

Virginia Association of First Responders, Board of Governors
Meeting October 4, 2025

Meeting called to order by **President Craig** at 09:00

Invocation by **Chaplain Kenneth Williams**

Pledge led by **Vice President Andy Neagle**

60 Agencies signed in, and voting/30 life members signed in to vote (quorum declared).

Kevin Dillard presented the new VAFR video to promote the new association and information on moving forward.

Minutes from previous meeting were approved as presented.

Ken Morgan Parliamentarian – 12 proposed by laws changes, you have written copies. Rebranding by laws changes. Minimal changes to article 1 & 2 to DBA and rebranding. Came from committee, all in favor no opposition to by law change number 1.

Eleven other items need to be changed. **Ken Morgan** presented #2 Consolidation of Junior Association into senior association. Juniors become members of VAFR and no dues etc. Change #2 adds phrase and deletes junior association. President will be able to appoint one member to the Board of Directors from the youth or young members (formerly juniors).

#3 & #4 Life Membership and Hall of Fame Changes.

#5 Agency membership approval and who does that approval.

Greg Burton from Covington Rescue Squad brought up opposition to changing District meetings to 2 instead of 4 meetings per year. District 1 is thriving we go out and reach

people. We worked with District 6, and they are now thriving. #11 has to do with the changes in district meetings which came from District VPS. All in favor of number 11 change. #11 is defeated at vote it does not go forward.

#2-12 excluding number 11, no changes made to this year's hall of fame submissions. Approval of changes 2-12 excluding 11. All are approved except #11.

Executive Director Bish – discussed the rebranding and how quickly things are moving forward, talked about current and new office staff, working trying to get CE hours throughout the Commonwealth. Currently we are collaborating with Community Colleges trying to get programs in the colleges. Talking to course coordinators in the colleges about our programs. Doug, Gary, and I completed the 2025 EVOC update. Worked in great partnership with VDFP. Chris Craft and I are working on using Fort Pickett to use the property for training they are very willing to collaborate with us. 2025 rescue college group gave a challenge coin to all participants at rescue college. This year decided to do fund raiser for rescue college 2026, moose lodges, and clubs I sent letters to all of them as of now have raised \$35,116 for rescue college 2026, I also applied for a grant for free registration for rescue college unsure if we will get that grant. Back a year and a half or two years ago we were challenged with the new drug kit issues. Our association had two people working on this work group. Bish presented a certificate to Kim Craig for her work on the workgroup to assist agencies with the drug box transition. We assisted more than 500 agencies with this transition. In the past year we have lost a lot of members of VAVRS and a lot of friends. Ask audience for 15 secs to close eyes and think about who has done more for

them and for the association and who are no longer with us.
Thanks to everyone.

Vice President Andy Neagle – report sent in 3-4 weeks ago. Back in Natural Bridge we finished survey. Results from survey we realize that we need to look at training programs and training is our biggest thing. We need training on extrication concerning large trucks. Be more proactive in our training classes. Do a better job of advertising the classes. Recently I met with Gary as he went over AMO with Kissie and Doug. Training is the main focus of this organization. Rescue College was a success with 100 more attendees than last year. Our training has increased. Issue of district restructuring the bylaw change was one of their suggestions that we have addressed already. There have been recommendations to redraw boundaries of districts. We have 8 districts right now, suggestions to have in person meetings but also have them available on zoom. District 10 is already doing that. Develop a kit for district officers to have to include information for the officers to do their job. We need to train people and let them know what their job requires and entails and what is expected of them. Hire a marketing firm to promote the association. Chair of two committees HR Committee – loss of Brian Billheimer, had to hire people. We hired new training coordinator with 10 applicants. Executive Director and President did interviews and hired Doug Eberhart. We had 7 applications for Kissies' position we hired Kissie. Membership committee is made up of District VP's that committee has been busy all year.

Secretary Bryant Skeen- it has been a busy year learning the job of secretary. Thanks to Gary Dalton, Kevin Dillard, and Ken Morgan for all their help. I have been collaborating with the juniors on events. If anyone needs anything let me know.

Treasurer Tarry Pribble – page 14, financial statements, proposed budget for Virginia Association of First Responders. Any questions on financial statement (none). Management report move on to books for August. No questions about books for August. Proposed budget is the first VAFR budget, done finance committee since 1997, budget that year went over one million dollars. This year we are close to 1 million dollars we are trying to move forward. We are doing more for our members. Increase of around 150k from last year's budget. The proposed budget comes from committee. No second needed. All in favor of budget with no opposition, the Board of Governors approved the budget. Last thing I am going to do is help out successor, vouchers for this convention we need itemized receipts. Send it in so we can get it processed we do not accept photos of receipts. Officers may not have photos of expense vouchers. No questions from audience.

Convention Chairman Scott Davis- thanks for being here, last year 254 this year 337 registered for convention. This is a training event with business meetings. Presented a gift to President Craig from the convention committee. Next year's spring meeting will be March 21, 2026. It will be a training meeting on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. It will be at Doubletree in Charlottesville, VA. This will be a training event with a business meeting on Saturday. Rebranding there have been tons of great comments on the rebrand. Fire Safety is producing our new logo on items. Kevin and Steve have done a lot of work. The video is great super

excited about where we are going. The Memorial Service honored twenty-nine who died in line of duty. The next Memorial Service will be on July 18, 2026, in Crystal City.

Chaplain Ken Williams – privilege to serve as chaplain, memorial service thanks to Eddy Ann and Junior for helping with the memorial service. Thanks to Harrisonburg for using the bell for the memorial service today.

Training Wayne Myers – been busy this year getting classes scheduled, need any help let him know.

Doug Eberhart Training Coordinator – lot of change in the office with the loss of Brian, now can-do DMV driver improvement points. We are now able to do CEU hours with OEMS. Thanks to Wayne for assistance. 335 courses this year from VAFR. EVOC Update is finalized with fire programs; we are making a schedule of updates. Future projects drone program; Tarry talked about the drone program going forward. We are also looking for a new animal first aid class.

Immediate past president Wesley Melson – awarding \$5000 in scholarships this afternoon, adding new scholarships this next year Ann Gwaltney, and Brian Billheimer scholarships. Honor to serve as president and immediate past president. I will help in anyway.

Parliamentarian Ken Morgan

Parliamentarian Emeritus J.C. Phillips – I have worked with Ken as a member of bylaws committee.

Editor Gary Dalton – pleasure to serve as editor; recognize Jeff Grimm for doing door prizes, great gifts TV to cooler to discounts

at various places. In your booklet there are directions on how to download the new app to a smartphone or iPhone. If you need help send me an email and I will help you get the new app. If you want anything placed on the website, send me information to post. There is information on the app for upcoming meetings and dates etc. Thanks for support for lifeline and website. Gary presented cooler prize to Greg Burton.

Steve Southworth Chief Rescue Officer – transition on change to Virginia Association of First Responders, Kevin Dillard, Scott Davis, John Craig, if you ever need resources call Kevin or Scott. Changes are good, recognized EMS, fire, and law enforcement. There will be training classes for all entities and adding training to include 911 telecommunications, and mental health response. Disaster Team response is moving forward. Thanked Jeff Grimm for all the hard work in his district.

District 1 Jeff Grimm – I have traveled 5118 miles representing District 1, our next meeting is Oct. 26, 2025, at Stanton Augusta Rescue Squad, I have served on rescue college committee, served on convention committee, new district officer training program. Thank district and home squad for helping him in being district vice president. Thanks to Doris Hinkle for helping with door prizes, thanks to Bubby, John, and Kim for help.

District 2 – No officer reports

District 3 Vice President Kathy Eubank –educational programs for all folks at convention, incoming District 3 Vice President, discussed upcoming meetings discussed upcoming training. Attendance is 20 on average, 25 max. District 8 folks feel like they do not have a home. I will be meeting with agencies to get

involved. Next meeting is at Holly Grove first Saturday in November. Training at 4 and meeting and 5 with dinner.

District 5 Vice President Woody Conner – attended all meetings, fill in for Stratton on two nominating committee zoom meetings. Campbell Co in May, also meeting in July, next weekend Victoria Fire and Rescue truck and tractor pull.

District 6 Vice President Daniel Murphy – last meeting was August 17 at Cave Spring 16 in attendance 7 agencies. I have been making calls for recruitment and fund-raising discussions. Mental health for first responder training Nov. 16 meeting at Scruggs at 1300 lunch will be provided.

District 7 Vice President Ted Harris – thanks to committee for excellent conference. Working with Romney Smith, agencies are being turned from local agencies to municipal agencies.

District 10 Vice President Byron Andrews – represented the northern part of the state we had two meetings one in May and one in August at Rock Hill rescue squad. 35 to 40 members were present. Patricia Copeland new Vice President David Garland new alt Vice President.

District 9 Vice President Tim Salyers – last meeting in July next Oct. 18 at 9a.m. at Bonanza in Lebanon hosted by Cleveland.

Dr. Maria Beerman-Foat Director OEMS – good morning VAFR, update from OEMS – introducing new Deputy Director Wayne Perry, served as flight medic, training coordinator, deep understanding of challenges that shape ems. Public health outreach initiatives here in Virginia. Continue building a progressive and unified future for emergency medical services.

Regional Councils, regions will be called OEMS regions and a number. The goal is to have all regional council contracts to start on Jan 1, 2026. Story about perfect EMS calls. Change is hard and scary, but EMS system needs to be the same in all of Virginia. Have a growth mindset. In many ways we are building the plane while we are flying it. OEMS is evolving as VAVRS is. We must work with ingenuity, and progress. Questions?

Gov. EMS Advisory Board Kim Craig – congrats to Wayne Perry, joy to get to know Dr. Maria Beerman-Foat, fun to be around making great changes. Great support to VAFR. Kevin Dillard great support for OEMS, and system in general. Lots going on at advisory board, bylaws proposals taking place, changes at advisory board level, change to committee structure. Recent changes are promising, administrative coordinator, patient care coordinator, trauma systems coordinator, executive committee, financial assistance review committee. Committee structure changes, GOVS ems awards program went from 12 to 8. It's important how we recognize our ems providers. Nominating committee at advisory board, in Nov election of officers and chairs. Recommendations for new chairperson Dr. Paul Ferrada, changes to rules and regs. All committees have been sent rules changes for review. Been working on since 2017, many changes have been made with how we practice EMS.

Bruce Stratton – met with Governor's Advisory Board, makeup of advisory board will be changed significantly. Kim will be taking a leadership role in that. I chaired a legislative committee; Ed Rhodes is an asset to that committee. Appreciate Johns help and ability to serve on this committee. Thanks to Gary Dalton for being

secretary for legislative committee. Thanks to Bubby and his whole staff. Kevin Dillard helps on multiple committees.

Nominating Committee Kevin Dillard Chair-, slate of officers and eligible candidates for officers today. President Andy Neagle, Vice President Bryant Skeen, Secretary Kenneth Williams, Treasurer Steven Reese, Training Officer Chris Craft, Chaplain Nick Brown. See list in booklet for candidates qualified by nominating committee. Two other candidates qualified to run for office Vice President Jeff Grimm, and Secretary Byron Andrews. Nominations for Nick Brown. Nomination for chaplain Nick Brown motion to close nominations closed.

Floor open for candidates to speak before elections. Vice President candidates Bryant Skeen, and Jeff Grimm. Secretary candidates Ken Williams, and Byron Andrews.

60 agencies voting/30 officers and life members, 90 total voters.

Fran Phillips spoke for Bryant Skeen; Ruth Johnson spoke for Bryant Skeen for the office of Vice President.

Scott Davis spoke for Jeff Grimm; Kim Craig spoke for Jeff Grimm for the office of Vice President.

Vote for Office of Vice President:

Ken Hillard spoke for Ken Williams for secretary; Mary Langford Forest View spoke for Ken Williams for the office of Secretary.

Spoke for Byron Andrews: None.

Election Results: Jeff Grimm elected Vice President, and Ken Williams elected Secretary.

New District Vice Presidents approved by BOG.

Secretary casts unanimous ballots for all unapproved offices. Motion made by Scott Davis, second by Ken Morgan. Motion carried with no opposition.

Legislative Advisor Ed Rhodes – see provided report. Over past 6 months I have attended more than 90 meetings I have attended. Discussions about the future of drone programs. Applications for grant funds and grants from DCJS website. Tarry Pribble 75-80% of current drones are from China. We will be applying for grant funding for a drone.

Kelley Snell AVAVRS –

Christopher Skeen VAJVRS Vice President – talked about moving forward, weird new steps for association of juniors, and information on the website if anyone needs anything contact him.

Alfred Smith Junior Advisor – thanks for all help in the past, and if anyone needs anything let him know.

Rescue College Chairman Ken Morgan – Rescue College thanks to the committee for their work on rescue college. Mac McGuire scholarship for rescue college. Apply for the upcoming year. June 12-22, 2026, Rescue College, looking at adding additional classes. Registration is up from 75 to 100 dollars.

Life Membership Ken Morgan – Steve, Jimmy, Connie, life members elect members of the committee. New Life Members – 2 suggestions for life members number 148, Citizens Rescue Squad in 1998 and works for Stanton Augusta Frank Smith works tirelessly on rescue college. Recommendation for **Frank Smith** as a new member all in favor, number 149 been involved since 1998

in Fredericksburg, and now known for work and leadership on kid's camp Gail Rice. All in favor of **Gail Rice** for life membership. Both nominees were approved for life membership.

Hall of Fame Kevin Dillard– nominee Kim Craig all in favor no opposed, Rob Logan second nominee all in favor no opposition.

Daniel Murphy EMS exchange with **Brandon Boguss** presentation on history of ems exchange program, and current trends since 1995. Presentation on their trip to Germany and what they did during the exchange to Germany.

AVAVRS President Kelley Snell-13 agencies represented today. 11 auxiliaries sent reports on what they spent on their squad. Donated \$45,190.12 to their squads and stations. I will be the immediate past president, we wish you well and look forward to working with you.

Death Benefit Committee Greg Burton– talked about plan and benefit is \$1250 per member death. If not part of the plan encourages you to join the death benefit plan. Has someone from your agency checked what is on file with the office for your plan? Check beneficiary information on file at the office.

Camporee Chairman Chris Craft- the camporee next year will be in Natural Bridge at Jellystone.

Unfinished business: None

New Business: None

Motion to adjourn meeting adjourned by President John Craig.