

CSFA Committee for Volunteers Status Report
September 11, 2017
By Tom Forster, Committee Chair

The Committee has been inactive for several years since Chairman Chief Ronny Coleman stepped down. This followed four years of several productive efforts, including providing Recruiting & Retention workshops held around the state, and several Leadership Workshops. Chief Coleman did an excellent job, and we very much appreciated and miss his work, along with those who volunteered to teach.

Since then, Jeff Stone and I have each served as Committee Chairs briefly, in my case since January this year. We've both struggled with a lack of time and resources to get things done. While Chief Coleman was retired and was able to commit significant time to the effort, both Jeff and I work full-time. In addition, we both serve as Volunteer Fire Chiefs, and are active in our County Fire Chiefs Associations.

In my case, for example, I volunteer to be the Secretary/Treasurer of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association, volunteer to teach several CFSTES courses each year, help with a County Fire Academy, co-organize a County fire muster, run the Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association website, www.plumasfirechiefs.org, and manage a sharesite on the service "samepage." I also volunteer to lead the Marin County Fire Chiefs Association History project and website, www.marinfirehistory.org. This of course leaves little time to lead a statewide volunteer effort.

However, despite these challenges, we are planning for a better future with the Committee, and are currently in a "go slow to go somewhat faster later" mode. We are basically planning for rebuilding and reorganizing. In January, I reached out to each existing committee member and asked if they still wanted to be involved. Some responded, and I never heard back from some. Next, a conference call was held with those who remained, to discuss the status and potential goals.

The next action step is to meet with you on Friday, September 24 in Healdsburg to seek input and gain approval on future goals for the committee.

Some of our recommended goals moving forward include:

- 1) Updating the committee strategic plan.
- 2) Updating the CSFA website page.
- 3) Improving communications about resources, 'best practices', and events through a statewide share site, possibly "Basecamp." This is different than the "portal", which I will explain in person.
- 4) Plan for future grant applications for training and/or other programs.
- 5) Convene an open committee and member 'best practices and problem solving for volunteer FD's' weekend in 2018.
- 6) Create an online apparatus & equipment donations program to streamline efforts, and basically link those who have something to donate with those who need it, leaving them to work out transfer. No pickup, storage, or drop-off on our part.
- 7) Re-engage with key partners, such as the CSFA leadership and FSTI.

I will discuss further on Friday, September 24.