MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, January 7, 2019**

***(Unanimously Approved on Monday, March 4, 2019)***

Chair Dan Brooks called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 9:05 a.m. in Room 438, State House, Augusta. Fire Commission members attending today’s meeting included Stephan Bunker, Senator Scott Cyrway, Deputy Chief Kenneth Desmond (RET), Gerry Gay, Matt Gomes, Steven Greeley, Ron Green, Chief Joseph Guyotte, Representative Catherine Nadeau, James Roy (for James Graves), Vicki Schmidt, Charles Soltan, Sean St. Germaine, Representative Timothy Theriault, Chief Joseph Thomas, Chief Michael Thurlow, Chief Larry Willis (RET) and Susan Pinette (staff). Members excused included Senator Brownie Carson, Chief Thomas Higgins, Suzanne Krauss and Harty Norris. The Fire Commission welcomed Chief William Gillespie of the Liberty Fire Department as guest of today’s meeting.

***A motion by Chief Michael Thurlow, seconded by Charles Soltan, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission accepts the meeting minutes of December 3, 2018 with four corrections***. (The minutes will be revised as follows- on page 2, paragraph 3 and the motion, of the December 3, 2018 minutes, the word “report” will be replaced with “Live Fire Training Facility Grant Guidance”) The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports and Old Business

The 2019 Joint Spring Conference Committee reported the vendor and attendee packets were mailed last week. The Committee reminded Fire Commission members that the 2019 Joint Spring conference is scheduled for March 27, 28 and 29 (Wednesday through Friday) at the Grand Summit Hotel and Conference Center, Sunday River in Newry.

The Municipal Needs Committee led a discussion regarding health care options for volunteer firefighters and the question “who is a volunteer?” Fire Commission members discussed issues of cost, requirements, coverage and providing guidance to towns who are considering offering health insurance to their volunteers. Members further suggested working with the new administration, the Legislature and Maine Municipal Association.

The Best Practices Committee nominated four individuals/organizations in 2018 for Best Practices recognition. A summary of the four nominees and descriptions of their best practices was distributed to Fire Commission members. The 2018 nominees for the annual Best Practices Award are-

* Goodwins Mills Fire and Rescue Department, Chief Roger Hooper
* Gorham Fire Department, Chief Robert Lefebvre
* Lincoln County Fire Chiefs’ Association
* Sabattus Fire and EMS Department

***A motion by Deputy Chief Kenneth Desmond (RET), seconded by Chief Michael Thurlow, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission awards their annual Best Practices Award to the Gorham Fire Department and be presented at the Joint 2019 Spring Conference in March.*** The motion passed unanimously.

The Education and Training Strategy Committee updated members regarding the status of the Live Fire Training Facility Grant Guidance. The Office of the Maine Attorney General reviewed the document and made no changes. The ETS Committee shared their schedule that included the December 19th briefing/presentation at the Maine Fire Services Institute (MFSI) in Brunswick. Over thirty attendees from eight communities went through the Live Fire Training Facility Grant Guidance. On January 10th, the ETS Committee will draft specifications for the RFP and on March 1st the application process will begin. Future plans include offering a slideshow on the Fire Commission’s website.

The Recruitment and Retention Committee met following the Fire Commission’s December meeting. Members discussed ideas to encourage Maine students and young people to join or volunteer in the fire service, including a recent article on Pennsylvania students studying for fire and rescue careers. RR Committee members discussed the definition of a volunteer and lack of clarity when determining workers’ compensation coverage and other issues regarding “what is a volunteer?”

Fire Commission members agreed to postpone appointing members to the SFMO and MFSI Funding Committee until new Legislative members have officially been appointed by the Speaker of the House.

The Treasurer’s Report included one new invoice for Fire Commission staffing services, June through December 2018.

***A motion by Ron Green, seconded by Chief Joseph Thomas, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission accepts the invoice for staffing services and directs the Treasurer to pay this invoice.*** The motion passed unanimously.

The LOSAP Board met in December 2018 to discuss funding the LOSAP program. The LOSAP Board estimates costs are 2.6 million which would cover 4000 people, and $600,000 to manage the program and says they will consider submitting legislation. The LOSAP Board told Fire Commission members that the single bid for the RFP was denied since the applicant could only provide service for half of the proposal. The LOSAP Board will rework the RFP and resubmit another in March. Additional plans include setting up a LOSAP website.

Fire Commission members received an update that the Department of Education would not be developing new curriculum (dispatch training) at this time due to teacher certification backlogs. Efforts continue to improve communications and legislation to define dispatchers as public safety employees may be proposed.

Fire Commission members discussed the upcoming Maine Fire Service Day at the State House on Thursday, February 7th and the Legislative Breakfast at the Senator Inn on Thursday, February 14th. The Legislative Breakfast is an annual event and is cohosted by the Fire Commission, the Maine Fire Chiefs’ Association, the Maine State Federation of Firefighters, the Professional Fire Fighters of Maine and the Maine Building Official and Inspectors Association. Maine’s Fire Service Day at the State House is hosted by the Fire Commission in the Hall of Flags during the First Regular Session of the Legislature to introduce the Fire Commission membership to the new and returning legislators. Members also discussed offering light refreshments at the event.

***A motion by Charles Soltan, seconded by Chief Joseph Thomas, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission may spend up to $250 for beverages and doughnuts at the Maine Fire Service Day at the State House.*** The motion passed unanimously.

New Business and News From Members

Fire Commission members have agreed to review their bylaws in the next few months. Members are encouraged to forward any suggestions to the Bylaws Committee.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chair Brooks adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette

**MEETING SCHEDULE**

Thursday, February 7, 2019 MEETING State House TBD

Monday, March 4, 2019 MEETING State House 9:00am

Monday, April 1, 2019 MEETING State House 9:00am

Monday, May 6, 2019 ANNUAL MEETING State House 9:00am

Monday, June 3, 2019 MEETING State House 9:00am

***Dates of Interest:***

*Thursday, February 7, 2019 Fire Service Day at the State House (Hall of Flags), 8:00am*

*Thursday, February 14, 2019 Legislative Breakfast at the Senator Inn*

*Wednesday, Thursday, Friday* *2019 Joint Spring Conference, Sunday River*

*March 27-29, 2019*

*Wednesday, March 27, 2019* *Joint Meeting, Sunday River (time TBA)*