

# ASSOCIATION UPDATE



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Association Administrator

## We're Engaged!

If I were to describe IAFFD's recent activity in a few words it would be: **"engaged, productive and grateful."** While I could keep going, these three words singularity do the job.

As I provide an overview of recent activities, it is clear the Association has been actively **engaged** on many fronts while encouraging the membership to do the same. When people are planning around family events, work schedules, fire district meetings, and other activities, we strive to be **productive** with offerings that invite engagement, provide educational opportunities, and distribute valuable resources. We are **grateful** to those utilizing the services we provide.

We are **grateful** for the 300+ attendees who spent time with us in Champaign (or online) for the 78th Annual Conference. This event is, by far, our most effective option for getting a solid dose of quality education paired with exceptional networking opportunities and stepping away from the daily grind.

We are **grateful** to have had 100 fire districts represented and thrilled to have welcomed 50 newcomers this year. The 2022 IAFFD Conference screams 'engaged!' The program had 30 talented speakers who presented 24 informative topics, including Open Meetings Act and the 3-part Essential Trustee Training. We hosted more social events to visit and doubled the vendor participation from the previous year. While 2022 overall participation was about 35% less than the pre-covid conference era, we are **grateful** to every attendee, our presenters, our supporters, and hard-working volunteers. They contributed to what we

see as a successful outcome and validating we are all *Still Going Strong!* You can view the conference highlights throughout this issue with our appreciation to Paul Grzelak for his photography services and a job well done.

Another **engaging** activity worth mentioning is the productive conversations our leaders, supporters, and members are having about the conference partnership with the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. Our two organizations have worked well together on many educational programs, and we are very confident this collaboration will experience similar, if not more tremendous, success. Watch your inbox and the next issue of The Fire Call for more details on this exciting endeavor!

The IAFFD has been proactive with the **Community Risk Reduction Statewide Task Force** and supports the vision promoting awareness encourages districts to learn how to collect and analyze incident data and form partnerships that can improve these statistics over time.

The Association continues to lobby lawmakers on the importance of having a voice for fire protection districts with the **Illinois Fire Pension Investment Fund Board** and by amending the statute.

There are 296 suburban and downstate pension funds, 109 represent fire districts, and 187 are from municipalities. This math is why we are eager to change the law and, more importantly, why the Fire Protection District President's vote in the upcoming election is so vitally important. **We need your help in getting Mr. John Perry of Lisle Woodridge Fire Protection District re-elected for a second term as Executive Trustee with the IFPIF Board.**

We encourage members (with Article 4 pension funds) to become **engaged** by confirming the information on record with the IFPIF office is accurate so that the current President of the Board of Trustees receives the election ballot and is not inadvertently delivered to the pension board president. This simple step can be 'productive' going forward with the election cycle.

Next and equally important is ensuring our members with an Article 4 pension fund understand why we find Mr. Perry the logical choice for the position. Beyond the fact that he has a two-year term on the Board under his belt, I share with you his professional background and leadership positions he has held in municipal organizations:

- President, IL City/County Management Assn;
- Founding member, IL Public Employer Labor Relations Assn.
- Founding member, Intergovernmental Risk Management Assn.
- Chairman, Managers Committee of the IL Municipal League
- Chairman, Planning Committee of the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference
- Founder of the Suburban Housing Coalition, now Diversity, Inc.

As we wrap up the summer season, I encourage you to get engaged by reading the information shared in this publication and using the area representative or staff to your advantage. We are here to serve you just as you are there to serve your fire district.

Thank you for supporting the IAFFD and for all you do in your community. ■