

**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**July 15, 2025**  
**Temple Baptist Church**

**Attendance:** Pierce Womack, Jason Dennis, Mike Norket, Kevin Henson, Ross Vezin, Randy Arant, Ben Waring, Terry Sheriff, Billy Barnes, Charles Lamoreaux, Kevin Crosby, Tom Gwyer, Rickie Jenkins, John Bowers, Josh Holzheimer, Jennifer Thackston, Tian Griffieth, Rick Cramer, Bruce Kline, Brian Bailey, Brook Dennis, Zorrina Harmon, Carter Jones, Brick Lewis, Jamie Helms, Ashley Boltin

**Online:** Ryan Eubanks, Matt Rhoton, Joe Palmer

9:55 am Swearing in of the new Supervisory Chairman Ben Waring by Past President Randy Arant.

10:00 am Meeting Called to Order by President Womack

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance by Chaplain Rickie Jenkins

President Womack welcomed everyone and gave thanks to Temple Baptist Church for hosting us. Today, we are streaming online to our membership. Today, we will review goals and objectives for each committee for the future and strategic planning goals.

***A motion was made by Randy Arant to accept the minutes as presented from May 14, 2025, seconded by Mike Norket. All in favor.***

**Old Business**

A building update was given by Executive Director Helms

- Appraisal came back slightly higher from the sale price
- Contract amount is 4.7 million
- We can afford to purchase the building.
- We will have to do renovations in phases. (A site plan was shown on the screen.)
- As a reminder, this project has been ongoing since 2020.
- We have had budget savings that we have been putting away, but we will have to do fundraising efforts as well.
- We have met with our banker and have payment options.
- We will be asking for funds from the State Legislature.
- Fundraising efforts do not have a set plan yet, but we all have to understand this is a team effort that we all have to be onboard with. This has to be all of us, not part of us or put on just staff. We all have to be in on the fundraising efforts.
- We have until Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, that is day 73 of our 75-day inspection period, to let them know if we want to move forward with the purchase or stop the process.
- So far, all inspections have come back clear. We do know that the roof will need to be replaced, and a heating and air auxiliary unit will need to be replaced.

- The CEMAR team says it will take 2.6 in renovations to get staff moved into the building.
- If we choose to move forward with the purchase of the building, we would like to develop and put in place a construction team and a fundraising team.

***A motion was made by Randy Arant to move forward with the purchase of the building; seconded by Mike Norket the motion was amended to move forward with the purchase of the building and creation of working group for renovation and a fundraising team. All in favor. (Jason Dennis, Mike Norket, Kevin Henson, Ross Vezin, Randy Arant, Ben Waring, Terry Sheriff, Billy Barnes. No vote due to absence Ryan Eubanks and Brad Kavetski.***

Bruce Kline asked what annual payments will look like. Director Helms says there are options it will depend on which loan option we go with. It was asked if it is an option to finance renovations, Director Helms replied probably not, but we are beginning to look at corporate sponsors. Chief Kline opinion is not to get a long-term tenant in the open space and in the educational space shoot high as in no less than space for 500 people. Chief Kline agrees that the committee has made the right decision to move forward.

Director Helms will go back and negotiate about the roof and heating and air unit to see if we can get the seller to come down on the price at all.

Director Helms and President Womack will work on putting the committees together.

A draft updated travel policy was given to all committee members. This will help with budgeting and streamlining. President Womack read through each item to the committee. Randy brought up that he feels the Past President should be included in the NC SAFER Conference. It was agreed to add the past president to this event. The thought is that this is the first trip of the new presidency, and it gives bonding opportunities for this group.

Chief Kline ask what the ballpark for total travel expenses is for the Executive Committee, Director Helms said roughly \$80,000. He asked the committee, are you comfortable with that, and is it appropriate? Chief Kline expressed that he feels the Executive Committee works their butts off and should be taken care of but still be mindful of the membership.

***A motion was made by Randy Arant to accept the written travel and events attendance policy effective October 1, 2025, for the next budget cycle. to include adding the Past President to the NC SAFRE Trip; seconded by Jason Dennis. All in favor (Jason Dennis, Mike Norket, Kevin Henson, Ross Vezin, Randy Arant, Ben Waring, Ryan Eubanks[online], Terry Sheriff, Billy Barnes). No vote due to the absence Brad Kavetski.***

## **New Business**

The President's Goals are communication and openness for the meetings. We have decided to do a Teams link to be transparent and open to all. I urge committee members to attend in person, but if you cannot, you can still teams in. Committee Chair reports are to be submitted prior to the meeting via the link. My goal is to condense committee reports, maybe put information on slides.

Past President – Stay involved and invite to functions. Per the strategic plan, research retirement community feasibility.

Arant – On June 27<sup>th</sup> I emailed to them all to introduce myself and keep them engaged. I want to pursue Helmet Shields and past president coins.

Finance & Audit – The Committee members need to be in the loop as we move forward with building finance. Meet periodically to review monthly statements. Strategic planning goal 1A3 shift to supervisory.

Legislative – tie up loose ends with definitions for Firefighter, Fire Chief and Fire Department. It was brought to the attention that this has been complete and signed into law. We do have a few carryovers for this year from last. We need to visit the legislature on museum funding. We need to support stricter penalties for burn bands.

Advisory – Collaboration with Chief Bulanow moving forward with the Leadership Institute selection process and update. Firm up the current awards with a refresh. Look at the Honorary membership definition that process, and what it looks like. We need to promote this area with marketing posts on social media, videos, and testimonials. This group has a meeting scheduled for July 24<sup>th</sup> at the office at 10:00 am.

4<sup>th</sup> VP – Congratulations, look forward to a learning year and whatever we can do to support you.

Supervisory- Welcomed new chairman Ben Waring. Review and look over the forms and the process. Continue to keep the benefit of having the reviews. We have to do our part to get folks in these 1% classes. We need more email blasts, social media, and email to continue to enhance.

Member Benefits – Welcomed our new chairman, Ryan Eubanks, who was joining us virtually. How to keep defined benefits online and in-person. Look into insurance for retirees and dive into the cost for us to offer. Death benefit increase, what would that look like? We also need to be looking at the State increase in taxes and elimination of income tax, and how that will affect the fire service. Eubanks has already had some ideas in financial coaching for the fire service. Strategic Planning 2A1 & 2A2 increase programs and gap of health care programs.

Lunch Break

Training & Education – Research into a Driving Simulator, how to grow Fire Rescue and Fire Service Improvement Conference.

OSHA Committee – OSHA Report continues to move forward, we need to focus on educating the membership.

Strategic Planning – We need a way to track our progress for each goal, whether that is a document, cloud, or software. Work with the technology committee on developing the best way to do this.

Bylaws – We want to get you more involved in the meetings to make sure we are straight and keeping on track. Review the bylaws for updates. Define what is Executive Committee is and what it is not.

EMS – Continue to strengthen the relationship with the EMS Association. Look at having an EMS track at fire-rescue and have other education tracks. Continue to work on the regulatory statute.

Conference Committee – Continue to strengthen the family events, workouts, and fun run. Review adding snacks and drinks back to the opening of the exhibit hall on Thursday night.

Chaplain Committee – Doing a great job, would like to see you all team up with SCFAST. August 5<sup>th</sup>, we have a meeting scheduled with chaplains from around the state to meet and standardize chaplaincy. Chaplaincy vs clergy are two different things.

Heritage Committee – Strategize on what the museum will look like from racks to displays etc. Continue to document and showcase retiring firefighter and fire chiefs and/ or items that are going away.

Recruitment & Retention – focus on High School and Career Centers. Holzheimer has a list of all the CTC programs and their instructors. Work on developing a video with students from CTC's for recruitment on a state level.

Technology & Communications – want to continue to work on the 800 radio system. But look at ways to reach our membership through apps, app alerts, text messaging, explore not only the technology but the cost.

Emergency Management – Bringing back this committee. We want to work on clear conversations, especially with the changes at the Federal Level. Pair up with the Emergency Management Association at the state level. Work on the reimbursement side education piece, we see so many fire departments that are missing out on the disaster side.

Director Helms mentioned that you all received an email from him for the OSHA rewrite Beta Test process, which is going to affect the membership at all levels. We wanted to have 30 in the test, but we ended up with about 15.

Officer Section – continue to support.

Insurance Services – Thank you for your support. We will work on pricing for increasing the death benefit. We will continue working on the retirement and provide quotes on health care. PRS possibilities keep expanding.

Foundation – Fundraising ideas for the new building and supporting our membership.

NVFC – Wants to attend more meetings around our state. Advocate for the grants program participation along with the volunteer recruitment “Make Me a Firefighters” campaign.

Staff – Thank you for what you do on a daily basis. Communication is the biggest thing to focus on.

Committee List – Changes are being adjusted, and we will send out the most up-to-date list.

#### 2025 Fire – Rescue Conference After Action Review

Brook started with conference numbers.

Reminder that our systems do not communicate; we have to export and import manually to make them work. Each person is identified by their email address, and you are set to the department that pays your dues. Even if you are a member of multiple departments, it is who pays your dues.

Conference Committee Chairman Gwyer.

- We feel that overall, it went well.
- The morning workouts were not attended well but we did have 3 locations, we are looking at going back to maybe 1 location.
- The Fun Run with a change of venue had okay attendance. We did partner with a eatery for after the run so that was an option for folks.
- We did not have this year, but we want to work on it for next year is a job station/ career center. A central spot that is not competing but shows opportunities that are available in our state view benefits and possibly apply on the spot.
- Scavenger hunt we did not do this year due to technology issues we couldn't make it work on the app.
- Business meeting, we talked about the events but no one was in the room. Maybe videos it or move it to earlier in the agenda.

- The business meeting had a dynamic speaker, but folks can't sit for 3 hours. Maybe look at breaking it into 2 different days.
- Maybe we should give out the hats at the business meeting instead of Thursday night.

4th VP voting maybe have a set registration for just voting members if they have not casted their vote have a computer available to them to vote in person. This year 1054 Could Vote only 524 did vote, but 788 opened the ballot and 543 opened the ballot but didn't vote.

Complaints about folks cheating at the Golf Tournament. Next year there is going to be a message that the golf pro can throw out any unrealistic scores. Also, play was slow maybe have a rule that you pick up after so many strokes.

Bring the light hors d'oeuvres and beverages back for Thursday night.

Morning workouts have one at the Sheraton as well.

Director Helms felt like one of the best conferences we have had, thanks to everyone. The hat giveaway is always fun to watch. We didn't receive any exhibitor complaints this year, as a matter of fact, we have an exhibitor waiting list. We are going to look at redefining our non-profit booths and entrepreneur booths. We will have financials at next month's meeting.

The transfer of Command was great. We are exploring a process where folks can reserve online their seats or tables. The banquet and transfer of command is driven by the president's induction and awards.

Playbook, if you don't have access, get with Brick.

Our next meeting is August 12<sup>th</sup>. That is FRI week, we will look at it and let you know if we have a change.

***A motion was made by Randy Arant to adjourn at 1:59 pm; seconded by Mike Norket. All in favor.***

### **Online Reports**

Officer Section - 1 p.m. Call to Order & Welcome – Battalion Chief Tian Griffieth, Section Chair Opening Remarks Old Business Meeting Minutes from the June 12, 2025, Officers Section Annual Meeting at Fire-Rescue – Micah Taylor, Section Secretary Strategic Goals assigned to all Section Leadership for 2025-2026. This will ensure progress and continuous improvement of the Officer Sections. Status Report on the Officer Section Training Library/Newsletter/The Jive/Facebook page – Chief Tian Griffieth, Section Chair Status Report on Fire Officer Academy: The Company Officer – Brook Dennis, staff co-liaison for

the Officers Section, September 28-October 4, 2025, registration closes June 30 New Business Strategic Plan review – Chief Tian Griffith, Section Chair, and Micah Taylor, Strategic Plan Goal 1.1 – Update FOA curriculum Ben/Haley/Tian Preventing instructor burnout, instructor succession planning Goal 2.1 – Ad-hoc member (Tasked with defining the pathway to become an instructor for the Fire Officers Academy to ensure a sustainable future of the program) Tian Goal 2.1 – Webinars + articles Tian/Ben/Cline Professional development, resume, or interview assistance Content distribution and planning Goal 3.1 – Communications Haley/Micah Regional meetings, automated text system Goal 4.1 – Funding - Jeremy/Ben/Tian Report – Jeremy King, Section Treasurer 2 p.m. Adjourn

#### OSHA - Committee Focus Activities

1) Completing the BETA Test process design for the general fire service to see the proposed state version of the regulation 2) Responding to and planning for developments on the federal level 3) Soliciting participants for the BETA Test process 4) Presenting several times during SCF-R and interacting with membership on the issue

#### Executive Committee Action Items

1) Ensure that any BETA test name has been submitted 2) Possibly participate in the BETA test. 3) Charleston Chief's will hear the presentation on July 16th - if you are planning to attend 4) Engagement in a written draft of the Subpart b. EMS by the EMS Committee

#### Advisory - Committee Focus Activities

1 - The Advisory Committee will be meeting in-person on July 24th @ 10am: SCSFA Board Room This meeting will be to review and discuss the current selection process for the Leadership Institute Program. The committee will be focused on the review of all associated documents and processes, discussion of opportunities for improvements, alignment of the committee with the process moving forward, and the execution of the process with any needed changes. 2 - I will be representing the Advisory Committee on July 14th for the selection of Fire Officer Academy candidates.

#### Executive Committee Action Items

No - EC Action Needed: Next month the EC will be briefed on any changes that are made to the selection process for transparency.

NVFC - Keith Minick is reviewing State Farm grants. Previously sent out the NVFC document of where we stand with the OSHA discussions.

Legislative - Schedule a committee meeting following the July 15th EC meeting to set goals and deadlines for the upcoming legislative session.

Chaplaincy- Will be scheduling a committee meeting after the joint statewide meeting of Chaplains to determine a statewide standard on Chaplaincy training. Along with myself, Patti Graham and Gary Rogers are a part of these discussions. Executive Committee Action Items Creating a Statewide Chaplaincy Program.

Technology & Communications - The Technology and Communications Committee is in the process of scheduling an in-person meeting for August 6th or 7th, with a Doodle poll distributed and responses pending. During this meeting, we will review our objectives for the year and define our committee's mission to ensure clear alignment with the SCSFA

Strategic Plan. We will also be updating the playbook to reflect this information. We are excited about the opportunities ahead and are committed to taking clear, purposeful action to support our goals.

Health & Safety - Schedule an upcoming committee meeting to welcome new committee members, share committee goals, and plan activities for the year ahead.

Past Presidents - I sent an e-mail to the Past President's group on 6/27/25 introducing myself and telling the group that I look forward to chairing the committee. I gave the group an update on the building purchase project. I told them that I would start working on meeting and field trip dates for the year.