



OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MEETING MINUTES

Title: Recruiting & Retaining Public Employee Firefighter and Paramedic Task Force

Location: AFFI | 927 S. Second Street | Springfield, IL. 62704

Date: February 5, 2025 Time: 11:00 am

Present: Chief Kent Adams | Senator Neil Anderson | Sue Czerwinski | Representative Jackie Haas | Joseph C. Holomy | Senator Patrick Joyce | Jim Keiken | Representative Mike Kelly | Jeff Maher | Don Moffitt | Chief Nate Rice | Steve Shetsky | Regan Stockstell | Chuck Sullivan | Robert Van Bebber

Not Present: Chief Brenda Farlow | Mayor Deborah Frank Feinen | Gina Degleffetti

Agenda Details

- I. Meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Senator Joyce at 11:02 A.M.
- II. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.
- III. Minutes were approved for March 2024 and May 2024 meetings.
- IV. Old Business – No old business
- V. New Business
 - i. Legislation

Potential ideas for legislation:

Community Colleges: Changes to the Fire Service Institute Act and the Fire Protection Training Act. Remove the requirement to attend an academy. Co-chairs will be working with the community colleges on a draft. Some grants have used the IL Community College Board for their program.

Certification: An individual can attend the academy, but they don't receive a certificate until they are hired by a department. Have these rules been changed?

Challenge the State Exam: Under the rules, a person can take the exam once. If they fail the exam, they must take the course. Individuals can submit their transcripts, NFA standards, and then take the test.

How much is required in other states to become a firefighter?

Is there an appetite to accept the training from other states to become a firefighter in Illinois?

Right now, a chief from a different state can provide their documentation and become a chief in IL.

What is the pass rate for people who come from out of state?

How would we change this? Ex: Champaign requires individuals to pass the academy. Will the department accept a Tennessee Fire Marshal certification?

Would OSFM accept training from other states?

Not all states have certification programs.

Applying military training for those who would like to join the department. Are some branches of military given priority?

Path for nurses who want to join the field as well.

Lowering the Age: Lowering the age for firefighters from 21 to 18.

Makes the field more competitive.

A person may begin at 18 and serve for 30 years.

AFFI will look at legislation. There is also current legislation by Senator Halpin.

What is the impact to pensions?

Peoria has a very successful apprenticeship program for 18–21-year-olds.

Has there been consideration for a journeyman/firefighter card at the state level?

Senator Halpin has a current bill (SB193) that is similar to this idea.

National Registry: Having the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians have exams in Illinois.

Having Reciprocity- Someone who is part of the national registry can take the exam for other places.

What is the EMS fee for the exam? Can courses be scheduled more frequently?

The Co-Chairs will work to create a bill with the priorities of the Task Force. The Task Force may adjust as needed.

Other:

Representative Moffitt encouraged members to review HB1150 – Property Tax Code. The Representative mentioned that this is good public policy. It is difficult for departments who had been exempt from property taxes to have to pay them once again. This can be especially difficult for smaller departments because it could be a big expense.

- VI. Upcoming Meeting Dates: Call of the Co-Chairs
- VII. Public Comment – No public comments.
- VIII. Adjourn 11:52 A.M.