



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
LANSING

ORLENE HAWKS  
DIRECTOR

**MINUTES**  
**MICHIGAN FIRE FIGHTERS TRAINING COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

Park Place Hotel  
300 E. State Street, Traverse City, MI 49684  
Friday, December 2, 2022  
1:00 pm

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Kevin Beeson, Michigan Townships Association  
Brian Blomstrom, Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association  
Kurt Corradi, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs  
David Feichtner, Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs  
Kevin Sehlmeier, State Fire Marshal, Ex-officio Member  
Kyle Svoboda, Vice Chairperson, Michigan Fire Inspectors Society  
Joseph Schehr, Michigan Professional Firefighters Union  
Robert Stokes, Chairperson, Nominee of the State Fire Marshal  
Steve Richardson, Michigan State Firemen's Association

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES STAFF PRESENT:**

Macie Smith, Department Technician, Fire Fighter Training Division, Recording Secretary  
Hollie Metts, Assistant to the State Fire Marshal  
Dan Hammerberg, Region 1 Training Chief, Fire Fighter Training Division  
Aileen Pettinger, Region 2 Training Chief, Fire Fighter Training Division  
Liam Carroll, Certification Specialist, Fire Fighter Training Division  
Kymberly Pashkowsky, Bureau of Fire Services, MI Prevention

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Greg Mowbray, Brighton Area Fire Authority  
Glen Goodson, Detroit Fire Department  
Brian Haskin, Whitewater Township Fire Department  
Charlie Noonan, Troy Fire Department  
Rob Ginther, Beverly Hills Department of Public Safety  
David Pelton, Walker Fire Department  
Don Drent, Northeast Ingham Emergency Service Authority  
Michael Yanz, Northeast Ingham Emergency Service Authority  
David Weisenberg, Lansing Community College Fire Academy  
Robert Adams, North Berrien Fire Rescue Department  
Ed Sayre, Mancelona Fire Department and Star Township Fire Department  
Robert Jennison, Livonia Fire and Rescue  
David McNally, VanBuren Department of Public Safety

BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES  
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Doug Gildner, Schoolcraft College Fire Training Institute  
Ray Ahonen, Madison Heights Fire Department  
Mark Cleveland, Egelston Township Fire Department  
Dale Hall, Grand Traverse Metro Fire Department  
Joseph Miracle Jr., Green Lake Township Emergency Services  
Teresa Robinson, Ferndale Fire Department  
Cameron Pichan, Detroit Fire Department  
Mark Fankhauser, Grand Rapids Fire Department  
Cory Kernodle, Grand Rapids Fire Department  
Rodney Brown, Training Coordinator  
Ray Wilson, Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association  
Donald Bigger, Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association

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

Chairperson Stokes called the regular meeting to order at 1:05 pm. A moment of silence was observed for our fallen firefighters. Roll call was taken by recording secretary, Macie Smith. A quorum was present.

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

**22-12-01**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Svoboda** and seconded by **Councilperson Schehr** to approve the December 2, 2022 regular meeting agenda as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**22-12-02**

A **MOTION** was made by **Vice Chairperson Blomstrom** and seconded by **Councilperson Feichtner** to approve the October 18, 2022 regular meeting minutes as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**IV. COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

**V. STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT:**

- a) **FY22 Course Summary:** Fire Marshal Sehlmeier gave an overview of the course summary. Council was provided a handout in their packet. It was asked that while reviewing the handout, to please remember we are in the beginning of the new fiscal year, and therefore, all totals will be lower for each exam type. Also, the challenge code is no longer being used and has been removed from the reports.
- b) **Exam Eligible Discussion:** As of now, when a Fire Officer course is completed, students get a letter from the instructor if they have met all the JPRs. The student brings this letter to the testing site with them on the day they go take the exam. The Bureau of Fires Services continues to work to improve SMOKE and is currently working on adding the ability for the instructor to go into SMOKE once the course is completed to check a box that states that individual is exam eligible. This would trigger SMOKE to send the letter by email to the student who has met all the requirements. This would greatly reduce the tasks and time it took instructors to generate and send out a letter to everyone who completed the course.
- c) **Instructor MOUs:** As of December 1, 2022, 84 people had their instructor designation in

SMOKE be put into an inactive status due to not completing the MOU. As reminder to everyone: if you retire, leave a department, or just change your email address to please log into SMOKE and make the necessary information updates. We need the most current contact information available in SMOKE to ensure that we can properly communicate with everyone.

- d) **Fire Officer III:** One hundred questions have been established for the Fire Officer III exam. Macie is currently working on entering the exam questions into LXR, which is the grading system Bureau of Fire Service uses. The first Fire Officer III exam is not scheduled until January 4, 2023. A second Fire Officer III Train-the-Trainer was held on November 10, 2022.
- e) **Overview of Youth Firesetter Courses:** Under new business on the agenda are two National Fire Academy courses that Fire Marshal Sehlmeier is asking to be approved. A major issue that the Bureau of Fire Services has been reached out to about and that MI Prevention is working on is improving the public's knowledge of youth firesetter behavior. Most people think it can't be the youth setting fires but as proof, there have been over 100 fires that have occurred in schools this calendar year. When looking into who is predominantly setting these fires, it is the students. Fire Marshal Sehlmeier is looking for two National Fire Academy courses to be held in Michigan in 2023. The first course is the Youth Firesetter Intervention Specialist Course (FO633), and the second course is the Youth Firesetter Program Manage Course (FO634). Both courses are a 16-hours and build off each other. Michigan was approved and funded for both Youth Firesetter courses. They will be presented in Wyoming, Michigan and will be held back-to-back in January 2023, should Council approve the request in this meeting. Fire Marshal Sehlmeier would like to give a shoutout to Dan Hammerberg, who coordinates with the National Fire Academy. Michigan gets a total of nine National Fire Academy courses every year. Councilperson Blomstrom will be hosting a class in Greenville, Michigan in January 2023. In July 2023, the Michigan State Firemen's Association will be traveling to Emmitsburg for the Michigan Weekend.
- f) **Fatal Fire Update:** To date, there have been a total of 115 deaths in 96 fires statewide. This is a 11% increase YTD based on 5-year average 2017-2021. Also, please note that there was also a 10% increase YTD based on 5-year average 2017-2021 for the total of fatal fires in Michigan. Fire Marshal Sehlmeier thanked Vice Chairperson Svoboda for working with the data so that we can have information, such as finding out the trends of these fires. Also, thanks to Don Bigger and the Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association for having the MI Prevention table with Kymberly Pashkowsky at the conference this weekend. The Bureau wants to talk with people about fire deaths in the state to help get more people involved in community risk reduction. There are over 550 fire departments in Michigan that are helping to put up alarms. Based off the data that was reviewed, most of the fatal fires that occurred in Michigan this year, the local fire department had previously been there within the last year. Three quarters of the 96 fatal fires that occurred this year, did not have a working smoke alarm. People over the age of 55 years old have a greater risk of death from a fatal fire.
- g) **MI Prevention Updates:** Fire Marshal Sehlmeier asks that during the holiday season as we visit family and friends, to please push the button to check for working smoke alarms and CO detectors. Also, verify all folks have fire escape plans in place. If not, please work with family members and friends to create these escape plans to keep everyone safe. Kymberly Pashkowsky is always posting very good information on social media for MI Prevention pages, which can be found on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Liking these posts is great, but we ask that you also share the posts to spread the information even more. As a fun social media challenge from MI Prevention, we ask everyone to post a family safety message and tag #MIPrevention.
- h) **Funding:** All county FY23 funding has been distributed to the counties and they have until

January 1, 2023 to encumber the money. This is spelled out in Section 14 of the rules. On January 1, 2023, Dan will be turning off the funding and money cannot be encumbered after that date. Fire Marshal Sehlmeier asks that county training committee chairpersons forward a list of their courses to the region training chiefs so that they can verify all money was encumbered properly in SMOKE by January 15, 2023. Please remember all courses must be closed out within 30 days of the completion of that course. Very soon SMOKE will start sending out emails if you go beyond 30 days without closing the course. The Bureau of Fire Services is consistently getting the invoices for courses paid within 14 days once a course is closed by the course manager. But if the course does not get closed in a timely manner, this delays the State of Michigan being able to get that invoice paid. The money the Bureau sends out for all training course goes to each counties county to distribute and pay the instructors.

- i) **Fire Training Video:** Legislative requirement for all Michigan fire departments to watch a 14-minute [video](#) on the health, handling, and proper use of Class B AFFF to their members. Fire departments have been asked to complete the required training and submit the training roster to BFS by July 1, 2022. BFS is tracking compliance. To date, a total of 581 departments have responded. This total is up 59 since last council meeting. Fire Marshal Sehlmeier would like to thank Councilperson Beeson and the Michigan Townships Association, because of them, the Bureau of Fire Services was able to send out letters to township supervisors asking for the rosters to be submitted.
- j) **Fire Department Survey:** The Fire Marshal also asks that all fire chiefs complete a short fire department [survey](#). To date, a total of 281 departments have responded. This total is up 15 since last council meeting. The information will be used to update SMOKE (training database), the Fire Service Directory, and to get a better understanding of the recruiting and retention challenges affecting Michigan fire departments. Fire Marshal and Chairperson Stokes encourage everyone to always make sure in SMOKE there is a current email, address, position, etc.
- k) **NFIRS Non-Reporting Departments:** 116 departments that have not reported at all this year as of November 30, 2022. This total is down 18 since last council meeting. These 116 fire departments are not eligible for any money from the Fireworks Safety Fees. You must be NFIRS compliant to obtain any money from the Fireworks Safety Fees.
- l) **Legislative Updates:** Proposed legislation to watch:
  - i. **Passed:**
    - i. [House Bill 5701](#) (door locking/barricade devices) – Passed PA 48 of 2022
  - ii. **Moved:**
    - i. [Senate Bill 1169](#) (new tanks) – Passed by Senate, Referred to Committee on Regulatory Reform 11/30
  - iii. **No Changes:**
    - i. [House Bill 5561](#) (Radios) – No Change
    - ii. [House Bill 6319](#) (Fire Drills) - No Change
    - iii. [House Bill 6331](#) (Schools/Lockdowns) – No Change
    - iv. [House Bill 6421](#) (Tanks) – No Change
    - v. [House Bill 5333](#) (Fireworks Bonds) – No Change
    - vi. [Senate Bill 5](#) (Fireworks – Local Ordinances and Holidays) – No Change
    - vii. [Fireworks Package House Bill 4888-4892](#) (Fireworks) – No Change
    - viii. [House Bill 5063](#) & [Senate Bill 355](#) (Fireworks/Juneteenth) – No Change
    - ix. [House Bill 6304](#) (Automatic Sprinklers) – No Change
    - x. [House Bill 6432](#) (Disclosure of Concealed Weapons) – No Change

- m) **Wednesday Wrap-Up Dates/Times:** The next wrap up is on December 14, 2022 at 4:00 pm. This will be the last Wednesday Wrap-Up of 2022. We will take a break for the holidays and will be back after the new year.
- n) Fire Marshal Sehlmeier would like to thank council for all their hard work. It has been a big year with appointments for seven new members and he really likes the direction this council is headed. Also, Fire Marshal Sehlmeier would like to thank Don Bigger for the hospitality he and the association have shown the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council this weekend.

## **VI. CURRICULUM COMMITTEE UPDATE:**

Councilperson Blomstrom stated the next Curriculum Committee meeting is on December 13, 2022. The committee will be working on the Fire Officer II exam. If time allows, they will also be working on the Fire Officer I exam in that same meeting.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS:**

### **a. Q Course Applications**

Mountain Rescue Workshop (**FMQ22-023**)  
Instructor: Michael DeCraene / Phone: 313-363-1377

Personal Skills Rescue Workshop (**FMQ22-024**)  
Instructor: Michael DeCraene / Phone: 313-363-1377

Team Skills Rescue Workshop (**FMQ22-025**)  
Instructor: Michael DeCraene / Phone: 313-363-1377

#### **22-12-03**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Schehr** and seconded by **Councilperson Svoboda** to **approve** Q Course applications **FMQ22-023, FMQ22-024, and FMQ22-025. MOTION CARRIED.**

- b. **Computer-Based Testing:** Fire Marshal Sehlmeier stated that the Bureau of Fire Services continues to meet with multiple computer-based testing companies. The Bureau is finding that SMOKE is further ahead than most of the commercial learning management systems. The companies that the Bureau has been meeting with have not been able to give official prices yet, but it is looking to be in the six-figure range for these systems.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **a. Proposed 2023 MFFTC Meeting Schedule:**

#### **22-12-04**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Blomstrom** and seconded by **Councilperson Richardson** to approve the Proposed 2023 MFFTC Meeting Schedule as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- b. **Use of Returned Funding to the MFFTC after January 1, 2023:** During this past meeting in October, council members were given graphs with data showing the amount of money spent, how it was spent and how much was left at the end of each fiscal year for the years of 2017 to 2022. For FY21, the funds were spent on mental health and then what was left was given to the Bureau of Fire Services to manage. They were able to get that end total to \$586.65. In FY22, a total of \$115,587.00 was given back. The money was left in the county level to spend through September. Fire Marshal Sehlmeier would like the to recommend the money be used for

funding certification courses. Also, to continue money going toward mental health courses but continue changing the locations of these courses. Please note it is very hard to get money reappropriated if the money that is given already is not being spent. Councilperson Blomstrom asked how much is in the account to date, which was informed that the account is up to \$7 million. This total would be before the current fiscal years \$2.3 million is given out. Fire Marshal Sehlmeier would like to note that the earlier council creates a plan for the returned money the earlier they can begin spending it. This would lead to more time to create opportunities to spend the money which would mean less money left in the end. Councilperson Blomstrom feels this is going to require a two-prong approach from council. He feels as though the money left in the county should go back to the Bureau of Fire Services. But if a class gets cancelled, does that mean the money automatically goes back to the bureau or does the county have a right to reallocate it? There could be reasons beyond control as why the course was cancelled so that is not fair to have the money automatically given back. Councilperson Blomstrom proposed that the county was given a timeframe to spend that money before it goes back to the bureau. Council came to a solution that a county may have 30 days to reschedule before the money goes back to the Bureau of Fire Services. Council also decided that creating two motions would make for a cleaner solution.

#### **22-12-05**

A **MOTION** was made by **Vice Chairperson Svoboda** and seconded by **Councilperson Feichtner**, Council allows Bureau of Fire Services to manage training funds returned after January 1, 2023 for FY23 to ensure priorities in certification courses and mental health classes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **22-12-06**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Blomstrom** and seconded by **Councilperson Feichtner**, after January 1, 2023 for FY23 courses that are cancelled in SMOKE can be rescheduled in SMOKE and must be completed within 30 days without losing any funding. **MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **c. Adding Two (2) New National Fire Academy (NFA) Courses:**

- i. FO633 Youth Firesetter Intervention Specialist Course – 16-hour Course
- ii. FO634 Youth Firesetter Program Manage Course – 16-hour Course

#### **22-12-07**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Schehr** and seconded by **Councilperson Corradi**, the MFFTC will adopt the in-state delivery of National Fire Academy (NFA) Courses FO633 Youth Firesetter Intervention Specialist and FO634 Youth Firesetter Program Manager and will be added as approved NFA Courses for delivery in the State of Michigan moving forward.

Councilperson Feichtner asked Fire Marshal Sehlmeier if it has ever been a process to just blanket approve all NFA Courses. It was discussed that due to funding and instructor requirements, all NFA Courses must be individually approved by council.

#### **d. Q Course Applications:**

RIC for the Rural Department (**FMQ22-027**)  
Instructor: Brandon Cory / Phone: 906-250-7822

**22-12-08**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Blomstrom** and seconded by **Councilperson Richardson** to **table** Q Course application **FMQ22-02 until the next meeting on February 14, 2023** due to no course objectives, schedule, or syllabus. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Basic Water with Boat Operations (**FMQ22-028**)

Instructors: Michigan Rescue Concepts / Phone: 586-784-9320

**22-12-09**

A **MOTION** was made by **Vice Chairperson Svoboda** and seconded by **Councilperson Richardson** to **approve** Q Course applications **FMQ22-028. Abstention: Councilperson Blomstrom. MOTION CARRIED.**

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Rob Ginther, Beverly Hills Department of Public Safety** thanked the council for the new rule put in place that everyone has 30 days reschedule. Asked, if possible, for Bureau of Fire Services to copy the county chairpersons on emails being sent out about courses to help assure they are closed in a timely manner.

**Donald Bigger, Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association** thanked everyone for making the drive to Traverse City and being here at the conference.

**Michael Yanz, N.I.E.S.A.** stated that regarding the 30 day rule that is now in place, he understands the importance of giving that money back. But he would like to point out that it may be difficult to get a class rescheduled and held within 30 days having to try to work around many different schedules. Getting time off requests in to take time off for the rescheduled course in a timely manner may be difficult.

**X. COUNCIL COMMENT:**

**Councilperson Corradi** thanked Bureau of Fire Services staff, especially Dan and Liam, for all the hard work they provided in processing and completing a reciprocity application for one of his staff within three days.

**Councilperson Blomstrom** would like to note and thank the Bureau to allow the MFFTC Meeting to be held at the MFSIA Conference in Traverse City. He understands there are extra expenditures that come from having the meeting in this location and it is appreciated.

**Fire Marshal Sehmeyer** wanted to share that Kymberly Pashkowsky has provided magnets for everyone attending this meeting, they can be found on the center of every table. Also, if your fire department would like some to hand out, please contact Kymberly.

**Chairperson Stokes** would like to thank Michigan Fire Services Instructors Association for hosting the meeting today.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:**

**22-12-10**

A **MOTION** was made by **Councilperson Feichtner** and seconded by **Councilperson Svoboda** to **adjourn** the meeting. **MOTION CARRIED.** The meeting adjourned at 2:23 pm.

**APPROVED:** MFFTC Regular Meeting 2/14/23 (Motion #23-02-02)