

**GREAT LAKES DIVISION of the
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS**

Minutes of the Annual Meeting August 24, 2003, Dallas, TX

The 2003 Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Division was held on August 24th in the Plaza Ballroom of the Dallas Westin Hotel. Prior to the meeting 153 members and guests joined together for breakfast. Before the call to order we were visited by IAFC officers President Randy Bruegman, Vice President Ernie Mitchell, 2nd Vice President Bob Di Poli and 2nd Vice President Elect Bill Killen. Bruegman thanked the Division for their assistance during his year as president and for helping to carry out his theme "A Time to Lead". Mitchell said he was looking forward to the challenges of the next year and by "Managing to Lead" we would continue the programs of the past as well as move ahead. Di Poli asked that we turn to mentoring new members of the fire service and challenged each IAFC member present to enlist one new member in the coming year. He also encouraged us to keep up our association with our national leaders by attending the Congressional Fire Caucus Dinner on May 5th. Killen thanked the Division for their support in his election and said he is looking forward to working with the IAFC officers this next year.

President Sellnow called on OH State Representative Dale Duermit to lead the Division in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the opening invocation.

President Sellnow introduced the vendor sponsors of our annual breakfast; PlymoVent, American LaFrance-Great Lakes Dealers, Crimson Fire and Spartan Motor and Chassis. It is due to the contributions of these valued Great Lakes Division supporters that we are able to offer the breakfast to our members at a greatly reduced price. Michael Walter of Nextel also spoke briefly telling our membership that Nextel is looking forward to being a partner at Forum 2004.

The president invited Alex Bernstein of the IAFC Western Division to address the meeting. The GLD is about to enter into a contract with the Western Division's Fire GPO. Bernstein explained the benefits of the Fire GPO that would be available to members of the GLD. As member communities we will have the opportunity to purchase items large and small from office and cleaning supplies to major fire and EMS equipment at extremely competitive rates. In most cases the sales will be made through local dealers. While this program is still in its infancy the long list of available items will continue to grow. More information on this subject can be found on the GLD web site.

The time being 9:15 A.M. CDT, President Sellnow called the annual meeting to order. The president appointed Chief Dave Campagni of Highland Park, IL as Sergeant at Arms.

President Sellnow then introduced the two IAFC past presidents who were present, John Buckman and Jim Halsey. The membership welcomed their presence.

President Sellnow called Gail Walters, Communications Director for the IAFC forward. Ms. Walters was presented with a plaque recognizing the time and effort she has put forth assisting the GLD. The president expressed our sincere appreciation for all of this help. The IAFC and the divisions will be suffering a great loss by Gail's leaving to accompany her husband on a new military assignment. We wish her well.

The next order of business was to introduce the GLD Board of Directors present. The president introduced Vice President Timm Schabbel, Clay Fire Territory, IN, IAFC Director Larry Grorud,

Janesville, WI, State Representatives Dale Duermit, Sharonville, OH, Bill Schmidt, Walker, MI, Brian Lott, Fishers, IN, Paul Klapprich, Wayzata, MN and Robert Wilcox, Matteson, IL. The president will fill the position of state representative from WI when he completes his term as president. Also introduced was the Ohio nominated candidate for 2nd Vice President, Kenn Taylor of Violet Twp., OH.

There was no report from the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Hutchings reported that for the year 2002 the GLD had expenses of \$53,324.00 and income of \$52,970.00 which was 2% over budget on expenses and 2 ½% under budget on income. Total assets as of 12/31/02 were \$11,113.00 in checking and \$56,018.00 in a money market checking that has replaced our certificate of deposit until interest rates go up and make certificates attractive again. When accounting adjustments are considered, our total assets dropped about \$500.00 below 2001. As of 08/14/03 we have had income of \$31,533.00 and expenses of \$19,033.00 with total assets of \$80,022.00. All accounts are well within budget at this time. Total assets are a bit inflated as we have not paid any of the expenses for FRI yet. Motion to accept the treasurer's report by Chief Campagni from Highland Park, IL. Second by Chief Anderson from Rutland-Dundee FPD, IL. Motion Approved.

Additionally Hutchings reported as of 07/01/03 the GLD membership total is 2150. This is down from 2293 members one year ago, although that figure included quite a few "temporary" members from promotional campaigns. Membership by state is: Illinois 585, Indiana 198, Michigan 361, Minnesota 162, Ohio 577, Wisconsin 243 and 24 retirees in other states. We have 2020 voting members. This number includes active and associate members. We also have 1828 dues paying members which include active, associate and department memberships. Motion to accept the membership report by Chief Whitworth, Miami Twp., OH. Second by Chief Bonkowski, Glenview, IL. Motion passed.

Division Director's Report: Chief Grorud stated while he appreciated the favorable comments that the IAFC officers spoke earlier about him, he felt it was a tribute to the GLD as he just does what our members want and he is honored to be our director. The GLD is much respected as a division within the IAFC and it has contributed much to the organization this year. Chiefs Buckman, Eversole and Reardon have all testified on the hill this year and have done an outstanding job. Jim Whitworth has provided federal legislation on our web site that is being accessed by the entire IAFC. Not a lot transpired at the recent IAFC board meeting other than attempting to deal with the federal bureaucracy and political issues. The IAFC Board did pass a recommended practice to provide guidance to our members in dealing with F/F training. Unfortunately we are still seeing too many injuries and deaths happening during training. The board accepted this recommendation which was put forth by past IAFC president and GLD member John Buckman. The recommended practice will specify minimum criteria for F/F's to meet before being placed in a hazardous environment. They will have to complete their standards to be fully certified F/F's within two years and there will be additional criteria for fire officers.

Grorud reported there are three candidates running for the position of 2nd vice president of the IAFC next year. They are Jim Harmes from the GLD and Rich Burch, Jr. and Don Oliver from the Southeastern Division. Harmes and Burch have indicated they will be stopping by this morning to speak briefly. We also expect Steve Westermann from Missouri Valley Division who is a candidate for IAFC 2nd vice president in 2005 to stop by.

Another interesting report from the recent board meeting was from the National Fallen F/F Foundation. During 2002 we had 99 F/F deaths. This is a huge issue that we have to work on. The ones that can make a difference in this issue are the folks here today. Our division was fortunate in that we had two

states without a death in this report, Illinois and Wisconsin. One other action by the board dealt with the constitution and bylaw changes approved by the membership allowing the board to adjust membership dues up to the level of the cost of living since the last raise. The board chose not to raise dues simply because it could. They chose to take no action at this time and will only consider a change when there is a need, based on budget.

The last item in Grorud's report deals with the problem of federal bureaucracy versus politics. Whether we like politics or not, we better know how to play the game. This year the majority of the time that the IAFC Board and staff have expended has dealt with the bureaucracy, not necessarily the people we elect, but the people that are running government. As much influence as we may have as an association, sometimes it just hits a brick wall. The current issue is who is going to manage the Fire Act. The Fire Act has been very successful even though the bureaucracy hoped that it would fail. Now they would like to take this grant program from the USFA in FEMA and put it into ODP where the states can skim off some money and the rest may get to the fire departments. There is also a significant police presence here that will also be looking for these funds. Our fight is to keep the program in the USFA. We are not winning this fight at this time and probably will not in the future. If we lose our fight, our goal should be to attempt to influence our national representatives to keep the Fire Act Program as it has been "an act for the fire service by the fire service" no matter where it ends up. This problem is just for next year. In 2005 our problem will be the terrorism orientation. This will be an attempt to divert more and more of this funding to the police. "We are getting our message out, they just do not want to hear it." Watch for and support the "member alerts" when they are received. Our representatives do pay attention when their constituents speak. Director Grorud thanked the Division for all of their support and said that he looks forward to serving the GLD in the future.

Nominations and Elections Committee Report: Committee Chairman William Schmidt reported the committee had received one nomination for the office of GLD President, Timm Schabbel of Indiana. Schmidt called for nominations from the floor three times. Hearing none Chief Reardon, Northbrook, IL moved that nominations be closed and that we cast a unanimous ballot for Timm Schabbel for GLD President. Second by Chief Shaw, Solon, OH. Motion passed.

For the office of GLD Vice President one nomination was received for Kenn Taylor of Ohio. Schmidt called three times for nominations from the floor. Hearing none Chief Crosley, Ohio moved that nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast for Kenn Taylor for GLD Vice President. Motion was seconded and passed.

For the office of GLD Division Director there was one nomination for Chief Larry Grorud. Schmidt called three times for nominations from the floor. Hearing none Chief Reardon IL moved that nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast for Larry Grorud for GLD Division Director. Second by Chief Rodewald, IL. Motion passed.

Audit Committee Report: Chairman Duermit reported that the Audit Committee met August 21, 2003 in Dallas, TX. Present for the meeting were Chairman Duermit, Paul Klapprich and Randy Sellnow. The committee found the records of receipts and disbursements to be in excellent condition. The system used by Hutchings provides a double check and provides an efficient way of accounting for all activities relating to the business operations of the GLD. He was complimented for the job he continues to do for the Division. The overall financial position of the GLD continues to be healthy. Chief Chuck Henrici moved to accept the report of the audit committee. Second by Dave Campagni. Motion passed.

President Sellnow thanked the members of the GLD for the honor and privilege of serving the Division during the last four years. He also thanked the board members for all that they do, not only for the GLD but for their individual states and departments.

President Sellnow then asked Past IAFC President John Buckman to administer the oath of office to the following new officers: President, Timm Schabbel, Vice President, Kenn Taylor, Division Director, Larry Grorud and WI State Representative, Randy Sellnow.

President Schabbel stated that it is an honor to become the president of the GLD. He said that the last two years have been a fantastic experience and he is looking forward to the next two. The board is filled with competent people and we have a bright future. He also welcomed Kenn Taylor to the board and expressed his opinion that we are fortunate to have him joining us.

President Schabbel asked Past President Sellnow to come forward to be honored for the energy and enthusiasm he has extended for the GLD. Schabbel complimented Sellnow on the leadership he has provided to our board and the personal pride we all feel. He also asked Kathy Sellnow to rise and be recognized for all she contributed to the GLD accompanying Randy in their extensive travels over the past four years. President Schabbel then presented Sellnow with an engraved desk set commemorating his years as president of the GLD.

Unfinished Business: The president announced that the GLD Board had just adopted a new and very ambitious Strategic Plan for 2003-2005. The plan contains 28 specific goals to guide the board. The three leading goals are: 1) Identify and communicate some of the best practices throughout the GLD. We will depend on the resources available from our membership to accomplish this. 2) We will work hard to continue the legislative network we have started. This originated in the GLD for the benefit of all of the IAFC divisions. 3) We will continue to increase our presence in the states fire chiefs' organizations and what's going on with the national side. The Strategic Plan will be posted on our web site next week and be available for all to view.

At this time Chief Harmes from LeBlanc, MI joined the meeting. President Schabbel offered him the opportunity to address the membership. Chief Harmes stated his qualifications for the position of 2nd Vice President of the IAFC in 2004. He is basing his platform on his motto "Link Arms with Harmes". The highlight of his program will be communications. Improving communication between the divisions, sections and the International can bring together over 12, 000 people. If we add in the extended families of our members this is a sizeable block of people. Our membership is also very important to the organization. The membership must take part in our programs and then be listened to. By linking arms we can become one voice.

Chief Westermann from the Missouri Valley Division was also invited to speak before the membership. Westermann is a candidate for the position of 2nd vice president of the IAFC in 2005. Westermann mentioned the motto for his campaign- "Leadership with Integrity". He listed his qualifications for this position. He has been with the same department from volunteer through combination to a paid department of 115 career members. With proposed consolidation it will become a combination department again. Westermann wants to be a servant leader and provide the resources to get the work done. He encouraged every member's involvement and the need to become a single voice of the fire service.

President Schabbel thanked the candidates and wished them well.

The president announced that just one of the fantastic programs going on within the division would be highlighted at the IAFC business meeting on Monday. The Ohio Executive Fire Officers' Program is one of the finalists for innovative new programs. He wished Ohio well in this competition.

Forum 2004: Brian Lott of Indiana announced that the GLD Forum 2004 "Partners in Learning" would be April 01 & 02, 2004 and be held in Merrillville, IN. This year the highlight of our program will be presented by Nextel discussing the future of communications in the fire service. On the schedule is Dr. Terry Henley who will discuss innovative ways to bring income into your departments. Also Janelle Crowley will be discussing labor and disciplinary issues. We will also have IAFC President Ernie Mitchell there to talk about IAFC hot topics. We believe this will be an exciting agenda.

President Schabbel invited the members to view our web page which has been updated and been made easier to use. We also have nineteen position statements posted now. The statements describe just where the GLD stands on various issues. He also invited the members to review the statements and make suggestion to their state representatives for changes or additions. These statements should be member driven and will be thoroughly reviewed by the board when we meet in November. The president also introduced Jim Whitworth to the membership. Whitworth is responsible for the GLD having the most up to date federal legislation information possible available to our members.

The president called for any items for the Good of the Division. Chief Halstead, Burton, MI presented a motion that the GLD endorse the candidacy of Chief James Harmes for the position of 2nd Vice President of the IAFC in 2004. Second by Chief Donahue, Madison Hts., MI. Motion passed. A motion was presented that the GLD endorse Julian Taliaferro for the position of IAFC Treasurer in 2004. Second by Chief Campagni, Highland Park, IL. Motion passed.

In closing President Schabbel encouraged everyone present to go home and enlist the support of their neighbors in lobbying their federal representatives to support the legislative agenda of the IAFC. He also invited everyone to join us at Forum 2004 in Merrillville next April.

There being no further business to come before the membership Chief Campagni moved for adjournment. Second by Chief McManaman, IL. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 A.M. CDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Ret. Chief Ron Hutchings, Secretary/Treasurer
Great Lakes Division, IAFC