

# **GREAT LAKES DIVISION/IAFC**

Minutes of October 21, 2004 Board Meeting  
Rochester, Minnesota

## **I Call to Order**

The annual board meeting of the Great Lakes Division (GLD) was held on October 21, 2004 at the Marriott Hotel in Rochester, MN. Our board meeting was held in conjunction with the annual conference of the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs' Association. President Timm Schabbel called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM CDT. The following board members were present: Vice President Kenn Taylor, Secretary/Treasurer Ron Hutchings, State Representatives, Dale Duermit-OH, and Paul Klapprich-MN and Bill Schmidt-MI

## **II Acceptance/Additions to the Agenda**

President Schabbel asked if there were any additions to the meeting agenda he had provided to the board members by electronic mail. Hearing none the agenda was accepted as presented.

## **III Approval of Previous minutes**

The President asked for the approval of the minutes of the August meetings. Duermit moved to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2004 board meeting as written. Second by Schmidt. The minutes were approved. Schmidt moved to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2003 Annual Membership Meeting as written. Second by Taylor. The minutes were approved as written.

## **IV Secretary/Treasurer's Report**

- A. Membership Report: The secretary reported that the total membership for the 3rd quarter in the GLD was 2258. This figure is 50 over the 2nd quarter of 2004 and 158 over one year ago. We now have 1864 dues paying members and 2033 voting members. We do have 94 temporary members of which 67 will expire on December 31, 2004. There was an extensive Board discussion on membership, recruiting and retention. Duermit has been successful in Ohio with soliciting new state members by mail and agreed to share his mail out material with the other board members. Hutchings will get a list of the temporary members to each of the board members.
- B. Financial Report: Hutchings provided the ledger balances for each of the accounts as of October 10, 2004. In his opinion we do not have any serious budget problems and he is confident that even though some balances are above or below estimates we will finish the year within the overall budget. With all of the known expenses paid for Forum '04 it appears that we have a little over \$2500.00 more income than expenses. There was considerable discussion about the value of the Forum flyer that we mass mailed and if it increased our attendance. It was generally agreed that the cost would not justify the results, although it probably helped somewhat. Duermit moved to accept the treasurer's report. Second by Schmidt. Motion approved.

## **V Director's Report**

Grorud had provided the President information on the following:

- A. Fire Act/SAFER Act: The Fire Act has been funded for 2005 at \$650 million, although there will be some changes for next year. There will now be three categories for matching funds. For communities over 50,000 the match will be 20%. Communities between 20-50,000 the match will be 10% and for

communities less than 20,000 the match will be 5%. There will also be funding available for private EMS providers for the first time. The program will now be administrated by Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) instead of ODP. They have also increased the amount of funding available to larger departments. It was determined by the GLD Board that because of the change there probably would be considerably less money available for small and rural departments. The SAFER Act has been funded at \$65 million for fire department staffing. The process for administering the grant has not yet been decided. It is thought there may be some type of peer review in the process as in the Fire Act. The grant for each new hire will be limited to \$100,000.00 per person for a four year period with an additional fifth year required to be covered by the community. Communities must provide a minimum 10, 20, 50 and 70% of the wages of a firefighter for first four year and 100% for the fifth year.

- B. DOT Placarding: The IAFC Government Relations section is closely monitoring this concern. It is expected that it will be an ongoing problem for the fire service.
- C. Project Concensus: Nextel has not yet accepted the FCC proposal. It is expected that they will. It may then be appealed by the opposition. We are reasonably sure it should be concluded by the end of the year.

There was also a question about the Fallen Firefighter Apprentice Act which we believe is to provide some funding for cadets as does the PSOB benefits. The official position of the IAFC on this is neutral.

## **VI Old Business**

- A. Minnesota State Fire Chiefs' Association Agenda: Klapprich passed out the MSFCA program book for the conference. Registration materials for the Board are available in the registration area. The Board will be attending the GLD luncheon on Friday and president Schabbel will address the meeting. There will be a vendor's breakfast Friday during the morning break and Gordan Graham will provide the all day program.
- B. Forum 2005: Taylor said that the dates for Forum '05 were firm and could not be changed. We cannot get away from the same dates as the CFSI dinner because of other dates such as FDIC and Easter and availability of Lambeau Field. An approach has been made to Pierce about sponsoring the dinner at Forum '05. We have not heard back yet. We are still looking for one or two "hot topics" for the program. Taylor suggested a simple explanation of NIMS by someone like John Buckman III. A presentation about details of the SAFER Act was also suggested as well as a program about the recent disastrous hurricane season in Florida. It was also mentioned that there was a program available to promote a new recruit testing procedure. Taylor provided a CD for everyone that contains the promotional material for Forum '05. He asked that each State Representative attempt to get the advertising into their state chiefs' publications.

Future Forums were discussed also. Taylor mentioned that contacts had been made with Harley Davidson in hopes that they may support Forum '06. Leadership and program planning for future programs was also discussed. It was suggested and agreed to by all present that the job of heading up future Forums should become the responsibility of the GLD Vice President in office.

After a short break, while the Board was reconvening, it was mentioned that we should plan to have our GLD Board meeting at Forum '05 on the Wednesday before the Forum starts. President Schabbel said that he would like to have the state chiefs' presidents join us for a brief meeting before

the hospitality room opens on that day as well. Duermit moved that we comp the registration fees to Forum '05 for the presidents of the state chiefs' organizations as we did last year. Second by Klapprich. Motion carried.

- C. IAFC Strategic Planning Session: The GLD had representatives for each of our member states in attendance for a total of 12 persons. The total attendance was over 200. This was twice as many attendees as they had at the last planning session, two years ago. The opinion of the GLD Board members that attended was that the program was well organized/planned and that a lot of good suggestions would have to be put in order by IAFC staff.
- D. Legislative Network: President Schabbel said that he would more widely distribute the Legislative Network File and was planning to start doing updates after the November elections. The President mentioned that he and Schmidt had had a conversation with Mary Comer from Hastings, the Plymovent dealer in the Michigan area, about the benefits the vendors had received from the Fire Act. Some of the vendors wondered if there was anything they could do to assist us as fire chiefs in extending the benefits of the FIRE Act. They are considering the creation of a Great Lakes Dealers Association that could channel some financial support to our Division for the promotion of programs beneficial to fire chiefs. The President suggested that it could be something such as underwriting states members attendance at CFSI by way of a grant from the vendors. There was also the possibility of a workshop to train our members in working with our legislative network. It would seem that the primary focus should be the FIRE Act. It was also suggested that we need "talking points" for our representatives and all agreed that the IAFC was doing a great job with their "Update Bulletins". The President said that he would be meeting with another representative of Plymovent next week to further discuss these possibilities.

President Schabbel announced that the transition to a new Web host for the GLD had been completed. It should not be long until we can do our own E-mail blast to all of our members.

- E. State Fire Chiefs' Presidents: The GLD board recommitted themselves to reaching out to the state presidents in any and all ways possible to continue building relationships.
- F. Fire GPO: Our representative to the Fire GPO, Keith Condra, provided a written report that is made a part of these minutes. Crosby Grindle has been hired by the GPO to handle national accounts. It appears that the Fire GPO is becoming better organized and now has approximately 71 vendors with more on the way.
- G. Web Page: We are still looking for best practices to post on the Web page. GLD Board members are encouraged to seek out best practices in their states that can be shared with our Division. Hutchings will provide the constitution for posting on the Web site.
- H. Forum 2006: There is nothing additional at this time other than Taylor will continue to follow-up with Harley Davidson.
- I. FRI: Hutchings reported he had reviewed hotels in Denver last week. He is not sure how or when we will make our hotel selections with the IAFC. If it is possible, he recommends that we select the Westin Hotel as the GLD headquarters if arrangements can be made for a large enough hospitality room. The second choice would be the Marriott.

## VII New Business

- A. NIMS: President Schabbel provided a NIMS bulletin that was published by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security. After considerable discussion of NIMS and how it will tie into the grant application process, it was decided that we had more questions than answers. The Board's opinion was that someone, preferably the IAFC, needs to take the lead in simplifying the NIMS document and get this information to the local fire departments.
- B. GLD Policy Review: Hutchings had provided, to each board member, a copy of the GLD Policies that were approved last year. There was an extended discussion about the travel expenses for the Board. It was decided they should remain as written. The Board agreed that limited social expenses at a gathering of the Board should be covered at the discretion of the President or the Secretary. President Shabbel suggested that sometime in the future we should consider sending the GLD President or his designated representative to attend IAFC board meetings. After discussion, and Board support of this suggestion, Duermit moved the GLD Board send the President or his representative to every quarterly IAFC Board meeting, excluding FRI, and pay the expenses. Second by Schmidt. Motion carried. Taylor moved to accept the Travel Policy as amended. Second by Duemit. Motion carried.

Without discussion Schmidt moved to accept the Election Policy as written. Second by Taylor. Motion carried.

Without Discussion Duermit moved to accept the Hospitality Room Policy as written. Second by Klapprich. Motion carried.

- C. 2005 Budget: Hutchings presented a proposed budget for 2005 that included income of \$60,220.00 and expenses of \$63,570.00. After deliberation it was decided that the President's travel expense should be increased by \$3000.00 to cover the additional expense for IAFC board meetings. Additionally, it was decided to increase the Web page expenses from \$1200.00 to \$1500.00. It was also determined that we should raise acct. # 107.1 plaques from \$300.00 TO \$400.00 and #107.3 contributions from \$300.00 to \$500.00. Schmidt moved that we approve the budget for 2005 with \$60,220.00 in income and \$67,170.00 of expenses. Second by Klapprich. Motion approved.

At this time, 12:25, President Schabbel recessed the meeting until 1:45 for a lunch break and to allow him to take part in a IAFC division officers' teleconference that had been called for 12:30 PM.

President Schabbel called the meeting back to order at 1:50 PM with all of the above present.

- D. 2005 State Fire Chiefs' Meetings/Schedules: After discussion it was determined that the GLD Board should meet with the Illinois Fire Chiefs at their annual meeting in October of 2005 in Peoria, IL. The tentative dates set for GLD Board meetings in 2005 are:  
April 06, 2005 – Greenbay WI  
August 10, 2005 – Denver, CO  
October 18, 2005 – Peoria, IL
- E. Monthly Teleconferences: We will plan to have several GLD Board teleconferences as needed to fill in between the scheduled board meetings.
- F. Misc: President Schabbel reported that while he was in Illinois people from Insurance Services Office (ISO) approached him about some type of partnership between GLD and ISO. At this time, he

did not know what they had in mind, but will communicate with them when he returns to the office. The President declared his interest in moving ahead with a GLD Fire Chief of the Year Award now that it is funded. A discussion as to how to solicit nominations followed. There was a strong feeling that only persons who make a significant contribution to the GLD should be considered and that a board member shall not be a candidate for this award. President Schabbel will look into the nominating procedure used by Fire Chief Magazine to make their award and suggest a procedure that we can consider for adoption.

Taylor suggested that we consider developing a "New Chiefs" Program that would promote the GLD while helping a new chief find the professional resources to do his job. It could possibly be done on our Web site. The Board showed an interest in this possibility. Taylor will look into this and report back later.

President Schabbel briefly reported on the IAFC division officers teleconference that he had taken part in during the luncheon break. The attendance at the conference call was light (8 to 10). They recapped the Denver meeting, 32 states participated. All presentations will be on the IAFC Web site tomorrow. There were some concerns about the large number of participations at the meeting. There will be an auto race in Denver the Sunday of FRI and consideration is being given to the possibility of using this to market FRI. All divisions are interested in designating hotels in Denver. The IAFC has 5200 rooms blocked at this time and does not anticipate any lodging problems. There may be an IAFC street party on the Thursday night of FRI. There were comments about reduced funding of the FIRE Act and other demands on the federal budget. There is to be a site selection committee formed to investigate future FRI conference sites. NIMS will be a priority of the IAFC.

President Schabbel reported that Chief Hank Clemmensen from Palatine Fire Department will be the new State Representative for Illinois and Bob Wilcox has been elected to serve as the new 2nd Vice President of the Illinois Fire Chiefs' Association.

Hutchings suggested that the board should consider a constitution and bylaws review during 2005 that would consider when the newly elected officers take office and the dues structure should be reviewed. This could then be considered for vote of the membership in 2006.

## **VIII State Reports**

Minnesota: Klapprich reported that they will have about 500 members present at the conference. Minneapolis has rehired the firefighters that they had to lay off for budget reasons. The advertising space that the department sold on the fire trucks helped with revenue. For the most part finances in the state seem to be better. MN has developed four different training sites around the state.

Ohio: Duermit reported that the state building code and fire code issues had still not been resolved. The Fire Marshal's Office is still in the Department of Commerce. The chiefs would like to see it transferred to the Department of Public Safety. The upcoming election may change some things. Chief Mel House is the new president of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association. The OFCA has been enlarging the size of their committees.

Michigan: Schmidt reported that the Fire Marshal's Office finally has been removed from under the State Police. There are some growing pains, but they are being resolved. The new Fire Marshal (Andy Newman) comes from the fire service. There is some disagreement over who appoints the State Director of Training and where it all fits into the state plan. There is a push on to adopt the International Fire Code. They are hoping to give the fire inspectors more authority for enforcement over new construction.

The Training Funding bill is still struggling. MIOSHA has defined the assistance they will provide to a jurisdiction during a major incident and what assistance they will provide to on site leaders in safety/health matters.

### **IX Communications:**

None.

### **X Good of the Order:**

Hutchings passed out expense vouchers and meeting expenses were discussed. The Hotel room expense is on the master bill. Expenses have to be decided for travel and per diem. The Board agreed on five days per diem and travel expenses for each board member.

It was discussed that with new board members coming on to the board that they would not have shirts like those that had been purchased by the board members in the past. Hutchings suggested that the Board should decide on a policy we will follow in the future. After discussion Duermit made the motion that each board member be supplied with a shirt at Division expense. Second by Schmidt. Motion approved.

Making shirts available to other division members was discussed. It was suggested that the secretary investigate the possibility of the IAFC vendor providing shirts to division members on order.

### **XI Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be a conference call, date to be determined by the President. We will also meet on April 06, 2005 in Green Bay, WI at 9:00 AM CST.

### **XII Adjournment**

Schmidt moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Duermit. Meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Hutchings, Secretary/Treasurer