

Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes

APPROVED

Date: May 12, 2025 1900 hours

Location: Winchester Hall
1st Floor Meeting Room
12 E. Church Street, Frederick, MD 21701

Attendance:

Battalion 1 (Todd Johnson).....	Present
Battalion 2 (David Fox)	Present
Battalion 3 (Cassie Goodman)	Absent
Battalion 4 (Daniel Moré)	Present
Battalion 5 (Mike Duble)	Present (phone)
Career Rep (Brandon Burke)	Present
Career Rep (Anthony Gramiccioni).....	Present
Citizen Rep (Mark Kirchman)	Present
Citizen Rep (Gunnar Pedersen)	Present

Nonvoting Reps:

Frederick County Executive (Jessica Fitzwater).....	Absent
Jurisdictional Medical Director (Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore)	Present
Fire & Rescue Services (Chief Tom Coe).....	Present
Volunteer Fire & Rescue Assoc. (President James May)	Present
Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services (Deputy Chief Shane Darwick)	Present
Local #3666 (President Stephen Jones)	Present (phone)

Guests: Jeff Scire
Susie Nicol

**Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Meeting
May 12, 2025**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Todd Johnson.

II. ROLL CALL OF VOTING AND NONVOTING MEMBERS:

Absent was:

1. Cassie Goodman, Battalion 3 Representative
2. Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

Jeff Scire (IHC Company 1)

Susie Nicol (BVAR Company 19), Ad Hoc Committee Secretary

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

V. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve March minutes:

Moved by Mark Kirchman

Seconded by Daniel Moré

VOTE: YES: 8 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

VI. REPORTS:

a. Ex-Officio Member Reports

i. Frederick County Executive, Ms. Jessica Fitzwater

As County Executive Fitzwater was absent, no report was given.

ii. Jurisdictional Medical Director, Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore

DFRS

Conducted interviews for second EMS Captain

iii. Fire & Rescue Division Director, Chief Tom Coe

Division Updates

Personnel at Stations 3, 7, and 31 were recognized with EMS Excellence Awards for their successful cardiac arrest resuscitations.

Attended the Chamber of Commerce 2025 Public Safety Awards and the FCVFRA Awards Ceremony.

Provided support to the Frederick Running Festival and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial Service.

The SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) package has been ordered, with installation anticipated in September.

The Digital Vehicle Repeater System is projected to be operational by late summer.

The budget is currently under review by the County Council. DFRS budget initiatives include the addition of a Behavioral Health Supervisor and the replacement of gas meters.

Fuel costs associated with apparatus and emergency generators will be covered by DFRS beginning in FY26.

Recruitment is underway for a new recruit class scheduled to begin in January. Applications will be accepted through May 31st.

EMS Week will be observed from May 18–24, 2025. The theme for this year is “We Care for Everyone.”

As of April 1st, Policy 3.04.01 (Standardized Helmet Colors) was updated to resolve a conflict within the policy. Policy 5.00.04 (Minimum Riding Requirements) was deleted, as its content is now addressed within the Volunteer Rank Structure policy.

iv. **President, FCVFRA, James May**

President May stated that he did not have anything to report.

v. **Local #3666, President, Stephen Jones**

President Jones stated that he did not have anything to report.

b. Committee Reports

i. **Director of Volunteer Fire & Rescue**

Fire/Rescue Work Based Learning Internship Program

Graduation Ceremony will be held at IHC - Company 1, Monday, May 19th at 1100 hours.

Planning Workgroup

The Planning Workgroup met on Tuesday, May 6, 2025. Discussion was held regarding UTV standardization and updates on the budget and CIP projects. A request from United Steam Fire Company was approved for firefighting capabilities of their UTV31.

Fire Police

No report.

Recruitment & Retention

14 students completed Gear Up class that started April 21 and ended May 7th.

PPE Voucher Program

The next PPE fitting for volunteers is June 6th at Logistics from 3:30- 5pm. The last fitting for the year will be on June 18th.

APS Update

Work at Myersville is underway. Next up is HQ and project closeout.

Operations Committee

The Operations Committee met on Tuesday April 15, 2025. Division updates were presented along with committee and workgroup updates. There were no items of business to vote on, nor any new business presented. The next meeting will be an All-Chiefs Meeting on June 10, 2025.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

a. Ad Hoc Committee Report

Co-Chair Anthony Gramiccioni presented the committees report via a PowerPoint presentation (copy attached). Members were encouraged to review the recommendations and comments in preparation for discussion at the June FRAB meeting and vote at the July meeting.

b. Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Representation

Battalion 4 has recommended Michael Wiand as their new FRAB representative.
Battalion 5 representative Mike Duble will submit a letter of intent for reappointment.
Still seeking a Citizen Representative.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion on election of 2025-2026 Chairman and Co-Chair

Chairman Johnson stated that, per the By-laws, a Chair and Co-Chair must be elected at the June meeting. Members interested in either position should contact Leslie via email.

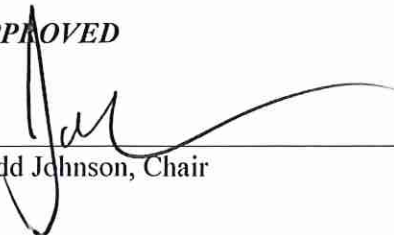
IX. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chief Coe mentioned that a blood drive will be held on May 20th to benefit the Whole Blood Program.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

APPROVED



Todd Johnson, Chair

APPROVED



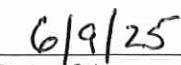
Date of Approval

APPROVED



Gunnar Pedersen, Co-Chair

APPROVED



Date of Approval

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

FRAB AD-HOC Presentation

AGENDA

- Committee makeup
- Assigned tasks & duties
- Recommendations
- Future discussions

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

Committee Makeup

FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD AD-HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- FCVFRA Representatives
 - Jeff Scire (IHC Company 1)
 - Susie Nicol (BVAR Company 19), Secretary
- IAFF Local 3666 Representatives
 - Matt Shaw (DFRS Captain, assigned to Company 3)
 - Tony Gramiccioni (DFRS Lieutenant, assigned to PSTF), Co-Chair
- Citizen Representative
 - Mark Kirchman, Chair

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

Assigned Tasks & Duties

FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD AD-HOC COMMITTEE TASKS

- Members of the Ad-HOC met with Fire Chief Tom Coe and FRAB Chairman Todd Johnson at our kickoff meeting to discuss how the fire services operates here in Frederick County and what happens “behind the scenes”
 - Included a review of the hierarchy of Fire Department Functions- operationally and administratively- to explain how the day-to-day flow operates within Frederick County Government.
 - Discussion about how a policy goes from a proposal to implementation and all the steps it goes through.
 - Provided the County Code, the FRAB Charter, the FRAB Bylaws, a resolution to both the FRAB CHARTER & Bylaws, the Policy Flow chart, the legal opinion from the county attorney regarding FRAB business and supporting documents to assist the Ad-HOC with making decisions.

FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD AD-HOC COMMITTEE MEMBER DUTIES

- Members of the Ad-HOC met in person for every meeting which was hosted at a satellite location to keep business confidential. All members had lengthy discussions about the purpose of the FRAB and its roles and responsibilities within the Division of Fire/Rescue Services.
- Members were also asked to consult their constituents while in recess from meetings to obtain more information for the next meeting.
 - Any information that was collected was presented to the Ad-HOC so we could make a unanimous decision for the recommendations we are proposing.

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

Focus and Scope (Proposed)

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD FRAB AD-HOC FOCUS & SCOPE

The Ad-HOC reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the FRAB currently and have determined the appropriate direction for the focus and scope of this committee:

- All policies proposed at the Operations committee shall be brought forth to the FRAB at the same time as to streamline and make the process more efficient. The FRAB will be able to submit their commentary to the Operations committee for their consideration prior to the voting by the Operations committee.
- Review of all orders and bulletins issued by DFRS that directly affect the general public.
- Begin QA/QI review function of DFRS using data obtained from the DFRS Data Planner to provide recommendations or calls for action to the Fire Chief.
 - Highlight AAR Findings & relevant LODD reports.
 - Determine additional areas that require review and expand as necessary.

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

Recommendations

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Reorganization of the Policy Flow

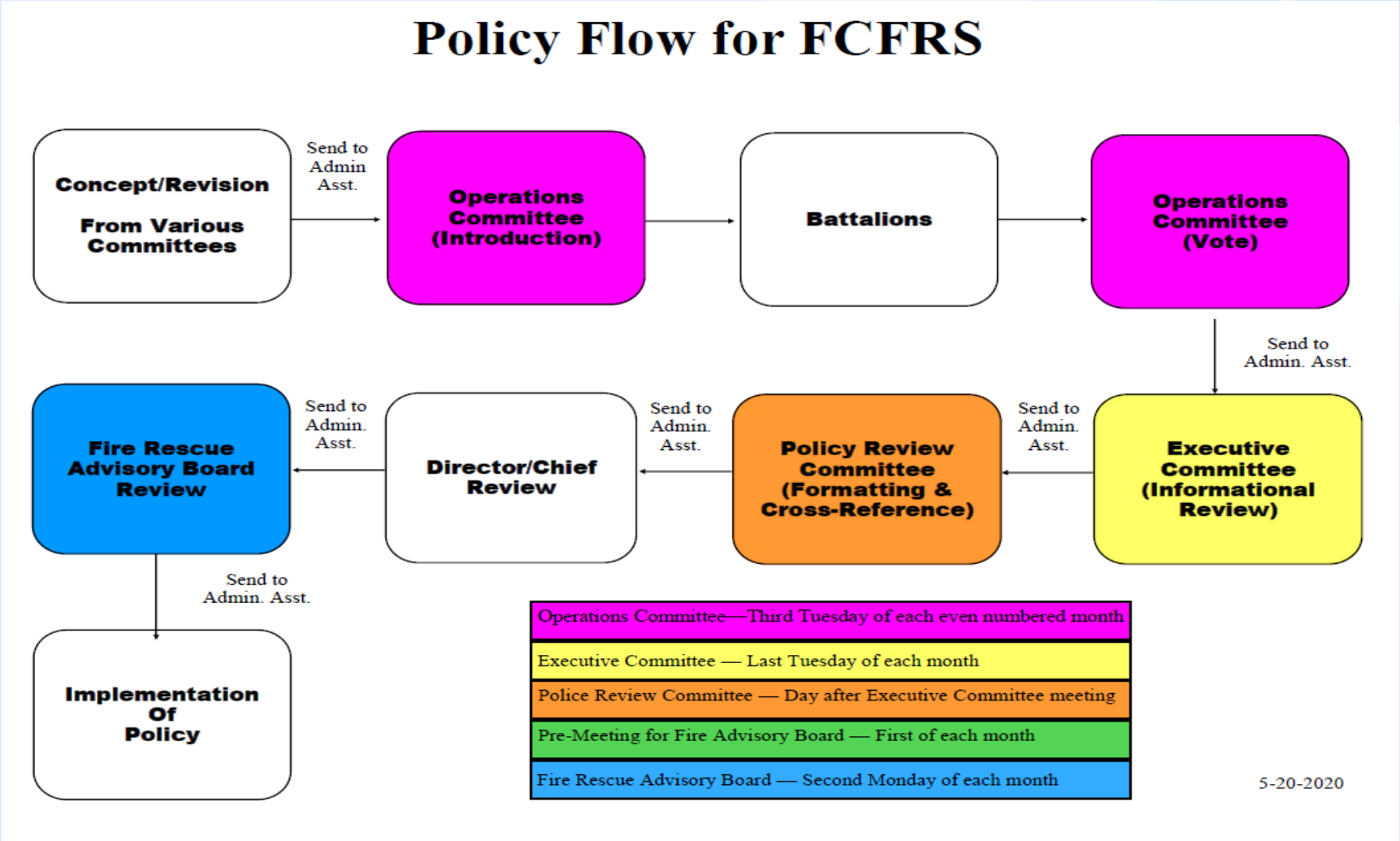
Analysis: Policy implementation with the Division of Fire and Rescue Services is muddled and drawn-out way too long. Members of this committee have either personally been affected by this or have heard the concerns from their constituents. This committee reviewed the current policy flow matrix and are proposing a more streamlined approach to allow for a more efficient operation.

Reference: Policy Flow for FCFRS.

Recommendation: Adoption of the FRAB Ad-HOC recommended Policy Flow for FCFRS

The next slide shows the current flow, the slide immediately after shows the recommended flow

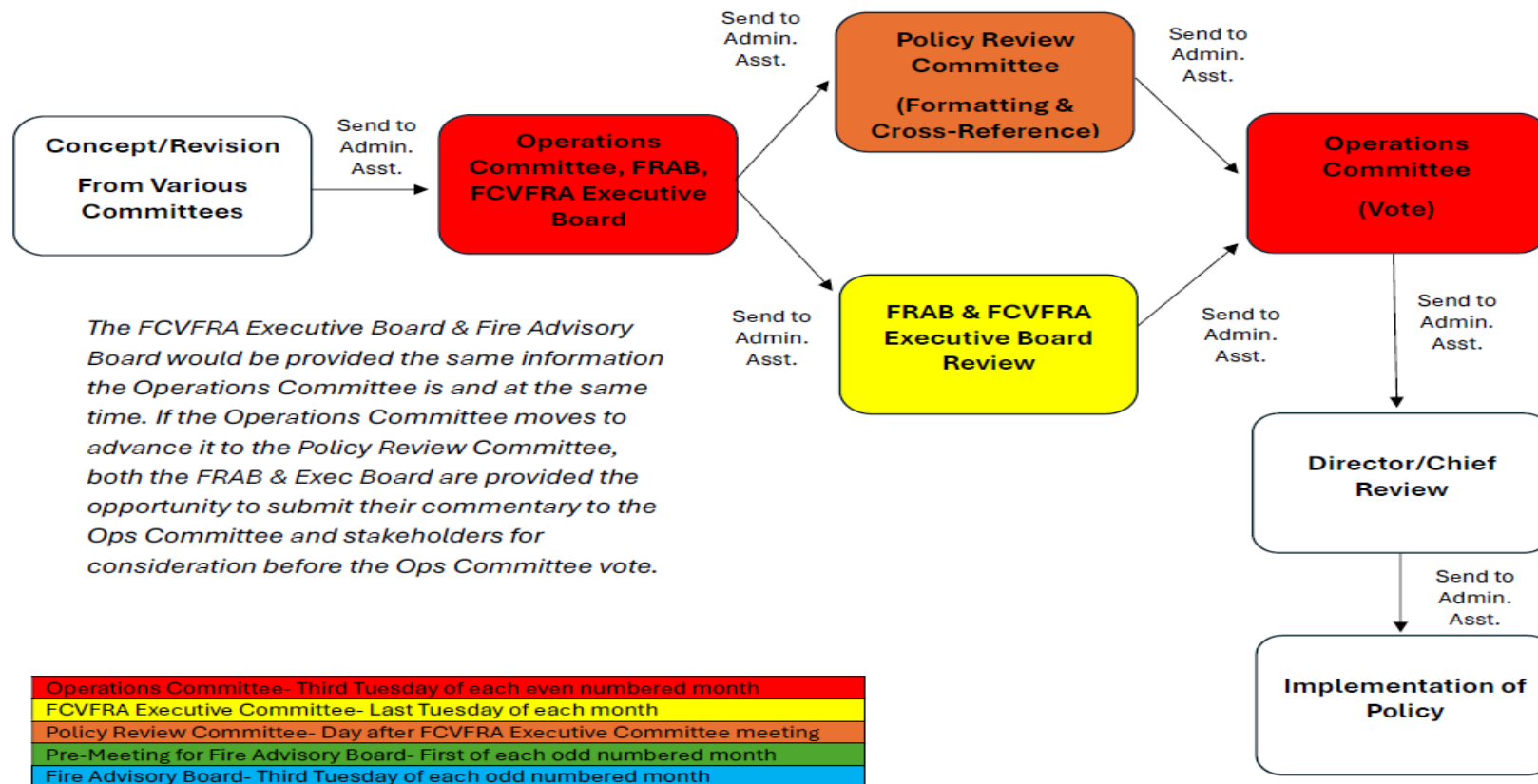
FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS



FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATION FOR CHANGE

Policy Flow for FCFRS



FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Reorganization of the Policy Flow

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Recommendation: Adoption of the FRAB Ad-HOC recommended Policy Flow for FCFRS

No changes on this slide from the initial reading

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Voting requirements of the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board

Analysis: “The purpose of the Advisory Board is to provide a functional management structure that ensures that input from volunteer, career, and citizen stakeholders is provided and considered during the policy making and policy review process and to keep stakeholder representatives engaged in the management of an integrated, countywide fire and rescue system.” A review of the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Charter and Bylaws does not outline any requirements for voting on policies, and the current practice works within an undefined area. An excerpt from the Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Bylaws:

ARTICLE XI - Procedures

1. The Advisory Board shall provide policy review and recommendations to the Director of the DFRS for his/her consideration prior to policy adoption or implementation.

Except for emergency situations, circumstances dictated by law or compulsory regulation, or direction from the County Executive, the Director of the DFRS is obligated to consult with the Advisory Board on matters of systemwide policy, procedures, rules, and regulations.

This committee is of the opinion that the work is done and approved by all the major stakeholders prior to it coming to the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board, and adding the last stamp of approval is an unnecessary step. Should the recommendation changes to the policy flow not be accepted, this recommendation would need to be revisited.

Reference: Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Charter, Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Bylaws.

Recommendation: The Fire and Rescue Advisory Board no longer has a vote on policy changes. The current voting rules would only apply for any elections of officers or changes to the Bylaws.

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Voting requirements of the FCVFRA Executive Board in relation to Policy Review

Analysis: The committee stands behind the fact that the current policy flow is exhaustive and duplicative. It is evident in how long it takes policies to come before the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board and that the additional step of going before the FCVFRA Executive Board for a vote is not necessary. The FCVFRA Executive Board should be briefed on all policy review the same as the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board recommended change is proposed, so they can give their commentary to the Operations Committee to consider. The FCVFRA Executive Board may have the opportunity to overrule the Operations Committee decision for exigent circumstances only (ex. Life safety, financial reasons, etc.)

This committee is of the opinion that the work is done and approved by all the major stakeholders prior to it coming to the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board, and adding the stamp of approval from the FCVFRA Executive Board is an unnecessary step. Should the recommendation changes to the policy flow not be accepted, this recommendation would need to be revisited.

Reference: Policy Flow for FCFRS

Recommendation: The FCVFRA Executive Board no longer has a vote on policy changes. They would have the authority to overrule the decision made by the Operations Committee for exigent circumstances.

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Determine the number of persons on the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board

Analysis: The current organization of the Fire/Rescue Advisory Board is defined multiple times. This is initially defined in Frederick County Code § 1-2-63 (B), “The Fire and Rescue Advisory Board consists of career and citizen representatives; and (1) volunteer representatives elected by the member companies in each battalion...”. It is further defined in the Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Charter, in the Composition section:

1. The Advisory shall consist of a total of fourteen (14) members, nine (9) voting and five (5) nonvoting, all of whom are entitled to participate in all Advisory Board meetings. The nine (9) voting members shall be appointed by the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Council.
2. The nine (9) voting members shall include:
 - Five (5) fire-rescue volunteer representatives
 - Two (2) career firefighter/paramedic representatives
 - Two (2) citizen representatives not affiliated with fire-rescue services

This is also echoed in the Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Bylaws, under Article II- Composition.

As listed in the previous recommendation, if the voting requirements are removed, the committee felt that the composition of members was no longer a relevant issue. Should the recommendation of no longer voting not be accepted, this recommendation would need to be revisited.

Reference: Frederick County Code § 1-2-63, Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Charter.

Recommendation: No change to the committee make up and/or the number of personnel on it.

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Determine how often the meetings need to occur

Analysis: Based on current practices, the Fire/Rescue Advisory Board meets monthly on the second Monday of each month while the Operations committee convenes on the third Tuesday of every even numbered month. Being that the primary goal of the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board is to advise the Fire Chief on policy & procedural changes, the times that the Fire Advisory Board far exceeds the number of meetings needed and it would improve efficiency along with participation if the meetings are scheduled in correlation with the operations committee meetings. There are meetings that occur now that are duplicative and redundant as there was minimal to no change in reports from the previous month.

The committee feels that moving from a monthly meeting on the second Monday of the to a bimonthly meeting on the third Tuesday of each odd numbered month would be beneficial. This would make the third Tuesday of every month be for the major committees of the VFRA.

Reference: Policy Flow for FCFRS

Recommendation: Change meetings to be bi-monthly, on the third Tuesday of each odd numbered month.

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Include the Fire Chief's report in the monthly report

Analysis: Based on current practices, all the reporting committees provide a written report that is then read by the Director of Volunteer Services at the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board meeting. The feedback from current and past members of this committee noted that many of the important happenings of the Division of Fire and Rescue services are reported by the Fire Chief, but there is no written report submitted with the monthly reports for all Fire and Rescue Advisory Board members to review.

The committee understands that things do happen, and the information submitted days before the FRAB meeting will change. For these circumstances, the Fire Chief can provide a verbal report on those items. A follow-up report should be provided to the committee members and/or it be recorded on the previous meeting minutes.

Reference: Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Packets

Recommendation: Require the Fire Chief to submit a written report to be added to the FRAB Packet for all members to review.

FREDERICK COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISORY BOARD

FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

Restructuring of DFRS Upper Management

Analysis: During the kickoff meeting, the Fire Chief explained to the members of the Ad-HOC how the fire department functions, both operationally and administratively, regarding the upper management of DFRS. Based on current practices, Deputy Chief Darwick serves as the Director of the Division of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services and Assistant Chief Polikoff serves as the Deputy Director of the same Division. Operationally, these officers serve the department at the appropriate level. It is defined, clear, and concise the organizations hierarchy. Administratively, Fire Chief Coe and Deputy Chief Darwick are of the same level as Directors of their respective Divisions. This current flow allows for the Director of Volunteer Services to circumvent the Director of Fire and Rescue Services by reporting directly to the County Administrative Officer (CAO) or County Executive. Although it has not caused many issues that the members of this committee are aware of, it presents as disorganized and could lead to continued struggles.

- Frederick County Code § 1-2-62 established the position of the Director of Fire and Rescue Services. Section (B) states, “... The Director of Fire and Rescue Services shall be appointed by the County Executive and shall have overall responsibility and full authority for all operations and administration of the division and its career and volunteer fire, rescue or ambulance corporations...”
- Frederick County Code § 1-2-62.1 created the position of Director of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services. Section (D) states, “... and derive authority from and work in conjunction with the Director and Chief of the Division of Fire and Rescue Services.” Section (E) further states, “The Director of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services shall maintain a direct relationship with the FCVFRA and serve as the conduit between the FCVFRA, the Division of Fire and Rescue Services, and County Government.”

The committee is of the unanimous opinion that the Fire Chief of the Division of Fire and Rescue services should have the full authority of the entire division, and the titles associated with Volunteer Services can be retitled to be a Deputy Director and associated job titles. This would eliminate any concerns outlined by the defined authorities within the County Code that currently work within a grey area. The Deputy Director of Volunteer Services can remain as the conduit between the FCVFRA and DFRS, but all communication to County Administration and the County Executive should go through the Director of Fire and Rescue Services.

Reference: Frederick County Code § 1-2-62, Director of Fire and Rescue Services; Frederick County Code § 1-2-62.1, Director of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services.

Recommendation: Reorganize the Director and Deputy Director of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services to the next associated level as defined by Frederick County Government rules to have the Director of Fire and Rescue Services to have overall operational and administrative authority over career and volunteer members and organizations. This would not change the established rule under Frederick County Code § 1-2-62 (B).

FRAB AD-HOC RECOMMENDATIONS

- No change to the committee makeup and/or number of personnel on it.
- The FRAB becomes an Advisory Board as intended. It no longer has a vote on policy changes.
- The FCVFRA Executive Board provides oversight but functions as an advisory board. It no longer has a vote on policy changes.
 - Operations Committee remains under FCVFRA Executive Board
 - FCVFRA Executive Board may overrule the Operations Committee for exigent circumstances only (ex. Life safety, Financial, etc.)
- The FRAB & FCVFRA Executive Board are afforded the opportunity to be notified of things brought to the table at Operations Committee meetings.
 - FRAB & Executive Board is given the right to submit commentary to the Operations Committee prior to them voting on policy changes or other pertinent decisions.
- The FRAB meetings change to the Third Tuesday of each odd numbered month.
- The Fire Chief must add their typed notes to the written FRAB report for dissemination to the board members review prior to the bi-monthly meeting.
- Remove & restructure the current FCVFRA Director position to be a Deputy Director position. This aligns the FCVFRA structure to match the rest of FCFRS and it places the true authority on the Director/Fire Chief as intended.
 - Restructure the current FCVFRA Deputy Director position to the next tier below to continue to align it with current practices.

FRAB AD-HOC SCOPE/FOCUS

- Bring policies and other pertinent issues to the FRAB & FCVFRA Executive Board the same time as the Operations Committee. Members will be asked for commentary only. Once a consensus opinion has been made, it should then be brought to the Operations Committee for consideration prior to voting on the policy.
- Review of orders/bulletins that affect the public.
- Continue receiving reports from DFRS Chief & VFRA Director.
- Being QA/QI review using data & provide recommendations/ calls for action to the fire chief.
 - Highlight AAR Findings & relevant LODD reports.
 - Build out as necessary.