

# Rio Grande Valley Firefighters' & Fire Marshals' Association

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## District Meeting Minutes Los Fresnos, Tx November 4, 2023



The Rio Grande Valley Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association held their quarterly meeting on Saturday, November 4, 2023 in Los Fresnos, Texas

### Board Members Present:

- President Dallas Renfrew
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Oscar Rodriguez
- 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President Aurelio Cadena
- Maricruz Tovar, Secretary
- Ruben Balboa, Administrative Coordinator/Immediate PP
- Ubaldo Perez, Training Coordinator
- Leticia Salinas, Treasurer
- Gary Wilburn, Chaplain
- Richard Trevino, Historian
- Ian Wilburn, Mascot

### Members not Present:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Victor Nieves
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Jesus Martinez
- Gerardo Gomez, Sgt. at Arms

### Call to Order:

President Renfrew called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

### Pledge of Allegiance:

Mascot Ian Wilburn led the group in the pledge.

### Introduction of Guests:

President Renfrew introduced the following guests:

- Donny Boggs, SFFMA President
- Chuck Richardson, SFFMA Past President
- Heather Trevino, TFA President
- RJ Thomas, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP SFFMA
- Norma Villegas, San Perlita Comm.
- Chief George Guadiana, San Perlita FD
- Gilbert Chavero, RGVFFMA Past President
- Leroy Salinas, RGVFFMA Past President

## Welcome:

Chief Gene Daniels welcomed the RGVFFMA and its members to the City of Los Fresnos and thanked everyone for attending.

## Response:

Richard Trevino, Historian thanked the City of Los Fresnos, Chief Daniels and its members for hosting the meeting.

President Renfrew congratulated the Los Fresnos Fire Department and Chief Daniels on their 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and for their hospitality and great food. The RGVFFMA presented Los Fresnos Fire Department with a plaque. The event was very nice.

## Roll Call:

District Secretary Mari Tovar conducted roll call of cities present. There were fourteen (14) cities and two (2) Past Presidents in attendance. President Renfrew and Secretary verified that a quorum was established.

## Approval of Minutes:

President Renfrew asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the District Meeting held in August. Motion made by Chief Leroy Salinas, PP (La Joya); 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chief Roy Contreras (Alamo); all in favor, motion passed and approved.

## Finance Report:

Finance report was presented by Treasurer Leticia Salinas (see attached).

President Renfrew asked for a motion to approve the Finance Report. Motion made by Chief Roy Contreras (Alamo), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chief Leroy Salinas, PP (La Joya); all in favor, motion passed and approved.

## Officer's Report:

President Dallas Renfrew:

- Discussed BBQ Cook-off between Texas A&M Culinary Staff and Valley. Need to get prepared
- Fundraiser
  - VAIL got involved with So. Texas All Hazards last year. Emergency responders need to learn a rudimentary sign language
  - Fishing tournament for Hard of Hearing, only 10 families will be chosen to fish, fishing license is required
  - Event based on donations only
  - Park permit has already been submitted and approved
  - Need to submit dates to George Garcia
- Training
  - District HazMat Summit
  - April 4 – 5, 2024
- Recap
  - BBQ Cook-off at Texas A&M
  - Fundraiser
  - HazMat Training
  - Pass the hat for San Perlita FF LODD

Chief Balboa, PP – Adm. Coor. (Harlingen) asked for a motion to donate \$150 to San Perlita FF LODD. Motion made by Chief Leroy Salinas, PP (La Joya); 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chief Contreras (Alamo); all in favor; motion passed and approved.

Adm. Coor. Ruben Balboa:

- BBQ Cook-off
  - Will assist valley team
  - Need 2 pits to cook. Will contact Kirby Wilson to request assistance with pits
  - Need t-shirts for team
  - Cook-off will not take the place of the valley party and will not be held during that time
  - Need to prepare for event and decide on meats to cook
  - Valley Party is the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of Municipal School
  - Municipal School Registration: 7/6/24 and Classes Start: 7/7/24

Discussion:

Chief Contreras, asked “Can the dates to the valley party or BBQ be changed?”

President Renfrew, response “No the dates can’t be changed. We will also pass the hat for donations for the Memorial Wall in Shawn Snider’s name and for a charity of the Chef’s choice.”

Chief Leroy Salinas, stated “We need to setup a committee to assist Balboa with the cook-off and design the t-shirt.”

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Victor Nieves:

- No Report – Not in Attendance

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Oscar Rodriguez:

- In charge of Memorial Services in April
- Email memorial names to Oscar Rodriguez at [oscar221@icloud.com](mailto:oscar221@icloud.com)
- Questions please call me at (469) 426-1107

As per President Renfrew, advised “We will be having 2 meetings in Cameron County and 2 meetings in Hidalgo County.”

3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Jesus Martinez:

- No Report – Not in Attendance
- In charge of EMS and Firefighter of the Year
- Nomination form will be sent out in January
- Email nominations to Jesus Martinez at [firedept@sullivancity.org](mailto:firedept@sullivancity.org) or
- Questions please call me at (956) 867-5838

4<sup>th</sup> Vice President Aurelio Cadena:

- No pumper races
- If anyone has any event ideas for after the meetings, please share them with me and we will entertain them

As per President Renfrew, “If you are looking for presentations from NVFC or SFFMA please call me.”

Rogelio Tijerina, asked “Are there dues being paid to the District?”

Treasurer Salinas, response “Yes, \$125 per department. Dues are sent out in December of each year. As of today, 32 departments have paid.”

Training Coor. Ubaldo Perez:

- FPSA scheduled for February – March 2024
- Offering a variety of training: Rescue, Emergency Management, Firefighter Classes, Special Courses
- NVFC HazMat Summit at NO COST – 25 students minimum
  - Host one class during the week
  - Weekend Classes 4 – 3-hour courses
- Annual NFA Class – 15 students minimum
  - Leadership in Supervision: 2-day class (Saturday and Sunday)

### **SFFMA Report:**

- Presented by President Donny Boggs (see attached)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> VP RJ Thomas
- Travel Grant
  - Soliciting industrial companies. Donation letters going out soon
  - Travel money will be based off of donations
- SFFMA Call for Presenters
  - Looking for presenters, if you know of anyone that would like to present, please submit names
- EMS Board created
  - 1<sup>st</sup> meeting held
  - Elected chair
  - FTO in EMS field
  - Setting up process
  - Working with state
  - Need someone from the valley to sit on board

**\*\*\*\*\*Break at 12:08 p.m. and Reconvened at 12:36 p.m.\*\*\*\*\***

### **Old Business:**

- No old business to discuss

### **New Business:**

- Training Classes Coming Up
- Positions Opening Up at SFFMA
- Wage Instructor Positions at TEEX

### **History of Host City**

History of Host City was presented by Richard Trevino, Historian.

### **Adjournment**

President Renfrew asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made by PP Gilbert Chavero, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chief Contreras (Alamo); all in favor; motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

*Dallas Renfrew*

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Dallas Renfrew, President

Submitted by: Mari Tovar, Secretary

**January 31, 2024**

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Date of Approval

Reviewed by: Ruben Balboa, Adm. Coor.



**RGVFFMA TREASURERS FINANCIAL REPORT**  
**Quarterly Report**  
**July 2023-September 2023**  
**Los Fresnos Fire Department**  
**4-Nov-23**

**BANK ACCOUNT**

<u>July</u>		<u>August</u>		<u>September</u>	
Beginning Balance	\$62,527.87	Beginning Balance	\$60,995.84	Beginning Balance	\$60,123.95
Credits	\$0.00	Credits	\$0.00	Credits	\$0.00
Debits	\$1,532.03	Debits	\$871.89	Debits	\$63.96
Ending Balance	\$60,995.84	Ending Balance	\$60,123.95	Ending Balance	\$60,059.99

**BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION FUND:**

BALANCE \$30,000.00 CD RATE: 1.29% TERM 12 MONTHS

CD Maturity Date: 08/27/23

**Total Accounts Value: \$90,059.99**

**REPORT PREPARED BY: LETICIA QUINTERO**



## RGVFFMA TREASURERS FINANCIAL REPORT

Quarterly Report

July 2023

**BEGINNING BALANCE: July 1, 2023**

**\$62,527.87**

### **INCOME (Deposits)**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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**TOTAL INCOME (DEPOSITS)      \$0.00**

### **EXPENSES (Checks Written/Debit Card Transactions)**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Check No.</u>	<u>Payable To</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
7/3	5476	Richard Van Winkle	SFFMA President 2022	\$500.00
7/11	5478	Ricks Quick Stop	Ice for SFFMA Conference	\$450.00
7/7	Debit	Intuit	Quickbooks	\$58.63
7/31	Debit	Goolge Workspace	Google Meets	\$10.65
7/31	Debit	Entenmann Rovin Com	Badge for Admin Asst.	\$139.25
7/31	Debit	Entenmann Rovin Com	Badges PP, Mascot, Sgt	\$373.50

Total Expenses (Checks Written/Debit Card Used)      **\$1,532.03**

**ENDING BANK BALANCE: July 31, 2023**

**\$60,995.84**



# RGVFFMA TREASURERS FINANCIAL REPORT

Quarterly Report

August 2023

**BEGINNING BALANCE: August 1, 2023** **\$60,995.84**

**INCOME (Deposits)**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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**TOTAL INCOME (DEPOSITS)      \$0.00**

**EXPENSES (Checks Written/Debit Card Transactions)**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Check No.</u>	<u>Payable To</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
8/7	5482	Aurelio Cadena	President Jacket	<b>\$110.25</b>
8/7	Debit	Intuit	Quickbooks	<b>\$63.96</b>
8/14	Debit	1&1	Website	<b>\$47.43</b>
8/21	Debit	SAS CPA	Tax Return	<b>\$412.00</b>
8/25	Debit	UBER Eats	District Meeting Meals	<b>\$12.88</b>
8/25	Debit	UBER Eats	District Meeting Meals	<b>\$214.72</b>
8/30	Debit	Google	Workspace-Meets	<b>\$10.65</b>

Total Expenses (Checks Written/Debit Card Used)      **\$871.89**

**ENDING BANK BALANCE: August 31, 2023** **\$60,123.95**



## RGVFFMA TREASURERS FINANCIAL REPORT

Quarterly Report

September 2023

**BEGINNING BALANCE: September 1, 2023** **\$60,123.95**

### **INCOME (Deposits)**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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**TOTAL INCOME (DEPOSITS) \$0.00**

### **EXPENSES (Checks Written/Debit Card Transactions)**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Check No.</u>	<u>Payable To</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
9/7	Debit	Intuit	Quickbooks	\$63.96

**Total Expenses (Checks Written/Debit Card Used) \$63.96**

**ENDING BANK BALANCE: September 30, 2023** **\$60,059.99**





## District Meeting Speaking Points Fall 2023

### Legislature and Legislative Activities

- Approximately \$10 million added to the 2604 funding
- TAMFS increased 2604 funding Sept 1, 2023 to: \$140 per student/day; \$700 course max; \$15,000 annual department cap (at the urging of your SFFMA Executive Board and membership)
- Criteria for 2604 funding revised to include the age of equipment in qualifying for funding.
- Allowance for emergency transport of persons in non-EMS vehicles in certain circumstances.
- Increased penalties to drivers who do not move over for emergency vehicles.
- Creation of an industrial FF license plate.
- More temporary licenses allowed for bingo fundraisers by VFD's.
- *TUITION EXEMPTION FOR VOLUNTEERS*

### Austin Office News

- The Austin Staff:
  - Tim Rutland – Executive Director (will be retiring in January 2024) The President has formed a search committee to contact potential individuals as a possible replacement.
  - Kevin Creamer – Certification Administrator
  - Edward Palacio – Membership Coordinator
  - Heather Lundy – Special Events Coordinator/Certification Assistant
  - Teresa Junkin – Bookkeeper/Membership Assistant
  - Julie Wegmiller – Sales Administrator
  - Derrell Beasley – Data system designer/programmer
  - Kim Hilsenbeck – Media, Marketing, and Outreach Director
- SFFMA Portal –
  - Approximately 90-95% complete
    - Primary modules still to be developed:
      - Skill testing scheduler
      - Written testing scheduler
      - Conference registration feature
    - Short tutorials available from SFFMA homepage. More will be developed this fall.
    - ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO HAVE AN ACCOUNT – IMPORTANT
    - REMIND EVERYONE THAT INVOICES NO LONGER MAILED OUT – CREATE YOUR OWN INVOICE IN THE PORTAL
- Testing –
  - Tests are being scheduled and conducted

- Email [testing@sffma.org](mailto:testing@sffma.org) for details and scheduling
- Testing being conducted by staff and some outside proctors
- Sales:
  - Continued strong demand for the HAIX wildland/EMS boots. Qualified for 2604 funding.
  - Also continued strong demand for study and reference books.
  - See the new store website
  - Contact Julie if you have questions.

### Certification News

- Discussions ongoing to try and improve pass rates for Aw, Ops, FFI, and FFII tests.
- Encourage people to use study guides – see SFFMA store for examples
- Continued work on test banks for Driver Operator, Instructor (I & II), and Inspector. Proposed completion: end of the year.

### Membership News

- RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP IS BEHIND WHERE IT SHOULD BE FOR THE YEAR.
  - We are at about 77% of last year's department membership numbers.
  - We are at about 88% of last year's individual membership numbers.
- NEED HELP GETTING THE WORD OUT.
- Make sure your members are aware of association benefits – SEE THE WEBSITE....**Benefits expire at midnight on December 31st....ensure you pay dues prior so no one is left uncovered.**

Email [membership@sffma.org](mailto:membership@sffma.org) for information if you need it.

- VFIS member insurance – Make sure a beneficiary form is completed by each of your department's SFFMA members. DON'T SUBMIT IT...you or the member should keep it on file. Form is available on SFFMA website.
- Retired member category has been established. To qualify, staff will need to verify:
  - Retired status
  - Past Association membership
  - 15 years with one or more SFFMA member departments
  - Contact [membership@sffma.org](mailto:membership@sffma.org) to pursue this membership status
    - Entitles member to vote at the annual training conference and convention
- Junior Member category recently developed.
  - Fee is ½ of annual fee.
  - Allows junior member to utilize training module of Portal.
  - Not qualified for any other benefits until full membership.
- Prorating of membership fee
  - Prorating the annual membership fee for **brand new members** has been implemented and will become applicable as of April 1<sup>st</sup> (beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the year).

- District Leaders' Symposium – Next symposium: January 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> at SFFMA offices.
  - Will have reps from TEEX, TFS, VFIS to address the group and answer questions.
  - LOTS OF OTHER IMPORTANT INFO TO DISCUSS...make plans to have two district board members attend.

• STRESS IMPORTANCE OF NOMINATING FF & EMS RESPONDERS OF THE YEAR

## Grants

- **SAFER Grant:**
  - Active as of December 14, 2022
  - Total grant amount: \$2.1 million
    - Can be used for:
      - Print and media marketing
      - Entry-level physicals for new personnel
      - Leadership and career training
      - Basic firefighter training for new personnel
      - PPE for new personnel
      - Assistance with membership dues
    - See information under Other Resources > SAFER Grant/Other Programs on the website.
    - Please take time to complete any survey that Kim has placed on the web site or distributes to association members. Your answers will allow us to serve you better.
- **SFFMA Education/Travel Grant:**
  - Continuing to petition businesses and other organizations for sponsorship support.
  - Do you have one in mind? Please let us know!!

## Conference

- Plans underway for **2024 conference June 27 – 30 in San Marcos.**
  - When available, info will be under **Meetings/Events > Upcoming Conference** on the website.
  - **Four-day conference (3 ½ days for most attendees): Thursday – Sunday.**
- Planning meetings for the 2024 conference to be January 26<sup>th</sup> at SFFMA offices.
  - Representatives of committees with conference responsibilities will meet with executive board members for planning sessions.
- Racing Committee says there will be races in San Marcos, but no conference registration will be required to enter.
- 2025 Conference: Frisco.
- 2026 Conference: Waco.

AMENDMENTS ON VOTING & DEPT. DUES PRO-RATION