**MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, March 1, 2021**

**Via ZOOM**

***(Draft Copy Only, Not Approved)***

Chief Dan Brooks called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 8:00 a.m. via ZOOM. Fire Commission members present for today’s meeting included Stephan Bunker, Senator Chip Curry, Senator Scott Cyrway, Deputy Chief (RET) Kenneth Desmond, Gerry Gay, James Graves, Steven Greeley, Ron Green, Chief Thomas Higgins, Representative Grayson Lookner, Vicki Schmidt, Charles Soltan, Representative Timothy Theriault, Chief Joseph Thomas, Chief Michael Thurlow, Representative Bruce White, Chief Larry Willis (RET). Members unable to attend the meeting were Matt Gomes, Chief Joseph Guyotte, Sam Hurley, Harty Norris, Peter Rogers and Susan M. Pinette (staff). Guests joining the Fire Commission meeting were Chief William Gillespie of the Liberty Fire Department; Chief William St. Michel, Executive Director of the Maine Fire Chiefs Association; and Richard Taylor, Maine State Fire Marshal’s Office.

Committee Reports and Old Business

The Best Practices Committee reported no new nominations for Best Practices recognition were received this month.

The Bylaws Committee was tasked with reviewing the Fire Commission’s bylaws and suggesting updates as needed. The Maine Legislature is considering a bill this session to allow virtual meetings. The Bylaws Committee will be drafting language so the Fire Commission bylaws comply with state law. The Committee will forward this language to members for their consideration and support final passage of the bill.

The Education and Training Strategy Committee reported that the original funding was not cut and talks with Fairfield can proceed to start their project. The Committee continued their discussion with Yarmouth to formally complete their project.

The Elections Committee reminded members that the Annual Meeting is in April and Fire Commission officers, according to the bylaws, are to be elected at the Annual Meeting. Chair Dan Brooks, First Vice Chair Gerry Gay, Second Vice Chair Ron Green and Treasurer Michael Thurlow have all indicated they are willing to run for another term. The Secretary position is vacant and Election Committee members strongly encourage members interested in serving contact them immediately.

The Recruitment and Retention Committee reported that the Department of Education will be forwarding a communication to guidance counselors across the State.

The Spring Conference Committee announced last month that the Spring Conference, originally scheduled for March 2021, will now be scheduled for late August 2021. Further details will be available in June but initial plans are for the location to remain at Sunday River. The conference agenda, workshops and speakers will remain the same although the Committee reserves the right to make changes if necessary.

The Staffing Committee updated Fire Commission members on the following:

1. The Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center at the University of Maine in Orono recently developed a report for Hancock County funded by an AFG grant. A proposal is forthcoming.
2. In addition, they are looking to partner with Maine Emergency Medical Services.

The Staffing Committee suggested to Fire Commission members that this group also consider a registration/licensing process to identify the firefighting capability in Maine.

***A motion by Chief Michael Thurlow, seconded by Gerry Gay, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission authorize the Staffing Committee to develop a registration/credentialing system to quantify the number of firefighters and their capabilities in Maine.*** The motion passed unanimously.

The Wildland Fire Committee did not have a report this month.

New Business and News from Members

The LOSAP Board has added a new EMS member, Amy Drinkwater. The LOSAP Board is still working on drafting language for their bill. Welcome Amy!

The Maine State Weekend will be virtual this year and five courses will be available from the NFA on May 1st and May 2nd.

The next Fire Commission meeting will be the Annual Meeting scheduled for Monday, April 5th and via ZOOM.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chair Brooks adjourned the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette

*My sincere gratitude to Chief Thurlow, for without his notes, I would not have been able to produce these minutes. Thank you!*