

Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association

Officer's Meeting Minutes

November 19, 1996

The Officers Meeting of the Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association (DVFA) was convened at 6:30 P. M by President Joseph W. Hojnicky, Sr., at the Magnolia Fire Company Social Hall. The invocation was offered by Director Steve Austin. The meeting was recessed due to the serving of dinner.

The meeting was reconvened by the President at 7:20 P. M.

President Hojnicky thanked everyone for their support and outstanding contributions, including the Minquadale Ladies during for the delicious meal. He reported that many issues, some sensitive would be reviewed and deliberated this evening.

The following were present: Joseph W. Hojnicky, Sr., Donald W. Knight, Michael H. Vincent, James E. Turner, III, William R. Carrow, J. Allen Metheny, Lynn J. Rogers, Dale A. Callaway, Stephen P. Austin, James L. Cabbage, Jr., Jasper H. Lakey, Jon B. Cottrell, Carrol B. Jester, James W. King, Clarence R. O'Neal, Jr., Theodore Doyle, Eileen Doyle, Marvin Sharp, Norman L. Amendt, Anthony R. Guzzo, Barbara Lewis, Bonnie Workman, Pat McCall, Virginia Yeager, John P. Fox, Les Warrick, David Foraker, Sr., Larry Mergenthaler, Tony Carnovelli, J. William Bell and Eleanor Raye Warrington.

President Hojnicky introduced President David Foraker, Mill Creek who provided the Officers an overview of the Wayne Steen incident. Local and State legislative representatives are willing to introduce legislation to pay for Steen's medical expenses. Mill Creek is asking for the support of the DVFA. Tony Carnivelli reported that the expenses to date totaled over \$550,000.00 There are three Workmen's Compensation cases pending.

President Hojnicky recommended that the Association's attorneys, Young, Conway and Taylor be used to review the Steen and other two cases. It is his wish that all the cases be brought to a successful conclusion. Further, that recommendations be developed for legislation which will rectify the current situation encountered by Fire Service personnel. It was further recommended that the DVFA utilize the Tierney Group, our media relations representatives, to organize a positive media campaign. The Chair of Mutual Relief was directed to investigate the potential of purchasing an insurance policy to cover these type of incidents.

Following further discussion, it was regularly moved, seconded and unanimously passed that the DVFA support a special interest bill in the Legislature to support and pay for Wayne Steen's medical expenses, former and future wages and his family's needs.

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It was regularly moved, seconded and passed that the President appoint a select Committee to study and report back to the Association at the March Executive Committee meeting the problems encountered by the Fire Service and potential solutions to be implemented.

Clarence R. O'Neal, Jr., Co-Chair of the Scholarship Committee reported on the method used by the Committee to select Scholarship recipients. A copy of the Scholarship guidelines will be distributed to the Officers. It was regularly moved, seconded and passed that a copy of this criteria be sent to the Elsmere Fire Company.

President Hojnicky reported on the receipt of the letter from Robbins Hose Company concerning the inequities of the Fire Insurance Tax funds throughout the state and the Association's response. It was regularly moved, seconded and passed that a Committee be appointed to study this issue and report back by no later than the March Executive Committee meeting.

President Warrick reported that following the Conference of the Mill Creek members in attendance, he would recommend to his Fire Company that no public action be initiated until after the March Executive meeting.

It was requested that the Insurance Leveling Up Committee's name be changed to the Supplemental Funding Committee.

It was agreed that the DVFA would reserve and be billed for 60 meals at the December Executive meeting and no meals would be reserved for the March and June Executive Committee meetings.

State Farm Insurance will be making a special presentation at the Essay Awards presentation to each of the Fire Departments.

It was agreed that all News & Views title submittal will be recognized in the next issue of the paper. It was further agreed that the Title would remain the same.

It was reported that 149 questionnaires on the Conference were returned. There were no clear cut choices. 78 of 121 preferred a move of the Conference location while 77 of 136 desired to remain in Rehoboth. It was agreed that the Conference for the following three years should be put out for bid. Ted Doyle was delegated to implement a Request for Proposal to initiate this activity. There was additional discussion on the Conference Liaison report. It was regularly moved, seconded and carried that the Conference Liaison Committee develop criteria for the Conference and report to the Association at the March Executive Committee meeting for discussion.

Ted Doyle, Chair of Conference 96, submitted the Conference financial report.

J. William Bell, Chair of Conference 97, reported on Committee progress to date. One of the Committee's goals is to build upon Corporate sponsorships, expand upon educational opportunities through the use of seminars for Fire fighters, Fire, EMS and Administrative Officers. They are currently exploring a Social event for Friday evening. It was directed that Allen Metheny be Conference Treasurer. Chairman Bell reported that monthly computer reports outlining investments and expenditures will be distributed on a monthly basis.

It was reported that the Health Department's EMS Director position was posted in house. This should be followed by a Statewide posting for the position.

C. J. Benz, Provident Insurance Company, was introduced and briefed the members present on the Insurance policy which is sold to Fire Departments across the state which alleviates the Worker Compensation issues/difficulties.

Director Austin reported on the proposed Partners in Progress Committee. The Draft proposal and Committee member recommendations are attached. It was regularly moved, seconded and passed that the proposal be adopted and the Committee be appointed with the Treasurer acting as the Chair.

Treasurer Metheny reported on the 21st Century fund application process sponsored by the National Volunteer Fire Council. He recommended that a Committee be appointed to address this issue. The selected topic items for the application of the funding are: Safety, Training & Education, Personal Protective Equipment and Memorials. It was suggested that a Media Training and a Leadership Conference be considered. President Hojnicky appointed Treasurer Metheny as the Chair of the Committee to submit a proposal for these funds.

It was reported that Senator Biden will support the inclusion of Fire Departments receiving portions of the funds in a revision to the Crime Bill.

The President distributed copies of the Hall of Fame awards.

The proposed funeral procession purple light issue was discussed. It was reported that New Castle County has voted to request that the DVFA oppose this issue. Presentations are to be made to Kent & Sussex County Associations concerning this request from the Funeral Directors.

Past President Roger's recommendations were discussed. Since the Officers have taken action on portions of the recommendations, President Rogers recommended that the following action be taken: Items 1, 2 & 3 require no additional action. Item 4 be referred to the Finance and Auditing Committee and the Treasurer for further study, Items 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 15 require no further action. Item 14 was also referred to the Treasurer and Finance and Auditing Committee. Item 14, the recommendation to change the term limit of the DVFA representative to the Fire Prevention Commission was withdrawn at the request of Past President Rogers.

President Hojnicky reported that a meeting has been tentatively scheduled with Senator Nancy Cook and Representative Richard Davis to discuss the Insurance issue. It was reported that they have some ideas on how to provide supplemental funding to the Fire Companies through the Legislative process. A meeting is to be scheduled with the Table Officers, the Chair of the Law & Legislative Committee and the chair of the Supplemental Funding Committee following the December Executive Committee meeting. It was regularly moved, seconded and passed that the Officers approve and support this meeting.

The letter from New Castle County concerning a tax decrease in the amount of \$3,000.00 for each active Fire fighter was discussed. It was regularly moved, seconded and passed that this issue be referred to the Law & Legislative Committee.

A concern was raised on the potential of increasing the pension payout. It was regularly moved, seconded and passed that this issue be referred to the Pension Advisory Committee for further study and recommendation.

It was requested that Barry Fry, Carlisle of Milford be added to the Supplemental Funding Committee.

Vice President Knight reported on the progress concerning the administering of the Hepatitis B inoculation. He stated that Tetanus boosters will also be provided.

Treasurer Metheny requested that Companies respond to any requests for financial allocations.

John Mitchell reported on proposed legislation to be introduced during the next Legislative session. He also provided copies of the proposed Budgets for the Fire Prevention Commission, Fire Marshal and Fire School.

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The minutes of the September 30, 1996 Officers meeting were approved as printed.

The President reported that the Ladies Auxiliary of the DVFA desired to share a booth with the Recruitment and Retention Committee

There being no further business to claim the attention of the Officers, it was regularly moved, seconded and carried that the meeting be adjourned. Benediction was offered by Director Dale Callaway. Adjournment was at 9:55 P. M.

Fraternally & respectfully submitted,

**James E. Turner, III
Secretary**

Attachment