved by the Finance Committee. Jasper Lakey moved, Harry Warner seconded, that the Treasurer be authorized to pay the bills as submitted. Motion carried.

DVFA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

December 8, 1996

Page 7

Good of the Association

Joe Murabito, Acting Director, State Fire School, assured everyone that any time there is a transition in leadership, there is bound to be some anxiety in the process. He announced that Florence Legates had rescinded her planned retirement; that Wayne Hutchison, after 30 years service, would retire on December 31, 1996; and that the New Castle County Fire Training Center is open for use.

Motion to return to New Business

Harry Warner moved, Randy Roberts seconded, to revert to New Business. Motion carried.

J. William Bell moved, Jasper Lakey seconded, that the Treasurer assess each company \$1,000 for Conference '97. Motion carried.

Good of the Association

Ladies Auxiliary President, Barbara Lewis expressed her thanks for allowing them to share the Recruitment and Retention booth at the Delaware State Fair and for donating the banner to the Ladies Auxiliary.


There being no further business, it was moved and seconded that the Executive Committee meeting be adjourned. The Benediction was offered by Rev. Art Titus. The meeting was adjourned by President Hojnicky at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Janice S. Yerkes
Recording Secretary**

Attachments: Officer Reports

I Certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Proceedings of the Executive Meeting of the Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association held on Sunday, December 8, 1996. Issued under my hand this 8th day of January, 1997.

Attest: 
James E. Turner, III
Secretary