



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – Feb 11, 2022

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"The key to success is to focus on goals, not obstacles."

- Unk



The Chief's Desk

As I draft this week's edition, I am sitting in the back of a classroom at the Delta Hotel/Convention Center in Mesa. This is the first week of the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association's (AFCA) new program – Chief Executive Officer Program (CEOP). I have spent the week facilitating, presenting, working on our CON application substantive review response, and driving back and forth to the Capitol visiting with legislators regarding ambulance reform.

The ambulance reform bill, HB2609, is scheduled to be heard in committee Monday, February 4 at 1400. It is one of 20 bills that will be heard in the MAPS committee that day. I have to be at the Capitol earlier Monday morning to meet with one last committee member prior to the hearing. It is going to be a long day.

Based on what we know today, the bill is headed in the right direction. The Governor's office has offered amendments that strengthen the language offered in the initial bill. Having the Governor's office as an advocate for reform is important to the process.

The lobbyist for the fire service has been working the bill from multiple points to ensure legislators understand what the bill does and does not do. As you read last week, there are multiple parts to the bill, however there are two points we have deemed key to making substantive change. First, we propose moving the process from one of litigation to one in which the Bureau of EMS and Director of DHS make the determination of need. Second, and vitally important, we are seeking transparency and consistency in data reporting. For example, a governmental entity reports response times monthly and post the reports publicly. Because we are a governmental entity, our data is public information. However, the data of private companies is not considered public information. In fact, AMR has said that their response data is proprietary and therefore not for public or bureaucratic consumption. Shocking that they wouldn't want to share their data - I wonder why.....

It is impossible to regulate response times and ensure standards are met, when there is no real oversight and/or transparency. Fortunately for us, it seems the members of the Military Affairs and Public Safety Committee (MAPS) understand and have concerns with how the current system is structured. If we get the bill through committee Monday, that will certainly be a big win. However, that is just one of many steps in the legislative process.

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Upcoming Events:

Feb 14: All day at Capitol
Feb 15: Labor Management, Production of second recruitment video starts
Feb 16: Present at Sunup Rotary, tour of CARTA with Rotary, PVEDF Meeting, Meet with community group
Feb 17: MRI, PV Council Meeting

Board Meetings:

Feb 28: Administration
CAFMA – 1700-1830

Commentary: A Year in Review

By: Todd LeDuc

2021 was a year of turmoil and challenge as the fire service navigated the continued daunting points of the global pandemic, COVID-19. Testing, compulsory vaccine mandates, and new variants all continue to make navigation public health and public safety of first responders a challenge.

Amid all this the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) released this December of 2021 their 5th edition of the national fire service needs assessment and on the health and wellness front. It is a “whopper,” to say the least. Let me explain my frame of reference and perspective, having served as an elected member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs Safety, Health & Survival Board; attending the Tampa summits and National Fallen Firefighter Foundations research gatherings; serving on the advisory board of the First Responder Center of Excellence; and now as the chief strategy officer for the Country’s largest provider of public safety physicals. By all accounts, it seems like we have made health and safety inroads in the fire service. Perhaps we have. I was interviewing a well-known fire service icon who worked with Chief Bruno at Phoenix (AZ) Fire Department more than four decades ago who told me he thought we had advanced 75 percent of the way further in regards to health, wellness, and safety than from when he began his career in the fire service.

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How Baltimore’s Great Fire of 1904 reverberates into 2022

By: Christina Tkacik

BALTIMORE — The antique fire engine is draped in black fabric, with a photo of three Baltimore firefighters who died while responding to a blaze Jan. 24.

Two of the firefighters killed that day — Lt. Kelsey Sadler and Kenny Lacayo — were posted at Engine Company 14, formed in 1822 and the same station where this steam pumping engine once belonged.

Edward Burgee, collections technician with the Fire Museum of Maryland and a retired firefighter with the Anne Arundel County Fire Department, said he was gutted by the first responders’ deaths and wanted to honor them accordingly.

“We’re all brothers,” he said. “We lose one, we hear about it, we feel it.”

Fires — whether of 1904 or 2022 — are top of mind at this Lutherville museum, which houses 40 antique fire engines including several that, like the number 14 steam pumping engine, responded to Baltimore’s Great Fire of 1904.

Last weekend, the museum held a virtual event to commemorate the conflagration, which started Feb. 7 and burned through the following day. In previous years, the museum has conducted guided bus tours to show the fire's progress through the city — though those have been on hold during the pandemic.

Burgee and other museum staff members can bring the fire to life and recall its significance for the city's history — and even the nation's.

"The fire itself was a defining moment for the city," said Stephen G. Heaver, the museum director.

Resulting in the destruction of much of the city's downtown and the ruin of 1,500 buildings, it also paved the way for improved fire safety standards, and spurred the redesign and modernization of Baltimore.

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Chief's Desk Continued

CAFMA CON Application Update

Our responses to the substantive review questions from the Bureau of EMS regarding our CON application have been finalized and submitted. The next step in the process is for them to review the additional information we provided to ensure we answered their questions adequately. If not, they will send an additional list of questions to our consultant. If we did provide enough information, we will move on to the final step which is a review of our requested transport rates. Should AMR file as an intervener, we will start working to set hearing dates following the rate review.

A hearing process could take anywhere from 12-24 months. If AMR opts not to intervene, then we would be awarded our CON. Chief Niemynski, Chief Parra, Patty, and Chief Feddema are already in the process of gathering job descriptions, establishing a hiring process, and developing an on-boarding process for the new civilian paramedics and EMTs. We want to be ready to role out our transport division within 90-120 days of being awarded our license to operate.

Remember, our CON application is a completely separate track from ambulance reform. CAFMA obtaining a CON is solely about the health and safety of our citizens. Our focus is supplementation of the 911 system leaving all of the interfacility, the profit center, to the private company/s. Ambulance reform efforts are part of the bigger picture statewide to fix a broken licensing system.

Other Updates

Priority Ambulance was supposed to have a recommendation regarding their CON for our area from the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) on Thursday, February 10. Unfortunately, information that was supposed to be provided by the Bureau to the ALJ in December was somehow delayed and not provided until earlier this week – go figure. This means another 20-day delay. Once the ALJ does render their non-binding recommendation, the Director of the Department of Health Services (DHS) will have 30 days to hand down a final decision.

Should Priority be awarded their CON, it will be months before they are actually able to begin operations in our area. So, still nothing on the horizon that will change the current crisis in our area, but we are making progress.

Our Rescues are currently working their way through fleet, tech services, and the warehouse. I do not have an update regarding our stretchers. We hope to have them in service by the first part of March.

We received our net assessed valuation (NAV) on Thursday the 10th. Both CYFD and CVFD received a 7% increase. One is actually 6.8%, but the county rounded the number. I do not have the dollar amount as of this writing. However, it is important to let you know that approximately \$1.4 million is already spoken for as a result of increases in some of our base expenses e.g. fuel, utilities, increases in every area of insurance, etc.

Chief Tharp will have the dollar amounts plugged into our base budget by Monday morning when senior staff meets to review the budget. We will have a better idea of where we stand after our meeting. Labor/management will meet Tuesday morning to discuss the overall budget. We will schedule a meeting with our wage and benefit committee in the coming weeks.

The first week of the Chief Executive Officer Program (CEOP) seems to be a success, at least from the feedback we've received so far. Our format is more free form and less scripted than other programs we typically attend in the fire service. Yes, we did have an agenda that we followed. However, PPT presentations were significantly limited, shifting the focus to participant engagement, and participant led discussions on the topics. We implemented "Mesa Rules" based on "Monterey Rules" utilized at the Naval Post Graduate School. The idea is that we create a safe environment so participants can speak freely and challenge each other, respectfully, on the topics.

We hoped to have 25 participants for our first offering. Ultimately, we ended up with 35 in the class. Participants will be given a reading assignment they must complete between now and their next session in October. They will have a seminar they have to attend during the AFCA/AFDA Leadership conference in July. Based on this first week, I think we have proof of concept enough to begin planning a 2023 offering of CEOP. We will have CAFMA participants next year – just as a heads up to our senior staff and other chief level officers 😊 Start planning your calendars now.
