**MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, September 14, 2020**

**Via ZOOM**

***(Unanimously Approved on Monday, December 7, 2020)***

Chief Dan Brooks called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 9:10 a.m. via ZOOM. Fire Commission members participating remotely included Stephan Bunker, Gerry Gay, James Graves, Steven Greeley, Ron Green, Chief Joseph Guyotte, Chief Thomas Higgins, Representative Catherine Nadeau, Vicki Schmidt, Charles Soltan, Chief Joseph Thomas, Chief Michael Thurlow and Susan Pinette (staff). Fire Commission members unable to participate in today’s ZOOM meeting included Senator Brownie Carson, Senator Scott Cyrway, Deputy Chief Kenneth Desmond (RET), Matt Gomes, Sam Hurley, Harty Norris, Peter Rogers, Representative Timothy Theriault, Representative Charlotte Warren and Chief Larry Willis (RET). Guests of the Fire Commission joining today’s meeting included Chief William Gillespie of the Liberty Fire Department; Chief Roger Hooper, York County Fire Administrator and Maine State Representative Henry Ingwersen of Arundel.

***A motion by Chief Michael Thurlow, seconded by Gerry Gay, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission approves the March 2nd, June 1st and August 3rd meeting minutes***. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports and Old Business

The Best Practices Committee reported no new nominations this month. Committee members encouraged Fire Commission members to recognize and nominate candidates by submitting a completed form to any Committee member or to staff. The nomination form is available online on the Fire Commission’s website. <https://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/about/commission/award>

The Education and Training Strategy Committee updated the Fire Commission on the status of the grant recipients. Farmington has received their final payment and the Fire Commission was able to view the results at last month’s tour. Yarmouth is expected to complete construction in October. Committee members informed members of a possible shortfall in grant revenue that may affect some projects. The State’s has issued a 10% cut in General Fund monies across all departments due to the COVID crisis. This 10% cut may also affect the Fire Commission’s funding.

The Recruitment and Retention Committee reported that they have been working with the community colleges and high schools to provide information on careers in firefighting and emergency services.

The SFMO and MFSI Funding Committee announced that they will not meet until after the new Legislature comes into session.

The Treasurer reported the Fire Commission has current funds totaling $1,640,70. The one outstanding expense was for the Best Practices award.

***A motion by Chief Michael Thurlow, seconded by Chief Joseph Thomas, that the Maine Fire Protection Service Commission authorizes the Treasurer to pay the invoice for the Best Practice award***. The motion passed unanimously.

The Wildland Committee was tasked to study the issue of firefighting in rural Maine, particularly the vast acres of forested land. Limited resources and increased demand have put pressure on rural departments and Maine’s Forest Service. The following members have been chosen to serve on this committee-

Matt Gomes-*Chair*

Chief Dan Brooks

Senator Scott Cyrway

Gerry Gay

James Graves

Ron Green

Representative Catherine Nadeau

Vicki Schmidt

The LOSAP Board reported that they have scheduled a tentative meeting in October. The Board plans to draft legislation to be submitted to the 130th Legislature.

New Business and News from Members

Fire Commission members received a letter and draft legislation from State Representative Henry Ingwersen of Arundel. Joining Fire Commission members for the discussion were Representative Ingwersen and Chief Roger Hooper. The proposed legislation is intended to address several staffing concerns during emergency situations. Many Maine fire departments are dependent on call and volunteer members who are employed in other jobs. Fire Commission members discussed the issues in the draft legislation including compensation for emergency responders who get ill while working at their per diem position and cannot return to their private employer. Several other areas of discussion included definition of an essential worker, working for more than two communities and current statutory language. Fire Commission members agreed that the issues needed further review and discussion and suggested to form a committee. Members also agreed that the Maine Fire Chiefs needed to be part of this discussion and solution. Fire Commission members thanked Representative Ingwersen for proposing this legislation.

Members of the new Per Diem Committee will include-

Chief Joseph Thomas- Chair

Chief Dan Brooks

Gerry Gay

Ron Green

Representative Catherine Nadeau

Chief Michael Thurlow

Representative Henry Ingwersen

Chief Roger Hooper

Chief William Gillespie

MMA representative (TBA)

The Maine Fire Service Institute was recently awarded the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Assistance to Firefighters Grant. This federal grant was awarded to MFSI to purchase a new fire and safety training trailer and other equipment used to train firefighters across Maine. Some of the vital equipment MFSI will purchase includes the new Air Management Mobile Trailer Prop, ventilation saws and tools, and other rescue tools. Congratulations to MFSI!

Fire Commission members agreed that the remainder of meetings in 2020 should be conducted via ZOOM. Staff will send out notices prior to the meeting.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chief Brooks adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan

Susan M. Pinette

**MEETING SCHEDULE**

Sunday, Oct. 4th – Saturday, Oct. 10th FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Monday, October 5th MEETING ZOOM 9:00am

Monday, November 2nd MEETING ZOOM 9:00am

Tuesday, November 3rd ELECTION DAY

Monday, December 7th MEETING ZOOM 9:00am

***Be safe, be well.***