

**Louisiana Fire and Emergency Training Commission Meeting
April Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2021**

Commission Members Present:

Chad Major	Professional Firefighters Association of Louisiana
Karen St. Germain	Governor's Appointee
Butch Browning	State Fire Marshal
Louis Romero	Professional Firefighters Association of Louisiana
Matt Lee	Chancellor's Designee from LSU
Bryan Adams	Governor's Appointee
Russell Di Salvo	Louisiana Fire Chief's Association
Ken Himel	Louisiana Fire Chief's Association
Brian Lindberg	Louisiana State Firemen's Association
Brandon Davis	Governor's Appointee

Commission Members Absent:

William Parker	Louisiana State Firemen's Association
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Attendees Present via Zoom:

David Coco
Megan Broom
Miranda Meynard
Sam Joubert
Nick Palmer

In Attendance:

Christine Earnheart	FETI
Loree Ramezan	FETI
Carey King	FETI
R. Keith Bennett	FETI
Ken Fowler	FETI
Kathe Jones	FETI
Dan Wallis	SFM
Michael Donahue	FETI
Kevin Fontenot	FETI
Mike Truax	FETI
Mark Treadway	OSFM
Jerry Hopkins	Shell
Erin St. Pierre	OSFM
Lisa Verma	FETI
Sasha Thackaberry	LSU-OCE

QUORUM PRESENT

The Louisiana Fire and Emergency Training Commission was called to order by Mr. Chad Major. Invocation was performed. Pledge was performed as well. Mr. Major called the roll and announced that a quorum was present. The meeting began.

Motion was made by Mr. Browning to approve the March 15 and March 29 minutes for the regular commission meeting and Ms. St. Germain seconded the motion. No objections were voiced.

MOTION PASSED.

Chief's Report

Mr. Fowler presented the report. He stated that classes were starting to pick up out in the region. They were not at 100%, but they were getting close. The numbers for Zoom classes were still remaining much higher than expected. They were still moving forward with the Rapid Intervention class, Train the Trainer. It was scheduled for May 24-28. Once the instructors were trained, they would get the pilot on the schedule. It was the same for the Fire Instructor. They would be hosting the LA Company Officer Conference again this year in Alexandria on August 30-September 1. He was hoping to have a flyer to hand out at the next meeting. He did have an upcoming meeting with the people from LSFA on the hot drills. He would be giving a report at their meeting this Saturday.

Mr. Major asked if there were any other questions regarding the chief's report. None were voiced.

This concluded the presentation of the chief's report.

Certification Report

Ms. Earnheart presented the report. She stated that the certification committee was finally able to meet last week. They had not met since February 2020 due to Covid. There were new members, so she offered to provide a list of all the committee members to the commission if needed. She did state that they had an open spot on the committee for the industrial representative, so the committee had voted to extend an offer to someone. It was sent Monday, so it was pending acceptance. The committee also approved a refrain from testing agreement. One of the things that was discovered during their ProBoard site visit in 2019 was that they did not have a policy for when they created a new certification level. Basically, even though someone may be a subject matter expert in a specific area, because FETI did not have the certification, the individual did not have it either. This was why the committee had put together a refrain from testing agreement which basically stated that whoever reviewed the new material would refrain from testing from one year after they had reviewed the material. Then they would be able to take the exam.

The committee also voted to update their reciprocity policy. One of the things was just a date update. The policy clarified that they would accept the 2019 edition and the 2013 edition for reciprocity and would not accept anything prior to that. They also voted to add an addendum to the policy which stated that reciprocity certificates could only be granted for levels that LSU currently offered at the time of the request.

The committee also voted to change the current Instructor 3 portfolio reviewer guidelines. It changed it from only having committee member review portfolios to now allowing any evaluator with Instructor 3 to review them.

The committee had a discussion on site checklists for technical levels and made the decision to move forward on them. She further explained that for technical levels it was important if an evaluator put in a request to do a practical skills exam for a particular skill at their department, they would have to go through a site checklist form with attached required photos of the equipment being used to establish a profile for the site and to ensure equipment safety and process compliance. They were starting with rope and confined space as they were extremely technical levels. She had been keeping a list of departments that had been doing the checklists so the process for follow-up would begin soon. The checklist was only required to be completed once.

She stated that these were all the things voted into policy or added into process. There were a few things she wanted to note, however. The IFSAC site visit would be there at FETI at the end of June.

She gave an update on levels. Safety Officer and the Officer series would be updated in the June-July range. They were in the process of conducting their material reviews and this would reflect the new additions of those standards. The new level that they were adding the soonest was Trench Rescue and that was pending approval. All the material had gone through the review process and had been submitted. ProBoard would be reviewing it first and then IFSAC would be reviewing it at the site visit in June. They were hoping to start this class in the fall.

They were doing a RIT certification. For now, it would be a state certification only and not IFSAC or ProBoard accredited. The municipal division was beginning Live Fire instructor training, so she was beginning the process of adding Live Fire Instructor to their certifications. They were also shooting to have Officer 4 available in the spring.

Mr. Major asked if there were any other questions regarding the certification report. None were voiced.

This concluded the presentation of the certification report.

Financial Report

Ms. Ramezan presented the financial report. She stated that the packets contained the March balance sheet with no irregular expenses to note. She gave a few project updates. The SCBA roof project was complete, and they were fully operational at this point. They were getting multiple concrete pads for it for training activities. All pads had been poured.

The two WAE part-time instructor positions were moving along. There was one individual hired and the other was still in process. The accounts receivable coordinator position had been hired with a start date of May 3.

Mr. Major asked if there were any other questions regarding the financial/budget report. None were voiced.

This concluded the presentation of the financial/ budget report.

Director's Report

Mr. Donahue presented the director's report. He stated that he only had one item to share. He had heard from LSU HRM. They were starting to get responses back for the salary equity study and he was informed that they were hoping to have something for review up the chain next week. So, if in fact that did happen, he should have something back within two weeks. He had nothing else to update the

commission on and stated that he would be yielding his time to Sasha Thackaberry from OCE for her presentation.

Mr. Major introduced Ms. Sasha Thackaberry to the commission and gave her the floor. She was excited about the merging of the two teams and was looking forward to the future and what they would accomplish together. She reviewed their core values with the commission. She stated that they had recently taken on a new national training partnership with Raising Cane's. Current budget and resources available to the commission were reviewed. Just like the commission, OCE was a revenue generated division. They would be focusing on marketing and online enrollment. She had met with Chief Wallis and reviewed the analysis that he had gathered to make sure they were all on the same page with the type of culture they wished to create within the department. The changes would not happen so fast that they would be disruptive, but they would happen. She did say that she would like to hold a retreat for group discussion on long-term goals and future plans. As well, determining what the department's success would look like was as important as the culture they wanted to create. They would be working together to determine how they defined the department's success, how they would hold themselves accountable in making that success happen and deciding what resources they would need to deliver that success. This was the goal they were shooting towards for August 21. She opened the floor for questions. None were voiced.

Mr. Major asked if there were any other questions regarding the director's report. None were voiced.

This concluded the presentation of the director's report.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Major presented his report. He stated that this would not really be a report, but he wanted to make a few statements. Subsequent to the last meeting, he was told thank you for taking their side and making the motion that he had made. At the last meeting, he had wanted to speak out more on the motion, but they were running short on time. He stated that never again while he held the position as the chairman for the commission would he tolerate disrespect from any member of the commission or staff again. They were all adults and being disrespectful to one another was not something that he would tolerate again. He was always taught not to bring a problem to the table without an attempt at a solution. He once again requested that in future even if there was disagreement that they be respectful of each other.

Mr. Major asked once again if there were any more questions. None were voiced.

The next meeting was scheduled for June 2 at 10 am.

This concluded the presentation of the chairman's report.

Old Business

Mr. Major opened the floor for the presentation of old business. None was voiced from the commission.

Mr. Major then turned the floor over to Chief Wallis. Chief Wallis stated that he and Mr. Donahue had conducted an informal meeting and as far as the staff and expertise level that there were not any problems. From the equipment standpoint, there were some issues with equipment in the training world which hindered it from being readily response able due to lack of use and so forth. They were

working on how to facilitate this and be ready for the upcoming hurricane season. They were working on a written plan to make the equipment usable in the event of an emergency. Mr. Lindberg asked if there was someone doing regular service on the equipment in question. Ms. Jones stated that normally it was, but since it had not been bringing in revenue then they did have the monies to continue with the servicing of it, but it was not unusable. The equipment would just need oil change, fluid check, etc.

Mr. Lindberg stated that they made the deployments during the hurricane season and he did not remember what was requested through the SF board and he asked if Chief Wallis knew. Chief Wallis stated that there had been many different requests because there were many different incidents. He stated that a request had been made for the Pine Country pumper and the crew to staff it. The request had been denied and he wanted to know some information on why the denial was made. Mr. Fowler stated that he had explained when the request was made that he could not make the final decision on that and the information was sent to Loree. Loree explained that there were issues involving the request. There was never an official tasking order. The request was not killed internally. The request had been passed on to Loree and Loree sent the request to the LSU EOC. Mr. Browning felt that with hurricane season coming, this was something that they needed to assess their assets and start getting their equipment ready and be able to make themselves available to join any future efforts.

This concluded the presentation of old business.

New Business

Mr. Major began the presentation of new business.

Mr. Major introduced Mr. Russell DeSalvo, the newest member to the commission.

This concluded the presentation of new business.

Motion to adjourn was entertained by Mr. Major. Motion was made by Mr. Major to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Himel seconded the motion. No objections were voiced.

Meeting was adjourned.



Approved by: Chad Major



Date: