



Fire Technology Advisory Committee Meeting

MINUTES

Friday, September 30, 2022

10 – 11 a.m.

Via Zoom Online Virtual Meeting

Hosts:

Alina Varona, Dean, Career Education and Workforce Development

Angela Olmanson, Program Administrator, Allied Health

Chief Jason Weber, Marin County

Heather Rahman, Program Coordinator, Career Education

Alex Jones, COM Work Experience Instructor

Attended:

Erich Mesenburg, John Dicochea, Dean Bonfigli, Joshua Dimon, Ron Palmer, Byron Ramey, Thomas Azwell, Rich Pearce, Matthew Barnes, Jason Hatfield, Scott Wood, Bret McTigue

<p>Welcome and Introductions</p>	<p><i>The meeting began at 10:00 a.m.</i></p> <p>Alina Varona started the meeting by welcoming all who joined and by explaining the agenda and what we planned to discuss. Following a welcoming, all participants introduced themselves.</p>
<p>Program/College Updates</p>	<p>Alina spoke of all educational sectors that fall under College of Marin Career Education.</p> <p>She reported the latest enrollments and demographics and the changes in comparison to previous academic years. She announced the metrics of students dual enrolled in high school and EMR/EMT classes. Alina also compared the retention and success rate in relation to that of College of Marin as a whole. All numbers declined during 2020 when the pandemic struck, but the trend shows tendency to recover.</p> <p>Scott mentioned that some students start the program but realize soon the magnitude of work. So, those students usually drop themselves and do not fail. Most students who stay in the courses through the mid-term often finish successfully save those who had unforeseen life situations and had to drop out.</p> <p>The committee discussed the qualification for instructors to teach EMT and EMR. It involves, at minimum, a 40-hour and CA State approved, State FIRE Marshal Instructor 1A and 1B or an equivalent through a police academy.</p>
<p>Labor Market Information</p>	<p>Heather Rahman reported out on the current local demands for EMT, EMR, Paramedics and Firefighters.</p> <p>The committee responded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighters with paramedic training, the salary can start at \$120,000/year. The pay varies from seasonal firefighters to full-time, professional paid. • Private institutions salaries are rising. They are realizing that if they want to retain employees they will have to pay better. • There are significant <i>fewer people</i> wanting to pursue this industry as previous years. • The demand numbers seem low due to the lack of applicants.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment, retention and referral bonuses are in place to mitigate such a dire need in the private sector, though it is still challenging to recruit. • EMT jobs do offer have much better pay now. • 911 companies are hurting (“starving”) for EMT candidates.
<p>Industry Share-outs</p>	<p>Why are less attracted to this industry?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems like public safety careers are as a whole has taken a down turn. • People are leaving these careers ahead of retirement due to fatigue and stress. • Cost of living in the Bay Area impacts the industry. • The luster of these careers is lacking right now. <p>CA usually license 2000 paramedics each year, but last year, and since the pandemic, only 500 were licensed.</p> <p>The committee asked, where are the College of Marin students land after they complete their courses? Our institutional goal is to have 85% of our students to report back that they are in an occupation closely related to the field of their study. In recent years, 78% College of Marin students, who completed and became employed, reported that they are working in a field closely related to what they studied. The survey results are lagging, but COM is striving to meet the 85% goal.</p>
<p>Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)</p>	<p>In past meetings, it was expressed that Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) was desired for FIRE 255 Wildland Fire course to fulfill for the degree in Public Safety. Alex explained that Credit for Prior Learning is available for those who have already had some training, but want to continue with an educational plan.</p> <p>However, CPL is available for any class for any degree, but a faculty member must determine that the previous educational training equates to what we offer in our courses before awarding CPL.</p>
<p>F.I.R.E. Foundry Updates</p>	<p>Chief Weber and Angela Olmanson reported on the updates for the F.I.R.E. Foundry program.</p> <p>F.I.R.E. Foundry program is to provide a pipeline to help attract and prepare folks to achieve their career goals revolving around climate emergencies and challenges. The program offers a livable wage and wrap-around services support, create a more diversified workforce in these fields, and to introduce new technologies in meeting climate change issues.</p>

	<p>The pilot cohort started on January 31st. The application process is planned and underway for 3 additional cohorts of students.</p> <p>The program is evolving to become nimble and more supportive to meet the students needs. A one-size fits all approach of this program doesn't work well. The 40 hours work week with a full day of instruction was too much for most students. We want to set up the program so that a student can meet their individual goals which may not include full-time work. This next year new classes will be available and CPL is will remain as an option. We hope to offer a physical fitness course to help students get ready.</p> <p>The committee is supportive for a fitness for firefighters' course with a suggestion to look at CPAT (Candidate Physical Aptitude Test) curriculum. Please share your thoughts and ideas with Angela Olmanson in regards to how best to offer to promote student success.</p>
Public Safety Degree Updates	<p>The Public Safety degree was mentioned through the discussions revolving around the F.I.R.E. Foundry students and credit for prior language. Please stay in touch with Angela Olmanson in sharing your ideas and support in attracting students into this degree program.</p>
Dual Enrollment Information	<p>Angela reported that many students at the high school level are interested in public safety type careers, but do not understand what it takes to meet those goals. We have many students interested in taking the EMR/EMT courses, but we need more instructors to teach.</p>
Fire Technology Faculty, Full-time Recruitment	<p>We're hiring for a full-time faculty member, tenure tract. If you are interested in serving on the hiring committee, please contact Alina for details.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 10-month contract • 15 units teaching load • Opportunity to work year-round and earn additional salary • Job is opened through at least, October 15 • First interviews should begin early November <p>We will be sharing the job description soon. Please circulate.</p>
Summary/Wrap-up	<p><i>The meeting was adjourned at: 11:05 p.m. Thanks to all who participated!</i></p>