

**MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**April 6, 2009**  
***(Approved on May 4, 2009)***

Chair Jeffrey Cammack called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:08 pm in Room 438 of the Maine State House. Members present included John Arsenault, Jay Bradshaw, Chief Dan Brooks, Stephan Bunker, Chief John Dean, Chief Darrel Fournier, Gerry Gay, Ron Green, Alan Johnston, Geoffrey Maker, Alex McPhedran, Walter Morris, Senator Richard Nass, Harty Norris, Senator Joseph Perry, Vicki Schmidt and Susan Pinette (staff). Members absent included Representative Dean Cray, Robert McAleer, Representative Benjamin Pratt, Charles Soltan and David Wacker. Guests of the Fire Commission included William Vickerson, Counsel for the Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters, Ed Holohan of Penflex, Inc. and former Representative Peter Rines.

The Fire Commission is please to announce that Senate President Elizabeth Mitchell recently appointed Senator Joseph Perry of Penobscot to the Fire Commission. Senator Perry is in his third term in the Senate and serves as Chair of the Taxation Committee. With Senator Perry's appointment, all 23 Fire Commission seats are filled.

***A motion by Alex McPhedran, seconded by Ron Green, to accept the March 2008 meeting minutes.*** The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

The 2009 Spring Conference Committee reports that plans for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Blaine House Conference for First Responders to be held April 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at the Hollywood Slots Hotel and Raceway in Bangor are moving forward. Over 106 people have pre-registered and 24 vendors have signed up to attend the conference. The 2009 Spring Committee has also scheduled the popular Fire Commission roundtable discussion to hear and discuss the concerns and ideas of Maine's fire service. The discussion will be on Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30pm at a place to be determined.

The Best Practices Committee announces that four Best Practice Awards are to be awarded at the 2009 Spring Conference. The Presque Isle Fire Department was nominated and approved by the Fire Commission in February. Rev. Daniel Coffin, Coordinator of the L.A.S.T. program and Herman Fire Department were nominated and approved at the March meeting. The Lewiston Fire Department was nominated for their wellness-fitness initiative program.

***A motion by Darrel Fournier, seconded by Gerry Gay, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission nominate Lewiston Fire Department and their Wellness/Fitness Initiative Program for a 2009 Best Practice Award and present their award at the 2009 Blaine House Conference for First Responders in April.*** The motion passed unanimously.

The LOSAP (Length of Service Award Program) Committee met with Ed Holohan of Penflex, Inc. this morning at the State House. Additional details of the meeting will be detailed under “Old Business”.

At the March meeting, the Elections Committee formally submitted their nominations for Fire Commission officers to serve for the next year. According to Fire Commission bylaws, officers are elected at the Annual Meeting, which is the April meeting. The Elections Committee, as also required by the Fire Commission’s bylaws, submitted the following names at the March meeting- Chief Jeffrey Cammack as Chair; Senator Richard Nass as Vice Chair; Alex McPhedran as Secretary; and Chief John Dean as Treasurer. The Fire Commission unanimously approved the nominations.

***A motion by Gerry Gay, seconded by John Arsenault, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission formally accept the Elections Committee’s recommendations and appoint Chief Jeffrey Cammack as Chair; Senator Richard Nass as Vice Chair; Alex McPhedran as Secretary; and Chief John Dean as Treasurer for a one year term.*** The motion passed unanimously.

#### Old Business

L.D. 847 “*An Act Authorizing Statewide Mutual Aid among First Responder Agencies*” was the first bill submitted by the Fire Commission to the 124<sup>th</sup> Legislature. L.D. 847 had a public hearing before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety (CJPS) on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and none one spoke in opposition. A work session is scheduled for April 9<sup>th</sup>.

L.D. 1177 “*An Act To Establish the Maine Emergency Services Institute*”, the Fire Commission’s second proposed bill, has been printed and also referred to the CJPS Committee. No public hearing date has been scheduled.

The third bill the Fire Committee plans to submit to the 124<sup>th</sup> Legislature regards the LOSAP legislation. Ed Holohan of Penflex, Inc. met with the LOSAP Committee this morning to finalize language before submission to the Revisor’s Office. An earlier draft of the program’s provisions was emailed to Fire Commission members. Mr. Holohan attended the Fire Commission’s afternoon meeting and explained the proposed bill to Fire Commission members. Mr. Holohan described the plan’s benefits, funding and criteria. He described this legislation as a mechanism to set up a LOSAP system in Maine. The final

language will be drafted and submitted to the Revisor's Office within the next week.

Fire Commission members were updated on the status of L.D. 621 "*An Act Allowing Workers' Compensation Benefits for Firefighters Who Contract Cancer*", a bill the Fire Commission voted to support. Members also discussed the role of the Fire Commission in endorsing proposed legislation. Members felt they had a duty to support legislation that benefits Maine's fire service, but it was important to hear all sides of the issues. The Fire Commission represents Maine's fire service and needs to bring forth their issues to the Legislature.

The Fire Commission revisited the proposal from the March meeting that the Fire Commission submit legislation regarding increasing the gross weight limit on vehicles with firefighter plates. Members agreed further information was needed and agreed to table the discussion.

***A motion by Darrel Fournier, seconded by Jay Bradshaw, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission table the discussion on the firefighter license plates until the May meeting.*** The motion passed unanimously.

The Fire Commission reviewed the Bills of Interest list that is current as of April 4<sup>th</sup>. Members had previously voted to send letters of support for L.D. 550 "*An Act To Protect Maine Residents from Home Fires and Carbon Monoxide*" and L.D. 621 "*An Act Allowing Workers' Compensation Benefits for Firefighters Who Contract Cancer*". L.D. 53 "*An Act To Permit the Use of a Common Flue for Oil and Solid Fuel Burning Equipment*" was also supported by the Fire Commission and members heard that the bill was facing opposition at the CJPS work session. Members were concerned with the direction the bill was moving and agreed to continue to monitor this bill.

***A motion by Darrel Fournier, seconded by Harty Norris, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission strongly oppose the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee's majority "ought to pass as amended" report to L.D. 53 "An Act To Permit the Use of a Common Flue for Oil and Solid Fuel Burning Equipment" and support the minority "ought to pass as amended" report.*** The motion passed unanimously.

### New Business

The State Fire Marshal's Office updated the Fire Commission on the status of the inspections of foster/kinship homes and the proposal in L.D. 353 "*An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the*

*Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2010 and June 30, 2011*" that these inspections no longer be conducted by the SFMO, but rather the Department of Health and Human Services. This proposal is strongly opposed by the SFMO and seems to be based on cost savings rather than safety concerns. The Fire Commission learned that in 34% of these inspected homes were found to have deficiencies and warranted plans to correct the problems. The SFMO estimates that they conduct 1600 inspections annually.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Services Commission, Chair Cammack adjourned the meeting at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette

Meeting Schedule and Dates of Interest

<u>Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup></u>	MEETING	State House	1:00pm
<u>Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup></u>	MEETING	DPS	1:00pm
<u>Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup></u>	MEETING	DPS	1:00pm
<u>Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup></u>	MEETING	DPS	1:00pm
<u>Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup></u>	MEETING	DPS	1:00pm
<u>Monday, November 2<sup>nd</sup></u>	MEETING	DPS	1:00pm

*To Be Scheduled:*

*Tour of the New Hampshire Fire Academy*