



# Southwest Virginia Firefighters Association Convention Business Meeting September 22, 2024 *We Protect Southwest Virginia*

22 September, 2024

The Fall Business meeting of the Southwest Virginia Firefighters Association was held on Sunday, 22 September, 2024 at the Christiansburg Volunteer Fire Department in Christiansburg, VA with 22 members present, representing 10 member organizations.

The business meeting was called to order at 1315 hours by President Josh Stitt. The invocation was given by Mr. Jeff Kirk of the Barren Springs Volunteer Fire Department. President Stitt welcomed everyone in attendance.

President Stitt recognized Christiansburg Fire Chief Billy Hanks. Chief Hanks welcomed everyone to Christiansburg and wished them a productive meeting.

## **Reports:**

### **President:**

Josh Stitt offered the following report:

- Thanked everyone for their attendance
- Thanked Christiansburg for hosting the meeting and for lunch
- Advised that the Convention Committee met prior to this meeting and are currently working on the agenda and other detail for the convention
- If you have any ideas for the upcoming convention, please contact him
- Asked the members present to spread the information about the association while visiting Fire Prevention Parades in the upcoming weeks.
  - This is a great opportunity to spread the word about the association and invite folks that are not currently members or even ask members that are not participating to return to the association
- The Wise Regional School was a success and the association was thanked for the support we give to this school

### **1st Vice President:**

Matthew Holbrook offered the following report:

- No Report

### **2nd Vice President:**

Joey Griffith offered the following report:

- No Report

### **Treasurer:**

Robbie Kiser offered the following report:

- Treasurer's report for the past quarter was read
- Motion to accept made by Potsie Smith and seconded by David Akers
  - **Motion voted and passed**

### **Asst. Treasurer:**

Potsie Smith offered the following report:

- Assistant Treasurer's report for the past quarter was read
- Motion to accept made by Robbie Kiser and seconded by Mark Smith
  - **Motion voted and passed**

### **Secretary:**

No Report

### **Asst. Secretary:**

No Report

### **Chaplin / Welfare:**

President Josh Stitt offered the following report:

- Advised that there were 2 deaths in the association that he was notified about since the last meeting
  - Past President John Campbell of Abingdon Volunteer Fire Department
  - Former Chief Steven Thomas Jaynes – Thomas Walker Vol. Fire Department
- When you hear of a member passing, please let President Stitt know. As members of the association try to attend the services or visitations of those members that pass when possible to show the overall association support

### **Sgt. At Arms:**

Barry Simmons offered the following report:

- No report

### **Board of Directors:**

Barry Simmons offered the following report:

- The Board of Directors met prior to today's meeting
- The Board of Directors voted to make Skyler Holbrook an Associate Member of the association
  - This recommendation was presented to the membership present
    - Potsie Smith made a motion to accept the Board of Directors recommendation to grant Skyler Holbrook an Associate Member
    - Motion seconded by Joe Kingera
      - **Motion voted and passed**

### **Legislative Committee:**

Billy Hanks offered the following report:

- The Fire Service Council and several other stakeholder agencies have submitted legislative packages for approval
  - Some of these legislative packages were approved and several were not approved
    - The legislative packages that did not get approved will be re-submitted in the 2025 session
- The OSHA mandates that are being proposed will have detrimental effects on fire departments across the country
  - This mandate could essentially shut down smaller volunteer fire departments

- The association needs to draft a letter to be submitted to both state and federal representatives that states our opposition to the bill and explain how this mandate will hurt the fire service

### **Membership Committee:**

- No report

### **Training Committee:**

President Stitt offered the following report:

- The members of the Training Committee will be contacted to work on the convention training
- Any training ideas or concerns need to be directed to President Stitt
- The association did get a training grant to help cover the costs
- The association is looking to possibly offer additional training during the week prior to convention

### **By-laws Committee:**

- No report

### **Rules and Contest Committee:**

- No report

### **Ways and Means Committee:**

Mark Smith offered the following report:

- 50/50 at this meeting

### **Scholarship Committee:**

Barry Simmons offered the following report:

- Applications are due for review by 1 April 2025
- Be sure to thank the scholarship sponsors

### **Convention Committee:**

Pete Haislip offered the following report:

- Working on the 2025 convention and everything is on track

## **Old Business**

No old business

## **New Business**

David Akers reported on the Dominion Energy Grant that was offered this year.

- There were 59 requests for funding from this grant
  - 3 association department were awarded grants
  - The total grant payout this cycle was just over \$69,000

David Akers reported on the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual First Responders Virginia Conference in Va. Beach this past week

- The attendance was down
- Several events and classes were cancelled
- There were only about 150 members and guest registered from the fire service
- They are looking to revamp this conference

Chief Billy Hanks reminded the members in attendance of the importance of training at this and future conventions

Curtis Whitt advised that the Virus Protection for the association laptops has expired and would like to renew this software. The membership agreed that it is a cost of doing business, Curtis will cost this software and advise the officers prior to purchase.

President Stitt advised that there are letters at the front table for door prize request and golf hole sponsorship. These letters were also sent out by email from Secretary Nathan Brewbaker

The meeting was adjourned at 1405 hours with Jeff Kirk offering the closing prayer.

**Thanks to the members of the Christiansburg Volunteer Fire  
Department for hosting the meeting and providing lunch**

**The next meeting will be Sunday, 19 January, 2025 at Boiling Springs  
Volunteer Fire Department, in Covington, VA at 1300 hours**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Curtis Whitt  
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