



***R.G.V.F.F.M.A. District Meeting  
Sunday, July 15, 2018  
Hidalgo, Texas***

*The Rio Grande Valley Firefighter's and Fire Marshals' Association held their quarterly meeting on Sunday, July 15, 2018 in Hidalgo, Texas.*

***Board Members Present:***

*James Farrell, President  
Leroy Salinas, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP  
Ubaldo Perez, Training Coor.  
Letty Quintero, Treasurer  
Ruben Balboa, Immediate Past President*

*Eloy Salazar, 1<sup>st</sup> VP  
Jacob Mercado, 4<sup>th</sup> VP  
Mari Tovar, Secretary  
Gary Wilburn, Chaplain  
Lauren Farrell, Mascot*

***Board Members Not Present:***

*Dawn Rodriguez, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP*

***Called Meeting to Order:***

*President Farrell called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.*

***Invocation:***

*Gary Wilburn led the group in prayer.*

***Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Flag:***

*Laruen Farrell led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Flag.*

***Introduction of Guests:***

*President Farrell introduced the following guests:*

- *Patrick Guzman*
- *Tracey Granger – Air Evac*
- *Hidalgo County EMS*

***Welcome:***

*Mayor Sergio Coronado welcomed the RGVFFMA to the City of Hidalgo.*

**Response:**

*Immediate Past President Ruben Balboa (Harlingen) thanked Mayor Coronado , Chief Robert Rojas and the Hidalgo Fire Department for hosting the meeting.*

**Roll Call:**

*District Secretary Mari Tovar conducted roll call of cities present. There were 14 cities in attendance and 2 Past Presidents. A quorum was established.*

**Approval of Minutes:**

*President Farrell asked for a motion to approve the minutes from April.*

*Gilbert Chavero (Past President) made a motion to approve the minutes; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Robert Rojas (Hidalgo); all in favor, motion passed, minutes approved.*

**Treasurer's Report:**

*District Treasurer Leticia Quintero gave treasurer's report (see attachment).*

**Discussion:**

*Frankie Joe Salinas, asked "How much is in the CD"?*

*President Farrell, stated "It's in the report".*

*Rene Lopez, requested a list of departments that have paid their dues.*

*President Farrell asked for a motion to approve the treasurer's report.*

*Frankie Joe Salinas (Edinburg) made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rene Lopez (Mission – Retired); all in favor; motion passed.*

**James Farrell – President:**

*President Farrell thanked the City of Hidalgo, Chief Rojas and the Hidalgo Fire Department for hosting the meeting on such short notice.*

**Presented on the following items:**

- 1. QuickBooks – District has switched over to QuickBooks for accountability purposes. The first couple of months the fee will be \$18.12 and will increase to \$44 after the first two months.*
- 2. CD at IBC – The CD is not earning very much interest. If anyone knows of a bank that the district can switch over to, please let the board know.*
- 3. The Executive Board has made some approvals on some needed expenses.*

4. *With the passing of Chief Rolando Espinoza the Executive Board is looking for someone to take over the Historian position. If interested, please let President Farrell know.*

***Eloy Salazar – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President***

*Thanked Chief Robert Rojas for his hospitality.*

*VP Salazar advised the members present that the RGVFFMA is not only for volunteers. It is for all members volunteer/paid that are a part of our district.*

*Thanked Hidalgo County EMS for attending the District Meeting.*

*Presented on the following:*

***Training:***

- *Possibly start offering 4 hour sessions of training in October while district meetings are in session. Any ideas, please let us know.*

***Luncheons:***

- *Would like to tailgate after the October and January meetings instead of host city providing a lunch.*

*VP Salazar, asked to “Entertain a motion to pay the fee for one member from 5 departments that are in attendance at this meeting, by throwing the department names in a pot and whatever department is chosen the district would pay for one member of that department to participate in the McAllen Stair Climb”.*

*Robert Rojas (Hidalgo) made a motion to pay the fee for five members of the departments that are chosen to participate in the McAllen Stair Climb; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rene Lopez (Mission – Retired); all in favor; motion passed.*

***Polo Shirts for Past Presidents:***

- *The Executive Board voted on purchasing Polo Shirts for all Past Presidents. Ms. Leticia Quintero solicited a sponsor for the shirts.*

*VP Salazar presented the Pharr Fire Department with the traveling trophy for having the most attendees at the District Meeting.*

***CONGRATULATIONS PHARR!!!***

***Dawn Rodriguez – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Not in Attendance***

***Leroy Rodriguez – 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President***

*Thanked Chief Robert Rojas for hosting the meeting.*

*Presented on the following:*

***Firefighter of the Year:***

*In charge of the RGVFFMA Richard L. Drewry Firefighter of the Year Award. Encouraged departments to submit applications.*

*President Farrell, stated “If your department has a Firefighter of the Year, please make sure to submit your application to the District, so they can submit the winner to the SFFMA”.*

***Jacob Mercado – 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President:***

*Thanked Hidalgo Fire Department, Chief Robert Rojas and the Mayor for hosting the District Meeting.*

*Pumper Races will not be held after the meeting.*

*Pumper races took place in Harlingen after the April District Meeting. Winners of the races were announced.*

***Pumper Race Results:***

***3-Man Pumper Races***

***1<sup>st</sup> Place – Edcouch/La Villa***

- *Johnny Vallejo*
- *Alejandra Garcia*
- *Manuel Hinojosa*

***2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Elsa***

- *Joel*
- *Raul*
- *Jeremy*

***3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Elsa***

- *Johnny Flores*
- *Ivan Garza*
- *Mike Rodriguez*

***2-Man Pumper Races***

***1<sup>st</sup> Place – Edcouch/La Villa***

- *Johnny Vallejo*
- *Alejandra Garcia*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place – La Villa**

- Manuel Hinojosa
- Alejandra Garcia

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Elsa**

- Ivan Garza
- Johnny Flores

**Water Polo**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place – Elsa**

- Johnny Flores
- Ivan Garza
- Mike Rodriguez

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Elsa**

- Raul
- James
- Jeremy
- Gary

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Elsa**

- Chris
- Raul
- Albert Gomez

**Ubaldo Perez – Training Coordinator:**

*Thanked Hidalgo Fire Department and Chief Robert Rojas for hosting the meeting.*

*Discussed the following:*

**Kevin Creamer (SFFMA) – Status**

- Surgery went well and is recovering
- SFFMA Training Website – will be rolling out to members soon

**70<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire & Public Safety Academy**

- Planning Meeting scheduled for mid-September. Please make sure all instructors attend.
- This year we had almost as many students in the Special Courses as we did in the Firefighting I Group

**South Texas Firefighter's Safety & Wellness Summit**

- September 30 – October 3, 2018

- *We will have presenters on Monday evening (Departments that have their training meetings may want to use that day as their training day for that week)*
- *Speakers:*
  - *Dr. Griffin – Charleston*
  - *Chief Daniel Deyear (Keynote Speaker) – Dallas Fire Department*
  - *Leadership Classes – have also been included this year*
- *We are still waiting for the results of the grant for Sunday and Monday Classes for NVFC presenters to present.*
- *MOU has been signed with TEEEX for the summit.*
- *Will be meeting with Cambria Hotel on Thursday. If people stay at the Cambria they will not charge us for the use of the training room.*

***Ruben Balboa – Past President:***

*Thanked the Hidalgo Fire Department and Chief Robert Rojas for hosting the meeting.*

*Presented on the following:*

- *Finance Report (see attached)*
- *State Convention – Arlington – June 2018*
  - *195 Delegates*
  - *699 Registered – 35 more than last year*
  - *3 Poster Winners*
  - *Elections:*
    - *Donny Boggs, 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President*
    - *Brent Allen, Secretary*
    - *Kylie Maples, Mascot*

*Thanked Pharr Fire Department Pipes and Drums and Pharr and Edinburg Honor Guards for their assistance with the Memorial Services at the convention.*

***Frankie Joe Salinas – Immediate Past President***

*Thanked the City of Hidalgo and Chief Robert Rojas for hosting the meeting.*

*Presented on the following:*

*SFFMA Fire Marshal Committee:*

- *Fire Inspector – Plan Examiner*
  - *Met in October to vote. We had 6 to 6 vote – Did not pass. We met again in July and it did not pass again.*

*VFIS*

- *Pays Firefighter of the Year \$1,000 to his/her department. It is important to submit your applications.*

*HB2604*

- *Is available for departments to send their people to training.*

*Fire Prevention Poster Committee:*

*Announced SFFMA Poster Winners:*

- *2<sup>nd</sup> Place Estella Hernandez – Rio Hondo*
- *3<sup>rd</sup> Place Celeste Cerda – Rio Hondo*
- *4<sup>th</sup> Place Princess Rose Perdon*

*President Farrell, stated “Our district has challenges just like anyone else, but it is well represented at the state level”.*

*President Farrell, advised the members in attendance to utilize HB2604 to attend training and reminded them that Municipal School is July 23-27.*

***Old Business:***

*No old business to discuss.*

***NEW BUSINESS:***

*Nueva Luz:*

*President Farrell, stated “Our board’s endeavor is to address medical health and wellness. Nueva Luz has approached the board and there are some grant opportunities for us to create a task force. We would like to address PTSD, personal finances, drug/alcohol abuse, etc., the District is going to partner with Nueva Luz to try and obtain a grant through VFIS and they will provide a 12 month support. The District has an MOU that has already been reviewed by the board and are waiting on Nueva Luz to review. However, if we are not awarded the grant the board has already discussed that we will continue to try to get the task force going”.*

*Rene Lopez:*

*Thanked Chief Rojas for hosting the meeting.*

*Chief Lopez stated, “I am enjoying retirement but have gone back to volunteer with the Mission Fire Department. I am also an amateur radio man and a member of the Heroes Organization. Mission Heroes is always willing to help out in any way they can. They will help out smaller departments, if they lose their equipment (gloves, etc). I am also a Board Member of the Nueva Luz Foundation. Nueva Luz will provide the money and assist with starting a regional task force. I urge the board to move forward and sign an MOU with Nueva Luz to be able to create a PEER to PEER Task Force”.*

*President Farrell thanked Chief Lopez for his service.*

*President Farrell, stated “The District is now utilizing QuickBooks for accounting purposes. In the past we would mail or email out invoices to the departments. We will now be able to send it out electronically”.*

*President Farrell has asked the board to contact agencies/organizations to become a member of our organization as a sustaining member*

*Frankie Joe Salinas, stated “The RGVFFMA will be hosting the 2021 convention and extended his assistance to the board to assist with the planning and preparing of the 2021 Convention”.*

*President Farrell stated, “The Taste of the Valley is a hit. It’s always good to hear that people want to come down here”.*

*President Farrell:*

*Website – the board has decided to take a different direction with it. We need someone to update the website. So we will entertain if anyone wants to assist.*

#### ***Historian Report – Rolando Reyes***

*Rolando Reyes (Hidalgo) presented the history of the Hidalgo Fire Department (see attached).*

*Thanked everyone for participating and attending and giving up their Sunday to be in attendance today. Thanked the Mayor and City Council for allowing them to host.*

*Rey Mendoza (Hidalgo Co. EMS), “I started in Hidalgo in 1995. I represent Hidalgo Co. EMS as Sr. VP of the company. We cover several counties. We would be honored to be a part of the RGVFFMA”.*

*Patrick Guzman (Municipal Emergency Services) Thanked everyone in attendance and Chief Rojas. Mr. Guzman, stated “We provide equipment to fire departments and cover south of Pleasanton to this area and to Laredo. I have been in the fire service for about 16 yrs with Kleberg County FD”.*

*Jason Delattre, Tracey Granger and the team (Air Evac) - Thanked President Farrell and Chief Rojas for inviting them to the meeting.*

*Program Director Jason Delattre (former Edinburg firefighter), stated “We anticipate becoming members of your District. We provide EMS training and maybe we can assist at your Fire & Safety Academy”.*

*Tracey Granger, Program Director with AirEvac, stated “We are working on doing classes for all departments. Emergency membership covers all members in the*



*household. \$85 yearly fee. Whether they are insured or not they will not receive a bill. We are honored, privileged and blessed to be a part of this”.*

***Next Host City:***

*Port Mansfield? Hopefully a tailgate party if hosted there.*

*President Farrell, stated “We will depart to Chief Espinoza’s residence at 1:30 p.m. Anybody that wants to join us is welcome too”.*

*Chief Rojas “Thank you for coming to the City of Hidalgo”.*

***Announcements:***

*Group picture w/ AirEvac after lunch  
Meal will be on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. You are welcome to walk around the arena.*

*Chief Robert Rojas thanked the employees from the State Farm Arena for assisting in getting it all together.*

***Benediction:***

*Chaplain Gary Wilburn provided the benediction.*

***Adjournment:***

*President Farrell asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting; Motion made by Johnny Flores (Elsa); 2<sup>nd</sup> by Octi Hernandez (Pharr); all in favor; motion passed.*

*Meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.*

*Submitted by:*

*James Farrell*  
*James Farrell*  
*President*

*Mari Tovar*  
*Mari Tovar*  
*Secretary*