



STATE OF TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE &  
INSURANCE COMMISSION ON FIRE FIGHTING  
COMMISSION BUSINESS MEETING  
Putnam County, Tennessee  
August 10, 2022

**CALL TO ORDER** (Commissioner Biggs)

**ROLL CALL** (Director Grande)

Commissioner Brian C. Biggs  
Commissioner Michael Henry  
Commissioner William Scott  
Commissioner Jay Moore  
Commissioner Stephanie Specht  
Commissioner David Windrow  
Commissioner Gary Farley  
Commissioner Travis Solomon

**Members not present**

Commissioner Carter Lawrence  
Commissioner Tommy Kelley  
Commissioner Sharrock Cobb

A quorum has been established

**Commerce and Insurance/Fire Prevention Staff Present:**

Anthony Grande- Executive Director- Fire Commission  
Commissioner Gary Farley  
Director Mary Gribble  
Leigh Ferguson- Chief Counsel  
Kim Cooper- Legal  
Richard Guardino – Fire Coordinator  
Michael Miranda - Fire Coordinator  
Cheryl Deener- Administrative Assistant  
Fred McCay- Accreditation

Jeff Elliott – TFACA Director, Fire service Program

Jason Sparks, TFACA Field Supervisor

Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Scott: Motion by to approve corrected minutes from previous meeting, seconded by Commissioner Henry.

Commissioner Biggs: Motion approved

Leigh Ferguson- Attorney General said the rules are on the way up and the final hearing for the rule changes will be at the next meeting.

Commissioner Farley- Greg Adams and Bailey Scott have left the Fire Marshal's office. We have an Executive Service Appointed position and we want someone who is a Geospatial data analyst and other software experience. We have hired Michelle Price in the Fire Marshal's office. Since everyone gave their reports during the work session, we are incorporating the meeting and work session minutes together.

TFACA Sparks- Give report during work session, which consisted of free training, including basic firefighting, 64 hours, Firefighters I and II burn and 84 hours on campus. We got the funding to offer free training and we have trained 45 people in 64-hour class, 66 people on live burns and 105 people on basic firefighting. The Fire Chief orientation is scheduled, and the recruits start in August for the fall class, graduation for these recruits will be October 28<sup>th</sup> which is the last Friday in October, and the recruit class is full. ARFF class is September 9-19<sup>th</sup> at Fort Campbell. We have held 1034 classes which served 15,000 students. We hired an East Tennessee coordinator Troy Perry, who was the Deputy Chief with Karns Fire Department. TN River weekend is November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, Upper Cumberland weekend is free and being held on October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Farley: We want to grow the fire training.

Director Grande: We have hire Richard Guardino, for the West Tennessee coordinator position.

Director Grande: Reciprocity report was given during the work session but consisted of 777 reciprocities given from January to July 2022.

Director Grande: 2022 In-Service update, in-service is still moving along.

Director Grande: 2021 Audits, we had audits with 51 departments virtually. The next virtual audits are August 24<sup>th</sup> for all East Tennessee departments. On the volunteer side, since Ms. Deener reviewed the training for individual volunteers, we need to vote on whether to allow Ms. Deener's training audits on individual volunteers is enough to be considered an audit.

Commissioner Farley: For comptroller audit we need to make sure that Ms. Deener creates a procedure on how she audited these records.

Commissioner Windrow: Last years, you checked this paper, but the comptroller may not accept it.

Ms. Deener: We can still complete the forms.

Commissioner Henry: Is someone from the department going to be there.

Coordinator Miranda: We will be sure they are available on Teams or Zoom calls for questions.

Commissioner Farley: We need to verify with comptroller to see if electronic audits will be okay.

Director Grande: If a department is not able to do a virtual audit, then we will go to the department in person.

Commissioner Specht: Virtual audits are also cost effective.

Director Grande: What are the total departments for next year?

Coordinator Miranda: We are looking at 25 a year for career and add 5% for volunteers.

Leigh Ferguson: There is no official answer from the comptroller's office for virtual audits and we will not know until next week if they will accept this.

Director Grande: We meet 20% of audits. Next year if we add more individuals, there will be more audits. We need to work out efficiently to get them done.

Commissioner Farley: We need to correct the Annual Fiscal Activity Act for the comptroller.

Cheryl Deener: EIP/VEIP report given during work session that consisted of the totals for Educational Incentive Program.

Total Departments: 204

Career: 90 Departments

Combo: 32 Departments

Volunteer: 82 Departments

Total FF applied: 8488

Total FF Paid: 8391 - \$6,433,000.00

Total Career FF Paid: 6995 - \$5,596,000.00

Total Volunteer FF Paid through Combo Depts: 605 - \$363,000.00

Total Volunteers FF Paid individual: 791 - \$474,600.00

Combined Total Volunteer FF Paid: 1396 - \$837,600.00

Coordinator Guardino: I have concerns about the requirements for volunteers.

Commissioner Farley: I have heard the same things you have, and we amended it to give volunteers (5) five years to certify at Firefighter I, the 64 hour and live burn is required in (3) three years. We updated the live burn from (3) years to (10) years. We have made changes to allow for a volunteer to meet the prerequisites. The first year the only requirement was (30) thirty hours training and a valid CPR. I have committed extra funds to the Academy for free training.

Fred McCay: The IFSAC site team is recommending a full re-accreditation after (3) three days of intense scrutiny. I have done many site visits and normally they have more to do with testing and practicals. With our current team, we were able to make correction on site as the site team found issues. The day after the site visit, we have to begin preparing for the next visit. I am teaching Ms. Jessica Curtis the correlations so she can begin with the Rope test while I am working on the Officer series.

Director Grande: I have been to site visits and our site visit was so different than what I have experienced. The NFPA consolidation is adding more and more work. If codes change on a (5) five-year cycle. We do not have very much time to complete each level.

Director Grande: I have shared communications reducing the number of ProBoard certificates issued. I had an appointment with ProBoard's accreditation manager. I explained why and what we want to do, and they asked for us to answer (5) five questions.

Commissioner Farley: We are their customer; we have answered these questions. They cannot dictate what we do.

Commissioner Henry: Thanks for bringing this to us.

Commissioner Windrow: Motion to have Chairman Biggs sign a letter to ProBoard answering their questions, seconded by Solomon. Motion carries.

Director Grande: This is not the board of directors wanting this it is the accreditation manager with ProBoard.

Commissioner Farley: We want to keep Inspector I and II.

Director Grande: They may not reaccredit us because they think we do not have funding which is not their call.

Sam Oldham with Sale Creek: When will this go into effect?

Fred McCay: Either at reaccreditation or annual meetings in January 2023.

Commissioner Windrow: ProBoard is to help transfer to a different state. We would keep Inspector I and II with ProBoard but there are not many firefighters who get ProBoard. It is too much administrative work to continue with ProBoard versus the number of firefighters who apply.

### **New Business**

Director Grande: A firefighter was accused of arson. I have provided the news reports. There are reasons to deny or revoke certifications. We need to make sure that we keep ourselves informed and act at the appropriate time.

Commissioner Biggs: Find out the status and we will not act until conviction.

Commissioner Biggs: Pipeline Emergency Response Training course, (8) eight hours and Mr. Ken Tuggle is here to speak about the class. We need to add this to the agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Scott and seconded by Commissioner Windrow to add the course to the agenda.

Ken Tuggle: In December 2019, I was assigned to meet and partner with the state for pipeline initiative. We already have the pipeline in East Tennessee and saw the need to train firefighters on these pipelines. The training will be conducted to NFPA 470, Chapters 4 through 13. The training will be instructor by pipeline workers. The pipeline workers will provide training on liquid, gas, interstate distribution, collection, and any other items with Pipelines. All the fire service would benefit from this training. It is an (8) eight-hour class that can be split into (4) four hours at a time if necessary.

Commissioner Scott: Where is the test?

Ken Tuggle: There is about 20 questions, all multiple choice.

Commissioner Solomon: Motion to accept the course, seconded by Commissioner Moore. Motion carries.

### **Old Business**

Director Grande: The rule changes are scheduled for our next meeting, and the rule change committee might need to meet one more time before our next meeting and have everything ready by November.

Motion by Commissioner Scott and seconded by Commissioner Henry, for Next meeting to be held at TFACA on November 1<sup>st</sup> work session, 9 AM, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10AM rule hearing, then following the hearing will be the meeting. Motion carries.

Motion to adjourn Meeting by Commissioner Windrow, seconded by Commissioner Henry, Motion approved.

Motion to adjourn the work session by Commissioner Henry and seconded by Commissioner Solomon. Motion carries.