



## MBFTE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**DATE:** September 17, 2024

**TIME:** 10:30 a.m.

**LOCATION:** Elk River Fire Department  
13073 Orono Pkwy NW  
Elk River, MN  
Teams/Teleconference

Board Member	In Person	TEAMS	ABSENT
Vance Bachmann – Assoc. of Townships			x
Dean Wrobbel – League of Cities	X		
Bobby Falcon- League of MN Cities			x
Chris Kummer - MSFDA			x
Chip Lohmiller - MSFCA	x		
Thomas Schulte- MPFF			x
Kate McKay - MSFDA		x	
John Peura – Public Member		x	
Michael Shwankl - MSFDA	X		
Chad Vermeersch		x	
Jim Fisher – Assoc. of Townships			x
Gavin Peterson – MSFDA	X		
Becki White - MSFCA		x	
Natascha Huspek - MSFDA	X		
Dan Krier – SFM - DPS		x	

**Staff:**

Steve Flaherty (Executive Director, MBFTE) Allison Marcus (Licensing Coordinator MBFTE) Ross Hoernemann (MBFTE)

Guests: (In person) Tom Popsun (Century College), Jared Rozeboom (SFMD), Scott Saehr (MFSCB) (Teams) Rayah Barton (MNIT), Dora Volz, Jack Volz, David Jensen (SFMD), Jeremie Baker, Wanda McCoy, Cheri Nelson (MNIT), Mike Warner

- I. Call to order at 10:54 am – Natascha Huspek, Chair
  - a. Roll call attendance listed above
  - b. Agenda additions –add Scott Saeher to public comment
- II. Approval of the amended agenda (Motion by: Lohmiller / Second by: Peura)
  - a. Agenda approved
- III. Approval of minutes from May 14, 2024 (Motion by: Peura / Second by: Lohmiller)
  - a. Minutes approved as written via roll call vote
- IV. Reports
  - a. Budget –Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
    - i. FY25 budget \$5,462,730.58 balance
      - 1. Licensing \$330,000 balance
  - b. Fire Safety Account (FSA) balance, SFM Dan Krier DPS
    - i. Balance \$8.33 million available
      - 1. \$7.1-\$7.2 million in recommendations from FSAC
  - c. Executive Director, Steve Flaherty
    - i. Recap of FY24 reimbursement programs
    - ii. \$5.5 base budget plus 1-time funding from FSAC
      - 1. Had enough funding to reimburse all eligible expenses
  - d. Executive Committee Report, Chair Natascha Huspek
    - i. FSAC recommending \$3 million for FY25 budget
    - ii. Discussed Vector Solutions contract up for renewal
      - 1. \$136,250 per year for 5 years
  - e. License Update – Allison Marcus
    - i. Heat map presented indicating licensed firefighters across the State
  - f. Fire Service Specialist —Jared Rozeboom (SFMD)
    - i. Tate Mills was promoted to Chief Deputy of Operations
    - ii. Left with 2 FSS, Jared Rozeboom and David Jensen
- V. Old business
  - a. FSAC 1-time Request—Steve Flaherty

- i. Requested \$3 million for FY25
    - 1. FSAC recommended \$3 million for MBFTE to Commissioner's Office
      - a. Commissioner's letter not signed yet
  - ii. DNR Request \$295,580 approved by FSAC
  - iii. Century College requested \$100,000 for EV and Battery stored energy training
    - 1. FSAC approved \$250,000 via MBFTE for 2 fiscal years
    - 2. Motion to table discussion until letter from Commissioner is signed and received (Lohmiller/Wrobbel)
      - a. Discussion on how the Board wants to use the money, suggested to be discussed at special meeting
        - i. Board wants money earmarked for EV Fire Suppression training and open for all training providers to use
          - 1. Motion withdrawn by Lohmiller/Wrobbel
    - 3. Motion to table discussion until guidance is received from Commissioner and to be discussed again at Training/Executive Committee meeting in November (Huspek/Schwankl)
      - a. Motion carried
- b. Vector Solutions—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
  - i. 200 departments subscribe to free version, 85 departments subscribe to premier version
    - 1. 25% of Minnesota firefighters are using VS
  - ii. New contract costs \$136,250 annually for 5 years
  - iii. VS came to fruition after 2017 study when fire service asked for online training presence
    - 1. If choose to not continue contract, future online training will be more expensive
      - a. Suggestion to have another survey to fire service
  - iv. VS was without an active representative for 2 years and Ross Hoernemann was recently hired to promote VS
    - 1. Suggestion to continue yearly contract until more usage information is obtained
  - v. Contract expires 10/10/24
    - 1. Maintenance contract would not have to go out for RFP
  - vi. Motion to keep 5 year contract with option to cancel contract with 30 day notice (Lohmiller/Wrobbel)
    - 1. Motion carries
- c. Reimbursement memo—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
  - i. FY24 is complete, Board approved reimbursement process was successful

## VI. New business

- a. MNIT Update—Cheri Nelson
  - i. Presentation on current challenges, analysis, options and next steps

1. Will require significant investment from Board
- 
- b. Lodging Reimbursement—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
    - i. Departments struggle sending firefighters to conferences due to lodging costs
      1. Fire Service suggests lodging reimbursement cap
    - ii. The Board’s opinion is they need to adhere to intent of only reimbursing training
  - c. Reimbursement for Certification Retesting—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
    - i. Initial certification is covered by reimbursement, retests have previously been free
      1. MFSCB will now be charging for retests
        - a. Fire Service wants retests to be reimbursable
          - i. Retests will cost \$75
      2. Board suggests not to reimburse retests
  - d. Training Reimbursement Dollars—Ross Hoernemann
    - i. Presented data and spreadsheet showing how much money was requested and reimbursed
      1. Broken down by year and region
  - e. FY2026-2027 Budget—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
    - i. Base budget proposals submitted to DPS and approved by FAS
    - ii. SFM Krier says the goal is to not go back to FSAC annually for 1-time funding
      1. Can not announce proposal amount publicly until Governor’s budget is released in January 2025
  - f. FY25 Budget Proposal—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
    - i. Base budget \$5.5 million
      1. FSAC recommendation \$3 million
      2. \$219,257.72 carryover
        - a. \$8.7 million total budget for FY25
    - ii. Proposal to add another position similar to Training and Licensing Specialist using \$100,000 funds allocated from Steve White’s FSS position
    - iii. Available funds for FY25 approximately \$8 million
      1. Liability for 1001 programs approximately \$750,000
    - iv. Leadership courses need to go out for RFP
    - v. Officer, FAO and Instructor – 80 seats
    - vi. Motion to adopt budget as presented by Steve Flaherty (Wrobbel/Peura)
      1. Friendly amendment of motion to adjust spreadsheet verbiage of MBFTE Board budget to MBFTE Operating Budget
        - a. Approved by Wrobbel/Peura

2. Discussion by Krier on whether Conferences and Seminars can be reimbursed following Statute 299N.02 subd. 3, Letter B, #3, & #4
  - a. Discussion on whether conferences and seminars falls under MBFTE duties if not paid to fire departments
    - i. Conferences and Seminars falls under bylaws introduction #4 which states “establish standards under which reimbursement will be provided for training and education”
    - ii. Intent under 4B –allocate funding to MN fire departments— funding for seminars and conferences is going to MN fire departments via other fiscal agent
  3. Question on whether to adopt budget with \$3 million 1-time funds before letter is signed by Commissioner
  4. Dean Wrobbel withdraws motion
- vii.** Motion to table budget discussion until \$3 million 1-time funding is signed by Commissioner and have a special meeting (Wrobbel/Peterson)
  1. Motion carried
- g. Social Media Presence—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
  - i. Does the Board want to see a social medial presence
    1. Decision to wait until another staff employee is hired with more bandwidth
      - a. Question on whether DPS Communications Staff could take on social media presence
        - i. What would the goal be of social media presence
- h. Board Resignations—Steve Flaherty, Executive Director
  - i. Bobby Falcon, Becki Rowan-White and Chris Kummer resigned, current vacancies with LOM, MSFDA and MSFCA

## VII. Public Comment

- a. Scott Saehr, MFSCB
  - i. Certification update from MFSCB
    1. Trending higher for Officer, FAO and Instructor compared to last year
  - ii. Working on ProBoard reaccreditation

## VIII. Next Meeting date:

- a. Scheduled for November 12, 2024

## IX. Motion to Adjourn at 12:57 p.m. by: Wrobbel / second by: Peura

- a. Motion carried

Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education  
445 Minnesota St. Ste 146  
St Paul, MN 55101

(web-site) [www.mbfte.org](http://www.mbfte.org) (email) [fire-training\\_board@state.mn.us](mailto:fire-training_board@state.mn.us) (phone) 651-201-7257 (fax) 651-215-0525