

**Department of Homeland Security  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
U.S. Fire Administration  
Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy  
December 13, 2023  
Zoom Teleconference**

**Attendees:**

The following members of the Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy were in attendance for the meeting.

John S. Butler (Chair)  
Fire Chief  
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department  
12099 Government Center Parkway  
Fairfax, VA 22033

W. Nelson Bauer, Ph.D.  
Deputy Fire Chief  
Orange Beach Fire & Rescue Dept.  
P.O. Box 458  
Orange Beach, AL 36561

Steven Dubay (Vice Chair)  
Deputy Chief  
Colorado Springs Fire Department  
375 Printers Parkway  
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Megan Schuth, Ph.D.  
Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal  
Denton Fire Department  
332 E. Hickory St.  
Denton, TX 76201

Dr. Michael Macey  
Director of Public Safety  
St. John's College  
1160 Camino de Cruz Blanca  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Scott Somers, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Arizona State University  
10157 East Palladium Drive  
Mesa, AZ 85212

Tiffanye S. Wesley  
Deputy Fire Chief  
Arlington County Fire Department  
2100 Clarendon Blvd. Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22201

Edward Davis  
Executive Director  
National Association of Hispanic  
Firefighters  
3114 Flameleaf St.  
Garland, TX 75044

Federal Emergency Management Agency/U.S. Fire Administration/National Fire Academy (FEMA/USFA/NFA) staff in attendance:

Mr. Eriks Gabliks, Superintendent, NFA  
Ms. Deb Gartrell-Kemp, Program Support Specialist  
Chief Tonya L. Hoover, Deputy Fire Administrator, USFA  
Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell, U.S. Fire Administrator, USFA  
Mr. Michael Pritchard, Branch Chief, Prevention and Special Operations Branch, USFA  
Ms. Michelle Spielman, Secretary  
Mr. James (Vince) Hodge, Director, Management, Operations and Support Services (MOSS)  
Ms. Tiffany Warren, Branch Chief, Training, Administration, Planning and Analysis Branch, NFA  
Mr. Richard Sexton, Branch Chief, Prevention Branch, NFA  
Ms. Tammy Pimentel-Matthews, Branch Chief, Response and Special Operations Branch, NFA

Others in attendance/public attendees:

Ms. Sarahjane Call, Office of Partnership and Engagement/Committee Management Office, Management and Program Analyst

**Convene Board of Visitors Meeting/Welcome**

**Chief John S. Butler, Chairperson, Board of Visitors**

**Ms. Sarahjane Call, Management and Program Analyst, Office of Partnership and Engagement/Committee Management Office**

**Mr. Eriks Gabliks, Superintendent, National Fire Academy**

**Chief Tonya Hoover, Deputy Fire Administrator, U.S. Fire Administration**

**Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell, U.S. Fire Administrator, U.S. Fire Administration**

Mr. Eriks Gabliks welcomed everyone to this meeting of the USFA/NFA Board of Visitors. The meeting was being conducted under regulations outlined in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Everyone is a Special Government Employee. Mr. Gabliks served as the Designated Federal Officer for the meeting to make sure everyone followed the federal requirements.

Mr. Gabliks stated that Ms. Deb Gartrell-Kemp is the contact person. She is the one who collects everyone's information and sets the meetings up. Ms. Michelle Spielman was Ms. Gartrell-Kemp's backup, and Ms. Jennifer Vanover would be taking notes for the meeting.

Mr. Gabliks stated that the Board of Visitors agenda is published in the Federal Register. The times listed are approximate, and they might need to adjust the schedule as needed. There should be enough time scheduled for all speakers, comments and questions, as well as for interaction. Mr. Gabliks stated that under the FACA requirements, anyone wanting to send something in to be reviewed had the ability to do so. There were no comments sent in from the public.

Dextera/Leading Solutions support staff, Ms. Vanover, would be taking notes and would compile minutes. The minutes will include matters discussed and conclusions reached by the board. The

minutes would be prepared and sent to the meeting chair within 90 calendar days. All comments and notes would be available for public review forever; they would be archived. Mr. Gabliks advised everyone to be sure to state their name before speaking so the minutes could be recorded accurately. If anyone has notes, they should email them to Ms. Gartrell-Kemp so she can forward them to Ms. Vanover. Mr. Gabliks stated that for the meeting order they would follow Robert's Rules for motions.

Mr. Gabliks convened this meeting of the USFA/NFA Board of Visitors.

Mr. Gabliks had all the new members raise their right hand and repeat the Oath of Office after him. He then congratulated all the new members and thanked them for volunteering their time to the Board of Visitors. Mr. Gabliks then turned the meeting over to Chief John Butler.

Chief Butler congratulated the new members, welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order. Chief Butler turned the meeting over to Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell.

Dr. Moore-Merrell congratulated everyone and thanked them for serving the Board of Visitors. She stated that this Board of Visitors is very important to the NFA. Everyone and everything must be relevant, and they need to keep up with the challenges faced in the field and know the type of officer development they need at all levels. Dr. Moore-Merrell stated that the USFA will continue to be relevant, and they are working very hard to do so. The NFA has to be the space where they develop not only today's officers but the next generation of leaders within the fire service and make them better. They will ask the participants' supervisors if they believe that the NFA made them better. She stated that she wants everyone to be able to say yes when they are asked if they are better because of their experience at the NFA. She hopes all the members keep that in the front of their minds. Dr. Moore-Merrell turned the meeting back over to Chief Butler.

Chief Butler thanked Dr. Moore-Merrell for her support and then turned the meeting over to Chief Tonya Hoover.

Chief Hoover stated that Dr. Moore-Merrell did such a great job that she would just like to welcome and thank everyone for their time and support.

Chief Butler thanked Chief Hoover. Chief Butler thanked Mr. Steven Dubay for his help as vice chair and thanked everyone who helps with the Board of Visitors. Chief Butler then had the new and current members of the Board of Visitors introduce themselves.

Mr. Gabliks mentioned that the items on the agenda can change depending on people's schedules. The Board of Visitors members should have received an email from Mr. Dave Brummett who is the legal counsel on campus. Mr. Gabliks stated that Ms. Sarahjane Call wanted to say a few words. Chief Butler turned the meeting over to Ms. Call.

Ms. Call unfortunately could not get her microphone to work. In the chat she introduced herself and thanked everyone for their hard work throughout the year. She is grateful for all of the Board of Visitors accomplishments each year and looks forward to seeing what the upcoming year brings.

Chief Butler then turned the meeting over to Mr. Michael Pritchard for his briefing on the National Fire and Emergency Medical Services Division (NFEMSD) and the National Fire Data and Research Center (NFDRC) Division.

**National Fire and Emergency Medical Services Division and National Fire Data and Research Center Division**

**Mr. Michael Pritchard, Branch Chief, Prevention and Special Operations Branch, USFA**

Mr. Pritchard stated that he is the branch chief for the Prevention and Special Operations Branch, which is in NFEMSD, and he is also the acting branch chief for the Research Branch, which is in the NFDRC. He will give updates on both divisions.

Mr. Pritchard stated that the Prevention Branch has a lot of outreach projects going on. There are a couple of data visualization tools that they are working on. One is the Home Fire Fatalities and Social Vulnerability Index Explorer tool that is available through the FEMA Geospatial Data Center. They are working to add the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) data into the platform. There is a wildland urban interface (WUI) Awareness Map that will show where the WUI issues are and how people can take action to improve their risk in that environment.

Mr. Pritchard discussed the continuing partnership with Sesame Street. There are a lot of different documents they have with them. They will be working on more projects with them in the near future.

Mr. Pritchard mentioned the “Fire is Everyone’s Fight™” project and how they want to get more people involved. They are trying to work with some colleges to do a project with their marketing classes on Fire is Everyone’s Fight.

Mr. Pritchard stated that the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Branch is new. Mr. Dave Millstein is the branch chief for the EMS Branch and the National Fire Data Center (NFDC). Mr. Pritchard explained how they went from 3 branches to 4. They are looking to hire a division director for NFDRC. They will continue to build the EMS Branch and try to get more funding. They are increasing engagement with their partners and stakeholder groups, such as the National Association of State EMS Officials, the National EMS Advisory Council, and the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS. EMS is approximately 66% of the calls in the fire service.

Chief Butler asked if the Board of Visitors could get a report of updates every quarter or so on the EMS Branch. Mr. Pritchard replied that the goals and objectives are being developed and it is a work in progress. They have a Program Decision Option (PDO) request to get more funding for the EMS Branch. He will look into getting that information to Chief Butler and the Board of Visitors.

Mr. Dubay asked if Mr. Millstein’s role was permanent or if he is in an acting position. Mr. Pritchard replied that Mr. Millstein is the EMS Branch Chief and the Acting Branch Chief for the NFDC.

Mr. Dubay asked if Mr. Pritchard could elaborate on what they are doing with Sesame Street. Mr. Pritchard explained that they have a lot of products going on with Sesame Street. There are the fire prevention color and learn activity booklets and family guides that are very popular. They have those in both English and Spanish. They want to create a wildland version of the activity booklets.

Mr. Edward Davis asked if any other branches use Sesame Street. Mr. Pritchard replied that the Prevention and Special Operations Branch is the branch that does the outreach part.

Dr. Scott Somers asked if Mr. Pritchard was familiar with the American Red Cross (ARC) Pillowcase Project. Mr. Pritchard replied that he was not. Dr. Somers explained that the Pillowcase Project started out like the Sesame Street project. The goals are to educate on family preparedness, safety risks, local hazards and coping skills. They have a pillowcase that kids can color, and they have created an entire curriculum around all-hazards and disaster response. Dr. Somers stated that he could send a link with the template on it to Mr. Pritchard. Mr. Pritchard replied that he appreciated that, and he would take a look at it. He stated that they do have a partnership with the ARC.

Dr. Michael Macey asked if the WUI mapping was on the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) platform and how will that work with the insurance carriers. Mr. Pritchard replied that it is on the ESRI platform. He explained that they were careful not to make it a risk map; it is an awareness map. They are trying to build awareness of where the built environment meets wildland and show it in a picture form.

Mr. Pritchard stated that the NFDC did a 2023 National Fire Data Week in May, and those videos are now available at <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/about/usfa-events/2023-05-15-national-fire-data-week/>. They are also working on some data visualization tools to be more engaged. The 2022 National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) data Public Data Release is now available on OpenFEMA. The link for that is <https://www.fema.gov/about/openfema/data-sets/fema-usfa-nfirs-annual-data>. There were 31.7 million incidents reported from more than 22,500 fire departments. Compared to 2021, that is a 9% increase in the number of incidents, with approximately 200 more reporting fire departments. Mr. Pritchard explained that there is a lot going on with NERIS, but he does not have an update at this time. There is a webinar that will be coming out with updates on that. The link for that webinar is <https://web.cvent.com/event/64c9603b-c040-4b3f-b314-421fb7cb13f4/summary?rt=a106J3KfNUyvG73AaTPt7w>.

Dr. Macey asked if there was anything being done to motivate the departments that do not contribute data. Mr. Pritchard replied that they are trying to show people the value of data with the outreach that is being done. Chief Hoover added that the NFDC is doing a number of things to increase activity. She explained that there are webinars and different events that are being used to expand the outreach into the states.

Mr. Pritchard asked if there were any more questions. There were none.

Chief Butler turned the meeting over to Mr. James Hodge, who is the director of MOSS.

## **Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvements on the National Emergency Training Center Campus**

### **Mr. James Hodge, Director, Management, Operations and Support Services**

Mr. Hodge welcomed the new Board of Visitors members. He will give an update on the work that has been done, the work that is in progress and the work that will be done around campus.

Mr. Hodge stated that there are 2 large tenants on campus, the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and NFA, and they fund everything to keep the campus running. There are a lot of work orders that get completed throughout the year. There have been approximately 9,304 resident students on campus this year between EMI and NFA. MOSS has completed 17 deferred maintenance projects for the year. Deferred maintenance projects are improvements that campus wants done, but they do not always have the funds to do it. USFA hosted 88 special groups during the fiscal year (FY) 2023. A few of the groups that were here were the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial, U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control and the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Program.

Mr. Hodge stated that there was a decontamination station completed at the burn range that has a bathroom with a shower. They completed the heating, ventilation and air conditioning repair in the Visitor Center and there have been a lot of elevator upgrades. The elevators being up to date are a requirement by the Americans with Disabilities Act. A Monaco fire alarm system was installed, and the last phase was completed this year. They had to repair the underground tunnel by Building S because it was failing due to water intrusion. They had to stop parking the apparatus on top of the tunnel because the damage was so bad. That project was completed, and they fixed and reinforced everything. Mr. Hodge showed some of the pictures of the inside and outside of the tunnel where the damage was, and he also showed pictures of the finished project.

Mr. Hodge stated that there have been some repairs that were unplanned due to wind damage. Work was done to repair the bridge by the cabin by Tom's Creek.

Mr. Hodge stated that there was a campuswide plumbing project that was completed. They replaced 15 post indicator valves, 20 water heaters, 2 heat harvesters, 16 water shut off valves, 100 dorm room sinks, etc.

Mr. Hodge stated that the campus Wi-Fi upgrade was completed. That entailed 200 access points being replaced and 20 switch replacements.

Chief Butler asked if the upgrade was necessary. Mr. Hodge replied that it was necessary. They are getting ready to do an update to the information technology infrastructure also.

Mr. Hodge stated that the Building B pavilion has been completed. He showed some pictures of the area. It has a fire pit and a cooking range for students to use.

Mr. Dubay asked if there has been a shift in the usage of the cabin because of the pavilion. Mr. Hodge replied that he was not sure because they close the cabin in the winter and the pavilion was just recently completed. The pavilion will be available throughout the year. Mr. Hodge stated that he does expect that the pavilion will be used a lot more.

Mr. Hodge stated that they finished the work on the Walk of Honor that gives another 5,000 to 10,000 clean bricks to be used for inscriptions. There is a heating system underneath that is tied to the geothermal network that is on campus. A lot of the things on campus feed off of the geothermal system. Mr. Hodge stated that if the community shut down, the National Emergency Training Center campus could probably stay up and running for a least a month longer.

Mr. Hodge stated that they have hired an arborist to come in and cut down some trees that needed taken down before they fell down. They have had to replace some of the fence due to the trees, which was not cheap.

Mr. Hodge stated that Frederick County does use the helicopter pad that is on campus to medevac patients out to York or Baltimore. They made the ramp a little wider and reinforced it so that a vehicle can transport a patient to the helicopter faster and easier. He showed some pictures of that.

Mr. Hodge showed pictures of the parking lots that were paved and restriped. They reinforced the access point and sidewalk for where the ladder truck sits by the memorial. They added more handicapped parking spots to campus.

Mr. Hodge stated that the FEMA bus has been a challenge. They use the bus to transport students from Baltimore/Washington International airport to and from campus. The repairs on the bus are becoming costly. There is a FEMA van that they can use for smaller trips.

Mr. Hodge mentioned some renovations that are going to be done for buildings G and R. They are preparing solicitations for bids. They will be putting solar panels on the Visitor Center. The last report showed they were pulling electricity that was equivalent to a streetlamp.

Chief Nelson Bauer asked how it was going with their price predictions and the actual price of the project. Mr. Hodge replied that they are always underestimating the price on the projects due to inflationary pressures.

Mr. Hodge stated that they had a contract in place with a vendor that provides linen service. They now have an area on campus with a laundry facility and can do their own linens. They cut ties with the linen service they had.

Mr. Hodge mentioned that there are several solar picnic tables located near Building S. People can plug in their laptops, phones, etc., to charge. There is battery storage in the seats. They have had good reviews on that.

Mr. Hodge stated that they are still trying to get funds for a wellness center. He stated that FEMA is not interested in building new buildings, but they will focus on the maintenance and upgrades on existing buildings. They will continue to push for funding for this project.

Mr. Hodge showed a slide with budgeting information. He also showed the list of projects that will be considered for implementation. Mr. Hodge asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Davis asked when the facility was established. Mr. Hodge replied that Building L was built in 1959.

Dr. Megan Schuth asked if the wellness center would be like a mini clinic. Mr. Hodge replied yes. Dr. Schuth stated that she liked that idea. Chief Butler stated that the Board of Visitors could help bolster some ideas.

Dr. Somers asked if there has been any demand for solar-powered charging stations on campus. Mr. Hodge replied he does not have any information on that. There have been a few requests for charging stations, but the campus does not have any currently. Dr. Somers stated that his fire station has a solar powered electric vehicle charging station, and they just got their first electric fire truck.

Chief Butler asked if there were any more questions, and there were none. Chief Butler turned the meeting over to Mr. Gabliks for the NFA updates.

### **National Fire Academy Updates on Developments, Deliveries, Staffing and Admissions**

#### **Mr. Eriks Gabliks, Superintendent, National Fire Academy**

Mr. Gabliks stated that they were now going to discuss some things that NFA is doing on campus. He described to the new members that there are 3 specific issues that will be debriefed at the Board of Visitors meetings, and they are training delivery updates, infrastructure (that is, the brick-and-mortar operations), and the budget that it takes to run the operations. There are 4 training branches that will share their updates. Mr. Gabliks started off with the Response and Special Operations Branch.

### **National Fire Academy Updates on Response and Special Operations Branch**

#### **Mr. Eriks Gabliks, Superintendent, National Fire Academy**

Mr. Gabliks showed a slide that had the staffing information on it. Ms. Tammy Pimentel-Matthews is the branch chief. This branch includes Incident Management and Control, Fire and Investigative Sciences, EMS, and Hazardous Materials training. There are some vacancies in this area. They just filled the position for a program support assistant. There are 2 positions that are vacant because 2 people got promoted to other positions. They have submitted budget requests to enhance the staff and the technology for the fire investigation trainings and the incident management trainings, including the simulation lab. They have a large volume of students interested in those areas. There is a 2 to 3 year waiting period on the courses for those areas. They are waiting for the requests to be evaluated.

Mr. Gabliks stated that they have launched a new 2-day EMS class, “Supervising Emergency Medical Services,” that has been offered twice on campus with good results. They will be offering this class off campus also. There is “Fire Investigation: Fire as a Weapon,” a new 2-day class that was delivered for the North Carolina State Weekend. The results were good, but it needs some tweaking. With Incident Management Command and Control, they have been delivering updated courses with the fully functional simulation software.



Mr. Dubay asked if the 2 new courses were developed in-house or contracted out. Mr. Gabliks replied that it was a blended effort because of the vacancies of staff members.

Mr. Gabliks turned the meeting over to Ms. Tiffany Warren to give some updates on the Training, Administration, Planning and Analysis (TAPA) Branch.

### **National Fire Academy Updates on Training, Administration, Planning and Analysis Branch**

#### **Ms. Tiffany Warren, Branch Chief, Training, Administration, Planning and Analysis Branch**

Ms. Warren stated that the contract was awarded in September to get the chairs in the Building J auditorium replaced. It should be done in February, and it should only take 2 weeks. The chairs will have USB ports in them.

Ms. Warren stated that in FY 2023 the NFA Online team had offered 11 resident courses and 3 online instructor-led courses, 2 of which were new development pilots through Blackboard. In FY 2024 they have offered 7 resident offerings using the Blackboard platform. There were 3 Executive Fire Officer (EFO) courses recently added to Blackboard. NFA Online self-study is piloting a new self-study course, “Chemical and Physical Properties Terms.” There were 2 additional courses in the Hazardous Materials curriculum that are being prepared for piloting. The 3 new courses will be released in the spring of 2024.

Ms. Warren stated that there have been 12 online offerings of “Fire Investigation: First Responders” and they used the self-study platform to administer the course exam to 264 students. The 10-day course “Fire Investigation: Essentials” had 4 offerings, and they used the self-study platform to administer the midterm and final exam to 119 students.

Ms. Warren stated that they are still monitoring the bids that have been increasing for the contract instructors. They do have a predetermined threshold amount, and when they get a bid that is over, they will review it and decide whether to accept that bid. They are preparing to analyze the data that they have been collecting and will review that to see how they will handle the rising cost for the future. They are currently in the process of building their 2025 schedule. She also wanted to mention that the TAPA branch is fully staffed, and she is excited about that. Ms. Warren asked if there were any questions, and there were none.

Mr. Gabliks stated that under the Government Performance and Results Act, the TAPA branch reports their activities each quarter to FEMA, which then reports to Congress. They survey the students who are trained on campus. They will ask them and their employer if they are better prepared since they took the classes here on campus. Mr. Gabliks showed the slide with all the information that they report out on. They share this information with their staff, the instructors and the Board of Visitors.

Mr. Gabliks turned the meeting over to Mr. Richard Sexton to give updates on the Prevention Branch.

**National Fire Academy Updates on Prevention Branch  
Mr. Richard Sexton, Branch Chief, Prevention Branch**

Mr. Sexton stated that they are getting close to being fully staffed. The WUI training specialist position is vacant, and they are trying to find unique ways to recruit for that position. The problem they are having is that all the people with the targeted skills and mindset of wildland fires are farther than 50 miles away. There will be more updates on that later.

Mr. Sexton stated that in the community risk reduction area, the final course in the Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention group is in the final stages of completion for being piloted. The 2023 curriculum review report has been received and is under review for action.

Mr. Sexton stated that in the fire prevention area, Mr. Keith Heckler is the training specialist. They are reviewing his delivery models and instructional methodology. They are looking into some unique ways to deliver the curriculum and to implement the technology to be more hands-on.

Mr. Sexton stated that updates are in progress for all the areas. The WUI training specialist failed recruitment so they will be trying again to fill that position.

Mr. Sexton stated that they are really looking at the evaluations that come back. They are looking at the student's feedback and their employer's feedback. Mr. Sexton asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Gabliks stated that he had 2 people ask him about the WUI position. He described the position to them, and they asked if telework was an option. Mr. Gabliks replied that the training specialist must be on campus when the classes are going on. Both people passed on the opportunity.

**National Fire Academy Updates on Leadership and Partnership Branch  
Mr. Eriks Gabliks, Superintendent, National Fire Academy**

Mr. Gabliks stated that Mr. Lester Rich is serving as the acting branch chief for the Leadership and Partnership Branch. They are looking to fill the position for an instructional systems specialist. They have an offer on the table for the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) position. They are hoping someone is hired within the next 2 weeks. There is now a vacancy with the Leadership/Executive training specialist. Mr. Derrick Sawyer was in that role, but he was commuting 2 1/2 hours each way to get to campus. Mr. Sawyer liked being on campus, but the commute was too far. There is a list of PDOs that have been submitted that would bolster their capabilities with more staff and more resources.

Mr. Gabliks talked about what the Leadership Branch is focused on. There is the EFO Program and Managing Officer Program. The Managing Officer Program is on pause. The State Weekends are going well, and there will be more talk about FESHE. There is a new course called "Fostering Belonging in the Fire and Emergency Services." They offered this class in November as a pilot, and they had great results. There will be a second offering. This class is designed to help create a diverse and inclusive environment throughout the fire service and EMS communities.

Mr. Gabliks stated that the slide he showed is a snapshot of where they are currently with the EFO Program. There was a graduation last week with 20-plus people walking across the stage, and it was the third graduation of the new 2-year model. There have been 4,695 students who have graduated from the EFO Program. The application window for the EFO Program will open in January for 500 applicants. They expect 500 applications for 144 spots. Mr. Gabliks stated that there were some challenges with the EFO class that was on campus last month. They found out from the surveys and feedback that there were too many people in that class. They are going to cap the number of students in the class to 24. Mr. Gabliks showed the schedule for 2024.

Mr. Gabliks stated that they do have the partnership with Columbia Southern University. There has been great feedback. Students have been enrolled already. The slide shows the dates for the offerings.

Mr. Gabliks stated that all of the EFO courses are recognized at the graduate level. This is the only program within the Department of Homeland Security that is recognized at the graduate level. Mr. Gabliks thanked the stakeholders for that.

Mr. Gabliks showed the slide with the current Managing Officer Program information on it. They are finishing up with the students who have been in the Managing Officer Program. They will keep the classes in the Managing Officer Program because they are good classes, but it will not be called the Managing Officer Program. The Managing Officer Program is going to be rebuilt. Mr. Gabliks showed the slide with the proposed structure of the Managing Officer Program refresh. Once they start the design and development, it may change. They went with a hybrid model because everyone's schedules are different and there are people that have traveling issues. It is also open to the volunteer communities.

Mr. Gabliks stated that the On Campus Courses Landing Page has been recreated so it should be simple to use.

Mr. Gabliks mentioned some FY 2023 accomplishments that were achieved. The NFA reached more than 68,000 career and volunteer fire and EMS personnel who participated in the FY 2023 classes that were offered on and off campus, both in-person and virtually. There were 18 courses that went to American Council on Education and all of them were approved. The EFO Program is the only program at the graduate level. Through the grants program the states delivered 1,305 classes to 18,323 students.

Mr. Gabliks stated that campus did host the National Traffic Incident Management Responder Training Program Leadership Symposium in October. The North Carolina State Weekend was a full house on campus. The Maryland State Weekend will be in February. Grant reviews will be going on in March for AFG. The EFO symposium will be on campus in April. Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant reviews will be on campus in April. The National Fallen Firefighters Memorial and the International Association of Fire Chiefs hazardous materials roundtable will both be hosted in May. There will be a Women's Weekend on campus in June.

Mr. Gabliks mentioned that there is a partnership with the International Association of Fire Fighters. They have a program called Responding to the Interface, and they are working on a train

the trainer class. There is also a partnership with the Society of Fire Protection Engineers, and through an AFG grant they developed a 2-day class. There has been a class offered with the partnership of CALFIRE and the U.S. Forest Service on Wildfire Investigations Training for the first time. They will do additional classes after the first of the year in California.

Mr. Gabliks stated that they have a partnership with the National Native American Fire Chiefs Association. Having a state weekend for the native fire departments will not work because they are in the western states. Those states will get to pick the classes and the locations. They are having discussions with Black Chief Officers Committee and the International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters to have a weekend on campus. They are also working with the National Association of Hispanic Firefighters to have a weekend on campus or another event.

Mr. Gabliks stated that the FESHE position is in motion. There is a member meeting on campus in January. FESHE has approved 2 new programs and there are 2 new programs under review. Once they get a person hired for the position, they will bring back that structure and make sure everything is updated. Mr. Gabliks asked if there were any questions.

Dr. Macey asked why the WUI position must be on campus. Mr. Gabliks replied that all the training specialists are on campus to interact with the instructional system design specialists. When classes are in session the training specialists are also the subject matter experts, and they make sure the instructors who are hired are following the materials. If an instructor calls out or cannot make it to the class, then the training specialist fills in. Mr. Sexton added that the training specialists are the contact people for the students. If there are any issues that come up during the time the students are in the classroom, etc., the training specialist is the contact for that.

Mr. Dubay asked if the class that was done with CALFIRE could be done in another state. Mr. Gabliks replied that may be possible in the future. The bulk of the instructors are from California, and CALFIRE is providing those instructors. They would have to factor in the cost and different avenues to have that in a different state. Also, all the infrastructure they need to work with is in California.

Ms. Tiffanye Wesley asked if there was a date for the second “Fostering Belonging in the Fire and Emergency Services” class. Mr. Gabliks replied that they are still making some changes in the curriculum and that they still need to decide on a date. Mr. Gabliks turned the meeting back over to Chief Butler.

Chief Butler recommended that they pass on the next couple of topics. Mr. Gabliks explained what was happening with the next topics.

## **Board of Visitors Subcommittee Activity Reports**

### **National Fire Incident Reporting System**

Mr. Gabliks stated that NFIRS is going to be going away. There will be no reason to have a committee for this. The staff is looking at having a group that is in the health and wellness safety arena to take the place of this group. That will be discussed more before the next meeting.

### **Professional Development Initiative Update**

Mr. Gabliks stated that the EFO Program is up and running, which was a big effort. As the Managing Officer Program starts moving forward, they will then get together on that subject. Mr. Gabliks stated that he wants to connect FESHE with this group also.

Chief Butler replied that he really liked that idea. Chief Butler asked if they needed to make any motions. Mr. Gabliks suggested that they needed some time to get some structure to the ideas. They will discuss these ideas before the next meeting.

### **Final Comments/Adjournment**

Chief Butler asked if there were any more questions or comments. There were none. The next meeting is April 22, 2024. Mr. Dubay motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Wesley made the second motion. All were in favor, and no one opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 4:07 p.m.