MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION

**Minutes**

## **Monday, May 2, 2022**

**8:00am**

**(ZOOM)**

Chief Dan Brooks called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission meeting of May 2nd, 2022 to order at 8:09 a.m. via ZOOM. Fire Commission members present for the meeting included:

Chief Brooks, James Graves, Vicki Schmidt, Fire Marshal Joseph Thomas, Chief William Gillespie, Chief Chris Wytoch, Representative Timothy Theriault, Steven Greeley, Harty Norris, Charlie Soltan, Stephan Bunker, Ken Desmond, Gerry Gay,

**Old Business**

Chairman Brooks began the meeting with a discussion of 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.*

The bill as amended:

1. Section 7 of the bill provides a $200,000 one-time appropriation to fund the Maine Fire Service Institute to support 2 regional fire service training programs awarded through the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission.
2. Tax credits to businesses that employ volunteer firefighters and 11 emergency medical services persons and to provide benefits to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical service personnel. This has an appropriation of $33,000.

Chairman Brooks interprets the $200,000 funding bill to be funding for the Commission to create a curriculum for the for the training program that will be implemented by the Maine Fire Service Institute (MFSI). And stated that there was some confusion regarding what the bill was supposed to have done which is to fund facilities construction and maintenance.

MFSI Director Jim Graves stated that MFSI received no funding and does not wish for MFSI to act a grant making organization for this particular funding.

Chief William Gillespie stated the bill is not what the Commission was hoping for.

Further discussion of the bill focused on changing language, how the Commission and MFSI will work together under the bill, and what might be future changes to the act if passed in its current proposed form.

Director Graves told the Commission that Vicki Schmidt will traveling to each of the seven training facilities in Maine to take pictures to document the conditions of each.

Director Graves also discussed the MOU’s MFSI have worked out with Maine’s fire training facilities regarding funding and cooperation.

Chief Gillespie expressed an interest in seeing the pictures to help future advocacy efforts.

**Committee Reports**

1. Recruitment and Retention

Harty Norris announced that the Chair of the National Volunteer Fire Council will be a speaker at the upcoming conference this fall.

Chief Gillespie offered his appreciation to Representative Theriault for supporting legislation providing funding for ongoing LOSAP operations.

1. Wildland Fires

Chairman Brooks stated that he had spoken with Robby Gross of the Maine Forest Service chair about serving as the Committees Chair.

1. Staffing Committee

Fire Marshal Thomas discussed the ongoing Hancock County survey effort and how current activities were focused on developing formats for returning survey data back to the Fire Departments in the county.

Chairman Brooks asked about the situation of Fire Departments in the County with regard to staffing full time or part time members.

**New Business**

Charlie Soltan brought up staffing the Commission’s Officers. After a brief discussion it was motioned to return the existing slate. The motion carried and the slate is as follows:

Chair - Chief Brooks First Vice - Gerry Gay Second Vice - Ronnie Green

Treasurer - Chief Whytock Secretary - Open

Chairman Brooks also mentioned his efforts to fill the Secretary position temporarily being held by Richard Taylor with someone more active with the “behind the scenes” activities of the Commission.

Gerry Gay mentioned the recent posthumous recognition of a Forest Service firefighter killed in a fire back in 1953.

Chairman Brooks informed the Commission that he’d spoken with the Maine Municipal Association regarding future Commission meetings and added that it might be a bit pricey. The Chairman wants to utilize a facility that can offer a hybrid set up. Commerce drive was mentioned but would not offer the hybrid option.

Ken Desmond mentioned the new Hallowell Fire Stations might be considered. Chairman Brooks said he’d consider that.

Chairman Brooks adjourned the meeting at 8:59 AM.

Other scheduled meetings:

Monday June 6th at 8:00