**MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**Monday, April 5, 2021**

**Via ZOOM**

***(Draft Copy Only, Not Approved)***

Chief Dan Brooks called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 8:00 a.m. via ZOOM. Fire Commission members present for today’s meeting included Stephan Bunker, Deputy Chief (RET) Kenneth Desmond, Matt Gomes, James Graves, Steven Greeley, Ron Green, Chief Joseph Guyotte, Harty Norris, Vicki Schmidt, Charles Soltan, Representative Timothy Theriault, Chief Joseph Thomas, Chief Michael Thurlow, Representative Bruce White, Chief Larry Willis (RET). Members unable to attend the meeting were Senator Chip Curry, Senator Scott Cyrway, Gerry Gay, Chief Thomas Higgins, Sam Hurley, Representative Grayson Lookner, Peter Rogers and Susan M. Pinette (staff). Guests joining the Fire Commission meeting were Chief William Gillespie of the Liberty Fire Department; Chief William St. Michel, Executive Director of the Maine Fire Chiefs Association; and Richard Taylor, Maine State Fire Marshal’s Office.

Fire Commission bylaws state that *“The Fire Commission shall select new officers annually. Elections of officers shall be held at the regularly scheduled meeting in April, which shall be deemed the Fire Commission’s Annual Meeting, or if no regularly scheduled meeting is held in April, then the election shall be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Fire Commission. The elective term of any officer shall be for the duration of twelve (12) calendar months, or the next annual meeting, whichever is sooner. It shall be possible for a person to be re-nominated and to serve for more than one term, subject only to the election process of the Fire Commission.”* (Article III, Section 1)

The Elections Committee presented the following slate of candidates for the Fire Commission officers-

**Chair- Chief Dan Brooks**

**First Vice Chair- Gerry Gay**

**Second Vice Chair- Ron Green**

**Treasurer- Chief Michael Thurlow**

**Secretary-open**

***A motion by Charles Soltan, seconded by Ron Green, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission elect the slate of officers as presented by the Elections Committee.*** The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports and Old Business

The Best Practices Committee reported no new nominations for Best Practices recognition. The Committee asked Fire Commission members to contact their memberships to recognize and nominate worthy candidates.

The Education and Training Strategy Committee announced that the Yarmouth project is complete. The Committee is working with Fairfield on their ongoing project and mentioned concerns with potential construction cost increases due to present market conditions.

The Recruitment and Retention Committee reported a successful outreach program in Penobscot County and has hopes to move to other counties.

The 2021 Spring Conference Committee announced that the Professional Development Conference has been rescheduled to August 25th through August 27th at the Sunday River Grand Summit Hotel and Conference Center in Newry. Information will soon be forwarded to members via email.

The Staffing Committee reported that they are in discussion with the Margaret Chase Smith Center regarding a project to develop a registration/credentialing system to quantify the number of Maine firefighters and their capabilities. The MCS Center is presently working on a study in Hancock County and the Committee hopes this study can be expanded to the entire state.

The Wildland Fire Committee reported that fire season started out “with a bang”. The Committee is also monitoring several bills working through the Legislature including one that would eliminate the $7.00 online permit charge and allow private companies to charge a fee.

The LOSAP Board reported their bill has been referred to a Committee and will be scheduled for a public hearing soon.

The Treasurer’s Report noted a balance of $774.70 and does not include this year’s state allocation. The LOSAP account reported a balance of $627.15.

New Business and News from Members

The Maine Legislature adjourned the First Regular Session after passing the supplemental budget. Meanwhile the Legislative Committees will continue to hold public hearings and work sessions on bills via ZOOM in the First Special Session. Maine is expected to receive over one billion dollars in federal stimulus money. Fire Commission members asked if these federal monies would be available for training sites. Commission members discussed several bills that they will be following in the next months including **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”* sponsored by Senator Stewart and **LD 1291** “*An Act To Reduce Fire Response Time by Eliminating Standardized Dispatch Protocols for Fire 9-1-1 Calls* sponsored by Senator Woodsome”.

The Governor’s Office continues to work on updating Fire Commission reappointments.

The next Fire Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 3rd starting at 8:00am. The May meeting and other future meetings will be via ZOOM for the near future.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chair Brooks adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette

Staff

*My sincere and continued gratitude to Chief Thurlow, for without his notes, I would not have been able to produce these minutes. Thank you!*