



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
LANSING

ORLENE HAWKS  
DIRECTOR

**MINUTES**  
**MICHIGAN FIRE FIGHTERS TRAINING COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING**  
**FY21 Returned County Allocation**  
Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
9:00 AM

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142818550?pwd=YXlzUE9UU0ZzV3B5V0p4V0c1L0ExUT09>

Password: **vyv0K1**

Phone: (216) 706-7075

Or (866) 390-1828 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 394127

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Brian Blomstrom, Vice Chair, Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association  
Alan Styles, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs  
Lynnae White, Michigan Fire Inspectors Society  
Terrance Blackmer, Michigan State Firemen's Association  
Greg Janik, Michigan Municipal League  
Jacob Steichen, Nominee of the State Fire Marshal  
Aileen Pettinger, Michigan Professional Firefighters Union  
Kevin Sehlmeier, State Fire Marshal, Ex-officio Member

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Chad Tackett, Chairperson, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs

**BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES STAFF PRESENT:**

Andrea Keown, Department Technician, Fire Fighter Training Division/Recording Secretary  
Hollie Metts, Assistant to the State Fire Marshal (virtual meeting moderator)  
Dan Hammerberg, Region 1 Coordinator, Fire Fighter training Division

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Adam Brown, Detroit Metro/Willow Run Fire Department	Doug Bourgeois, Beaver Creek Fire Department
Andy Down, Long Lake Township Fire Department	Doug DeBest, Baroda Fire Department
Aric Massingill, Adrian Fire Department	Doug DenBleyker, Graafschap Fire Department
Brian Lorkowski, Harrison Township Fire Department	Doug Pratt, Frederic Township Fire Department
Carrie Edwards-Clemons, Flint Fire Department	Greg Flynn, West Bloomfield Fire Department
Christopher Mantels, Saugatuck Township Fire Department	Greg Mowbray, Brighton Area Fire Authority
Corey Miller, Berkley Department of Public Safety	Jack White, Shelby-Benona Fire Department
Dan Deyo, Morely Fire Department	Jason DeNeau, Southfield Fire Department
Dan Vandyke, Rockford Fire Department	Jesse Marcotte, Northville Township Fire Department
David Mc Inally, Van Buren Dept. Of Public Safety	Jim Plieth, Detroit Fire Department
David Pelton, Walker Fire Department	Jim Stevenson, Warren Fire Department
	John Martin, Novi Fire Department

BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES  
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John McKay, Owosso Department of Public Safety  
Josh Mosher, Midland Fire Department  
Kevin Powers, Madison heights Fire Department  
Kurt Corradi, Bay City Fire Department  
Mark Cleveland, Egelston Twp. Fire Department  
Mark Nicolai, Muskegon Fire Department  
Mark Nicholai, Ann Arbor Township Fire Department  
Matt Fruchey, Beaverton Fire Department  
Matthew Hagerty, Onoto Fire & Rescue  
Mike Keefe, Allendale Fire Department  
Robert Bryant, West Bloomfield Fire Department

Robert Ginther, Beverly Hills Public Safety  
Robert Smith, Dexter Area Fire Department  
Ryan Tibbets, Kalamazoo Public Safety Department  
Stacy French, Portage Fire Department  
Steve McKellar, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs  
Steve Rynbrandt, Clio Fire Department  
Steve Wart, Athens Township Fire Department  
Teresa Robinson, Lansing Fire Department  
Tim Seal, North Oakland County Fire Authority

### **I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:**

**Vice Chair Blomstrom** called the special meeting session to order at 9:04 A.M. Roll call was taken

Chairperson Tackett – absent  
Councilperson Blomstrom – present  
Councilperson Styles – present  
Councilperson White – present  
Councilperson Blackmer – absent  
Councilperson Janik – present  
Councilperson Steichen – present  
Councilperson Pettinger – present  
Fire Marshal Sehlmeier – present

A quorum was determined present.

### **II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**20-12-01**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Janik** and seconded by **Councilperson Pettinger** to approve the December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 special meeting agenda, as presented.

A roll call vote was taken.

Chairperson Tackett – absent  
Councilperson Blomstrom – yes  
Councilperson Styles – yes  
Councilperson White – absent  
Councilperson Blackmer – absent  
Councilperson Janik – yes  
Councilperson Steichen – yes  
Councilperson Pettinger – yes  
Fire Marshal Sehlmeier – yes

Six votes yes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### **III. COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Councilperson Blomstrom:** spoke with Jim Plieth from Detroit Fire and he brought up that the mental health discussion that was had at the last meeting was good and is looking forward to hopefully continuing the discussion today as part of how to spend unencumbered funds.

**Councilperson Styles:** Also had a conversation with Jim (Plieth) and look forward to discussing that with everyone today.

**Councilperson Blackmer:** Had a couple of communications regarding the discussion that was had at last month's meeting regarding the funding for the firefighter academies, I had a couple of communications that were in support of that in raising the funding.

**Councilperson Janik:** received a couple communications regarding the county allocations and

funding in general. A lot of communications about live fire training that I am looking forward to sharing that with council.

**Councilperson Steichen:** Contacted the RTC's, in particular the northern ones and will include that in council conversation.

**Councilperson Pettinger:** Had a bunch of communication as well, State Representative Kent reached out in regard to HazMat class accommodations and questions on that. Had a meeting with the fire marshal in Saint Clair Shores in regard to officer questions. I also talked with Jim Plieth about Detroit, they have a lot of concerns about behavioral health and are really interested in pushing that forward.

**Fire Marshal Sehmeyer:** Had a conversation almost daily with at least somebody regarding the topics we will be discussing today.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

**FY21 Returned County Allocation:** Fire Marshal Sehmeyer started by talking about funds that possibly could come back after December 31<sup>st</sup>. Council discussed live fire training and mental health initiatives as a means to utilize the unencumbered funds and decided to move in the direction of looking at mental health first and live fire training second. Councilperson Janik commented that since there are many departments not up to speed on mental and behavioral health issues, that council make it as easy as possible to obtain training and courses and suggested the possibility of having someone promote the importance of firefighters mental and behavioral health. Councilperson Pettinger suggested possibly using MI Prevention as an avenue to market and promote this initiative. Councilperson Styles feels the biggest difficulty will be that there are so many different products out there and each department varies in their presentation preference. Councilperson Blomstrom recommended that council should approve the courses and vendors, utilizing the Q Course list and if there is a course not on the Q Course list, have that person/vendor fill out the application to get them on the list so funds can be applied to that course. This will allow departments to choose the best training/course that fits their needs.

Council discussed distributing the funds by dividing the counties into regions then went through and broke the state up into 27 counties (map attached below\*). Each of the 27 regions will have to establish a fiduciary that would accept that money on behalf of said region. The fiduciary will have to be one of the county training chairpersons of that area since they are already established in the bureau's system for accepting payments. Council detailed how as the funds are returned, it would be distributed in \$27,000.00 increments, meaning each region would receive \$1,000.00 every time the bureau receives \$27,000.00 in unencumbered funds. Councilperson Styles asked if there is a rough estimate of what might be returned. Fire marshal stated on average, in the last 2-3 years, council has awarded at least \$100,000 throughout the year of unencumbered funds. Councilperson Blomstrom asked if numbers are down for SMOKE entries in regard to classes this year versus years of no Covid. Fire marshal stated that they are not. Consistently, BFS has received \$100,000 back every year, so he does not think that trend is going to change.

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Jim Plieth, Detroit Fire Department:** Appreciates all of the dialogue and appreciates everyone taking his call. Over the last two weeks we have suffered two, but one for sure suicide in the city of Detroit. Something that a lot of people aren't looking at, at least in our department, is on the back end of Covid, we're going to have a huge problem in the city of Detroit that nobody is looking at. We have guys that, five years ago started doing medical runs, they had 25-30 years on the job. On the back side of this they are going to have some issues of seeing things that they haven't seen in the first 20 years of their career that they'll have to deal with. It's not just our young guys coming on to the job. At some point during Fire Fighter I & II, should we be introducing some type of mental health and wellness training and learn how to talk to your peers and your fire houses as their going through their academies. I have received tons of outreach nationally from people and I'll be sharing things with people as I get things in. I will send it out to you guys so you can share it with your departments. This is a really outstanding conversation that really needs to keep going.

**Matthew Hagerty, Onota Fire & Rescue:** Asked via chat function, "Could you use the region training coordinator as the fiduciary for the reallocation?" Fire Marshal explained that the regional

training coordinator is an independent contractor of the Bureau of Fire Services, so we need a county or agency to be the fiduciary.

**Tim Seal, North Oakland County Fire Authority:** Commented via chat function, Mental Health and Wellness is covered in the JB 4th edition Chapter 2 and within NFPA 1500. I cover it at length with my academies as I have my CISM Certificate.

**Mike Keefe, Allendale Fire Department:** Just a question and clarification, so through my understanding there will be no other grant funding money available other than wellness classes correct? So if we want to do another Advanced Fire Dynamics class here, there will not be grant money for those type of things this year? Councilperson Blomstrom remarked that based on the motions coming down at the next meeting, that is correct. The money that comes in will be divided up into \$1,000 groups and the focus will be on mental health and wellness.

**Carrie Edwards-Clemons, Flint Fire Department:** via chat function, "Thank you for all that the committee is doing to address this issue. My audio is not operable."

## **VI. COUNCIL COMMENT:**

**Councilperson Blomstrom:** I just want to echo what everyone else has been saying. I think that council as a group did great work today, coming together to come up with a plan to discuss this. Not only is this something we need to look at as a council and stand behind that we need to get this out there to individuals. I think also as a council that it shows that we're doing due diligence and looking at the issues in the fire service. I'll go back to saying in the past few years, where did we spend the extra money coming in, what did we try to do, we've done a lot of things with classes, props, regional grants. We've done something different every single year, but we looked at what is a priority that needs to be done in the fire service. This year, we're going in a different direction, something that is very important to the fire service, looking at the health and wellness of our people. So as we show the state of Michigan how we go about looking at priorities and things, this is a step in the right direction saying it's not just about going to class or buying equipment, now we're looking at reinvesting in the personnel who provide these services throughout the state and looking at their health and wellbeing. It's about the people that we all care about as brothers and sisters in the fire service and retention and recruitment and health and wellness. I think this is a great way we have gone this fiscal year and I'm looking forward to seeing this money get distributed out. I'm looking forward to seeing all the classes that can be offered.

**Councilperson Styles:** Not really much to say at this point with everyone's wonderful comments. The biggest thing that I got out of this is that over the last few years that both the union and Yellow Rose Campaign through the chiefs, and individuals going out and trying to promote mental wellness has always kind of been a fractured thing. To have the governing board of Michigan training standing behind this should speak volumes, even to other states to say that we as a combined front to try to combat this epidemic. I applaud everyone for this, Aileen, thank you for bringing this up as the initial idea. This is very near and dear to my heart, I couldn't be happier that we're doing this. I applaud having these conversations.

**Councilperson Blackmer:** Just to piggy back what Aileen said, if PTSD or anything haven't your fire department yet because of Covid, they will eventually. I have firefighters coming into my office talking to me openly about things that they never probably would have a year ago. Just between the different stresses and things, that that adds on to the job. I think we're on the right road, there is definitely value in what we are trying to accomplish. I like the direction, I like that fact that we grouped it off regionally and let them assess their own needs and divide that money equally. SO I think it was a good morning. I think we got a lot more accomplished than we thought we would.

**Councilperson Janik:** Applauds the council for the direction they are taking and the focus. This is an investment and in a way it doesn't even seem to be adequate but creating the awareness and the money we're putting into this, is the right thing to do. I'm grateful to council for focusing on this behavior and mental health. Thank you.

**Councilperson Steichen:** Coming into this meeting, I didn't know how it was going to shake out, but I'm really happy with what we came up with. I think it's a very fair and equitable way of handling the money as it comes in. What we're doing in north west Michigan is pretty unique and it might inspire others. If you go to [www.NMIpeernetwork.com](http://www.NMIpeernetwork.com), we also had to open up a private Facebook

page that has 300 members from all different fire, EMS, dispatch, all the different backgrounds. We're encouraging open dialogue and people to really break down the stigma. I think what we're doing here today and going forward is going to really be a huge difference for future generations.

**Councilperson Pettinger:** Appreciates that everyone notices the importance of this topic. We have got to have healthy firefighters especially with Covid. I really appreciate everyone's support in this important issue.

VII. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**20-12-02**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Janik** and seconded by **Councilperson Steichen** to adjourn the special meeting/work session.

A roll call vote was taken.

Chairperson Tackett – absent  
Councilperson Blomstrom – yes  
Councilperson Styles – yes  
Councilperson White –absent  
Councilperson Blackmer – yes  
Councilperson Janik– yes  
Councilperson Steichen – yes  
Councilperson Pettinger – yes  
Fire Marshal Sehlmeier – absent

Six votes yes. **MOTION CARRIED.** The meeting adjourned at 11:02 AM.

**APPROVED:**

  
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Chairperson Tackett

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilmember



# MICHIGAN BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES

## Fire Fighter Training Division

Bureau of Fire Services

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## MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DISTRICT MAP

