



Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association

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CSFCA Wildland Fire Section Organizational Meeting

Friday, March 20, 2009

South Metro Fire Headquarters
Centennial, Colorado

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by CSFCA Executive Director Cooke. Chief Mike Morgan, CSFCA Secretary served as the Secretary for the meeting. There were 28 individuals in attendance, representing fire departments, county sheriffs offices, county emergency management offices, and the Colorado State Forest Service (see attached meeting roster).

Introductions & Opening Remarks by CSFCA Executive Director Cooke

Exec. Dir. Cooke welcomed those in attendance and thanked them for their participation. He gave a brief history of the efforts to create the Section, beginning when it was first identified as a goal in the CSFCA Strategic Plan 2+ years ago. Last summer, when the ad hoc WUI committee was meeting in preparation for the Legislative Interim Committee, the participants expressed continued desire to see the Section created. Cooke expressed his pleasure that they were finally getting it off the ground. He indicated that a total of 68 people have expressed interest in the Section, but many could not attend this particular meeting.

Following introductions, Cooke gave his vision of the CSFCA Wildland Fire Section; to bring together CSFCA members involved in wildland fire management to provide leadership, expertise and direction on wildland fire issues. He indicated that when wildland fire issues cross his desk, it would be extremely helpful to have access to the technical expertise represented by the individuals assembled for this meeting.

Cooke expressed his hope that the Section would be representative of the broad range of disciplines involved in wildland fire management. He indicated his belief that the CSFCA was well-positioned to accomplish this because CSFCA membership is open to all agencies and organizations that have a wildland fire management role, including the state and federal wildland fire agencies, county sheriffs, county emergency managers, and of course fire departments. He noted that some are department or agency members, such as fire departments and others are individual members, such as county sheriffs and county emergency managers.

Cooke indicated that the specific purpose of this meeting was to get the Section organized and, as time permitted, to discuss some of the current issues of interest to those in wildland fire management.

"Serving the Chief Fire Officers of Colorado Since 1968"

Organizational Issues

Cooke led a discussion of organizational issues by walking through the proposed Section Bylaws.

1. Name

It was the consensus of those present that the organization should be known as the Wildland Fire Section of the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Association.

2. Mission

There was discussion centered on the fact that it would be appropriate to incorporate a cost containment theme into both the Mission Statement and the Objectives. The proposed Mission Statement was re-written to incorporate this theme. The propose mission statement now reads:

"The mission of the Wildland Fire Section is to bring together CSFCA members involved in wildland fire management to provide leadership, expertise and direction on wildland fire issues, in order to reduce the injuries, deaths, property loss and the fiscal impacts of wildland fires and to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire in Colorado."

The proposed mission statement was approved by consensus of those present.

3. Objectives

In order to incorporate the cost containment theme into the objectives, objective "E" was re-written to read:

"making recommendations on public policy to reduce the injuries, deaths, property loss and the fiscal impacts of wildland fires and to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire in Colorado."

The proposed objectives were approved by consensus of those present.

4. Membership and Dues

Article II of the proposed bylaws was approved by consensus of those present. Cooke indicated that he did not know if additional dues for section membership would be needed, but this section allowed for dues up to \$25 annually to be assessed.

5. Section Officers

Article III, Section 1 of the proposed bylaws, pertaining to Section Officers was approved by consensus of those present.

6. Regional Directors.

Cooke expressed his hope that the Section would focus on all of Colorado's wildland fire problems, not just the forest fire problem. He noted that the wildland fire problem and the resources available to deal with the problem vary considerably depending upon what region in the state you are located in. Cooke indicated that the role of the Regional Directors would be to: (a) represent the members of the region on the Board of Directors; (b) facilitate two-way communications between the Section and its members in the region; and (c) encourage membership and participation in the Section from within the Region.

Cooke indicated that the proposed bylaws included the recommendation that the regions be consistent with the CSFCA Regions, which are based on the State's All-Hazard Regions. There was concern expressed that some of the regions were extraordinarily large. However, Cooke suggested that instead of redrawing boundaries, a Regional Director could designate other folks within their region to assist with communications.

Following discussion, it consensus of those present that the organization should include Regional Directors and the Regions be the same as the CSFCA Regions.

Article III of the proposed bylaws was approved by consensus of those present, with inclusion of the following description of the role of the Regional Directors:

"The role of the Regional Directors is to: (a) represent the members of the region on the Board of Directors; (b) facilitate two-way communications between the Section and its members in the region; and (c) encourage membership and participation in the Section from within the Region."

6. Duties of the Officers

Article IV of the proposed bylaws, pertaining to the Duties of the Officers was approved by consensus of those present.

7. Meetings

It was the consensus of those present that regular meetings should be held every other month, on the months opposite those when the Combination Section meets, and that the meetings should be held around the state to accommodate regional participation. Article V, Section 1, Paragraph B will be amended to read:

"Regular meetings will normally be held every other month, in the months of January, March, May, July and September, on the third Friday of the month. These meetings will normally rotate between the regions. However, the dates and/or location of regular meetings may be changed by a majority vote of the Section Board of Directors."

8. Eligibility for Office

Cooke noted there was a typo in this paragraph and he recommended the eligibility be extended to individual members. It was the consensus of those present to accept these changes. The amended Article V, Section 3 shall read:

"Any member of the Section seeking election to any office shall be a regular or individual member of the Association."

Action on Proposed Bylaws

The remainder of the proposed bylaws was approved by consensus of those present. Cooke advised that he would make the changes to the proposed bylaws. He would then distribute the proposed bylaws as amended to all parties on the Section's distribution list for formal action on adoption at the next meeting. Following action by the Section members, the CSFCA Board of Directors must ratify the Section bylaws.

Election of Interim Board of Directors

Cooke recommended that an Interim Board of Directors be elected to serve until the Annual Meeting. He indicated that persons that were on the list of those interested but not available for the meeting could be nominated for a seat on the Interim Board of Directors.

Chairman – Jimmy (Jamey) Bumgarner, Fire Chief of Larkspur Fire Protection District placed his name into consideration for Chairman. This was seconded by Paul Russell of Castle Rock Fire Rescue. There were no other nominations. The motion to elect Jamey Bumgarner as Interim Chairman of the Section was unanimously carried.

Vice Chairman – Deputy Chief Jeff Berino of Lake Dillon Fire Rescue placed his name into consideration for Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Chief David Blair of Grand Valley Fire Protection District. There were no other nominations. The motion to elect Jeff Berino as Interim Vice Chairman of the Section was unanimously carried.

Secretary/Treasurer – Gary Green, Fire Chief of Red, White and Blue Fire Rescue (Breckenridge) placed his name into consideration for Secretary/Treasurer. This was seconded by Paul Russell of Castle Rock Fire Rescue. There were no other nominations. The motion to elect Gary Green as Interim Secretary/Treasurer of the Section was unanimously carried.

Regional Directors

Cooke next asked for volunteers or nominations for individuals to serve in the capacity of Interim Regional Directors. The following individuals volunteered or were nominated to serve in this capacity:

Northwestern Region (Includes the counties of Eagle, Garfield, Grand, Jackson, Mesa, Moffat, Pitkin, Rio Blanco, Routt, and Summit) – Chief Dave Blair of Grand Valley Fire Protection District (Parachute) volunteered to serve as Regional Director for the Northwestern Region.

Northcentral Region (Includes the counties of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Elbert, Gilpin, and Jefferson) – Chief John Staley of Thornton Fire Department and Sam Parsons, Wildland Coordinator for Fairmount Fire Protection District both indicated their willingness to serve in this capacity. Chief Staley deferred the position of Regional Director to Sam Parsons.

Southwestern Region (Includes the counties of Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, San Juan) – Cooke recommended that Chief Rich Graeber of Upper Pine Fire Protection District serve as Regional Director for the Southwestern Region, in absentia. He indicated that this nomination is supported from folks in his region.

Southcentral Region (includes the counties of Chaffee, El Paso, Lake, Park, and Teller) – Commander Jim Reid of El Paso County Sheriff's Office volunteered to serve as Regional Director for the Southcentral Region.

South Region: (includes the counties of Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Las Animas and Pueblo) - Rich Stromberg of La Veta Fire Protection District volunteered to serve as Regional Director for the South Region.

The following regions were not represented at the meeting;

- Southeastern Region (Includes the counties of Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, and Prowers).
- San Luis Region (Includes the counties of Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande and Saguache).
- West Region (Includes the counties of Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel).
- Northeastern Region (Includes the counties of Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Larimer, Lincoln, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, and Yuma).

Cooke advised that he would send an Email out asking for volunteers from these regions to serve as Interim Regional Directors.

Meeting Dates and Locations

Following discussion, the following was adopted as the meeting schedule for the Wildland Fire Section for the remainder of the year:

May 22, 2009 – Colorado Springs (Location TBD)

July 24, 2009 – Parachute or Rifle (Location TBD)

September 3, 2009 – Ignacio (Location TBD) Note: meeting to be held in conjunction with CSFCA meeting on September 4, 2009. This will be an evening meeting.

Annual Meeting in Conjunction with CSFCA Annual Conference in Keystone (Date and Time TBD)

2008 Interim Committee on Wildland Fire Issues in WUI Areas

Cooke provided an overview of the 2008 Interim Committee on Wildland Fire Issues in WUI Areas, noting that many of the issues the CSFCA presented to the Interim Committee resulted in legislative initiatives in the 2009 General Assembly. Note: A copy of the Report of the 2008 Interim Committee on Wildfire Issues in Wildland-Urban Interface Areas was distributed to meeting participants and is available for download at: www.colofirechiefs.org/wildfire/08WildfireFinalReport.pdf.

Comments by CSFCA President Riley

CSFCA President Chief Riley joined the meeting (following his appearance at the FMAC meeting scheduled for the same time) and addressed the participants. He expressed the need for a Section focused on wildland fire issues and his support of its creation. He also expressed his appreciation to those that participated in the meeting.

Current Legislative Issues

Cooke provided an overview of wildland fire-related bills in the 2009 Legislative Session; highlighting what the bills do and where they are in the legislative process. A Summary of Wildland Fire Bills in the 2009 Colorado General Assembly was distributed to meeting participants and is incorporated herein by this reference. The summary is available for download at: www.colofirechiefs.org/wildfire/PIDC_Engine_Mobilization_Guidelines.pdf.

The following wildland fire bills were reported on (see the summary for the purpose and current status of the bills):

- a. SB09-001, Establishment of Community Wildfire Protection Plans by County Governments (Sen. Gibbs; Rep. Scanlan)
- b. SB09-013, Extension of Civil Immunity to Persons Engaged in Emergency Response Activities (Sen. Gibbs & Schwartz; Rep. Levy & King S.)
- c. SB09-016, Concerning Measures to Encourage the Restoration of Forest Areas Affected by Bark Beetle Infestation (Sen. Kopp & Penry, Rep. S. King & Scanlan)
- d. SB09-018, Concerning the Creation of a High-Risk Communities Wildfire Mitigation Grant Program (Sen. Kopp & Gibbs, S. King & Scanlan)

- e. SB09-020, Concerning the Responsibility for Responding to Wild Land Fires (Sen. Gibbs, Rep. Scanlan)
- f. SB09-021, Incentives for Volunteer Firefighters (Sen. Kopp; Rep. Scanlan & Levy)
- g. SB09-105, Concerning Removal of the Statutory Limit on the Amount That May be Raised in a Single Year By a Special Property Tax Levied by a Board of County Commissioners for the Purpose of Fighting Specified Types of Fires in a County (Sen. Gibbs, Rep. Scanlan)
- h. HB09-1031, Requirement that the State Match Local Government Contributions to the Emergency Fire Fund (Rep. S. King, Sen. Penry & Gibbs)
- i. HB09-1162, Concerning Intergovernmental Cooperation for the Purpose of Mitigating Wildfires (Rep. Gerou, Sen. Kopp)
- j. HB09-1199, Healthy Forests and Vibrant Communities Act (Rep. Scanlan, Sen. Gibbs)

Note: Cooke reported at length on the "Strike Below" amendment to SB09-020 and the structure it creates regarding wildland fire responsibilities. He indicated his belief that the crucial element of this bill is the development of county wildland fire plans in collaboration between the sheriff and the fire departments of the county. Cooke reported that he has had conversations with the County Sheriffs Association about working together to develop a model template and education program to successfully implement the provisions of SB09-020. He expressed his desire that the Wildland Fire Section be involved in this process.

Current Issues

Cooke led a discussion on those wildland fire-related issues that have come across his desk in the recent past or were recommended for discussion at this meeting.

PIDC Engine Mobilization Guidelines

Cooke indicated that he has received Emails and phone calls from chiefs expressing concern with Pueblo Interagency Dispatch Center's (PIDC's) Engine Mobilization Guidelines and asked for input from those assembled for the meeting. Following were the comments and issues discussed:

- Why is this decision being made at the dispatch center level?
- Initial attack dispatch decisions should not be made on the basis of cost; but closest available and qualified resources – delayed IA resources could result in larger, more costly fires.
- Beyond IA, cost containment decisions should happen at the incident level.
- The costs being considered by PIDC are equipment only; thus it is not an apples-to-apples comparison of actual costs.

In addition, it was recommended that PIDC publish the engine rotation list on the Internet. Doing so would accomplish two things: first, it would provide visibility and hopefully eliminate some of the concerns about favoritism; and second, it would let those who are lower on the list an opportunity to get away for a few days without having to take themselves off of availability.

Cooke recommended a subcommittee develop a consensus position on the issue to be presented to Brenda Wasielewski and Allyn Herrington. BC Jim Schanel of Colorado Springs FD agreed to take lead on this and collected contact information from others interested in assisting him.

Policy on Private Resource Utilization

Cooke reported that the IAFC Guidelines for Managing Private Resources was distributed to CSFCA members on October 8, 2008; however they were distributed without comment. On March 5, 2009, the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group released guidelines on private resources which differ in some respects from the IAFC Guidelines. Cooke expressed the desire that the CSFCA provide specific guidance to its members regarding the issue of private resources on wildland fires. He recommended

a subcommittee review the two guidelines and make a recommendation regarding adoption by the CSFCA Board. DC Jeff Berino of Lake Dillon Fire Rescue agreed to take lead on this.

IAFC Guidelines for Managing Private Resources on Wildland Fire Incidents
<http://www.colofirechiefs.org/wildfire/PrivateResourceUtilizationGuides.pdf>

Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCC) Guidelines for Private Firefighting Resources
www.colofirechiefs.org/wildfire/private_resource_guidelines.pdf

Standardized Equipment Rate Issue

Cooke reported that, while the issue was resolved for this year by the consensus adoption of templates for engines, tenders and special circumstances, there will be need to reevaluate this approach again, possibly this year and at least every couple of years. Cooke indicated that the ongoing evaluation of the Standardized Equipment Rate Issue and other AOP business practices are likely best addressed by the Wildland Fire Section on behalf of the CSFCA.

NWCG Position Paper "Supplemental Fire Resources"

Cooke reported that when the NWCG Position Paper regarding "Supplemental Fire Resources" came out he was contacted by chiefs who expressed concern with the policy. However, over time, as it became clear that the policy only affects those departments that have resources under contract for wildland fire, the expression of concern has died off. Cooke asked if anyone in attendance at the meeting had any concerns with the policy. None were expressed.

For a copy of the NWCG Position Paper "Supplemental Fire Resources", go to:
www.colofirechiefs.org/wildfire/supplemental-fire-dept-resources.pdf.

Colorado Emergency Resource Mobilization System Interface with National Interagency Wildfire Dispatch System

Cooke advised that a draft of the revised Colorado Emergency Resource Mobilization Plan has been distributed for comment. This is an Implementation Draft, meaning that it is in effect during the comment period.

For a copy of the Colorado Emergency Resource Mobilization Plan Implementation Draft (02-19-09), go to: www.colofirechiefs.org/wildfire/Resource_Mobilization_Plan%202009-02-19.pdf.

Cooke also reported that there is need for continuing the dialogue towards one all-hazard mobilization system for the state, instead of the current "all hazard, except wildfire plan" and a separate "wildfire plan"

Utilization of Colorado All-Hazard Type 3 IMT's

Cooke indicated his belief that progress was being made towards incorporating the Colorado All-Hazard Type 3 IMT's into the interagency dispatch system for use on wildfires. Brown (CSFS) indicated that the Type 3 IMT's would not be used on a wildland fire incident unless they were NWCG qualified. Discussion ensued over the appropriateness of requiring NWCG qualifications for all IMT positions. Cooke advised that he would obtain a status report on this and report back.

Wildland Fire Reporting

Cooke reported that significant effort went into creating one fire incident reporting system for the state; however, we collectively need to do a better job of reporting to provide the CSFS the data they need for their required reports to the feds. Many wildland fire incidents are not being entered into the system at all and many others are being entered without location, cause or size estimate. Thus, the value of the data is limited. Cooke indicated his willingness to assist in training and technical assistance on NFIRS for departments currently not reporting, as he wishes to avoid the return to two separate fire reporting systems at all cost.

Other Issues

Colorado Prescribed Fire Council

Sam Parsons, Wildland Fire Operations Supervisor for Fairmount Fire Protection District reported that he currently serves on the Colorado State Prescribed Fire Council, and is the only cooperater that does so. Sam expressed his willingness to represent the CSFCA on this Council.

The purpose of the Colorado Prescribed Fire Council, which was created in 2007, is to

- Increase appropriate use of prescribed fire in Colorado
- Reduce barriers to prescribed fire.
- Improve cooperation & coordination among burners.

To download a copy of a presentation on the Colorado Prescribed Fire Council, go to:
www.colofirechiefs.org/wildfire/CoRxFireCouncil.pdf.

Without objection, it was the consensus of those present to recommend to the CSFCA Board that Sam Parsons be designated as the CSFCA Representative to the Colorado Prescribed Fire Council.

23% Indirect Rate Assessed by CSFS on Local Invoices

The question was asked if the CSFCA had received any response from its inquiry regarding CSU's practice of adding an indirect cost assessment of 23% on top of all invoices submitted by local agencies for reimbursement. It was mentioned that the Interim Committee had asked the CSFS for documentation regarding the indirect rate assessment; specifically what it was used for. Unfortunately, neither Rich Homann nor Clair Brown was in the meeting when this issue was raised.

Cooke reported that the CSFS had responded to the Interim Committee inquiry and that he would obtain a copy of the CSFS memo and distribute it to the members on the Wildland Fire Section contact list.

Creation of Standing Committees

Cooke indicated that the Wildland Fire Section might wish to consider standing committees to deal with some of the topics and issues that will come before it, such as a Policy Committee, Business Practices Committee, Training & Technical Assistance Committee, etc. Further discussion of this was tabled until the next meeting.

It was also mentioned that, at some point, the officers of the Wildland Fire Section may wish to meet with Jim Fletcher, Manager of the Rocky Mountain Coordination Center to open dialogue on issues of mutual concern.

Future Presentations

Cooke asked if there were any specific presentations the Wildland Fire Section would like to have at subsequent meetings. Following were the suggestions that were made:

- Presentation on the new forest health report
- Presentation on the forecast for this wildland season
- Presentation from someone on the National Incident Business Group on changes to the national business practices (Clair Brown indicated that the CSFS has someone that sits on the Group that could do this presentation)

Announcements

Federal Surplus Property – Rich Homann announced that GSA is currently conducting an auction of federal surplus property, which includes firefighting equipment and trucks capable of being converted for firefighting. Rich indicated that the equipment and vehicles are sold “as is”. The auction closes March 25th at 16:30 hours. For more information go to: <http://gsaauctions.gov>.

Front Range Wildfire Symposium – Clint Fey, Wildland Team Chief for West Metro Fire Rescue announced and distributed flyers for the Front Range Wildfire Symposium to be held in West Metro’s new training center on November 2-8, 2009. Chief Fey indicated that it was not their intent to compete with the Colorado Wildfire Academy, but to expand the availability of needed training. For more information contact BC Fey at: 303-989-4307, ext. 557 or CFey@westmetrofire.org.

Douglas County Interface Drill – Douglas County will host an interface drill on May 2, 2009 in conjunction with NCR and UASI. Additional participation is welcome. For more information contact Jamey Bumgarner, Fire Chief, Larkspur Fire Protection District at (303) 681-3284 or jbumgarner@larkspurfire.org.

Free Leadership Workshop – Chief Riley reported that the City of Pueblo Fire Department is sponsoring “Leadership Re-Think!” by Stephen Gower, on March 31, 2009 at Pueblo Community College. There will be two sessions, 8:00am to 11:30am and 1:00pm to 4:30pm. For more information, go to the Training/Conference Page on the CSFCA website at: <http://www.colofirechiefs.org/trainingconf.htm>.

Accreditation Workshops - Chief Riley reported that the City of Pueblo Fire Department is hosting CFAI Basic Workshops on June 10 - 13, 2009. . For more information, go to the Training/Conference Page on the CSFCA website at: <http://www.colofirechiefs.org/trainingconf.htm>.

Adjournment

With there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 22, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the Colorado Springs area at a location to be announced.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Cooke & Mike Morgan