

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FIRE MARSHALS

Board of Directors Meeting

April 20 & 21, 1999

Washington, DC

Meeting Attendees

Rocco Gabriele (MD), President
George A. Miller (NJ), Vice President
Roy Marshall (IA), Secretary/Treasurer
Walter Smittle (WV)
Tracy Boatwright (IN)
Don Bliss (NH)
Tom Brace (MN)
Frank McGarry, Project Manager
George Keeley, Legal Counsel
Brad Pabody, USFA
Peter Sparber, Sparber & Associates
Karen Suhr, Sparber & Associates
Michael Minieri, Executive Director
Carla Minieri

April 20

The Board meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. A motion was made by Tracy Boatwright to waive the reading of, and to approve, the December Board minutes. Roy Marshall seconded the motion. Motion carried.

President Report

President Gabriele gave an update on changes of new state fire marshals which he had current information. Mr. Gabriele addressed a CPSC project regarding malfunctioning sprinklers. CPSC will be testing a representative sampling of heads from dry-pipe systems. Our members' cooperation will be solicited. All sprinklers with the exception of Omega would be included in the project. Approximately 30-32 areas will be investigated.

Discussion regarding NASFM representatives was held. Positions discussed include: Fire Inspector Certification position with NFPA 921 committee. Jim McMullen requested the position on the 921 committee as a representative from NASFM. Discussion was held regarding the request and President Gabriele will ask the Arson Committee for a nominee. It was mentioned that a replacement for Wade Schaeffer is needed to represent NASFM on the Pro-Qual Board.

A letter from Ray Carnahan, Arkansas State Fire Marshal, regarding the Hazardous Materials Book was discussed. The book is on the internet, but Mr. Carnahan would like NASFM to make the book more accessible to the membership and suggested copies be placed on CDs. The problem with copying the book is based on cost. Because of the different colors in the book, the book is expensive to copy. Discussion was held on possible solutions to gain access to the material.

A letter from Jim McMullen regarding Low Level Exit Signs was reviewed by the Board. Mr. McMullen was approached by the Low Level Exit Sign Association and requested NASFM's position on the issue. Don Bliss made a motion to refer Jim McMullen to the appropriate NFPA Committee regarding this issue. Tracy Boatwright seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A CPSC firework brochure was discussed. Meri-K Appy, NFPA, was concerned about NASFM's logo being placed on the brochure. NASFM was never given the brochure to review before the logo was placed on the brochure that recommends safe ways to handle illegal fireworks. Since such a recommendation will be contradictory, CPSC was contacted and NASFM's logo was taken off.

International Harmonization Project

Rocco Gabriele updated the Board members on the International Harmonization Project. Don Bliss, Peter Sparber and Mr. Gabriele met with individuals in Brussels and Sweden regarding the project. Mr. Gabriele informed the Board of the positive outcome of the meetings. Mr. Bliss, Mr. Sparber and Mr. Gabriele were given the opportunity to discuss NASFM's concerns with the highest level official in the Swedish Department of National Chemicals Inspectorate. They also met and discussed various concerns with many counterparts of organizations here in the United States.

Legislative Report

Tracy Boatwright reported on Legislative issues. Mr. Boatwright informed the Board that numerous fire safety related bills were introduced, but only two bills are likely to see much action in the near future. 1) Fire Safe Cigarette Act of 1999 (HR 1130) and 2) CPSC Budget Bill.

Regulation Mr. Boatwright updated the Board regarding NASFM petitions to the Federal Trade Commission and CPSC regarding consumer warning labels on upholstered furniture containing non-fire retardant polyurethane foam. Mr. Boatwright also addressed the CPSC Furniture Flammability Standard and Children's Sleepwear Flammability Standard. A proposed resolution was made and passed regarding sprinkler failures based on last year's problems with Omega sprinkler heads. (Resolution attached)

Consumer Product Safety Report

Low Ignition-propensity cigarettes:

Frank McGarry reported on the progress of the ASTM Committee. The proposed new test method that measures the propensity of a cigarette to ignite fabric has been sent out for balloting of the committee members. Committee Chairman Hank Roux has done an outstanding job of facilitating a very difficult process.

Upholstered furniture (non-legislative):

The NASFM petition concerning the labeling of upholstered furniture has been received and docketed by the CPSC. It is unknown when the Commission will act on this latest NASFM effort to alert the public to the dangers of upholstered furniture.

In cooperation with the IAFF, NASFM issued an alert bulletin to local fire departments on the hazards posed by furniture warehouses and retail stores. Frank McGarry attended the American Furniture Manufacturer's Association (AFMA) annual meeting and addressed this concern.

The issue of upholstered furniture flammability has received a great deal of media attention, and NASFM continues to be the primary fire service organization that is out front on this issue. As a result, NASFM has been contacted for information on a variety of other fire safety topics (see below for details).

Mattresses:

The first phase of research concerning open flame ignition of mattresses is over, and NIST is now building gas jets to simulate the kind of fire which tends to ignite mattresses. The next phase will determine how existing mattresses fare and what needs to be done to make them less susceptible to open flame ignition.

Electrical Appliances:

NASFM submitted comments on UL 746C, which proposes several measures to improve fire prevention in electrical appliances used in the home. This standard directly affects more than 200 other UL standards and indirectly affects many more — 92.8 million individual appliances were bought by Americans in 1996. Even if NASFM comments are not incorporated, the new standard is a big improvement.

Computer Monitors:

NASFM is exploring the connection between information technology equipment and external ignitions to ensure that US and international standards for such equipment provide for the highest levels of safety.

Media Interest in consumer product safety issues:

NASFM has been interviewed or provided information to the following media organizations:

Upholstered Furniture

Good Morning America

Dateline NBC

Inside Edition

20/20 ABC News (story currently in development)

Associated Press

Washington Post

New York Times

Wall Street Journal (story currently in development)

Fire Engineering (story currently in development)

Furniture World

Electric Blankets

20/20 ABC News

Window Security Bars

Good Morning America

Non-UL Listed Appliances

Dateline NBC

Utility Lighters

Inside Edition

Meetings with Underwriters Laboratories:

The Task Force met at UL Headquarters in Northbrook IL on February 12, 1999 to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Task Force will meet there again on August 20, 1999.

Chemical Safety Board

Dr. Paul Hill, who is with the Chemical Safety Board, will be speaking at the June conference. Mr. Sparber suggested a break out session for individuals to speak with Dr. Hill and discuss the Chemical Safety Board needs.

Washington DC Fire Department Report

Chief Alexander Bullock visited the Board briefly and gave an update on current issues within the DC Fire Department. Chief Bullock is acting administrative chief of Department. Inspection responsibility was assigned elsewhere, but the Fire Department has the inspectors. It is a difficult time in D.C.

1999 Annual Conference

Discussion was held concerning sending invitations to former officers of NASFM. It was agreed that registration would be waived for the former officers, but they would be responsible for their expenses. Olin Greene will be swearing in any newly-elected Board member. Jim McMullen will be asked to give the history of NASFM at the orientation meeting.

NASFM Awards

Discussion was held regarding the awards to be announced at the conference. Tom Brace is the chairperson. It was agreed that nominations would be solicited for SFM of the year from the Principals, and the nominees would be presented and voted on along with the regular elections at the annual meeting. This call for nominations will be repeated in the next newsletter, and nomination will be accepted from the floor.

Executive Director's Report

Financial Status Roy Marshall gave an overview of the current status of the administrative budget. Certain line items need to be researched. Mr. Marshall and Carla Minieri will work together to update the budget for the annual meeting. Tracy Boatwright made a motion to accept the financial report. Walter Smittle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

1998 Audit Report Michael Minieri reviewed the 1998 audit with the Board and very minor problems were identified and will be corrected. The report was distributed to the Board members.

Telecommunications Michael Minieri informed the Board of a change in Headquarters telecommunications. A decrease in T-1 line and long distance charges. Mr. Minieri requested \$1500 be spent in order to realize a savings over the long-term. George Miller made the motion to spend \$1500 towards implementing the savings. Don Bliss seconded the motion. Motion carried.

10 YEAR BATTERY: Michael Minieri brought before the Board a request from Mr. Robert Pliskin regarding a 10 year battery for smoke detectors. He is requesting support for a TIA to NFPA 72 to require the 10-year battery. The Board informed Mr. Minieri to respond that the issue does not meet NFPA criteria as an emergency for a TIA.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

A letter requesting support for regulation in a specific state was referred to that State Fire Marshal without NASFM action.

Central Station Alarm Association

A request from the CSAA to endorse proposed amendment #388 to NFPA 72 was discussed. The Board elected not to endorse the proposal.

Cooperative Agreement The proposal for Cooperative Agreement 1999-2000 arrived at Headquarters and copies were placed in the Board books. Suggestions were made to seek additional funding in the agreement for meetings of the Science Advisory Committee, a Firework Safety Campaign, and a Holiday Fire Safety Program.

Brad Pabody discussed the agreement and informed the Board on the Code Database which is currently in the agreement and also in the 1999-2000 agreement. Mr. Pabody reminded the Board that a similar database on regulatory matters is in the current cooperative agreement. About 21 states did not respond to the survey. Staff will contact these states in effort to get their data.

Conference call facilities were addressed by Mr. Pabody. Mr. Pabody suggested giving him three to four days advance notice to make the arrangements for conference calls through the USFA. The call-in would be by way of an 800 number, with no NASFM cost.

JUVENILE FIRESETTER PROJECT

Frank McGarry reported on the status of the Juvenile Firesetter Project. The budget was settled and the grant is in the Justice Department contract office waiting for all necessary individuals to be contacted before awarding the grant to NASFM. Once the grant has been awarded, all NASFM principals will be advised of the particulars of the Project and how interested parties can become involved.

WADE SCHAEFER RESIGNATION

Captain Wade Schaefer (Michigan) retired from his position in the Michigan State Police and from NASFM's Board of Directors. His resignation was March 31, 1999. Mr. Schaefer's seat will be left unfilled until the June conference. It was this Board seat that would have been and is up for election in June.

NOMINEES FOR BOARD POSITION

Nominees thus far include V.J. Bella, Louisiana and G. Mike Davis, Texas. The next newsletter will solicit candidates for the position and nominees' will be accepted from the floor at the annual conference, as is required by the by-laws.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

A request for time on the Board agenda at the June Board meeting was made by Arthur Stone from the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO). The Board informed Michael Minieri to place Mr. Stone on the agenda. He will discuss a continuation of NASFM/AAO cooperation on reducing fireworks injuries. (Correspondence attached)

ANNA FIRE DEPT LETTER

Correspondence from the Anna Fire Dept asking all fire service organizations to seek a portion of tobacco law suit settlements with the states was reviewed. The Board elected to take no action on the matter. A copy of the letter is attached.

APPROVAL OF NEW ADVOCATES

The Board of Directors approved two new advocate members. The Board requested additional information about two applicants before approving the companies as advocates. Michael Minieri will gather the information and distribute to the Board for a vote via fax or email. *The Advocate Application form is to be revised to address an issue of additional information needed for advocate membership.*

GUESTS AT THE APRIL 21, 1999 SESSION

Ryan Trainer, Rogers and Wells Law Firm, spoke before the Board of Directors and committed himself for Pro Bono work for the association. Peter Sparber made a recommendation to integrate the pro bono work with the Legal Committee. George Keeley also made a recommendation in favor of Mr. Trainer. Mr. Trainer is an expert on legal international trade issues and will be able to provide invaluable advise on NASFM's harmonization efforts.

Pat Coughlin spoke before the Board updating the members on several issues. Mr. Coughlin discussed the Board's concerns about CPSC widening its investigation to include all sprinklers, not just the Omega. Also an update on the status of the Omega replacement program was given. A status report was given on the 10-year battery issue, including the status of legislation in Oregon and New York, and warned that legislation like this could prevent the sale of photoelectric smoke alarms. A new award program, Order of Life Safety Servants, was announced.

NICET representatives conveyed to the Board the possibility of a new program that might serve the needs which COPA was conceived to address.