



ITEM: 6.1

DATE: April 8, 2025

TO: BOARD OF CHIEFS, HEARTLAND FIRE
TRAINING AUTHORITY

FROM: JAY PETTERSON, HEARTLAND FIRE TRAINING
AUTHORITY – TRAINING MANAGER

SUBJECT: HFTA BOARD OF CHIEFS - MEETING MINUTES, MARCH 18, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Chiefs review the meeting minutes, prior to the participating in the April 8, 2025 Special Meeting.

1. HFTA BOC meeting minutes from March 18, 2025

BACKGROUND:

The above HFTA BOC meeting minutes are provided in accordance with Brown Act meeting requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT:

All financial information presented in the HFTA Treasurer/Controller – Financial Report

JAY PETTERSON
HFTA, TRAINING MANAGER



HEARTLAND FIRE TRAINING AUTHORITY

BOARD OF CHIEFS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025

8:00 AM

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Meeting of the Heartland Fire Training Authority Board of Chiefs held this Tuesday; February 4, 2025 was called to order by the HFTA BOC Chair Chief Don Butz at 8:03 am.

2. ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

CHIEFS PRESENT:

BRIAN BOGGELN – Alpine Fire Protection District
KEN KREMENSKY – Barona Fire Protection District
MIKE SIMS – VICE CHAIR – Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Protection District
BENT KOCH – Heartland Fire & Rescue (El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove)
DON BUTZ – CHAIR – Lakeside Fire Protection District
BOB PFOHL – Viejas Fire Department
ANDY LAWLER – San Miguel Fire & Rescue
JUSTIN MATSUSHITA – Santee Fire Department

CHIEFS ABSENT:

NONE

STAFF PRESENT:

JAY PETTERSON – Heartland Fire Training Authority, Facility Manager
CLAY SCHOEN – Heartland Fire Training Authority, Treasurer/Controller
MIKE SMITH – Bonita/Sunnyside Fire Protection District

STAFF ABSENT:

NONE

GUEST PRESENT:

JESSE FOURNIER – Grit First Fire Training

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Jesse Fournier

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE
MARCH 18, 2025 MEETING

MOTION by MATSUSHITA,
SECOND by KOCH to approve
the Agenda of the MARCH 18,
2025 meeting

MOTION CARRIES BY A VOTE OF THOSE PRESENT

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

State Law prohibits taking action or discussion on any item not on the posted agenda. The HFTA Board of Chiefs may briefly respond to statements or questions by persons exercising their public testimony rights. If appropriate, a matter of business may be on a future agenda.

NO PUBLIC COMMENT

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent Items are routine matters enacted by a motion according to the RECOMMENDATION listed below. With the concurrence of the Board of Chiefs, a Chief or person in attendance may request discussion of a Consent Item at this time.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF THE
FEBRUARY 4, 2025 MEETING**

MOTION by SIMS,
SECOND by KREMENSKY to
approve the Minutes of January
7, 2025 special meeting, financial
report and training manager
report as presented

MOTION CARRIES BY A VOTE OF THOSE PRESENT

**APPROVE FINANCIALS REPORTS
AS PRESENTED**

MOTION by SIMS,
SECOND by KREMENSKY to
approve financial reports as
presented

MOTION CARRIES BY A VOTE OF THOSE PRESENT

**APPROVE TRAINING MANAGER
REPORT AS PRESENTED**

MOTION by SIMS,
SECOND by KREMENSKY to

approve training manager report
as presented

MOTION CARRIES BY A VOTE OF THOSE PRESENT

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1 – VENDOR APPROVAL PROCESS AND FACILITY USE AGREEMENT

HFTA training manager presented a PowerPoint covering the step-by-step process of executing a facility use agreement at the Heartland Fire Training Facility. The training manager also provided a detailed overview of the vendor inquiry process. The presentation covered all the details required from initial inquiry throughout the final steps of the process.

Chief Justin Matsushita raised questions after the presentation about a possible lack of communication from the training officer level. His concern is that the Operations Chiefs may not be involved or informed about trainings and classes taking place at the Heartland Fire Training Facility.

Chief Don Butz responded to Chief Justin Matsushita, informing him that the process currently used and historically used does not align with Chief Matsushita's concerns.

Chief Justin Matsushita explained that he believes that there should be better communication between training chiefs and operations chiefs.

Chief Don Butz informed the HFTA BOC group that Lakeside's training chief and operations chief communicate regularly, to make sure each is aware of what the other is doing. Chief Don Butz recommended that each agency ensure that clear communication is happening internally amongst all levels and divisions.

Chief Justin Matsushita asked the HFTA BOC group to act as an oversight of "Non-State Fire Training (SFT) courses". Chief Justin Matsushita requested that new training opportunities, new concepts, and classes be brought to the HFTA BOC's to approve before approving any such training to take place at the Heartland Fire Training Facility.

Chief Justin Matsushita stated that he is in support of trying new things as long as they are not treated as "spoken as" operational policies.

Chief Don Butz suggested that the operations chiefs and training chiefs within each agency should be talking with each other and staying in constant communication; addressing these matters, not the HFTA BOC's.

Chief Bob Pfohl and Chief Mike Sims spoke to the HFTA BOC group and reminded everyone that they voted Chief Don Butz to be the Chair and act as the HFTA BOC liaison to the training officers. Chief Bob Pfohl and Chief Mike Sims

added that they trust Chief Don Butz in his elected position and that if Chief Don Butz does not see an issue with a proposed training that needs to be brought to the HFTA BOC group, that he as the BOC Chair and liaison can determine the course of action taken.

Chief Bent Koch suggested to the HFTA BOC group that the operations chiefs and the training chiefs should stay in constant communication.

Chief Don Butz addressed the HFTA BOC group and offered to act as the initial screening “filter” for all training and classes outside of the State Fire Training (SFT) curriculum. If Chief Don Butz determines that there may be possible concerns with a possible training and/or class he will bring it to the HFTA BOC group for further discussion, as needed.

Chief Bob Pfohl asked the training manager to send a courtesy email to the HFTA BOC group whenever there is a new training or class proposed on the training officer agenda, so the HFTA BOC group can be kept informed.

Chief Andy Lawler informed the HFTA BOC group that he has been made aware of concerns that certain Central Zone personnel are making operational decisions based on podcasts. He asked the group to clarify these concerns.

Chief Justin Matsushita responded and informed the group that his concern is that the Central Zone personnel prioritize life safety.

Chief Matsushita informed the HFTA BOC group that he is concerned that newly promoted personnel are promoting new strategies and tactics, Chief Justin Matsushita does not believe a newly promoted Captain should be teaching strategies and tactics, instead this should be handled by Battalion Chief’s with 10 years of experience at their position.

7.2 – HFTA TRAINING OFFICER APPROVAL PROCESS FOR OUTSIDE VENDORS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

HFTA Training officer Michael Smith (Chair) presented a verbal overview of the training officer process for soliciting and selecting different training and class opportunities. Captain Michael Smith explained to the HFTA BOC group that since he has been the training officer chair, the group has added and utilized an agenda item to specifically identify training and class needs.

Captain Michael Smith informed the HFTA BOC group that the goal of the training officer group is to offer as many trainings and classes as possible, at the Heartland Fire Training Facility.

Captain Michael Smith informed the HFTA BOC group that monthly attendance at the training officer meeting by certain agencies is minimal.

Captain Michael Smith informed the HFTA BOC group that the training officer group hopes that by offering more trainings and classes it will lead to obtaining more training equipment, props and structures at the Heartland Fire Training Facility for each agency to utilize.

Captain Michael Smith informed the HFTA BOC group that the training officers try to vet possible trainings and classes to make sure they align with the zone needs. Captain Michael Smith informed the HFTA BOC group that the training officers take into consideration the operational needs of each agency and try to limit the impact on each agency as much as possible.

Chief Bent Koch informed the HFTA BOC group that the operations division has a mission and the training division has a mission, and requested that each of these divisions communicate regularly to assure they are in alignment. Chief Bent Koch stated that this communication should take place in the stations, in the department and throughout the zone as well as at the training officer meetings and operational meetings.

Chief Justin Matsushita stated that the training officers do a good job but he is concerned that students who attend classes at the Heartland Fire Training Facility will not separate zone and agency policies from independent vendors and their strategies and tactics.

Captain Michael Smith responded, informing the HFTA BOC group that every presentation includes a disclaimer that identifies the content being taught is independent from the Central Zone, the JPA members and the HFTA as a whole. This serves as a reminder to the audience that the content being delivered is not department policy.

Chief Justin Matsushita informed the HFTA BOC group that he is concerned that there is a perception that the HFTA Fire Chief's don't support classes and training opportunities. Chief Justin Matsushita informed the HFTA BOC group that budget and cost drives agency support for personnel attending outside trainings.

7.3 – GRIT FIRST FIRE TRAINING, CURRICLUM OVERVIEW

Grit First Fire Training owner, Jesse Fournier presented a PowerPoint presentation for the HFTA BOC group. Jesse Fournier's presentation provided the following information:

- Background of his work experience
- Marketing materials for the company and classes
- Background of how Grit First Fire Training started
- An overview of how social media can be helpful and harmful
- An overview of the curriculum being taught in the May 2025 class
- Data validation and justification of resources (FSRI, FF Rescue Survey, IFSTA)

Jesse Fournier concluded his presentation by informing the HFTA BOC group that his goal for offering the training is to give back. Jesse Fournier stated that he supports everything the zone wants to achieve and hopes that he can be supported when offering future trainings and classes.

Chief Justin Matsushita asked for Jesse Fournier to review and share the course learning objectives.

Jesse Fournier selected the appropriate slides within his presentation and shared the course learning objectives with the HFTA BOC group.

Chief Andy Lawler responded to Jesse Fournier, asking what Jesse's needs are for the upcoming class. Specifically, operational needs including personnel and apparatus.

Jesse Fournier responded, "sending a few people per agency and some engines would be appreciated."

Chief Don Butz informed the HFTA BOC group that each agency should be careful when supporting vendors.

Chief Don Butz and Chief Andy Lawler informed the HFTA BOC group that each agency should make sure they assure there is no conflict when hiring or aligning with a vendor, to avoid any violations – gift of public funds.

Chief Andy Lawler, Chief Mike Sims, and Chief Don Butz, recommended having a follow up conversation with the focus of hiring and supporting vendors, specifically developing a standard procedure that can be used at the Heartland Fire Training Facility.

Chief Justin Matsushita stated to the HFTA BOC group that he appreciated Jesse Fournier's presentation and that he felt the presentation cleared up a lot of information.

Chief Andy Lawler informed the HFTA BOC group that the term SEARCH has been used on various calls lately. Chief Andy Lawler informed the HFTA BOC group that he is concerned about possible negative impacts from personnel using the acronym during a call.

Chief Justin Matsushita informed the HFTA BOC group that he is concerned that zone personnel attending an outside class may start to question their agency Battalion Chief's.

Chief Bent Koch responded to Chief Justin Matsushita's concerns and stated that the concerns should be addressed internally and holistically.

Chief Andy Lawler recommended to the HFTA BOC group that new vendors present to the HFTA BOC's prior to being approved to teach their content at the Heartland Fire Training Facility. Chief Andy Lawler asked that the HFTA BOC's be involved in the presentations so they can see and observe the content that is being taught. Chief Andy Lawler stated that he wants the HFTA BOC group to stay current on all curriculum being offered to their personnel.

Chief Don Butz asked the HFTA BOC group to reframe and develop new options for future vendors and trainings, outside of standard State Fire Training (SFT) courses and trainings.

Chief Justin Matsushita asked the training manager to create a new process for vendor selection and fee sharing of future classes and training opportunities.

Chief Bent Koch asked the training manager to send the new process options to the sub committee (Chief Bent Koch, Chief Don Butz, & Chief Andy Lawler). Once the sub committee has the options, they will share with the remaining members of the HFTA BOC group.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment of the March 18, 2025 HFTA BOC Meeting at 0930.

CLERK OF THE BOARD POSTED THE AGENDA FOR MARCH 18, 2025 HFTA BOC MEETING IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE LAW AND AGENCY POLICY CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MINUTES TYPED BY: Jay Petterson, Clerk of the Board