

# MINUTES

## INDIANA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER PERSONNEL STANDARDS AND EDUCATION

**April 27, 2009  
Rensselaer VFD  
201 S Cullen St  
Rensselaer IN 47978**

Jerry Nulliner thanks Rensselaer VFD for hosting the meeting.

**A. BOARD CALLED TO ORDER 6PM**

**B. ROLL CALL**

Present

Jerry Nulliner  
James Greeson  
Bradley Thatcher  
Jack Kerney Sr.  
Ab Crosby  
Jeff Hayes

Absent

Thomas Hanify  
Darrick Scott  
Candice Ashby

Also in attendance:

Ivan Nevil, Geneva VFD; Larry Bartlow, Hillsdale VFD; James Southard, Hillsdale VFD; Larry Southard, Hillsdale VFD; L.E. Koehler, Rensselaer VFD; Kenny Haun, Rensselaer VFD; Tom Orrell, Beverly Shores FD; Willie Parish, Medaryville VFD; John Grolich, Plymouth FD; Jim Bradford, Lake Station VFD; Don Fultz, Tippecanoe Twp VFD; Ed O'Farrell, Attica FD; John Kepshire, South Haven FD; Tim Misch, Rensselaer VFD; John Shafer, Rensselaer VFD.

**C. MINUTES REPORT FROM March 9, 2009**

Correction needed in J2. IFSAC spelling corrected  
Jack Kerney made a motion to approve with correction. Ab Crosby seconded. Motion passed.

**D. VARIANCES**

1. Daniel Dulin requested variances for Instructor I, and II/III. He is a certified instructor with law enforcement, and teaches the legal side of issues for DNR. He also teaches River Rescue in South Bend. He is currently the training officer at Goodland FD.

Staff recommends approval based on his passing the Instructor Reciprocity test.

Jack Kerney made a motion to approve staffs recommendation. Jeff Hayes seconded. Motion passed.

2. Dale Wilzbacher requested a variance for the Technical Rescue Awareness level. He completed the training through the IDHS course but he did not meet the prerequisites at that time. He has now received his Hazmat Awareness certification and he would like the Technical Rescue Awareness certification at this time.

Staff recommends denial. We have a written test in place.

Ab Crosby made a motion to approve staffs recommendation. Bradley Thatcher seconded. Motion passed

3. Paul Colvin requested a variance for Instructor II/III. Mr. Colvin was granted a variance for Instructor I in 2006. Paul has many years experience teaching through Eli Lilly, and he is a state licensed substitute teacher. He refers to getting his certification back but there is no record of him having held a state Instructor II/III certification.

Staff recommends approval based on his passing the Instructor reciprocity test.

Jack Kerney made a motion to approve staffs recommendation. Bradley Thatcher seconded. Motion passed.

4. Robert Walker requested a variance for Fire Officer 4. He holds an Associates Degree in Applied Science from Ivy Tech, 1997 and a Bachelor of Science in Distinction Organization Management 2007. He holds a Fire Officer 3 and a valid Instructor II/III.

Staff recommends approval. His training exceeds the state requirements for this certification.

Jeff Hayes made a motion to approve staffs recommendation. Jack Kerney seconded. Motion passed.

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|--------------------|--------------------|
| 5. Jonathan Musick | 6. Kurt Lanzone    |
| 7. Harold Osborn   | 8. George Powell   |
| 9. Brian Strohm    | 10. Clint Raley    |
| 11. Randy Flowers  | 12. Darin Knoepfel |

Requested variances for Wildland Firefighter I/II. They took a class “Basics of Wildland Fire Suppression”.

Staff recommends denial. We have talked with DNR who in part sponsored this class. This is an 8 hour general information class that does not begin to cover the standard.

Ab Crosby made a motion to approve staffs recommendation. Jack Kerney seconded. Motion passed.

**E. APPEAL REQUESTS**

No appeals at this time.

**F. STATE FIRE MARSHAL REPORT- JAMES GREESON**

My report is about the information on the Swine-flu. This is a human strain; there is no danger from animals. It is perfectly safe to eat the meat if it is properly prepared. If you have employees that are ill or feel ill, running a fever, send them home. If they are home make sure they stay home and do not come into work. Primarily, use good health habits. If you feel you need a mask, if you are in areas that you might be in danger of coming in contact with a lot of people, the masks are about \$1.00 a piece. There are more expensive masks out there, \$8-\$9, that are 80 accurate. Monitor your news, your EMA's and keep track of what is happening in your areas. We are monitoring around the state. We have no confirmed cases yet, but we have sent some samples to the CDC. Currently there is no vaccine for this flu. Just keep monitoring your areas, and if you see a lot of traffic in a particular area, let us know. The NFA catalog is out. This is a great chance for training. Everything is reimbursable except your meals. Night before last at Lake James we had a large fire, 5 homes lost and 2 damaged. Somewhere between \$6-\$8 million dollars lost. We are still determining cause and origin. Fireworks, amusement rides, county fairs, this is all coming up, and we will be busy in the next few months. There is a push in play right now where fireworks locations want to be able to store more fireworks on location. They also want to be able to store them in trailers. If you see this let us know. This has not passed and I am fighting this. This is not something we want to see. Next month, may 27<sup>th</sup>, is the visitation to the Hoosier Burn Camp. This is a good place to be and to see and help these kids.

**G. HOMELAND SECURITY TRAINING DIVISION  
REPORT; DIRECTOR BRADLEY THATCHER.**

I want to announce a couple of new employees. One has already started, David Probo, comes to us from South Carolina, he has 24 year in the fire service. He replaced Brian Mayo. We also hired Carrie Dillon, she starts on May 11, and she will be taking the Fire and EMS test validation position.

We have completed the NFA weekend. We had 147 firefighters attend this training.

Another project is the tech rescue training program. Technician level of training going on throughout the state. This is a very expensive training to put on. We have to bring in special instructors, and the props that have to be paid for. We have a grant of \$486,000.00 and we will have 125 students trained through this. This is for the Structural Collapse Operations and Technician levels. The first class in District 10 has already been completed. We will start going around the state with the program.

We have started with the voluntary electronic recertification program. We have more than 400 recertify on this new program.

The Live Burn Trainer is in Indianapolis right now. It has been down. It will be going to Greensburg. We have sort of worn this thing out. Kidda stated that the average training is 300 firefighters per year, and we have more than quadrupled this. What normally takes 3 years to wear out, we are doing it in a year. We did take out a 3 year warranty on it, so we are definitely using this trailer. The Hazmat trailer is in Avon and this trailer continues to make the rounds.

## **H. CERTIFICATION BRANCH CHIEF, JOHN BUCKMAN**

### **1. Revocation of certifications:**

#### **a) Virgil Hall**

Is a Fire Chief. Falsification of practical examinations is the basis of this. He did not take the practical exam but signed stating that he completed them.

#### **b) Matt Morrow**

There are extenuating circumstances for Mr. Morrow, and we will remove this from the minutes at this time.

#### **c) Jeff Stigall and denial of certification for Chief Bryan Frank.**

Mr. Stigall was the lead evaluator for a FOST class, and he admits that he falsified the documentation stating that the student completed the practicals. He has been suspended for 180 days, and then he has 180 days of probation. Probation puts him on notice.

Brian Frank did not complete the practical skills but as though he completed them.

Probation – the board will determine the definition of probation and what it will entail. Jack Kerney stated that this needs to be a firm/stern message, so that he knows it will not be tolerated in the future. Bradley Thatcher suggested that while on probation, he would have to have a “co-signer” on the practicals. Ab Crosby suggested that when this happens, maybe we should look into revoking all certifications. John Buckman will write a policy for board approval on what this should entail. Possibly if he violates the rules during probation, then he would permanently revoke his certification. Suspension prohibits him from acting as an Instructor in any form, for 180 days.

What happens if he decides that he is not going to do anything for the 1 year, and then he comes back and everything is forgiven. We need to say something to the affect that “you are suspended for 180 days and xx number of classes. Therefore, even if he does not teach for 1 year, he still has to complete so many classes under this order.

2. Letter from Joe Blossom

I included this letter to show the proper way to respond to the audit letters.

He submitted documentation including pictures, showing how practical skills are completed, and documentation showing what props were used and how they completed them. They described what they did in order to meet the skills.

3. Audit Letters.

We have learned that people pencil whip the record. They do not understand how an audit is conducted. I am now getting calls from instructors wanting to know the proper way to do an evaluation/skill exam. The student is taught a skill. The student then goes in front of the

evaluator, and does the skill. The evaluator does not coach, demonstrate, or explain how the skill is done. The student is supposed to show how to do the skill. They either do the skill correct or they do not. If they do not, they fail the exam. They do not get coached at the exam.

4. Increase test for Instructor I by 50 Indiana questions and add 50 questions to the Instructor II/III test to include rule questions. This increases the Instructor I test to 150 questions and will increase the Instructor II/III test to 150.
5. Master Hazardous Material Technician. If you have this certification, do you have to test for Hazardous Material Awareness and Operations in order to meet the prerequisite of Hazardous Material Awareness?

Mara Snyder stated that the board could not give a blanket approval on this issue. Each individual would have to request a variance.

6. Practicals - requirement is demonstrate? Simulate? Or completion of actual practical?  
We are doing a web training program that will explain how to do practical skill examinations.

Staff asked if a student fails a portion of a skill, is there a time frame that he needs to complete this skill? Can he ask for a different evaluator?

The board states: This would be up to the lead evaluator. He is in control, and he makes this decision.

We still have issues with students taking written exams without having met the prerequisite. We can:  
Make it an Instructor issue. Prior to signing up, they need to verify that the student has met the prerequisite. Hold the student responsible. They are adults. They need to take the responsibility for themselves and make sure they have met the requirements for the class.

Have the student provide a transcript of certifications showing that the prerequisite has been made.

If you have a department that is missing a most of the PSID numbers, send an e-mail and we will send you a roster for your department showing the PSID numbers. This is also a good way to clean up the rosters for your department. Many people have come on, left, married, and this is a good way to get the rosters cleaned up.

Comments from audience.

- Cannot get a written test on time
- Cannot get anyone to return call or answer e-mail
- Everything is electronic now. I do not have computer or access to internet
- Cannot get books to teach from the district counsels
- Illinois and Missouri have gone electronic on the death certificates and it has slowed the system down by 3-5 weeks. I hate to see that happen to Indiana certifications.
- Taking 30-45 days to get results back from written test.
- System is broke and I don't know if you can fix it
- Lack of communication a big problem. All these programs going into play but no guidelines on how to use them.
- Having to buy the books out of there own budget because Districts won't let FD use the books if they do not have a district instructor involved. They do not want another instructor coming in and teaching something that they can teach themselves. They need the books not an instructor.

We are testing 3 sights with the new FOST written and practical testing. Evansville, Cloverdale and Adams County are the pilot test sites. There are 6 computer simulations and the student must complete 4 of those, and then 2 more actual hands on.

7. North American Fire Directors have given us a \$5000.00 for grant writing. We will be going throughout the state teaching this.
8. We will be bring the Wildland Firefighter I/II test bank and practicals to the June meeting for approval. We have been getting a lot of variance requests for this so we will be developing practicals for this and submit them for approval.
9. We ask that variance requests be received in the office 3 weeks prior to the meeting date. We have to have time to investigate the request and the board needs to have time to look these over prior to the meeting.

**I. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS- JUDGE TEEGARDEN**

No report at this time.

**J. OLD BUSINESS**

NFPA standards, we need to get started on these in order to get these adopted in the time frame allotted. John Buckman stated that he is working on putting a committee together to look at the new standards.

Mara Snyder states she needs a fiscal impact statement on any changes.

**K. NEW BUSINESS**

Ivan Nevil requested to speak on the FOST pilot program.

The new FOST is changing the practicals and testing from what the board directed originally. In the past, this needed approval by the board as a pilot program so the students can get state certification on this training. The skills are not the same. They are similar, but yet they are different. The rules state that “the practicals received from the board.”

The board appointed Jerry Nulliner to review the content of the written and practical skills exam, and make a decision on the

contents of the program as a pilot. He will present his finding at the June board meeting.

The new Fire Officer Strategy and Tactics written/practical testing is from the Brady, Strategic and Tactical Considerations on the Fireground, second edition. These books have been shipped to the fire district counsels.

**L. MEETING AJOURNED at 8:30 pm**

**Next Meeting**

**IVFA  
June 18<sup>th</sup> 2009, 10am  
Holiday Inn North  
Monte Carlo Room  
3850 Depauw Blvd  
Indpls IN 46268  
317-872-9790**