**MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, June 7, 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 Robby Gross (for Matt Gomes), James Graves, Steven Greeley, Ron Green, Harty Norris, Vicki Schmidt, Charles Soltan, Chief Joseph Thomas, Chief Michael Thurlow, Chief Larry Willis (RET). Members unable to attend the meeting were Stephan Bunker, Senator Chip Curry, Senator Scott Cyrway, Deputy Chief (RET) Kenneth Desmond, Gerry Gay, Chief Joseph Guyotte Chief Thomas Higgins, Sam Hurley, Representative Grayson Lookner, Peter Rogers, Representative Timothy Theriault, Representative Bruce White and Susan M. Pinette (staff). Guests joining the Fire Commission meeting were Chief William Gillespie of the Liberty Fire Department; Chief Roger Hooper, York County Fire Administrator; and Chief William St. Michel, Executive Director of the Maine Fire Chiefs Association.

Committee Reports and Old Business

The Best Practices Committee reported no new nominations this month but continued to urge Fire Commission members to submit worthy nominees for Best Practices recognition to the Committee. Commission members agreed that the Fire Commission would not award an annual Best Practice Award this year due to the lack of nominations.

The Bylaws Committee did not have a report this month.

The Education and Training Strategy Committee reported the start of a “lessons learned” document based on the initial group of grants awarded by the Fire Commission. Committee members are monitoring the status of LD 242 *An Act To Support the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission* sponsored by Senator Cyrway in these final days of the legislative session. The Committee also updated members regarding the Fairfield project. Fairfield had proposed changes to their initial submission and the Committee requested that Fairfield submit these proposed changes to the Committee for approval.

The Recruitment and Retention Committee had no new business to report.

The Staffing Committee updated Commission members on their work with the Margaret Chase Smith Center and the Hancock County project group. Grant funding applications are moving forward. Members agreed that the first priority is to develop a census/registry process with the goal to document the actual number of firefighters.

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

The Treasurer’s Report noted that there were no new Fire Commission transactions in May 2021. The account balance for the Fire Commission remains at $774.70 and the LOSAP account is now at $602.15. The Fire Commission’s funds from the State are still outstanding and members are hopeful to receive these funds soon.

The LOSAP Board reported their bill received a unanimous Committee report ought to pass and because of the attached fiscal note, the bill goes to the Appropriation Committee table for further consideration.

New Business and News from Members

Fire Commission members reviewed the status of several bills still before the Maine Legislature. LD 731 *An Act To Establish a Program To Assist Regional Firefighter Training Programs, To Provide Tax Credits to Businesses That Employ Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Medical Services Persons and To Provide Benefits to Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Medical Services Persons* sponsored by Senator Stewart of Aroostook contains over $200,000 in funding for the Maine Fire Services Institute. LD 731 received a unanimous ought to pass as amended report from the Taxation Committee and was reported out of Committee on June 4th. LD 731 now sits on the Appropriation Committee table because of the fiscal note.

Fire Commission members learned that the Maine Fire Service Institute Advisory Board has a vacancy for a legislator. Members hope the Legislator would also be on the Fire Commission and suggested Senator Chip Curry, if he was available and willing to serve.

Fire Commission members were informed that the Department of Environmental Protection issued guidance to fire departments not to use water from milfoil infested sources except for emergencies.

Fire Commission members agreed to cancel the July meeting unless unresolved Legislative issues made a meeting necessary. Commission members discussed future meetings and the possibility of in person meetings. Meeting space was potentially available at the Department of Public Safety where Commission members and the public could spread out comfortably. However members agreed to hold the August 2nd meeting via ZOOM with a potential in person meeting in September. The September meeting will be scheduled for Monday, September 13th because of the Labor Day holiday.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chair Brooks adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan. M. Pinette

Staff

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