

Virginia Fire Services Board

Live Fire Training Structure Committee

Thursday, September 24, 2026

Amazement Square

27 9th Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

10:30 AM

MINUTES

A meeting of the Live Fire Training Structure Committee was held in Lynchburg, Virginia. The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair James Calvert, and a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

James Calvert, Committee Chair – Industry (SARA Title III/OSHA)

Billy Hanks – Local Fire Marshal

Todd King – Virginia Association of Counties

Jerome Williams – Certified Fire Service Instructor

Kevin Duck – Insurance Industry

JM Snell II – Virginia Board of Housing and Community Development

Carla Keesee – Virginia Chapter, International Assoc. of Arson Investigators

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Jess Rodzinski – Virginia Professional Fire Fighters

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT

Theresa Hunter, Chief Administrative Officer

Marc Brade, Chief of Training and Operations

Michael Parris, Deputy Chief of Training and Operations

Spencer Willett, Government Affairs Manager

Greg Cavalli, Policy Analyst

GUESTS PRESENT

Rhett Fleitz Andy Foley

David Hoback Keith Johnson

CHANGES IN THE AGENDA

VDFP Training and Operations Chief Marc Brade stated that he was prepared to present the department's opinion on the changes in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1400 standard. Without objection, this was added to the committee's agenda.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Approval of the minutes of the previous committee meeting (June 2026)

Motion: Hanks **Second:** Williams

Discussion on the Motion: None

Vote: Unanimous

Action: Minutes approved

REPORT FROM VDFP ADMINISTRATION

Theresa Hunter stated that there are five construction projects, four repair projects, and four building renovations underway.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Calvert recognized the president of the local Virginia Professional Fire Fighters chapter William Copes. He thanked the staff for the documentation from the previous meeting of the committee. He also thanked the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) staff for their work on the vendor process, as well as the contributions of Steve Sites.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Live Fire Training Structures Grant Extension – City of Roanoke

Rhett Fleitz, with the City of Roanoke, requested a 3-month extension for the burn building as the city is waiting for the building permit. The city was hopeful the building permit will be received the following week as the deadline is October 17. The city expects the construction to be completed by mid-December. Chair Calvert suggested a 6-month extension, which Fleitz concurred with.

Motion: Approval of the 6-month extension request for the City of Roanoke

Motion: King **Second:** Williams

Discussion on the Motion: None

Vote: Unanimous

Action: Extension approved for six months

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NEW BUSINESS

a. Report from VDFP Training and Operations Chief Marc Brade on NFPA 1400

Brade said that in February the committee asked the agency to review items regarding square footage requirements for different prototypes of burn buildings. Brade said that the committee should maintain requirements that follow the NFPA 1400 standard. Brade said that the square footage requirement added to the policy was specific to the VDFP requirements at that time. He noted that NFPA 1400 does not recommend specific square footage requirements and that the guidelines in that standard are weight-based. Brade recommended implementing NFPA 1400 standards.

JM Snell asked about the sections referenced by Brade. Board Clerk Willett said that in the board policy, the sections mentioned by Brade referenced square footage requirements in burn rooms and Willett explained those requirements to the committee. Willett said that the committee had previously asked the agency for an opinion on square footage requirements and whether they were still needed because it is not governed by NFPA 1400. Snell said that he believed square footage requirements were already in effect at the time of the April meeting and were not the subject of proposed changes.

Chief Michael Parris said that there was discussion of square footage requirements as it pertained to prefabricated structures, such as containers, which do not meet the square footage requirements in the policy. He said that could restrict the options for localities. Committee Chair Calvert suggested that the committee review NFPA 1400 and in the future when receiving a design or proposal that does not meet the requirements of the current policy the Board can determine whether to grant an exception. Calvert stated this had been done in the past. Parris clarified that the agency position is to conform to NFPA 1400's language, which does not include a square footage requirement and allows for a locality to design and build what is needed for the training environment. He said the decisions on the size of rooms in the facility are driven by the needs of the locality and training requirements.

Willett clarified that the committee asked the Training and Operations Branch whether the square footage requirement in the policy is required to complete training. Parris said that meeting the square footage requirement is not required if a locality complies with NFPA 1400. Calvert agreed with Parris and proposed that the committee review NFPA 1400 versus their own policy. Snell motioned to accept the report from VDFP Training and Operations and moved to add this as an agenda item for a vote at the next committee meeting.

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Motion: To accept the Training and Operations verbal report and add consideration of square footage as an action item at the next meeting

Motion: Snell **Second:** Duck

Discussion on the Motion: None

Vote: Unanimous

Action: Verbal report accepted and action item approved to be added to the next meeting agenda

Board Clerk Willett added that there is a question of whether the program is primarily for new construction or the repair of existing structures. Policy states that the service life of these structures is 20 years. Willett emphasizes that as the agency builds new structures, there is the possibility of outpacing the funding available. Calvert talked about the differences between Class A and Class B buildings and intends to share documentation with the Clerk for discussion at the next committee meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Clerk of the Committee
Spencer Willett

Minutes completed by Joseph Crosby

Documents related to this meeting of the Virginia Fire Services Board may be requested by contacting the Government Affairs Division by emailing PolicyOffice@vdfp.virginia.gov