



State Fire Advisory Board Summary
November 16, 2023
1:00 PM
PEMA Headquarters, Room 112
Harrisburg, PA

I. Call to Order

- Thomas Cook, Fire Commissioner, called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM

II. Roll Call

- Thomas Cook, Acting State Fire Commissioner
- Art Martynuska, Region 2 Firefighter
- Joseph C Mitchell, Region 3 Firefighter
- Bruce Trego, Region 4 Firefighter
- Sam Aungst, Region 5 Firefighter
- Jeffrey Jumper, Region 6 Firefighter
- Frank J. Zangari, Region 7 Firefighter
- Tom O'Donnell, Region 9 Firefighter
- Jeremy Warkessel, IAFF Local 302 President
- Robert Brooks, PA Professional Firefighters Association President
- Steve Bair, PA Fire and Emergency Services Institute President
- Jerry Ozog, PFESI
- Sean Harris representing Rep Gillen, Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee
- Staff Member for Senator Muth, Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee
- Dustin Ulrich, PA Career Fire Chiefs Association
- Adam Andrews, PA Assoc. of Fire Equipment Distributors
- Kerry Vanyo, Rep Solomon House VA & EP Committee
- Amy Sweitzer, Fire Equipment and Apparatus Vendor
- Representative Mark Gillen, House VA & EP Committee
- Randy Padfield, PEMA Director

III. Opening Remarks

- Commissioner Cook welcomed all to the meeting of the Pennsylvania State Fire Advisory Board.

IV. ACTION ITEM: Minutes from the September 5, 2023, Meeting

- Motion to approve by Frank Zangari and second by Jeff Jumper. Motion passed unanimously.

V. **Legislative Overview – Wes Majors**

- We will be seeking input from the Board for the grant re-authorization that is due in 2024.

VI. **Update from the Relief Association Reform Subcommittee – Steve Bair**

- Reviewed the suggested changes from Nate Silcox.
- The working group included suggestions from the surveys on the original draft of the report – these have been removed for the final report.

VII. **ACTION ITEM: Relief Reform Report**

- Motion to approve report for submission with the suggested changes by Frank Zangari and second by Jeff Jumper. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. **Update from Best Practices Subcommittee – Jeff Jumper**

- Met virtually Oct 27, 2023 – Goal is to develop a statewide network for sharing of fire services best practices to provide access to proven concepts that will move the Pennsylvania Fire Service forward.
- Concept: Develop a “Best Practices Portal” where best practices could be shared and resources accessed. This portal would be housed by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner.

IX. **Old Business**

- Regional Meetings: There are two more scheduled this year and a few after the new year.
 - Commissioner Cook extended thanks to the regional reps for organizing these meetings.
 - Topics at these meetings are Relief reform report and the grants and loans program reform.
- Recruitment and Retention Program – 3 positions have been posted.

X. **New Business**

- Chief O’Donnell suggested for LODD we should consider creating a task force for the departments living through the loss. – Commissioner Cook assured this is already in the works.
- Chief Zangari asked about terms for Board members. The members of the State Fire Advisory Board will continue to serve for another 4-year term.
- Chief Zangari stated that many Fire Companies are asking “will each department be receiving the full \$20,000 from the 2023/2024 grant?”.
 - Since we have received more than 2,400 applications it is not likely that each department will receive the maximum amount.

XI. Other Business/Public Comment/Closing Remarks

- Steve Bair: This will be his final year of serving the Institute so he will be replaced after the first of the year. He extended thanks to the Board for allowing him to be a part of the Board.
- Feedback regarding the municipal grants? Commissioner shared that it is not funded at a high enough level.
 - Chief Ulrich suggested that a representative from the PA Career Chiefs be put on the municipal grant review committee in the future.
- Rep Gillen: Thank you to the Board for what they are doing for the constituents.

XII. 2024 Meetings

- February 15, 2024 at 1:00
- May 16, 2024 at 1:00
- September 19, 2024 at 1:00
- November 21, 2024 at 1:00

XIII. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Tom O'Donnell, second by Joe Mitchell, passed unanimously.