

**Report TO THE ARROWHEAD REGION FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION**  
on the *Minnesota State Fire Department Assn.* board of directors meeting at St. Cloud, MN  
at the Homewood Suites  
on **Jan 21-22, 2011**, by Rex Lentner, MSFDA director from Arrowhead Region

1. **Friday**, 1/21/2011, "Goal setting meeting" called to order at Approx. 1700 hrs. 40 ideas for goals were brought out, and through discussion were reduced to 9 topics. These were examined by 4 groups of people and recommendations and specific goals were established. These goals will be worked on over the coming year. Session adjourned at 2045 hours, and members stayed the night at the Homewood Suites.

**NEXT DAY---1/22/2011--Board meeting called to order at 0938 hours (following committee meetings)  
by president Shane Schmidt.**

2. **Saturday**, 1/22/2011. Regular board of directors meeting convened at 0938 hrs. George Espensen, chief of Eden Prairie, and now President of the Memorial Foundation presented report on the Foundation's concentration of effort to get all the remaining "coins" sold and converted to cash- focusing on building up the scholarship fund to what it was intended. Hope to again award 5 \$1,000.00 scholarships. Application form will be out soon. As for establishing a memorial at the Capitol grounds, the site is "ours" in perpetuity, according to Espensen. The hope is to raise about \$600,000.00 which will be enough to construct a decent memorial site and ensure a fund for future maintenance of it. This is a far cry from the 2 million \$ price tag the former foundation members wanted to spend. Espensen noted that the former foundation members spent virtually ALL of the monies that were raised prior to now. This board pledges to not spend a thing until there is enough \$ to begin construction. It is hoped that the people of the Minnesota fire service (suggested \$30 per firefighter, or about the price of a case of beer) will contribute generously this time, being assured that the money will in fact go toward the site to **honor all** past AND present members of the Minnesota fire service. A fund raising effort will be forthcoming. Yeah, we know the comments will be loud about how much money was donated in the past, and what the heck happened to all that? Well, it's gone! And if the fire service in Minnesota wants to have a proper and fitting place to honor ALL of US, the fire service needs to be the leader in getting it done. We can all take some ownership in this, and be proud of it, and create a place of honor. Let's step up!
3. 2011 Conference (this year) to be in Detroit Lakes June 2-4, 2011. Registration info should be in your hands now. Many excellent training classes are scheduled, so get your registration in quickly in order to get the class you desire. REMEMBER, you must make your own lodging reservation. Let's get some ARROWHEAD folks there this year! The Symposium will feature a presentation by 2 presenters on the subject "**What the @#%\* we can do better**" on structure fires. Should be GOOD! The symposiums in past years have been extremely interesting and relevant. This one should be excellent. Some of the classes scheduled deal with Relief Association topics and also for new relief board members. Your relief could pay the cost of the conference registration and it could qualify to be spent out of the Special Fund for training of your relief officers.
4. The board is recommending a YES vote on the following by-law change to be presented at this year's conference. This change would alter the procedure for selecting conference sites for the future. A "round-robin" rotating schedule of host cities would be followed in the following manner: 2012-Alexandria; 2013-Bemidji or Brainerd; 2014-Owatonna; 2015-Grand Rapids; 2016-Detroit Lakes; 2017-open for bid; then repeat the cycle. (2012 had already been chosen for Alexandria.) This would lessen the expense of "campaigning" for a site selection, and allow hosts to better plan for their event, along with allowing for a "bid" option occasionally. Come to the conference prepared to vote your preference, but the board strongly recommends a YES vote on this and on some other by-law changes the board has recommended. You will receive mailed notice with specific language. The board also established a policy of the registration fee to not exceed \$150 per person for conferences without MSFDA board approval.
5. Fire Marshal Jerry Rosendahl reported that the Fire Safety Account has accumulated a nice surplus and it will be a challenge to prevent the legislature from raiding it this year. Be prepared to join in an effort to "educate" our legislators. Minnesota has a new Commissioner of Public Safety: Ramona Dohman, former Maple Grove chief of Police, and we understand a very professional person in her field and should be a good commissioner. We hope she will re-appoint Jerry Rosendahl as Fire Marshal again. A committee is looking at compiling a source of suggested ceremonies and procedures to aid fire departments in a variety of areas, such as badge pinning ceremonies, funeral ceremonies, and other topics. Stay tuned. The fire marshal's office wants ALL MFIRS reports for 2010 submitted (electronically) by 2/28/2011. If you have any outstanding, get them in. He noted that the position of fire investigator for Northeastern Minnesota formerly held by Terry Christensen (now retired) is scheduled to be filled. Good news for the Arrowhead Region. The future of the Fire Center is still somewhat clouded with Warren retired and Bruce to be gone after June. Help for grant writing will suffer with the loss of those people.
6. MSFDA Safety committee: compiling data on driving requirements and training along with truck weight and load issues as pertaining to fire department operations. Minnesota allows operation by vol. and paid-on-call members to operate emergency vehicles over 26,000# GVW with only a Class D license as long on official duty. This does not mean that these drivers should never receive any specific training on operation these types of heavy vehicles. The committee hopes to come up with some recommendations.
7. The MSFDA is looking to change its association with the Minnesota Smoke Eater to a different publication in order to periodically make written articles and information available to the members of the association. Watch for

specifics on the transition as they evolve. Additionally, the website [www.MSFDA.org](http://www.MSFDA.org) will be soon re-designed to make it a little easier to find things. The site is up and running now, and you can not only view all minutes and reports from the Arrowhead association (look under "Regions" and click on region 3 for our stuff) but there are links to other fire info and reports from the MSFDA activities. Go there and have a look.

8. FIRE SERVICE DAY AT THE CAPITOL IS MARCH 10, 2011. Get your registration in and call or e-mail me to reserve a spot on the Arrowhead Bus to the Capitol that day.
9. Info: The funds invested in the statewide fire pension plan last year earned about 9%.
10. Training board report is: applications for licensing are ready. Go to [www.MBFTE.state.mn.us](http://www.MBFTE.state.mn.us) for the info & forms. Grandfathering program is in effect until 6/30/2011, after that the only way to get licensed is to take the tests. If volunteer and paid on call firefighters think they will want to be licensed, do it now while the grandfather process is available.
11. Auditor's working group: working on cleaning up "break in service" language in the laws, and working on revising the "records retention" laws for Relief Associations. As of now, reliefs MUST keep EVERYTHING forever.
12. Some regions report good attendance at their region meetings. No particular reasons offered. Otherwise, the Arrowhead region is no different than most regions as far as attendance at region meetings. We must keep urging people to attend. It would be great if each fire department could REQUIRE members of their department to attend at least one meeting a year. Alexandria assigns people to attend region meetings and state conferences. Information seen and heard first hand is so much more understood.
13. MSFDA Secretary Doug Noah asked for departments to send him names of deceased firefighters for the annual memorial service, and names of persons that have served at least 20 years on a department that is a current member of the Minnesota State Fire Department Association (MSFDA) for inclusion in this year's awarding of Honorary Life membership in the MSFDA, and receive a nice certificate and member card. Get those names to me also. Noah noted that he will not run for re-election to the Secretary position.
14. The MSFDA board passed a motion to advertise for and select a person to be our administrative person (not the official title) to take over some duties presently done by the executive committee, and some added responsibilities. The position is part-time in nature, and will be a contract position with the compensation to be negotiated. See the MSFDA web site for info.
15. There is an opening for a person from the MSFDA membership for appointment on the Training Board. Interested? Must be a volunteer or paid on call type. Contact President of MSFDA SOON!
16. MSFDA board **tabled** 2 requests: (1) to take a position on residential sprinklers, and (2) a request from the Memorial foundation for a specific amount of funds for a donation. These items will be discussed in June, 2011.
17. MSFDA is sponsoring 2 scholarships to fire courses at Texas A&M. See web site [www.MSFDA.org](http://www.MSFDA.org) for details.
18. Each Region Director gave a brief report from the region activities and a policy was established requiring each Region Director, committee chairperson, and other representative of the MSFDA to submit a written report to the MSFDA executive committee following each meeting that that person attends giving a brief update to the exec. Committee on what happened. This should keep the officers of the MSFDA up to date on all the regions and on other events as they occur.
19. The meeting adjourned at 15:50 hours on 1-22-2011. It was a long day, but very productive, I feel. Our next meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2011, in Detroit Lakes.
20. On a personal note, my current term (in my 20<sup>th</sup> year as such) as a director of the MSFDA representing the Arrowhead Region expires following this year's conference in Detroit Lakes. Nominations for the next 2-year term for the position will be opened on Feb. 10, 2011, at the Arrowhead meeting in Esko, and the election for the position will be done on May 5, 2011.

It is-and has always been-an honor to serve and I feel privileged to serve the people of the Arrowhead Region's fire service.

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Visit the MSFDA web site often! [www.msfd.org](http://www.msfd.org) Click on "regions" and then to Region 3 for all the Arrowhead info.