

MFSA Scholarship Committee Meeting Minutes

The Maryland State Firemen's Association Scholarship Committee meeting convened on Tuesday November 16, 2004 at 4:00 pm via conference call.

Members of the Committee in attendance:

Chairman Ron Siarnicki
James L. Deskins
Robert W. Ryan
George D. Kennett
Matt Stevens
Special Liaison, Brenda Foster Johnson

Special Guests:

President Robert Jacobs
1st Vice President Lee Sachs

Members of the Committee excused:

William Olsen
Richard Steinberg
Faron Taylor
LAMSFA Liaison, Margaret Woltz
Special Liaison, James E. Milke

Members of the Committee absent:

Vice Chair Dale Fishack, Jr.
Pete Piringer
Douglas Simpkins, Jr.
Special Liaison, Dwight Polk

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM via telephone conference by Chairman Siarnicki. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the call and commented how appreciative he was that the Committee could join in the meeting to accomplish Committee business. President Jacobs and 1st Vice President Lee Sachs were acknowledged as attending the meeting. They both brought greetings from members and leaders of the organization. President Jacobs expressed his desire to discuss the State of Maryland Tuition Remission issue facing the Association this year. First Vice President Sachs commended the Committee for all the successes since last year.

The Chairman began his report on activities that have transpired since the last Committee meeting and gave a detailed report of the issues surrounding the new payment process that was utilized for this education cycle. First Vice President Sachs advised the Treasurer reported the Committee had expended \$1,000 more than collected for scholarships this year; however it was reported by the President that there is an outstanding pledge due to the association to cover this expenditure. The Chairman went on to explain all that transpired with the payment process this year that included a special meeting with the MSFA Treasurer and the President to balance the funding sources that the Committee had secured for this payment cycle. As a result of the

meeting in Union Bridge, the Treasurer released all of the scholarship funds to the various institutions that required student payments. All payments for the year have been made and this cycle is now complete.

The Chairman then briefed the Committee on the Legislation Proposal addressing issues raised last year by Special Liaison Dr Jim Milke concerning the Tuition Remission Program for the Maryland State Higher Education Commission. The legislation was proposed by Delegate Brian Moe but failed to get out of Committee last year. President Jacobs advised that he has already spoken to Delegate Moe about sponsoring the legislation again this year and the Chairman advised that he and Dr. Milke have already requested a meeting with the Maryland State Higher Education Commission to discuss their support of the bill again this year. President Jacobs instructed the chair to prepare and submit a briefing sheet on the proposed legislation.

Committee Member Jim Deskins added that the Committee should work with each of the County Associations to garnish support of the bill. First Vice President Sachs advised that the Legislative Committee will disseminate the information to each of the legislative representatives for the associations across the state. This discussion concluded any old business items on the agenda for this meeting.

The Chairman opened the floor for new business. There was discussion concerning the Committee addressing the issue of providing MSFA Scholarship monies to students that are entitled to submit to the State of Maryland for Tuition Remission. It was discussed that this could be considered a double payment for the same service and that the Committee may wish to examine its payment policy related to this. Matt Stevens commented that the scholarship he received from the Association really helped him bridge the gap between remission payments.

Committee Member Robert Ryan added that the Committee should start looking at the financial needs of the students and it was commented that questions related to financial need have been added to the 2005 Scholarship application posted on line. First Vice President Sachs commented he supported the Committee looking at something different in relation to a student that is entitled to the remission so that the Committee could support more students with the same amount of available funds. Jim Deskins expressed his concerns with the scholarship Committee not being able to support students throughout their four or five year education cycle. This issue has been discussed by the Committee before, however no action was taken. Jim went on to state that maybe the Committee should look at reduced scholarship amounts in the out years once the remission system kicks in for the students.

President Jacobs expressed his desires to have the Committee look at this issue and see if it can find a way to spread the available funds out in an equitable way taking into consideration the monies that are made available through the remission program. Bob Ryan added that maybe the Committee should look at expanding the use of the monies provided by the MSFA to include books, fees and lodging needs. President Jacobs instructed the Committee to continue working on this issue and to try and look at the need that each student has. The issue was tabled by the Chairman for further discussion at the next Committee meeting.

The Chairman briefed the Committee on the success of the Past President Awards that were secured this year and the need to identify more sponsors for this program. Work has begun on three new awards and the calls are currently being made to find supporters of the Scholarship program. The Chairman added that each Committee member should begin looking at possible funding sources to support the program and to look at new ways to bring monies into the treasury. The Chairman suggested the Committee should open up the recognition program beyond the Past Presidents to include significant members of the State Fire Service that have contributed to our success. President Jacobs suggested that the Committee look at some of the fire companies in the state to give smaller amounts to support the scholarship program next year. He also suggested that the Maryland Fire Chiefs Association be contacted to see if they will sponsor a Chief's Award.

First Vice President Sachs advised that the Scholarship Committee needs to look at trappable resources to support their mission and to be cognizant of the existence of the MSFA Foundation and the State Memorial Group that are also looking for financial assistance. He suggested the Committee move cautiously because the MSFA parent organization may be conducting some fundraising initiatives next year as well if current and proposed funding sources dry up at the state level. President Jacobs commented that the Committee should look for individuals, families and organization that wish to contribute to educational programs to support the scholarships and that the MSFA Foundation is not yet up and running. Presidents Jacobs and Sachs both agreed that their needs to be a meeting conducted soon to get the Foundation planning underway and that most likely no funding will be made available for the Scholarship Committee in the upcoming award cycle by this entity. The Committee will have to find its needed funds itself for the 2005 cycle. First Vice President Sachs added that it is the intent of the Foundation's By-Laws to have the Scholarship Committee rolled under the umbrella of the Foundation.

Jim Deskins asked if any monies were being made available to the Scholarship Committee from the MasterCard arrangement entered into by the MSFA. President Jacobs advised no. Bob Ryan added that the Committee needs to look at another way of giving opportunities for our supporters and that the Committee needs to locate the funds for this cycle, resulting in a discussion of what funding sources are already in place for the next year. The Chairman reported that all of last year's funding sources were anticipated to be in place for this year and that the carryover for 2004 will help fill the budget gap. First Vice President Sachs advised that he was not sure of a budget carryover. The Chairman reviewed the Committee's budget documents for the last cycle which did reflect a carry over. Committee Member George Kennett advised that the minutes from the May meeting reflect a \$10,000 carryover by the Committee. President Sachs again advised that he thought no carry over existed. The Chairman asked that a meeting be convened with the Presidents, The Association Treasure and the Chairman Emeritus of the Scholarship Committee to review the account ledgers. Both Presidents agreed to make this happen.

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Ladies Auxiliary had passed a motion at the Ocean City Convention this year to raise the amount of support they are providing to the Scholarship Committee but that the motion was ruled unconstitutional at their Spring Conference. The Ladies Auxiliary will be working to resolve this issue but have made the full

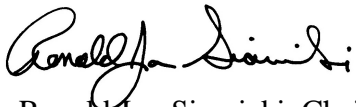
pledge payment as committed to in Ocean City. The Chairman will continue to work with the Ladies Auxiliary to resolve this issue.

The next meeting of the Committee will be scheduled for the first week of February 2005 and will again be held by conference call. The May meeting for the Committee will be held in person at the College Park Fire Station so that the Committee may review the 2005 scholarship applications. The minutes from the previous meeting held in Ocean City during the Convention were approved by the Committee via a motion by Jim Deskins and a second by Brenda Foster Johnson.

First Vice President Sachs congratulated the Committee for another successful meeting and the positive outcomes from the work accomplished. He acknowledged the need to find more funding for scholarship and for the many other worthy initiatives of the Association.

Having no further business to discuss the meeting concluded at 5:20 PM.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald Jon Siarnicki". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ronald Jon Siarnicki, Chair