

Illinois Fire Chiefs Association Strategic Plan 2022-2023



ILLINOIS FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN

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Accepted/approved by vote May 11,2022 at the IFCA Board Meeting held in East Peoria Illinois

Illinois Fire Chiefs Association

Executive Board

Chief John Kachanuk, President

Chief Richard Mikel, First Vice President

Chief Tom Styczynski, Second Vice President

Chief Donald Shoefflin, Immediate President

Chief Jim Grady (retired) Executive Director

Directors

Chief Tom Deegan (retired) ♦ Chief Chad Hoefle ♦ Chief Mick Humer

Chief Tracy Kenny ♦ Chief Brian Lambel ♦ Chief Al Yancey

IAFC-GLD Representative Division Chief Matt Knott

Area Representatives

Chief Kent Adams ♦ Chief Sid Aurand ♦ Deputy Chief Nick Asta ♦ Chief Steve Bennett

Chief Rich Evans Jr. ♦ Chief Rudy Horist ♦ Deputy Chief Craig Hanson

Fire Commissioner Annette Nance- Holt ♦ Assistant Chief Gregory Hurd

Chief James Keener ♦ Chief John Knapp ♦ Chief Keith Krestan ♦ Chief Brian Kolosh

Chief Chuck Lauss ♦ Chief Casey Rexroat ♦ Chief Steve Salrin

Chief Jim Walters ♦ Chief James Whiteford ♦ Chief John Winters

IFCA Staff

Maureen Griseto ♦ David Slivinski ♦ John Buckley Jr.

Strategic Plan Recognition

The IFCA strategic plan is a working document that is intended to be used not only as a reflection of what the association represents but also a summary of present and future goals, initiatives and direction for both short and long-term initiatives.

This document is designed to be updated as necessary as the association changes its focus and potential direction over time. This document shall be used as a guiding tool for the association and as a means of providing communication and transparency for its membership, partners and associates.

Executive Director Summary:

March 2022

Greetings As Executive Director of the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association it is my honor and a privilege to serve the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. Over the years our association has grown building upon values such as professionalism, integrity, respect, loyalty optimism just to name a few. This past year 2021, improved as we “got together” for our symposium, golf outing and conference, but we continued to test the strength, endurance and in many ways the personality of our organization along with our members. The pandemic caused so many events to be cancelled with daily life altered in many ways, but we are returning stronger!

The IFCA Team looked at this to make some changes in how we operate, what we can do better, and what we can do to enhance our operations as well as delivery of services. Our assessment team developed programs that were a hybrid mix of traditional and virtual promotional assessments. They are now writing our own exams for assessments and expanding outside the State of Illinois. Forward positive progress.

We looked at our membership and what we can do to provide better more detailed information, so we switched over to MemberClicks for membership information, billing and promoting classes for the association and foundation. We have also expanded the scope of involvement through Government Accounting partnered with James Howard & Associates with a more comprehensive and robust financial posture that tracks all funds for both entities and with some additional enhancements his team will work closer with our in tracking all aspects of registration, billings, receivables and those that perhaps just forgot to process dues or class payment. The final area I am addressing with vigor is past due billing & collections, this is an all hands-on chore set for 2022 with anticipation of some small yet positive changes.

We have enhanced our partnerships with all Fire Service members but perhaps the strongest has been with the Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts, The Fire Service Institute and the Office of the State Fire Marshal. Internally our Education / Research Foundation, Our Administrative Professionals and our Volunteers section continue to grow and expand not only membership but in active involvement.

As we move forward over, the next three years I have a vision of increasing delivery of classes at the officer level, promoting sessions for new chief officers as we are seeing retirements and movements within organizations, continued work on our internal reporting systems at all levels of communications and information management, some changes to the way we use to do things – offer some alternatives if you will.

My goal five years ago was enhancing our reputation, ensuring that back up plans are in place and that we continue to move forward – together as a Team that we described at the We-Chiefs.

The mission will still be stability, professionalism and keeping in the forefront of today’s emergency services world. We will do that, and we will deliver. The IFCA is a strong organization that in my estimation will continue to enhance The Fire Service not only in Illinois and the Great Lakes, but in the country.

Respectfully Submitted

James M. Grady III

James M. Grady III
Executive Director IFCA



ILLINOIS FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Dedicated to excellence in the Fire Service

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Phone (847) 966- 0732 ▪ FAX (847) 966- 0782
Website: **www: Illinoisfirechiefs.org**

Chief John Kachanuk IFCA President 2021-2022

Havana Fire Department

March 2022

Members of the IFCA:

Recently, Members of the Executive Board, Committee Chairs and Stakeholders within our organization reviewed our strategic plan for the upcoming year. The idea behind the 2022 planning session was to have more involvement from the membership by way of a survey through our area representative and directors along with seeking input from our IFCA committees. What I can honestly say is this, the plan worked.

Several key issues were addressed where, EMS\VCOC recruitment and retention at all classifications within the fire service from volunteer to career, Communications from the Presidents down to the Membership, Assessment services on where we have been and where some opportunities for expansion exist, the changes within our membership service and information collection for all a greater use for all aspects of MemberClicks, Legislative concerns covering all levels within the IFCA just to name a few. Much of the discussions centered around this; how do we make the IFCA work for you? The input and involvement from the Membership plays a key role on how the organization grows and we need to provide for our membership. I'm happy to say this document reflects that input and growth.

Please take a few minutes to review, there have been many hours spent updating this document. As always, if you have questions or comments, please contact me or any Member of the Executive Board.

I personally want to thank each one of you for your efforts in the IFCA's continued growth.

John Kachanuk

Chief John Kachanuk
Havana Fire Department
President IFCA 2021-2022

Organizational Background:

History

On August 3, 1951, nine fire chiefs from northeastern Illinois gathered in River Forest to discuss their mutual concerns. From this meeting came the impetus to continue meeting, and to begin an organization which years later, has become one of the leading organizations in the Illinois fire service – the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association (IFCA). The IFCA Mission follows:

The Illinois Fire Chiefs Association is dedicated to promoting excellence in the fire service by providing an information-sharing network and by offering educational, legislative and technical opportunities to our diverse membership and associated partnerships.

The IFCA is composed of nearly 1,500 members and requires proactive management to meet the needs of this large, diverse group. The Executive Board was expanded to meet both the needs and the mission of the Association. Currently, there are 20 elected positions on the Executive Board, which includes the positions of President, two Vice-Presidents, five Directors, one Retired Director, and Area Representatives for eleven regional areas. The position of Area 5 (City of Chicago) is appointed by the Fire Commissioner of Chicago. The IFCA created several committees, which focus on individual areas of concern or specific projects. There are both standing and external committees which meet regularly and report their activities to the membership through the Association's publications and website.

Over the past several years, the IFCA has increased its daily workload by representing the general membership on numerous regional and state committees that were created to draft legislation or to modify state-mandated programs or projects. Since the IFCA represents the state's fire and EMS leadership, when requested to participate on those committees, the Association must represent our interests and concerns. But more importantly, the IFCA has expanded its professional service offerings to include consulting services which benefit both the Association financially, and the community requesting our studies.

IFCA Personnel

Executive Director- 1 ♦ Program Manager - 1 ♦ Administrative Personnel - 1 ♦ Legislative Liaison - 1

Standing Committees

Accreditation ♦ Administrative Professionals ♦ Annual Conference

Annual Symposium ♦ Chief Emeritus ♦ Chief of the Year

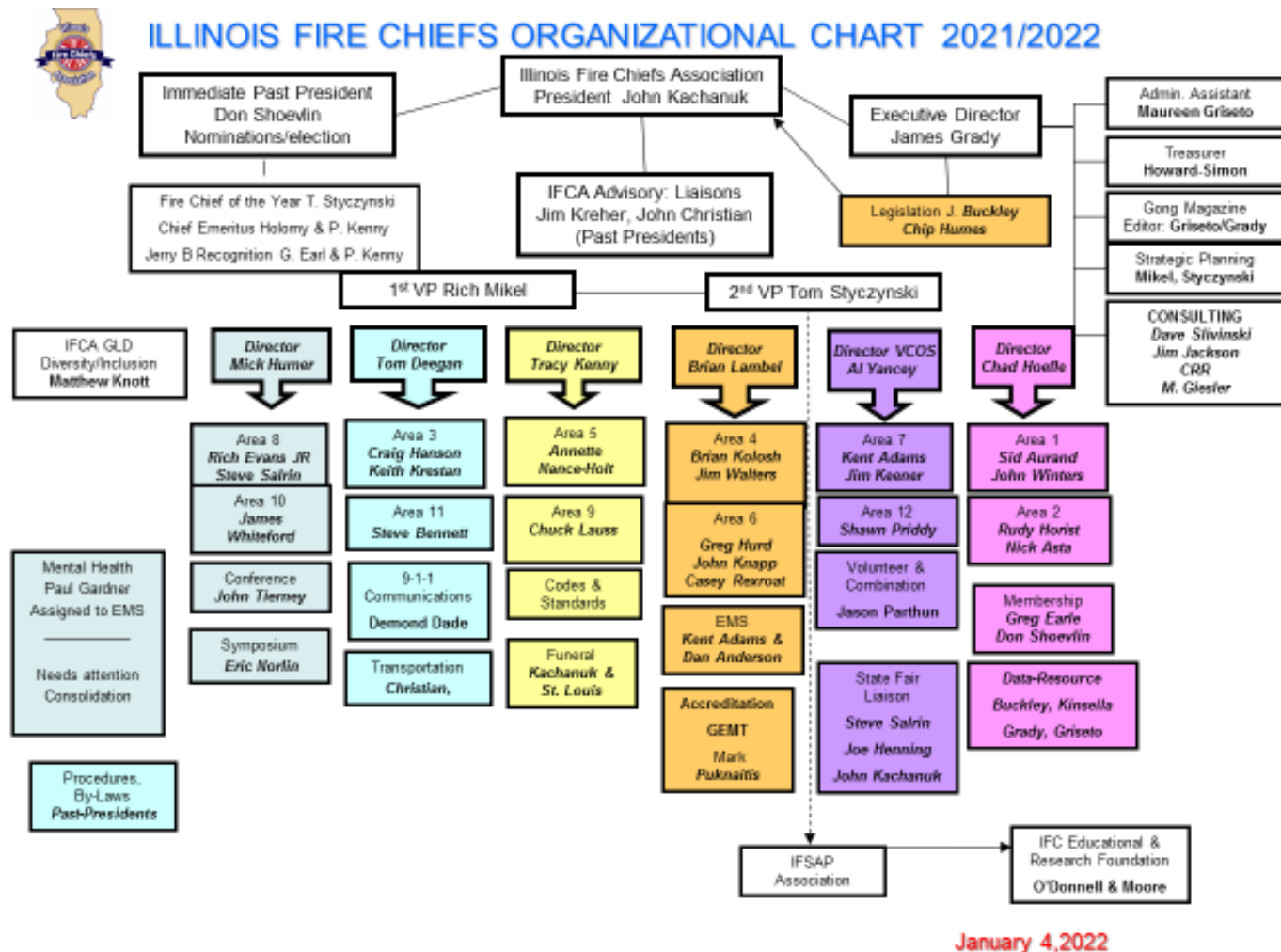
Codes & Standards ♦ Communications/9-1-1 ♦ Data & Resource

Diversity ♦ EMS ♦ Funeral ♦ Legislative ♦ Marketing/Membership

Medal of Honor ♦ Procedures & By-Laws ♦ State Fair ♦

Transportation ♦ VCOC

Organization Chart



Statistics

Membership Totals as of December 31, 2021	
Departments	496
Active	1293
Associate	48
Retired	259
Individuals	3

Planning Steps

Key steps of the Strategic Planning Process include:

1. Selecting a Strategic Planning process and team. A broad cross-section of the association is ideal for the make-up of the team. The IFCA Planning team is headed up by the two current IFCA Vice-Presidents.
2. Identifying the association's mission, vision and values. This step answers "what, who, how and why" for the association. This step attempts to clarify the association's reason for being and where it wants to be.
3. Identify internal and external partners. To help define the people and resources with which the fire department must collaborate and to help identify those who are impacted by the decisions and actions members take.
4. Conduct a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Challenges (SWOC) analysis to help create focus on the issues facing the association. Strengths and weaknesses are generally internal to the organization, while opportunities and challenges evaluate external factors.
5. Identify and define the strategic objectives and goals. This step attempts to define and describe broadly what the association must do well to be successful.
6. Select specific programs or projects to complement strategic objectives; links the strategic objectives to tangible efforts towards meeting the mission of the association. This step generally also requires specific measurement strategies to help evaluate progress.
7. Document the planning process and review periodically. This step creates the "blueprint" and provides a reference to guide future planning.

Planning Process

The IFCA Executive Board facilitates the process, utilizing management staff expertise, to identify and refine the agency's visions and values. This is done by our IFCA Vice Presidents as moderators.

As the association charts its course over the long-term, it must map concrete strategies that will allow it to focus on the vision. These strategies for achieving the mission and vision are the strategic objectives. They will change as the agency advances toward the goals set out in the Strategic Plan, if the department decides its focus should change in order to achieve its mission and vision.

The project list tracks the initiatives the association undertakes to improve its performance within the strategic objectives. A new project that is initiated and assigned resources should always be aligned with, and in support of, the association's strategic objectives.

Because the association has a limited amount of resources, it must decide how best to allocate the resources it does have. Those decisions should not be made arbitrarily, but rather in support of the association's strategies and based on data that helps to clarify the association's needs.

Methodology for Future Updates to the Plan

The Strategic Plan is designed to offer guidance for the 3–5-year time horizon. As such, it should be reviewed frequently by department staff to ensure that the mission, vision and community expectations have not dramatically changed. Initiatives should undergo a rigorous analysis to evaluate their value in achieving alignment with the Strategic Objectives. Each initiative should also be analyzed for resource requirements. Once this review is complete and the initiative continues to receive the board support, a project plan can be drafted to begin comprehensive development and implementation.

This document should also be updated on a continuing basis to ensure that assumptions, stakeholder desires and economic factors continue to be relevant. The specific planning steps may change, but the association should actively seek input from multiple partners and groups to ensure future planning is considerate of a diverse set of expectations and demands.

Planning Assumptions

In developing a long-term strategic plan, it is necessary to rely on certain assumptions based on information that is currently available. Upon accessing information which reflects the community, there are key assumptions that can be formulated. The following are key assumptions and challenges that have been identified to exist by the Illinois Fire Chiefs' Assn. over the next five to ten years.

IFCA Mission, Vision and Values – Our Building Blocks

<p style="text-align: center;">Mission</p> <p>The mission of the Illinois Fire Chiefs' Association is to function as the Illinois Representative for the fire service through inclusive participation of diverse fire organizations by being proactive through communications at all levels.</p>											
<p style="text-align: center;">Vision Statement</p> <p>To strive for membership diversity as we promote new and advanced training and information related to safety, health and development</p>											
<p style="text-align: center;">Values</p> <table> <tr> <td>Credibility</td><td>Trust</td></tr> <tr> <td>Integrity</td><td>Responsiveness</td></tr> <tr> <td>Sustainability</td><td>Representation</td></tr> <tr> <td>Diversity</td><td>Reliability</td></tr> <tr> <td>Tradition/History</td><td>Resourcefulness</td></tr> </table>		Credibility	Trust	Integrity	Responsiveness	Sustainability	Representation	Diversity	Reliability	Tradition/History	Resourcefulness
Credibility	Trust										
Integrity	Responsiveness										
Sustainability	Representation										
Diversity	Reliability										
Tradition/History	Resourcefulness										

Internal & External Stakeholders

IFCA Educational and Research Foundation

Fire Marshal's Office

Illinois Fire Service Institute

Illinois MABAS

Illinois Fire Service Assn.

Illinois Society of Fire Inspectors

Governor's Office

Associated Fire Fighter of Illinois

Illinois Assn. of Fire Protection Districts

Northern Illinois Assoc. of FPD's

IFCA Administrative Professionals

International Ass. Of Fire Chiefs

Wisconsin Fire Chiefs' Assn.

Illinois Society of Fire Instructors

Great Lakes Division – IAFC

Various Sponsors-Vendors

IFCA Planning Session Notes January 20, 2022

Committees

DEI

A committee in the works with anticipation that 2022 will be the breakthrough year addressing; articles for the Gong and monthly IFCA news, work with OSFM as a primary partner (state) that can open doors to an annual conference/symposium or special event, provide speakers for conference presentation/breakouts. Once again, a new committee with hard working members that want to grow the team and grow membership involvement with the IFCA on committees and the board as area representative/directors/president(s).

EMS

Committee and or Section: EMS

Current Chair & Co-Chair: Chiarman Kent Adams (Romeoville FD), Co-Chair Dan Anderson (Des Plaines FD)

Goals and objectives of the committee: The goal of the EMS committee is to promote the advancement of EMS as practiced within the State of Illinois. The committee will focus on solutions for Illinois Fire Chiefs and their departments/districts that address barriers to them providing EMS services to their citizens.

Statement of intent from the Committee: It is the intent of the EMS Committee is to be the resource for the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association Executive Board, Area Representatives, and membership in all matters as they relate to the Illinois Fire Services provision of EMS.

Commitment from the Committee: The committee will keep itself informed on national trends within the provision of EMS nationally, internationally and statewide. Above all, the committee will establish and maintain communications channels with the IFCA Executive Board and Executive Director. The committee will not be able to accomplish it goals without the assistance of other IFCA committees so to that end it will work with and update the varoius committees as to the needs of Illinois Fire Service EMS. Also, the EMS commmtee will assist other IFCA committees in meeting their goals and objectives.

Current members of the committee:

Strengths

- Membership with vast EMS knowlede and experience.
- Members that meet on schedule and engage

Weaknesses

- Communications with Exec. Board/Commitees.

Opportunities

- Receptive Executive Board and committees.

Threats

- Legislative environment and IDPH rules

Ask yourself, your team:

- *Where have we been? Where are we going? How can we get there?*
- Finally: what can we do for you? ***“What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of your Committee?”***

Planning Session Notes:

- ***Be aware of staffing challenges and work with others to develop solutions.***
- ***Keep communication flowing with all members.***
- ***Assign “action items” to members for needed work.***
- ***Interact with other IFCA Committees to ensure no gaps in information flow or work activities.***
- ***Strive for more legislative involvement.***
- ***Strive for more involvement with the IDPH.***

GEMT – going strong in Illinois and increasing yearly, common rates along with new incentives are in the future.

Fire Chief of the Year**Goals and objectives of the committee:**

It is the goal of the committee to provide a process to vet a Fire Chief of the Year from several categories based on the type of department and population.

Statement of intent from the Committee:

It is the intent of the committee to provide a fair process for nominations of applicants and have the ability to communicate that to other organizations that may submit nomination packets.

Commitment from the Committee:

The committee is very committed for the nomination process and representing the Illinois Fire Chiefs with great honor.

Current members of the committee:

Chief Fred Friedl- Beach Park	Chief John Christian- Barrington FD
Chief Tracy Kenny- Broadview	Ret. Chief Tom Deegan
Ret. Chief Dennis Ahrens	Margie Schiemann- Nicor
Ret. Chief Jim Grady IFCAED	IFCA Immediate Past President

Strengths

- The Committee members share the same View of what a FCOY should be.
- Honesty and objectiveness of evaluating applicant's packets
- Commitment to program.

Weaknesses

- Only meeting once a year (virtual).
- Having a minimal amount of applicants
- Have a personal relationship with an applicant

Opportunities

- Diverse committee members
- Amending criteria when needed
- Better marketing of the Award

Threats

- Filling positions when vacated
- Having to turn down applicants

Ask yourself, your team:

- *Where have we been?*
Some committee members have been on the committee since its inception. That brings a great deal of continuity to the committee based on its history.
- *Where are we going?*
The committee will continue to move forward in reviewing the criteria for the Fire Chief of the Year. We will continue to meet as necessary after the applicants are received and communicate in between as needed.
- *How can we get there?*
By remaining committed to the program and not to sway away from our views of what the Fire Chief of the Year should be.

Finally: what can we do for you? ***“What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of your Committee?”*** Just by continuing the continued support with the program. Assist with distributing the information to partner associations.

Planning Session Notes: None

Funeral Committee

Committee and or Section: Funeral Committee

Current Chair & Co-Chair: Kachanuk/St. Louis

Goals and objectives of the committee: to provide assistance to departments/districts stricken by the loss of current or past employees/members.

Statement of intent from the Committee: My intent as a Co-Chair is to support our committee members by providing them information, assistance, and in-person support as they carry out their duties of serving stricken departments/districts.

Commitment from the Committee: the members of the IFCA Funeral Committee are committed to the departments/districts they serve and will perform to the best of their ability to meet the expectations of the family and the department/district.

Current members of the committee: see membership roster

Strengths of Committee Many long-term committee members * Proud reputation Respected by many	Weakness of the Committee not all parts of the state are covered
Opportunities within the Committee Several newer members have joined Training for future committee chair positions	Threats to the Committee: Not all AFFI members embrace us Poor communications

Ask yourself, your team:

Where have we been? Where are we going?

How can we get there?

Strong past

Bright future

Training and telling our story

Finally: what can we do for you? ***“What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of your Committee?”***

Our committee members would like to have an annual meeting/training session sponsored by the IFCA

*** Funeral Committee members serving since**

Two members serving since 2003

Two members serving since 2006

Three members serving between 2007-2009

Five members serving between 2012-2015

Twelve members serving between 2016-2022

Planning Session Notes:

- ***Increase efforts to reach ALL parts of the State***
- ***Committee has added Funeral Directors and Pastors to their Membership***
- ***Work to close the working gap between IFCA Funeral Committee and the AFFI Honor Guard***
- ***Do a better job of telling our story.***

Legislative

Committee and or Section: Legislative

Current Chair & Co-Chair: John Buckley

Goals and objectives of the committee:

Review legislation that impact the fire service and determine IFCA positions. Introduce legislation as necessary. Communicate IFCA position with membership and legislature. Assure IFCA voice is heard in Springfield/

Statement of intent from the Committee:

It is the intent of the legislative Committee to aggressively represent the membership of the IFCA in Springfield.

Commitment from the Committee:

The Legislative Committee is committed to representing all the members of the IFCA including Municipal Department and Fire Districts, Volunteer, POC, part-Time or career Fire Chiefs.

Current members of the committee:

D/C Nick Asta (Barrington-Countryside)

Chief Bryan Doyle (Fairview-Caseyville)

D/C Brian Scott (Western Springs)

BC Paul Mackin (North Palos FPD)

B/C Richard Manthy Jr. (Arlington Heights FD)

Chief John Christian (Barrington)

Chief Jeff Pizl (Hillside - Retired)

Battalion Chief Bill Perkins (Manteno)

Chief Jason Parthum VCOC (East Dundee)

Chief Dave Weiss (Westmont – Retired)

Chief Greg Earle (Centralia FPD – Retired)

Chief Rudy Horist (MCHenry Township FPD)

Chief Kent Adams (Romeoville)

Chief Tom Deegan (Schiller Park – Retired)

Chief Joe Holomy (Effingham)

Chief Steve Norvilas (Pleasantview)

Strengths

- Very involved in Springfield
- Good communication with Legislators
- Good direction from members
- Positive President involvement

Weaknesses

- Often fighting an uphill battle
- Difficult to identify successful objectives
- Inability to identify funding
- Difficulty communicating realistic outcomes

Opportunities

- Well respected by Legislators
- Known as willing to solve problems
- Diverse representation on the Committee

Threats

- Diverse IFCA membership
- Divided viewpoints
- Difficulty in solving difficult problems

Ask yourself, your team:

- *Where have we been?* The IFCA has been involved in legislative efforts since the formation of our organization. Over the years, while the methods used have changed with the changes in the legislature, the respect for our organization in Springfield has continued to grow. Currently, we are more involved in legislation than we ever have been.

- *Where are we going?* Springfield is constantly changing. We work diligently to assure that we keep up with changing times. It is difficult to know what is coming next, only that there is always something on the horizon. The best thing we can do is attempt to be prepared.
- *How can we get there?* Continue our current involvement. Always look for opportunities to make things better through legislation. Identify relay outcomes that can demonstrate a positive benefit and that have a significant chance of making it through the legislative process.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finally: what can we do for you? <i>“What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of your Committee?”</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current support by the President and Executive Board has been essential to the Legislative Committee. Continuing that support is vital to the success of the Committee. |

Planning Session Notes:

- ***Continue to communicate with, and monitor AFFI & Legislative Relationships***

Symposium Committee

Goals and objectives of the committee:

Plan, build and deliver an annual educational and networking event for the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association

Statement of intent from the Committee:

To provide an exceptional event incorporating topical educational subjects in concert with the social, networking opportunity for fire chiefs and their staff members in a relaxing atmosphere that is all inclusive.

Commitment from the Committee:

Current members planning to stand as is

Current members of the committee:

Tim Leidig, Tom Krueger, Joe Henning, Maureen Griseto, Eric Norlin, JG3

Strengths

- Tim Leidig
- Tom Krueger
- Joe Henning
- Maureen Griseto, JG3 (It's the people!)
- Support of vendors/sponsors and Chiefs Executive Board

Weaknesses

- Unforeseen scheduling conflicts

Opportunities

- Future committee participants

- More input/participation from the CFO committee

Threats:

- COVID, attrition, if for any reason we don't have Maureen to help

Finally: what can we do for you? ***"What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of your Committee?"*** At this point we receive the support we need from the chiefs through Maureen and JG3, The Exec board has always been very supportive of us!

Planning Session Notes: None

VCOC

Committee and or Section: VCOC

Current Chair & Co-Chair: Jason Parthun

Goals and objectives of the committee:

1. Focus on Volunteer and Combination Firefighter Wellness and Cancer Prevention
2. Community Risk Reduction
3. Market Existing Educational Programs of the VCOC
4. Legislative Action
5. Improve VCOC presence in the IFCA

Statement of intent from the Committee:

To assist chief officers and company officers of volunteer and combination fire departments in the development of professional leadership skills, representation on critical issues affecting the volunteer services of the State of Illinois to create greater opportunities in funding, training and professional service for their respective departments. To elevate the quality of fire service at local level to enhance the overall quality of life to the citizens of the State of Illinois and promote safety and wellbeing of members of the fire service.

Commitment from the Committee:

Our vision is to be a professional, integral arm of the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association, representing what is best about the Illinois Volunteer and Combination Fire Officer. We will be a dynamic organization, characterized by integrity to serve as the collective voice of the volunteer/combination fire officer to create greater opportunities in funding, training, and professional service for their respective departments. We will continuously evolve with the evolution of our state volunteer service and work together for success within the individual departments.

Current members of the committee:

Weiss, Dave, Hoefle, Chad, Kenny, Patrick, Bentley, Tom, Horist, Rudy, Yancey, Al, O'Hare, Kevin, Grady III, Jim, Parthun, Jason, Adams, Kent, Bryant Sr., Jeff, White, Brad, Pahlmann, Scott, Hurd, Greg, Winters, John, Baker, Cole

Strengths of Committee

We have a good core group of members who are committed to the VCOC and its mission.
We have a decent offering of programs for presentation.

Weakness of the Committee

The need to engage more of the state's Volunteer and Combination Service

Opportunities within the Committee

We should leverage our committee members to market our committee and its services throughout the state.
We need to partner with other groups to market the need for volunteer fire and EMS throughout the state.
Statewide recruitment and retention activities.

Threats to the Committee:

Decreased recruitment and retention for the Volunteer Fire Service throughout the state.
Difficulty or perceived difficulty to train firefighters
Departments lack funding to properly train and equip firefighters and EMS.

Ask yourself, your team:

Where have we been?

We have been a strong committee within the IAFC, we represent a lion share of departments within the state but continue to struggle with marketing our services to departments throughout the state.

Where are we going?

We are working on updating our R&R workshops, adding other programs that would benefit the rural fire service as well as are looking at other ways in which to engage Volunteer and Combination departments.

How can we get there?

- We strive to continually update our programs to make sure they are relevant and pointful.
- We will market our services through our committee members and area reps, to ensure we have a voice throughout the state.
- We will continue to run our equipment donation program, to better equip departments.
- We will seek out problems that our Volunteer and Combination departments are experiencing and work on solutions through our committee or regionally, by engaging those with similar problems.
- We will update and improve our marketing
- We will continue to work on legislative actions that will support and enhance the Volunteer and Combination departments within the state.

Finally: what can we do for you? ***"What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of your Committee?"***

Planning Session Notes:

- ***VCOC will host a Conference in September 2022***
- ***Continue to host webinars for VCOC***

Assessments and Consulting

Goals and objectives of the committee:

Provide leadership selection and development using high quality tools and process for the public safety industry.

Assessment team key personnel: Dave Slviniski, James Jackson

Strengths of Committee	Weakness of the Committee
Talented/dedicated executive team	Learning curve-virtual space assessor participation
Experienced and diverse Assessor Pool	Competitive pricing vs national competition
Use of cutting-edge technology	Marketing – conference attendance
First-in-world assessment and development tools	Organizational chart/responsibility overload
Customer service	Lack of specialization of tool-specific assessors
Diverse product offerings	
Written Examinations (in-house/use of tech)	
Networking opportunities	
State and national stage for CRR	
New team assessors	
Collaboaration with internal IFCA team (Education)	
Collaborative relationships with external industries	
Opportunities within the Committee	Threats to the Committee
Expansion of existing market fire organziations	External competition (virtual/traditional space)
Local expansion outside traditional markets (higher ed, law enforcement, government agencies, dispatch, etc.)	Executive team burnout
Marketing – conference attendance: target industries	Lack of experienced team members for quantity of work projected
National expansion for all target markets	More work than resources (developers/assessors)
IL CRR as template for nation	
Expansion of Executive Team and support staff	

Notes:

- Need to develop partnerships and further develop collaboration with other organizations, always keeping in mind to take care of the Illinois Fire Service FIRST.

IAFC-GLD

Monthly news and notes shared with IFCA through Matt and Jim g3, partnership with Wisconsin Chiefs strong, involvement within a GLD seminar/symposium. All information is flowing well through Chief Knott. (jmg3)

IFCA Educational and Research Foundation

Strengths

Programs, scholarships, special events, strong relationship with IFCA

Weaknesses

low class enrollment, competition for classes at all levels.

Illinois Fire Service Administrative Personnel (IFSAP)

Affiliation: IFSAP

Goals and Objectives: Education, Support, Networking, Greater recognition of skillsets brought to the fire service.

Working with IFCA Executive Board

Strengths: Positive working relationships with those who are involved within the board. A better understanding of both sides of the job. Building on those relationships to strengthen the admin position within the Fire Service. Improved recognition of the value of an admin in their own Departments.

Weakness: Could be more opportunities to assist in accomplishing goals and communication between the two boards. While IFSAP stands on its own as an organization, we ultimately rely on the Chiefs for their support and backing. Admin have no rank and/or respect without the utmost support of the Chiefs and Executive Staff and an inability of recognition without Chiefs standing up for them.

Opportunities: Continued involvement with the meetings and utilizing remote access to them. Yes, meeting in person is always optimal, however, the times are moving forward and we have to utilize the technology that is presented to us.

Threats: Not necessarily through the Board, but the Board promoting other companies that offer “easier and more cost effective” carve outs of our jobs. Obviously, every one of our positions is slightly different depending on our Chiefs and what they expect of us, however, as we see more outsourcing of our jobs or cutting out portions to make them part-time/no benefits, its hard to see the IFCA Board promoting those companies that are doing that.

Where have we been? : With very little backing and or support. Through the Chiefs putting various admin on a pedestal and discussing with colleagues the importance of a great admin in their office we have had the opportunity to grow. There are still Chiefs out there that believe we should just pay the bills and answer the phones, while other more progressive Chiefs recognize the transition of the admin position and value it has to them.

Where are we going?: To have the same opportunities for training, furthering education and understanding of new aspects of the job. Things like public education, GEMT, legal updates, updates in ordinances, increasing revenue paths etc are evolving parts of our careers and there is a need for understanding so that we may do our jobs more effectively. We would love to have an ESP-2 eventually, and increase the participation within IFSAP.

How do we get there?: Certainly a tougher question. With the support of IFCA and pushing their members to give our members the opportunity to get out of the office. With regards to the ESP 2 classes, we probably will have to meet with a selection of Chiefs to discuss what they would like to see a further push on since things have changed since the inception of the program. It's designed to give the participating admin a better idea of what it is the Operations side does so that we may better assist them. Additionally, we have to prove value in being involved with IFSAP. With opportunity and growth, comes value and buy in.

What do you need form the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of your TEAM?

Unfortunately, a lot of the recognition/gratitude that the IFCA Board members have for the membership of IFSAP, doesn't always translate further down membership. And while the Chiefs we work with on the board are fantastic, ultimately they do not always have any control over our careers and support within our careers. We rely heavily on the reconition of our Chiefs for accalades, raises, support in opportunities within our own careers and growth can sometimes seem like a threat. There needs to be a continued push of empowering people in the admin positions, instead of just lip service. Even as we understand that we are not Chiefs, we are often times put in positions of understanding, given confidential information, asked opinions, all while accomplishing our own goals and jobs...yet we went several years without a nomination for an Admin of the Year. We made great strides in the last couple years building those relationships within the two Boards, it would be great to continue to push that through the membership as we both struggle to have members that have buy in and participate.

Area Representatives / Directors / Board Members

Goals and Objectives:

Assist the Illinois Fire Service in being successful. Be and advocate for all types of Illinois Fire Departments. Plan and advocate for legislation to improve the Illinois Fire Service, *Recruitment, Education and preparing our future officers*

Your statement of intent and does your time & position allow for additional assignments with the IFCA:

Time allowed – common answer is yes when applicable and with the use of zoom.

My intent is to assist the IFCA in achieving its goals and improve the fire service in the State of Illinois. Assist and offer expertise by taking on committee assignments

I also intend to reach out to members in my area to get more of them involved with the Association either through committee work or just attending the various events we host throughout the year.

Your understanding of the internal partners of the IFCA? [Foundation, IFSAP]:

The internal partners of the IFCA are unique partnerships that help move the organization in a forward direction. These partners help the IFCA achieve its organizational goals.

The Foundation is our fundraising partner that allows us to give back to the fire service through education.

IFSAP is the Admin Assistant group which is the backbone of our departments and organization.

At times not really sure how we do work together, but know that a central part of us

Foundation strength is education, need to expand throughout the state

Need to advertise or promote our internal partners

Strengths

- The membership Foundation
- Organizational Partners, Diverse
- Education, experts, talent
- Assessment services, Finances
- Communications, Symposium

Weaknesses

- Funding, unwillingness to change
- self promotion – who we are
- succession planning, conference
- Statewide presence

Opportunities

- Legislative opportunities to help the fire service
- Harness talent at lower level officers
- Take lead on a state wide Fire Service Conference
- Grow the board

Threats:

- Decrease in the number of firefighter applicants
- competition for classes/conferences
- Loss of experience/expertise due to retirements
- Time for involvement spread too thin
- Funding for all associations/dues, Turnover

Ask yourself:

- *Where have we been?* Great past with great assets (people), willing to address challenges
- *Where are we going?* Need to address future progress and build upon our past as a reference and not get bogged down with the old ways
- *How can we get there?* Collaboration, open minds, try new ventures, try to recruit more members from different officer levels, expand our brand throughout the state. Together we can do anything
- *Is there something the IFCA is not doing that you feel we should be doing?* Not currently, No, better presence downstate
- *Is there something that the IFCA is doing that you feel we should no longer do?* Not currently, No

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of the IFCA?”</i> Continue to appoint dedicated individuals to positions to affect change and move the organization forward. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep doing what we are doing the thank you mean alot |

Planning Session Notes:

- ***Communication is stagnant at the Director level.***
- ***More information needs to flow from Presidents to Directors, and then from Directors to Area Representatives. (Consider executive summaries)***
- ***Build a better bridge between Directors and Presidents levels.***
- ***Ramp-up Committees to help strengthen our Membership***

Administrative

Goals and Objectives

- Increase resource area on the website. SOP's, Policies, FAQ
- Update administrative manual/job tasks
- Update/create new brochures for members
- Create a how-to-manual for incoming board members
- Continue to improve our financial reporting and activities related to billing, collections and savings

Strengths of the IFCA

- Core group of members, organizations and vendors that continue to support and assist the IFCA
- Well respected organization

Weaknesses of the IFCA

- apathy by the membership, none or little feedback on issues until it blows up.
- Limited involvement by members on committees, many members on multiple committees to fill spots.
- Little/no planned time for board to actively work on project/suggestions made at meetings. i.e. redesigning/update website features

Opportunities with the IFCA

- Expand presence in central/southern Illinois
- Use of the IFCA Board to increase communication to the areas of the State. Message cannot just be an email once a month to members
- Expand workshops/webinars for Chief Officers throughout the State

Threats to the IFCA

- loss of identity as a leader of the Illinois Fire Service
- Overload for the core group of members holding the IFCA together. We need more workers not more chiefs.

Where have we been?

- Many years of being a leader in the fire service not only in Illinois but throughout the United States
- Continuous membership growth

Where are we going?

How can we get there?

- More participation/interaction from the board with their areas and with the other board members and committees.
- Need to merge the history with the present needs/culture of our membership.

Is there something the IFCA is *not doing* that you feel we *should be doing*?

- Making direct contact with members in different areas to see what the IFCA can do to help them. Suggest area reps attend the Regional Chiefs or MABAS meetings in their areas and get a feel what the area needs from the IFCA. NOT a survey or email.

Is there something that the IFCA *is doing* that you feel we *should no longer do*?

- Not necessarily the IFCA but the IFCA Board meetings have become a recap of the IFCA Board hearing from the partners which takes up a lot of time and then we rush through the business of the IFCA and very little is planned or accomplished.

What do we need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure continued success for the IFCA?

- Respect of other board members and the IFCA staff time. Everyone is busy, having to follow up on individuals who do not RSVP or who do not complete requested information makes it hard on everyone.

IFCA in General**Strengths****Weaknesses****Opportunities****Planning Session Notes:**

- *Determine if the "Gong" should continue, and if so be printed or electronic.*
- *Consider creating the position of Education Coordinator to coordinate and oversee training classes, seminars, the Symposium, and the Conference.*
- *Further develop relationships with other Fire Service entities.*
- *Strive to have members respond to requests sent by Maureen.*
- *Consider creation of a "Recruitment and Retention" work group.*

Past President Advisory Board

Affiliation: Past Presidents

Goals and objectives of the IFCA Executive Board:

To provide resources and representation for all members of the IFCA.

Your statement of intent and does your time & position allow for additional assignments with the IFCA?

To provide feedback and participate in forums, committees and groups with the goal of improving the IFCA and moving the strategic plan agenda into the future.

Your understanding of the internal partners of the IFCA? [Foundation, IFSAP]**Strengths of IFCA**

Resource Base for its membership
Collective knowledge

Weakness of the IFCA

Participation of membership in key initiatives
Legislative power

Diversified membership
 Opportunities within the IFCA
 Creation of new initiatives to drive the
 Illinois Fire Service
 Training in new and innovative topics
 Build the organization membership

Rumor management
 Threats to the IFCA:
 Loss of membership
 Decreased revenue generation

Ask yourself:

Where have we been? A lot of history and routine way of handling our business

Where are we going? Hopefully engaged in the changes that effect our members and the world around us. How can we get there? Taking the lead in making decisions that will propel the IFCA in areas that reflect the real-life impacts to the communities that we serve.

Is there something the IFCA is not doing that you feel we should be doing? Creation of working groups and committees that focus on very specific projects and initiatives.

Is there something that the IFCA is doing that you feel we should no longer do?
 No

Finally: what can we do for you? ***“What do you need from the IFCA Executive Board to ensure the continued or improved success of the IFCA?”***

Continue to be available for assistance to the resources that are available through the IFCA. Keep constant and transparent communication. Be proactive in supporting new initiatives that may be different from the norm.

Input from Past President Patrick J. Kenny:

I appreciate the opportunity as a former president to weigh in on your strategic planning session. I'm very proud to be a member of the IFCA. I think the strengths of the organization deal with the diversity of the membership and now reflected on the executive board. President Kachanuk is a perfect example of valuable leadership not from a career department. John will do an excellent job and it was an honor to serve with him.

That being said, I am concerned about a few areas. I'm still wondering about the usefulness of the Gong in a written format. I know this is an old subject, as many things are that have been tossed around over the history of the organization, but this past Gong issue frankly was lacking in interest and there were a number of mistakes in it. Those examples led me to question the quality and usefulness of the product.

Another area I think we're struggling with, again this has historical origins, is the role of the area representatives. You'll have to excuse my ignorance as I don't know this to be the case of any area representative currently. I do know for a fact it was the exception not the rule historically. I believe that the area representative should be making a stop at every single fire department (whether a member or not) in their area at least once a year.

I don't think doing a survey via email or meeting over zoom works. The pandemic could be used as an excuse but meeting out in the parking lot or out on the apparatus floor separated by way more than 6 feet wearing masks, if necessary, to discuss current issues in that department and what can the IFCA offer specifically for

them, and their department is critical to the retention and recruitment of members. The pandemic has driven the strength of in person communication to the brink of extinction and must be kept on the radar.

I have always believed that is an underutilized role and frankly some people in the past just used that as a résumé builder. I think it is incumbent on those critical positions to get the pulse of what's going on out there in a very diverse and ever-changing fire service. I think specifically in the volunteer combination areas that contact is really important in terms of credibility, especially when you're trying to spread classes. That area rep (Chief), who is respected and KNOWN in that area, should show up in the morning of the class just to welcome everybody along with the host chief. We don't offer that many classes that this is a huge imposition. If it is seen that way you have the wrong person in that role.

Another area I think that needs to get investigated, that again is historical, *I guess that's what you want out of us old fart presidents which is what was tried and didn't work*, is combining the Districts and the Chiefs into one conference. We are splitting the baby with our membership because the reality is most volunteer Chiefs do not attend the symposium or conference. Making it more available as one stop shopping would be at least worth a shot.

In the past that discussion has come up in every decade and has been shut down with concerns of revenue splitting, vendor intrusion regarding two sources going to the same well and not allowing the use of our vendor list. While I was president and many years on the board and even as the Assistant Executive Director, I listened to good arguments on both sides of the concept. Now I think to be consistent with consolidation in so many other areas of the fire service; I think we are missing the boat to not aggressively pursue this. The timing is excellent coming off COVID revisions of both events and the fact that the Executive Director for the Chiefs as well as for the Districts have a great working relationship and I think discussions could be kept very professional and profitable for both.

As far as the Conference goes, I think the installation dinner has just about run its course. I was appalled at the lack of attendance at the last one as really it was mostly the award winners and their families along with a few other chiefs. That saddens me because that used to be the highlight of the conference that showed respect for the election process. Yes, some Chiefs ditched out to go with vendors but there really was only a minority of them.

On the length of the conference some thought should be given to does it have to be three days as day three seems to really lose momentum. I don't care if you have a speaker of incredible magnitude on Wednesday, he or she is going to be talking to very few.

I also would like to see the open forum that is on the night before the start put somewhere in the body of the conference, maybe as part of the annual report, and use those leaders sitting together to answer the tough questions.

From an educational standpoint I think more zoom presentations aimed at the volunteer combination group that can be offered live during their drills aimed at assisting their training officers, that's another group that we need to realign with (TSO's), would be helpful. That was just discussed at the Vol/Comb. Subcommittee the other day. Those would be taped and then if career departments wanted to use them as a daily drill or a

weekend drill it could be used to their benefit too. It also allows time for a plug for membership or any other message the executive board wants to get out there.

Regarding consolidation I also think it's important to align ourselves as close as we can with the other major fire service organizations (i.e., IFSI, OSFM, IFSAP etc.) so that Illinois Fire Chiefs Education and Research Foundation can continue to provide quality education to our current and future fire service leaders.

The Illinois Fire Chiefs Assessment and Consulting Services I see as our biggest opportunity to literally step outside the box with endeavors that the organization may be able to get involved in with more future thinking. We have not done a lot over the years of "research" even though it is included in the title, where the Board votes to invest through the Foundation leadership in some endeavors/projects/programs that might not pan out or might hit a homerun.

I think that risk/reward needs to be revisited because sometimes the only way you find out if something is going to be successful is to invest and try it. After all it is called the Illinois Fire Chiefs Education and **Research** Foundation. A great example that I applaud the Board for supporting is the True Virtual Assessment Centers. That partnership with Pinsight gave the IFCA a leg up in a very competitive business by providing the first platform to offer an assessment center in a virtual environment. Since the Illinois Fire Chiefs Assessment and Consulting Services division is critical to revenue generation investing in future research like this is both practical and necessary.

In terms of strengths, I think the organization was an incredible asset during the pandemic thanks to the leadership and role modeling of the executive board. I applaud and thank all of you for your dedication and time to this wonderful association and for asking my opinions.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Kenny

SWOT assessment during 2021 IFCA Planning Session 12-May-2021

EMS Strengths

IFCA works well with IDPH
EMS plan involvement
Illinois Chief on National Plan

Weaknesses

Beholding to Nurses/Doctors
No EMS on IDPH (medics, EMT)
Chiefs understanding on local/state involvement
Systems accreditations or letters of review
National Exam failure rate level is high
Shortages of Medics and EMT's
Need for recruitment of EMS personal
Internal IFCA monthly reporting is needed

Opportunities

Medics used for vaccine programs
Medics used for ambulance inspections
Chiefs need to be heard/active with Local EMS systems
FD Sponsorships of EMT's and Medics through academy or volunteer

GEMT

2020 69 million net revenue after sharing back percent
Cost Report annually by September 01 annually hfs.gemt@illinois.gov
Payment methods via Jet Pay
Work closely with billing provider
Complete cost report correctly
Amend Billing Ordinance
Future = more/increased participation
Call/email Mark or Phil in/at Naperville

Legislation

IFCA looked at highly / respected in Springfield
Communications is strong amongst Presidents and Committee
Chiefs build up relationships with local legislators – know your locals
Incentives -specifics and benefits
Committee meets regularly and share ideas, please bring forward

President, and ED will slip bills UNTIL we need all hands-on deck to make calls / contacts

VCOC

Strengths

Dedicated group
New blood/leadership
Common Voice
Helping others
Equipment donations
New sub-committees
New Co-Chairs

Weaknesses

Reduction in Volunteer Staffing
Involvement throughout the state
Committee – need workers
Marketing
Need REPS in south, west and northwest

Tasks

Utilize social media
Enhance marketing
Sub-Committees
Short term goals
Define roles/objectives
VCOC Conference!!

Needs (training)

Strategic planning
ISO trainings
Recruit/Retention
webinars - more
online training tools
Legislative concerns and proposals
Just meeting with Volunteer throughout the state

Area Representatives / Directors

Interaction with CFO recipients
Help with membership recruitment
Maintain directors' monthly meetings / calls
Reach out to neighbors within areas and TALK
For VCOC reach out
Don't be afraid of change sometimes we need a breath of fresh air
Need for more representatives perhaps at different ranks AC,DC,BC

IFCA in General

Strength in and with committees
DEI the newest committee, involvement throughout the state
MemberClicks for tracking of all membership to include type of department and the demographics of the department
Past President as an oversight team to work with ED and in office presidents

Process President Don and past President Current team headed up by Jim Kreher and John Christian, check with Past Director Buhs for job description/committee defined (JMG3 to do)

Administration going along well implementing changes to finances and tracking of information for back up and improvement. Key components MemberClicks and Government Accounting with James Howard.

Overall feeling our administrative team is strong and committed to the IFCA, well managed and accepting necessary changes.

Highlighted thank you to Maureen, Dave, John Buckley, Jim Grady

Assessment/Consulting going great – the team is doing everything from standard assessments to virtual to a hybrid mix. Managed well by Dave Slivinski who keep ED jmg3 informed.

Move forward stay the course – keep all IFCA parties working together strong alliance within the Foundation & Association!

Membership – enhance the use of face book for members & general information

Build upon social media

Marketing – help need by all to tell our story IFCA & IFCA-ERF

Reach out to all partners tell them we are here for them

Continue to assist the IFSAP Branch

Keep strong alliance with OSFM, IFSI IAAPD

Try for a combined Fire Service Show

IFCA Educational & Research Foundation

Scholarships strong – keeping promise for the future officers

CFO is a main stay but as with all programs is not sole based to IFCA

All programs are updated but the need for back up at all levels is a must

Competition for students is going to increase

Partnerships are needed for the future

Fund raising going well – golf outing back this year

Move forward stay the course – keep all IFCA parties working together strong alliance within the Foundation & Association!

FILE; 2021 planning SWOT-General information May 12, 2021

State of Illinois – IFCA Regional Boundaries

