

## **Congressional Fire Services Institute National Advisory Committee Meeting**

Virtual Via Zoom

December 14, 2021

### **Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order on December 14, 2021 at 2:00 pm.

### **Bill Jenaway, CFSI Board of Directors**

- Thanks for supporting CFSI and we hope to see you in-person when possible.

### **Presentation on USFA - Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell, U.S. Fire Administrator**

- Deanne Criswell, the FEMA Administrator, has been a good partner thus far. We have some shared priorities in community preparedness and resilience.
- I want us to train for the threats that we face today – the changing landscape of all hazards – and not just traditional threats from the past. We need to focus more on things like the WUI and other disasters, as well as evaluate our disaster deployment models.
- We need to streamline our data and improve our data collection resources.
- USFA must also continue to work to address physical and behavioral health challenges.
- We can play a role in addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the fire service.

### **Question and Answer:**

- Chief Siarnicki: What do you see as the most critical issue USFA is facing today?
  - Dr. Moore-Merrell: Administrator Criswell is helping to open doors, but more can be done to inform people about the work USFA is doing. We also need to improve our data situation.
- Chief Compton: What are your plans to get fire service stakeholders to work with USFA and each other to accomplish our goals and how can CFSI NAC members assist with making USFA more than an afterthought at FEMA?
  - Dr. Moore-Merrell: Stay the course and work collaboratively.
- Seth Statler: NFPA has been working on wildfire and the WUI; what can NAC organizations be doing on WUI and wildland issues?
  - Dr. Moore-Merrell: USFA has boots on the ground in Boise and we've done some realignment within USFA to elevate WUI issues. USFA plans to prepare reports to get information to you on these issues.
- Preet Bassi: How does President Biden's executive order to improve customer experience impact FEMA grants and NFORS data reporting?
  - Dr. Moore-Merrell: That order was just signed so response is still developing.
- Alan Sactor: What is your perspective on fire prevention?
  - Dr. Moore-Merrell: Do it. Prevention is great. But as much prevention as we try to do, we do also need to prepare for response.
- Ken LaSala: Cybersecurity is a growing threat. Will USFA start developing some cybersecurity resources for fire departments?
  - Dr. Moore-Merrell: We are communicating with CISA and USFA is working on making sure whatever we do takes into account cybersecurity.

- Chief Compton: How can you ensure that USFA is relevant as a federal fire service partner and leader especially for local folks who ask what USFA might be doing at the local level?
  - Dr. Moore-Merrell: We are creating a communications division and our goal is to connect better so the fire service knows what's going on. USFA is also submitting more budget proposals than ever to try to grow.

### **Chair's Report**

- Chief Ron Siarnicki delivered the Chair's report.
- Last month I participated in a review and update of the CFSI strategic plan
- Everyone Goes Home program is working to create a fellowship.
- The number of public safety officers who have died due to COVID continues to grow.
- Tampa III will be in San Antonio TX Feb. 13-16, 2022.

### **Vice-Chair's Report**

- Craig Hannan delivered the Vice-Chair's report.
- The Programmatic Subcommittee has begun consideration of seminar proposals and we are excited about putting the seminar proposal together.

### **Executive Director's Report**

- Bill Webb, CFSI's Executive Director, delivered a report.
- COVID-19 has been challenging for CFSI, but we are looking at hosting our 2022 dinner in-person in Washington, D.C. if possible. The theme will be Sustaining Strength and Resilience in Challenging Times.
- Applications for CFSI's national awards are open.
- We're making some changes to the CFSI Associate's Club program that we hope to unveil soon.
- CFSI and caucus leadership put together a tribute video for the 20th anniversary of 9/11.
- We have been conducting a webinar series and will continue with these to talk about issues of interest to the fire and emergency services.
- We're in the process of relocating our office and going mostly virtual.
- Please help get the word out about the 2022 dinner. We look forward to seeing you there.

### **Legislative Report**

- Michaela Campbell, CFSI's Director of Government Affairs, delivered a report.
- The FY22 appropriations deadline has been pushed to February 18, 2022. CFSI continues to advocate for our priorities, including AFG and SAFER, USFA, urban search and rescue, and more.
- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which became law, includes many provisions of interest to the fire and emergency services, including significant funding for addressing wildland fire issues; authorizing ALERT grants; addressing first responder safety as it pertains to traffic, highway, and motor vehicle emergencies; and more.
- The infrastructure reconciliation bill (Build Back Better) is still being negotiated.
- CFSI was pleased that the Protecting America's First Responders Act became law in November.
- As you are having meetings, please continue to ask members to join the Fire Caucus.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

- **Ethics** – No report
- **Programmatic** – Included in Vice Chair's report
- **Fundraising** – Included in Chair's report.
- **Membership** – No report.
- **Resolutions** – No resolutions for this meeting.

### **New Business**

- Recognition of the retirements of Sara Yerkes, Greg Cade, and Tony O'Neill.
- Seth Statler discussed the release of NFPA's fifth needs assessment.

### **Adjournment**

- Upon motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 3:27 p.m.