

**The Maine Fire Protection Services Commission
&
Maine Fire Services Institute**



***Training & Education Subcommittee
Report & Recommendation Regarding the
Regional Live Fire Training Facility Grant Program***

**Final Version
Approved by the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission
6/3/2019**

LETTER OF SUBMITTAL:

To: Members of the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission
From: The Fire Commission Training & Education Subcommittee
Date: May 17, 2019
Re: Report & Recommendation of Grant Awards

In July 2018, the 128th State Legislature passed LD1845 creating Public Law, Chapter 444, Section 3, 20-A MRSA §9004. This law established a fund to support the construction, and repair or replacement of regional live fire service training facilities (LFTF) in the State of Maine. In accordance with this law and in order to establish a fair, competitive, and effective process to distribute the funds, the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission (Fire Commission) issued guidelines to establish the criteria for the Regional Live Fire Service Training Facility Grant Program in February of 2019.

The grant application period opened on March 1, 2019 and closed on May 1, 2019. A total of eight (8) grant applications were received by the application deadline. Those applications came from communities across the State of Maine and included requests for funding of projects across all three permitted activities under the law authorizing this grant - repairing, replacing existing, and the construction of new live burn firefighter training facilities.

In accordance with the grant guidance a grant review committee was appointed by the Chair of the Fire Commission consisting of members representing each of the following stakeholder organizations:

1. Dan Brooks - Chair of the Fire Commission
2. Jim Graves - Director of the Maine Fire Service Institute
3. Michael Thurlow – representing the Maine Fire Chiefs’ Association
4. Vicki Schmitt – representing the Maine State Federation of Firefighters
5. Gerry Gay – representing the Professional Firefighters of Maine

The grant review committee met in person at MFSI for ½ day sessions on both May 7th and May 13th as well as electronic collaboration on this final report. The Training & Education Subcommittee is pleased to submit this report including our unanimous recommendations for implementation to the full Fire Commission for your consideration and final authorization of the grant awards in accordance with the State law and available funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Michael Thurlow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Training & Education Subcommittee Chair

APPLICANTS:

A total of eight applications were received as summarized below in alphabetical order:

Community	Requested Funding	Type of Project
Auburn	20,829	Repairs to Existing Facility
Bangor	519,400	Replace Existing Facility
Ellsworth	12,343	Simulators & Props
Fairfield	557,400	New Facility
Farmington	509,400	New Facility
Milo	150,000	New Facility
Wiscasset	493,800	Replace Existing Facility
Yarmouth	443,800	Replace Existing Facility
Total Requests	\$ 2,706,972	

GRANT REVIEW METHODOLOGY:

All applications were kept secured at MSFI until the subcommittee met on 5/7. The majority of that first ½ day meeting was spent by committee members reading each proposal in its entirety and taking detailed notes. During the second ½ day meeting on 5/13 the committee members discussed the details of each proposal. We did so while evaluating them against the Grant Guidance and the intent of the State Law that funded this program. We also analyzed available funding and discussed timing and logistics.

In the end all applications were scored independently by each member of the review committee according to the matrix outlined in the grant guidance. The average of each of those scores has been summarized in the chart titled Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

It should be noted that scoring was influenced by applications that failed to meet certain requirements in the grant guidance. Two of the applicants are not currently reporting NFIRS data to the State Fire Marshal’s Office as required in State Law and the grant guidance. One application was not signed by the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Elected Official as required. Other applications lacked a level of clarity, or failed to contain sufficient data on one or more of the scoring categories.

GRANT SCORING RESULTS:

All projects were carefully reviewed and scored according to the published criteria. They are listed in ranked order in the table below.

Ranking	Community	Requested Funding	Type of Project
1	Auburn	20,829	Repairs to Existing Facility
2	Yarmouth	443,800	Replace Existing Facility
3	Farmington	509,400	New Facility
4	Fairfield	557,400	New Facility
5	Bangor	519,400	Replace Existing Facility
6	Ellsworth	12,343	Simulators & Props
7	Milo	150,000	New Facility
8	Wiscasset	493,800	Replace Existing Facility

FUNDING AVAILABILITY:

A total of \$1,500,000 was authorized in the State Law that created this grant. Of that \$500,000 was appropriated in FY18-19. An additional \$500,000 still needs to be appropriated for FY19-20 and FY20-21. In exchange for their fiduciary management of these funds the Maine Community College system is entitled to a 4.5% fee of \$67,500 leaving a total balance to award of \$1,432,500. That level of funding will allow for the full or partial funding of the top four scoring projects, and also meets the law's intent of funding repairs and replacement of existing facilities, and construction of new facilities.

PROJECT SUMMARIES:

- Auburn – Repairs to their existing facility as recommended by the engineering study previously commissioned by MFSI.
- Yarmouth – Replace their existing burn building with one of the new prototype designs bid by MFSI, the Battalion Chief model.
- Farmington – Build a new facility based on the new prototype designs bid by MFSI, the Assistant Chief model.
- Fairfield - Build a new facility based on the new prototype designs bid by MFSI, the Assistant Chief model.

RECOMMENDATION / IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

The Training & Education Subcommittee recommends that the top four scoring projects be awarded in the order they scored through the detailed review process. Due to logistical & oversight concerns, the limited funding, and the timing of the availability of those funds, the projects must be staggered over a multi-year implementation plan.

Additionally the winning bid received from the MFSI formal bid process for the prototype designs included a 6% cost increase effective 1/1/20 that must be factored into the final awards, as the applicants applied based on being funded in the current fiscal year. Projects that can't start until 2020 should not be penalized for the cost adjustments driven by the current construction market, material costs, and the impacts of tariffs.

Year 1 – 6/3/19 – 12/31/19

Fully fund the request from Auburn in the amount of \$20,829

Fully fund the request from Yarmouth in the amount of \$ 443,800

Year 2 – 1/1/2020 – 12/31/2020

Fully fund the request from Farmington (adjusted for 2020 cost) in the amount of \$539,964

Partially fund the request from Fairfield with the remaining balance available of \$427,907

With the support of the full Fire Commission the subcommittee will continue to oversee these projects by working with the applicants, MFSI, and the Community College system to assure all aspects of the grant program are managed and executed properly and efficiently.

We are pleased that through this initial limited funding we will be able to provide assistance to four projects involving three new state of the art, code compliant, safe facilities to train Maine's firefighters. We hope these demonstration projects will highlight the need, and position us to seek additional funding support to extend this project to our original goal of 11 regional sites spread across the entire State of Maine.

Appendix 1
Grant Scoring Matrix – Average Score Summary

Live Fire Training Facility Grant Scoring Matrix
5/13/2019

	AUBURN	BANGOR	ELLSWORTH	FAIRFIELD	FARMINGTON	MILO	WISCASSET	YARMOUTH
Project Description and Budget								
quality & completeness								
budget & detailed plans								
basic training needs								
needs of area served								
experience w/grant management								
Average Points Awarded	24	16	12	17	23	9	8	24
Statement of Effect/Impact								
use/ historical or proposed								
geographical area & #Depts served								
multijurisdictional MOU's								
regional training partnerships & support								
MFSI complimentary use								
Average Points Awarded	24	15	16	20	23	10	9	24
Financial Need								
resources requested								
adequate financial need								
ownership /long-term lease								
financial plan to maintain facility								
Average Points Awarded	23	16	9	18	22	8	8	22
Cost/Benefit Analysis								
cost share								
local match								
in-kind								
relative return on investment								
Average Points Awarded	23	15	6	22	20	12	6	21
Average Total Points Awarded	94	62	43	77	88	39	31	91
Rank Order	1	5	6	4	3	7	8	2

25 maximum available points in each subcategory