MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION

**Minutes**

## **Monday, April 4th, 2022**

**8:00am**

**(ZOOM)**

Chief Dan Brooks called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission meeting of April 4, 2022 to order at 10:00 a.m. via ZOOM. Fire Commission members present for the meeting included:

Chief Brooks, James Graves, Ron Green, Vicki Schmidt, Fire Marshal Joseph Thomas, Chief William Gillespie, Chief Chris Wytoch, Senator Scott Cyrway and Ret. Chief Willis.

**Introductions and other business:**

Chief Brooks stated that he didn’t have the March 7th meeting minutes to approve due to clerical errors.

Commission members discussed proceeding absent a quorum present.

**Committee Reports**

1. Best Practices

Two best practices awards were given at the Maine Fire Chiefs Association Conference to Deputy Chief Baker of the Old Town Fire Department and Roger Hoover of the York County Fire Department.

1. Professional Development Conference

Chief Gillespie said the Conference went very well and had sixty vendors participate. Speakers were well received, and all the programs were very good.

A discussion ensured as to future venues for the Conference as the price at Sunday River is increasing.

1. Education and Training Strategy Committee

Jim Graves announced that the RFP issued for facilities engineering studies was released and two proposals were received. One for $17,800 from Knight Engineering and another for $32,000 from St. Germain Engineering.

Mr. Graves stated he’d review the performance details of the proposals and requested approval to accept one of the bids.

Fire Marshal Thomas made a motion to accept the $17,800 bid which was seconded.

A discussion ensued regarding the Commission approving an award absent a quorum. It was agreed that action needed to be taken quickly for Jim Graves to make the award and move forward.

Fire Marshal Thomas motioned to allow Mr. Graves to move forward with the review process and make the award to the bidder he deemed the best suited to do the engineering study.

Following a discussion about the importance of these studies, repair, and maintenance of these training facilities there was consensus that perhaps a fire year strategic plan or a plan in general be put together to ensure adequate funding.

Chief Brooks suggested putting a budget together and have the legislature make an annual appropriation for the funding which Chief Gillespie pointed out amounted to $73,000 this year.

D. Recruitment and Retention Committee

Retired Chief Willis pointed out that Fire Departments are going to permit Fire Departments to exercise more flexible full time work periods which he believed might help recruitment efforts.

F. Wildland Fires

Vickie Schmidt notified the Commission that joint Maine Fire Services Institute and the Maine Fire Service had held the Wildland Firefighter Training Program. Jim Graves showed the Commission a copy of the certificate those taking the training will receive.

G. Staffing Committee

Fire Marshal Thomas informed the Commission that the Hancock Survey group was moving forward and was in the process of developing presentation materials for individual fire departments in the county comparing their department to the county at large.

II. Old Business

A. LOSAP

Chief Gillespie informed the Commission that the contract for the Third Party Administrator for LOSAP was being finalized and will be ready in June.

B. Other

Chief Gillespie pointed out that legislative proposals for funding were sitting on the appropriations table and that the outcome would be announced in the near future. He went on to express his hope that the Criminal Justice and Safety Committee approved funding for the Third Party Administrator for LOSAP.

Chief Gillespie went on to state that LD 797, the LOSAP legislation had passed with the important language changes included.

IV. New Business

Senator Scott Cyrway mentioned that he’d be running for the Maine House of Representatives having been timed out of the Maine Senate.

Chief Brooks expressed his appreciation for what Senator Cyrway has done for the Commission as a Senator and hoped he might stay on as a representative.

Troy Dare of the Vermont Prevention Bureau requested that he be given time at a future Commission meeting to provide a presentation. The request was discussed, and a final decision will be made at a later date.

Chief Brooks said the next Commission meeting would be on May 2nd at 8:00 AM.

Members discussed future meeting formats and preferences. This included in person meetings and where venues to hold such a meeting might be available. Others expressed their wishes to keep distance meetings and/or a hybrid approach. The hybrid meeting would give those traveling a long distance to Zoom in while others attend in person.

Chief Brooks adjourned the meeting at 9:24 AM.

Other scheduled meetings:

Monday May 2nd at 8:00

Monday June 6th at 8:00