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FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 209: 1900 (NBFU LETTER)

By Richard Schulte

The fourth Annual Meeting of the National Fire Protection Association was held in New York in late June 1900. Among the subjects discussed was a letter from the National Board of Fire Underwriters (NBFU) addressing the publication of standards developed by the NFPA. The following is the transcript of the NBFU's letter and the discussion of the letter:

“NATIONAL BOARD OF FIRE UNDERWRITERS.

Mr. Stratton. *Mr. President, the reference in the Executive Committee's report on a communication which we had received from the National Board of Underwriters was in connection with this letter from them of May 15, addressed to the Secretary of this Association:*

New York, May 15, 1900.

Mr. Everett U. Crosby, Secretary National Fire Protection Association, New York:

Dear Sir—Referring to the conference held at these rooms on the 28th of February last, between the officers of your Association and representatives of this Board, we desire to say that the recommendation adopted at that conference was submitted to the Executive Committee of this Board at the meeting held on the 26th ult., when the matter was referred to the annual meeting of the Board on the 10th with a favorable recommendation, and the following resolution thereupon adopted:

Resolved—That we approve of the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the National Board adopt the standards formulated by the National Fire Protection Association and assume the expense of publishing the same in suitable form, and also that the Board contribute to the cost of printing the annual proceedings of that Association; and, further, that matters relative to protective measures be referred to the said National Fire Protection Association for investigation and report to the Executive Committee of the Board.

Yours truly,

H. K. MILLER, General Agent.

This communication from the National Board of Fire Underwriters indicates that the work of this Association is to have their official recognition, and the proper method of handling this important responsibility is before you to decide now, if you care to take it up at this meeting. Some action must be taken in order to prepare for the work which will be imposed upon us.

Mr. Hexamer. I do not think this Association is quite ready at this time, Mr. President, to lay out any definite plan of action in this matter. There is only one thing I see that we can do, and that is to refer the entire subject to the incoming Executive Committee with power, my idea being that it will be necessary to appoint standing committees on various subjects, to whom matters coming from the National Board can be referred for examination and report. And, as our meetings are annual, some plan must be devised by which speedy action can be taken, because to delay action from one year to another would be out of the question. I would therefore move you, Mr. President, that the subject of the detail of the proposed plan be referred to the incoming Executive Committee with power. Adopted.

On motion of Mr. Hexamer the Association adjourned to 10 a. m., Wednesday, June 27."

The NBFU's letter is indicative of the relationship between the NBFU and the NFPA in 1900. The NBFU's support was vital to the future of the NFPA.

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Source: *"Proceedings of the Fourth Annual [NFPA] Meeting"*, New York, 1900.

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