RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES
RICHARD W. MILLER
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MIKE ZIMMER
ACTING DIRECTOR

MICHIGAN FIRE FIGHTERS TRAINING COUNCIL
3101 Technology Blvd., Suite H
Lansing, Michigan 48910

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 12, 2014
1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson Timothy James, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs
Vice Chairperson David Purchase, Michigan Municipal League/Michigan Townships Assn.
Brian Blomstrom, Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association
Aileen Pettinger, Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union
Chad Tackett, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs
Richard Miller, State Fire Marshal, Council Member ex-Officio

MEMBERS ABSENT

Steve Richardson, Michigan State Firemen's Association

BFS STAFF PRESENT

Joseph Grutza, FFTD, Manager
BreeAnn Hooker, Recording Secretary
Paula Brzezinski, Curriculum Specialist
Gary Crum, Region Supervisor
Dan Hammerberg, Region Supervisor (via teleconference)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Matthew Majestic, Oakland Community College
Ray Wlosinski, Training Coordinator
Karl Holder, Rochester Hills Fire Department
Martin Erskine, Battle Creek Fire Department
Andy Bezenah, West Bloomfield Fire Department
Gary Kautz, Burton Fire Department
Michael McLeieer, Olivet Fire Department
Liz Smalley, Office of Regulatory Reinvention
Mike Bernardin, Michigan Fire Inspectors Society
Ted Jensen, Michigan Fire Inspectors Society
Mark Cleveland, Egelston Township Fire Department

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairperson James called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. A quorum was determined present. Councilperson Richardson was excused prior to the meeting.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Items added to the agenda were; June 10, 2014 Closed Session Minutes, Evaluations of Instructors to be added under new business, and Liz Smalley will be here to discuss the rules.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Tackett to approve the August 12, 2014 meeting agenda as amended. **MOTION CARRIES.**

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Purchase to approve the study session minutes on June 10, 2014 as presented. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Tackett to approve the regular meeting minutes on June 10, 2014 as presented. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to approve the closed session meeting minutes on June 10, 2014 as amended. **MOTION CARRIES.**

4. INSTRUCTOR APPLICATIONS

Staff presented the following Instructor applications for the Council's consideration:

(14) Certified Instructor I
(14) Probationary Associate Instructors
(7) Probationary Instructor I
(4) Certified Associate Instructor

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Pettinger to approve the instructor applications as presented. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to table the Instructor II application submitted by Jeffrey Huber pending a revisit of the rules. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to approve the Instructor II application submitted by Daniel Oberst. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Pettinger to approve the Instructor II application submitted by Raymond Wlosinski based on documentation and clarification provided. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Tackett to approve Michael McLeieer to the status of Associate Instructor based on his request. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to table Gary Kautz Instructor II application appeal in attempt to clarify the rule set. **MOTION CARRIES.**

5. STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

Liz Smalley from the Office of Regulatory Reinvention, introduces herself and explains issues with our latest drafts of our rules, and extends her apologies on the length of time it has taken for our rule sets to be addressed. When rules are reviewed, the office has to ascertain that the rules are legal because they match the Authority that was given to the Department, the Council in the statute that initiated the rules.
Everything reviewed in the draft had to relate to some particular section in the Act. There were two main sections, 9 and 11, that had a lot of issues were there were opportunities to regulate. Given that, the key areas will have to come out, because there wasn't anything to tie them back to the Act. Individual approvals are not in the statute; the Council is to set the standard, not to approve the individuals. The rules should be written constructively to account for any concerns that may be present and the Council was correct to write the rules specifically. As for special considerations, those will also have to be specifically outlined. The right things to do are to adopt rules, change statute and come back and expand the rules. Council has been instructed to operate as you have always operated until the new rules are in effect.

1. Legislators interested in making updates, need to be approached, letting them know that updates are needed to the Act to accommodate some things that need to be regulated.
2. Draft rules will be supplied to the Council. Office staff and Council should continue on the course that Council has been operating.

Further assistance and clarification was sought by Council, on various scenarios and issues within the rules.

The Director of LARA, Steve Arwood has left and has taken a job with MEDC. Mike Zimmer is the acting director in the interim.

In regards to the Fireworks boilerplate topic, there are 6 letters of support from the following organizations; Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs, Western Association of Fire Chiefs, Northern Association of Fire Chiefs, Southeast Association of Fire Chiefs, Michigan State Fireman's Association, Michigan Fire Inspectors Society.

In regards to the manager vacancy within Fire Fighter Training Division, there has been concern about filling his position. There was a meeting last week, with the Reinvent Performance Management team, in trying to manage the FFTD processes better. The purpose is to justify the positions within this Division through this process.

As discussed at prior meetings, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant was applied for and was awarded in the amount of $500,000 with a match from the Fireworks grant in the amount of $75,000. The grant is for the replacement of the IMS system to move toward a uniform software system.

Past usage of videos was reviewed and discussed.

In regards to fireworks activities, revenues and expenses were discussed, highlighting the unexpended revenues.

6. **Directors Report**

Crum Retirement: Region Supervisor Gary Crum has announced his retirement effective November 6, 2014. Gary has served as Region Supervisor for nearly 14 years. He previously served as a contract Training Coordinator. Gary has been an outstanding employee for the Fire Fighter Training Division. He has served the fire service with impeccable integrity. Gary was willing to take on additional duties and responsibilities as staffing was reduced and services expanded, all the while continuing to provide outstanding service to the firefighting community. His work ethic and dedication to his mission will be missed. Please join me in expressing our thanks to Gary and wish him success as he moves on to the next phase in his life.

Grutza Retirement: As was previously announced, I will be resigning from my position as Manager of the Fire Fighter Training Division and retiring effective September 14, 2014. It has been my privilege to serve as Director and Manger of the Bureau of Fire Services/Fire Fighter Training Division for the last 10 years.

After serving as a fire fighter with the City of Trenton for 29 years, I felt that the position of director of training for the state of Michigan was an excellent opportunity to continue to serve the fire service. And although faced with many challenges, the journey has been very rewarding. It has been my honor to serve and I will always be grateful that you allowed me to be part of your team.

But as with any group or organization, success is dependent not on the name at the top of the page but the quality of the people that serve in the rank and file. Those of you who have served as leaders in the fire service know exactly what I mean. In my case I have been blessed to serve with thousands of outstanding people involved with the Michigan fire service. And we would not have been able to do what we have done the last 10 years without their effort and support. I want to acknowledge all of them today.

Thanks to the fire chiefs of the 1069 fire departments in Michigan. The training level of each fire fighter is ultimately the responsibility of the fire chief and we have enjoyed working with each of them as they strive to reach their education goals.

Thanks to the local department training officers who work with their fire chief in delivering the training.

Thanks to the 83 County Training Chairpersons and their committees that are our primary line of communication to the fire service. Their work in determining their county's fire training needs and coordinating any funding opportunities available to them has been an integral part of the fire fighter training division operations.

Thanks to the 16 Regional Training Centers that provide top quality training and their continuing support to the FFTD operations.

Thanks to the state and regional fire organizations that we have had the pleasure to address and work with.

Thanks to the county organizations that establish and conduct the basic fire fighter I and II academies producing outstanding fire fighters for their communities.

Thanks our state fire instructors. We are grateful for this outstanding group for managing our courses and instructing our fire fighters. Fire Training is only as good as the instructors that stand in front of the class, teach the skills and share their experiences. They are truly the foundation of our organization.

Thanks to the Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association who have supported our efforts while promoting professionalism for their members.

Thanks to the State Fire Marshals that I have worked for, Andy Neumann, Tony Sanfilippo, Ron Farr, Karen Towne and current Fire Marshal Richard Miller. These individuals have all fought the battle, sometimes working uphill during fiscally tough times, to support fire fighter training within the Bureau of Fire Services.

Thanks to the staff in the Bureau of Fire Service offices, whose duties sometimes cross over into our area, but were handled with professionally and made our days in the office a pleasure.

Thanks to the former members of the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council, Bill Anderson, Cliff Messing, Randy Agruda, Mike Cousins, Mike Deprez, Shaun Abbey, Kevin Pirlot, and current members Tim James, Aileen Pettinger, Brian Blomstrom, Chad Tackett, Steve Richardson, and Dave Purchase. It has been our honor to work with each of these fire service leaders. Your dedication to the training of fire fighters was never in doubt and inspired our staff to do all we could to help you achieve your goals and objectives.

Thanks to all those that served on the various Council committees who with their knowledge and experience helped the Council and FFTD focus on their mission.

Thanks to the Contract Training Coordinators, Deward Beeler, Lorraine Schwartz, Connie Daniels, Ed Diem, and our current group, Robin Arlt, Chuck Booth, Roger Caris, Dick Caudill, Mike Cederholm, Roger Davis, Kevin Gentry, Mark Hall, Warren Hansen, Bob Hill, Ricky Kleinow, Craig Lear, Jim Lippert, Bruce Pelletier, Tom Philipps, Rick Royston, Tim Russell, Ed Sayre, Rick Van Horn, Keith Weisgerber, Ray Wlosinski, and Pete Zamora. It cannot be

overstated that the work performed by these individuals allows the FFTD and Council to carry out the duties and responsibilities as required under 1966 P.A. 291. In addition, each of them carried out their duties proficiently in spite of less than ideal support. The Training Coordinators without fail represented the Bureau and Council in a way that put our organization in the best light and that should not go unnoticed.

And finally, thanks to the staff of the Fire Fighter Training Division. As stated before, no man is an island and any success we have achieved over the last ten years is due to the efforts of the training division staff. Jeanette Robinson, Jody Jones, Mike Greis and Mary Egner all performed their duties skillfully. Thanks to the current staff, this includes Paula Brzezinski, who has come in, worked hard, and taken our mission to heart. BreeAnn Hooker, who has been called on to do her regular assigned obligations and more, has done so while contributing to the institutional knowledge that is critical to our operations. Our Region Supervisors, Gary Crum and Dan Hammerberg are irreplaceable. They are our direct contact to the fire service. Their 24/7 dedication to our mission provides the 24/7 service required by our fire fighters. Their knowledge of the policies and laws and their experience in the fire service have helped right the ship on many occasions. All of the current FFTD staff work as one, with the focus being the delivery of quality fire training.

I would like to conclude this report by delivering a message to the current members of the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council. I am extremely grateful for all you do. The amount of work you put in as a member of Council goes well beyond what you are compensated. And you do all of this on top of your other duties and responsibilities you face back home. I want to thank you all for your service.

Nevertheless, as a member of Council, you have been handed a great responsibility. We understand that quality fire training is necessary to assure that our fire fighters respond to emergencies in a safe and efficient manner. Our citizens deserve a well-trained emergency response team when they call for help. Our fire fighters deserve proper training to assure that they can complete their mission and return home safe and healthy. Unfortunately, good training costs, and when budgets are tight, fire training usually takes the biggest hit. As members of the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council, sometimes you may find yourself as the lone voice objecting to these training cuts. This can be frustrating.

But you can't let that stop you in your mission. You must continue to work with the legislature, with LARA and with the Bureau and find a solution. Remember, you are the last line of defense when it comes to training cuts. Sometimes you might feel you stand alone. But you must keep fighting to develop and nurture a finically stable state training program and support staff. The funds are there and it is up to you to find a way to make this work.

In conclusion, I want to thank you all for allowing me to be part of this great mission that you are on. It has been my honor to serve.

7. **Committee REPORT – Blomstrom**

Review of the Curriculum Committee minutes by Councilperson Blomstrom.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Pettinger to purchase a test bank and develop a 100 question state-supported exam to be administered by the Training Coordinators at the end of each Company Officer I and II program; successful completion of the class being 70% or higher on the written exam with the amendment for the number of times a candidate can retest. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A roll-call vote was requested and the results are as follows:
Pettinger-Yes
Tackett-Yes
Blomstrom-Yes
Purchase-Yes
James-Yes

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Purchase to change the company officer program from a "six prerequisite and one final class system" to allowing all 7 courses to be taken and passed successfully as part of achieving the Company Officer I and II certification, including the Firefighting Strategies and Tactics as an equivalency to the three tactics classes, with the implementation date of October 1, 2014. **MOTION CARRIES.**

Chairperson James requested that it be noted that discussion took place immediately following support of the motion.

8. OLD BUSINESS

None

9. NEW BUSINESS

Fiscal Year 2015 County Funding Letter
The State Fire Marshal sent a letter in reference to this, although the county training chairs all need to be contacted upon Council approval showing support to for the State Fire Marshal.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to make the recommendation to distribute the million dollars appropriated in fiscal year 2015 via the formula in Act 291 with a minimum amount set at $5,000 per county. **MOTION CARRIES.**

Michigan Fire Inspector Society Fund Request
Ted Jensen and Mike Bernardin come to the Council today to discuss their commitment to promote fire and life safety education to the citizens of this state and their request for 1% of the total funding for all counties in Michigan for the development of a public educational fire and life training program for Michigan's citizens.

Ed Meth/Instructor I Reciprocity
Vice Chairperson Purchase proposes that an Instructor I course still count towards an equivalent to Educational Methodology, also that the Instructor I course assist in meeting the course requirements for Company Officer.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Pettinger and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to bring this to the curriculum committee to review and then bring it back to the next meeting. **MOTION CARRIES.**

Future Instructor Orientation Courses
With Gary leaving, the point is made that the Instructor Orientation class is a requirement of Instructor I. The question is posed, how is the Bureau going to be able to meet the requirement and has there been any thought or plan as far as how the Bureau plans to accommodate this?

Fire Officer III Instructors
A mistake has been made in the rules process, when the criteria was set to be able to teach company officer and the prerequisites, it should have applied to Fire Officer III as well. The question was posed as to whether or not the Council will be able to make final amendments to the rules before the final approval.

Grants

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Tackett to approve to allocate $5,000 of the Executive Secretary allotment to go to the Michigan Fire Inspectors Society for the seed money to go to their Public Education program. **MOTION CARRIES.**

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Tackett to reallocate the $20,000 of the Executive Secretary line item committed funds to the uncommitted balance. **MOTION CARRIES.**

The uncommitted balance now totals $52,446.

14.70
A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Tackett to approve the request made by Delta Township Fire Department for the computer hardware and software for delivery of training in the Blue Card Incident Command System for $17,000. **MOTION CARRIES.**

14.71
A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Purchase to deny the request from Saugatuck Township Fire District for a regional live fire training facility. **MOTION CARRIES.**

14.72
A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to approve the request by Bertrand Twp. Fire Department to present Suburban Fire Tactics course for $1500. **MOTION CARRIES**.

14.75
A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to approve the request submitted by Schoolcraft College Regional Training Center to host a Fire Officer III Series for Warren Fire Department and surrounding Mutual Aid Departments for $2,340. **MOTION CARRIES**.

14.76
A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Tackett to approve the request submitted by Mackinac Island Fire Department to be used for flashover training for $12,000. **MOTION CARRIES**.

14.78
A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Purchase to approve the request submitted by Battle Creek Fire Department to certify personnel in ARFF for $10,000. **MOTION CARRIES**.

14.82
A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to approve the request submitted by Ann Arbor Township Fire Department for flashover training for $9,531.30. **MOTION CARRIES**.

Instructor Evaluations
Councilperson Blomstrom asked about instructor evaluation forms being sent out without any directions and inquires about the purpose. There was discussion and concern in regards to this evaluation.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Blomstrom and seconded by Councilperson Tackett that the course evaluation form be put on hold until a plan is in place for review and discipline outlined for not returning the form established and discussion to be brought before council. **MOTION CARRIES**.

Chairperson James requests the Manager to orchestrate a work session with Liz Smalley on the rules prior to the next Council meeting.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Raymond Wlosinski expresses his appreciation to Gary Crum and Joseph Grutza over the years.
Matthew Majestic inquires as to where he needs to send his invoice for payment. Also, if Region Supervisor position does not get filled, recommends that the RTC's run Instructor Orientation.

Andrew Bezenah expresses thanks to Gary and Joe.
Gary Crum recalls the reason for Instructor Orientation only being done by Region Supervisors. In the past, Training Coordinators used to do it, but in years past, Administration decided to only allow the Region Supervisors to do it due to constant changes within the Bureau. He also expresses his appreciation to Joe.
The question was asked by Mark Cleveland as to whether Instructor Orientation is needed. Also expresses his thanks to Gary and Joe.
Daniel Oberst expresses his thanks to Gary and Joe for their years of service and to Council for their support and work.

10. COUNCIL COMMENT

Councilperson Tackett echoes the public's sentiments and expresses thanks.
Councilperson Blomstrom again expresses his thanks to the upcoming retirees, also thanks Dan Oberst for all of his work on the Curriculum Committee.
Councilperson Purchase for all for the work being done and states that the fire service is a lot better off today because of the work done by Joe and Gary. Councilperson Purchase will not be at the October meeting.
Chairperson James expresses his thanks to Gary and Joe.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A **MOTION** was made by Councilperson Purchase and seconded by Councilperson Blomstrom to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION CARRIES.** The meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

October 24, 2014 @ 1:30 p.m.

Location:
Park Place Hotel
300 E. State Street
Traverse City, Michigan 48910

APPROVED:

Timothy James
Chairperson

Fire Fighter Training Division Representative

Brian K. Blomstrom
Councilperson