



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

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Minutes of a Meeting of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs

Saturday, November 9, 2019 – Red Jacket Mountain View Resort, No. Conway, NH

Called to order at 1331 hours by Chief Buxton.

After a salute to the flag, a moment of silence was requested for departed members.

Chief Buxton welcomed all to North Conway.

Advocate Members present – Stephen Vowels of Kingfisher Company, Inc.

Members were asked to introduce themselves and share where they were from.

Special Guests: n/a

Minutes of the October meeting: A MOTION (Fraitzl/Sitar) to accept them carried unanimously.

Financial Report: n/a

Communications: n/a

Applications for membership: n/a

Life Membership: n/a

President's Report: (Buxton) –

- He spoke of the benefits being derived from the hiring of our new lobbyists.

- He had lunch with PFFNH President McQuillen and spoke of the bills relating to the retirement system and benefits in the case of firefighter suicides. They are not supporting the retirement benefit one.
- He spoke of a bill for balanced billing for ambulance services and also the federal requirement that all ground ambulance services be reviewed over the next four years as far as billing, etc. He asked for volunteers to serve on a working committee. Chiefs Howard, Sitar and Beattie will serve.
- He stated that the FFI visiting committee started work yesterday.
- He spoke of the pass rate for FFI. Since 2014 it's been 65%. Pumps has gone from 87% to 50%, etc. Discussion ensued on the reasons (instructors, candidates, curriculum)?
- He also spoke on a proposed rules change by FST concerning those convicted of arson being subject to punishment.
- Rules are presently being drafted for NFPA 1582 physicals and reimbursement processes.
- FST visiting committees met Thursday.
- He shared that he had attended a meeting on locking devices for schools as there is a concern that school officials receiving grants for devices are having them installed without regard to the local fire codes. They are working through the issue, as well as the toll that active shooter drills are taking on the teachers and students
- He asked the board if they supported the amendment being proposed on the dimensions of rooftop solar arrays. The board affirmed after discussion.
- Discussion also ensued on an amendment relating to sober living facilities that may preclude early fire warning devices. The board affirmed its support for early warning devices and to keep the number to under 16 residents.

Executive Director's Report (Lemire) –

- Crotched Mt. Christmas Party will be Thursday, December 12.
- January will be a breakfast meeting at the NHFA on the 9th with a LifeScan presentation afterward.
- CFSI will be April 29-May 1, 2020. NHAFC reps will be attending.
- He asked if the board supported another corned beef dinner meeting again in March on the 12th and the board affirmed. A February ski event/meeting was also approved for February 13.
- Moving ahead with the Annual Meeting/Vendor Showcase again at the same location on April 9. We won't be competing with FDIC or NEDIAFC conferences this year.
- He shared that we're progressing with the onboarding with the new website, engaging in several training classes.

1st Vice President Report (Jones) – No report

2nd Vice President Report (Rhodes) – n/a

Sgt. At Arms (Sitar) –

- He spoke of the NH Fire Chiefs' certification program. Working on it now. More information will be forthcoming for a January on board.
- Apparel is for sale on the website.

Committee Reports

Scholarship Committee – (Dep. Toomey) – No report

Division Reports

State Fire Marshal – Fire Marshal Parisi submitted his report as listed below:

Bureau of Administration:

- Recovery Residences: Recovery residences (Sober Houses) continue to be challenge on the forefront of our agenda. HB 311 was retained by the House. A subcommittee has been established and is meeting to discuss how to move forward in 2020. A statewide solution is needed. We will continue to engage the fire service, the building officials, NH Coalition for Recovery Residences (NHCORR) and the Attorney General's office in proposed solutions. We are working on an Informational Bulletin for Recovery Residences to include a process for accommodations.
- Personnel:
 - Building Safety and Construction: We have a current opening for a part-time Program Assistant II / Building Permit Coordinator. The position is 29.5 hours per week in Concord.
 - Planning and Support Services: We have a current opening for a part-time Program Assistant III/NFIRS Data Coordinator. The position is 29.5 hours per week in Concord.
 - Bureau of Investigations: We have two investigator positions open. The BOI is currently recruiting for two (2) open Fire Investigator positions in the Northern Hillsborough, Eastern Merrimack, and Grafton County areas. The closing date for applications is November 25, 2019.

Bureau of Investigations:

- New/Active cases: 16 Calls for Service in the month of October; Our 8 investigators are actively working 32 Criminal Cases.
 - The BOI is investigating multiple motor vehicle fires in the greater Merrimack County area that appear to be incendiary in nature and connected to each other.
 - Investigators responded to a fire in Stratham on October 24th where an occupant of the home was wielding a knife upon the arrival of first responders. He was arrested by Stratham PD on charges unrelated to the fire and the cause of the fire remains under investigation.
- Fatal Fire: Investigators responded to North Hampton on October 11th for a fire that resulted in two fatalities. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.
- Accelerant Detection Canine Teams: Our two Accelerant Detection Canine Teams were very busy during Fire Prevention Week and the month of October. The teams worked with investigators at 3 fire scenes and performed K9 demonstrations at 15 events in the month of October.
- Court Actions: On October 16th Derek “William” Webber was sentenced to 47 ½ years in prison for second degree murder and arson in Rockingham Superior Court. The conviction is for a fire that occurred in Exeter in June 2018 resulting in the death of an elderly female.
- Training: During the month of October, investigators attended training sessions throughout the state, to include NFPA 1 and 101 code updates, annual firearms qualifications, and information sharing databases. Investigators provided in-service training to the Exeter Fire Department and the NHFA – Certified Fire Investigator program.
- Public Outreach: Investigators provided a block of instruction to the Newmarket Elementary School’s 5th grade science class and discussed topics such as the scientific method and what the job of a fire investigator entails.

Bureau of Building Safety and Construction:

- Solar: The Board of Fire Control will have a public hearing on November 20, 2019. The amendment addresses the requirements for solar array spacing and roof access for one and two family dwellings. The amendment would allow installations covering up to 50% of the total roof area to be exempt from the access provisions in NFPA 1. The amendment will require an 18” ridge setback unless modified by the AHJ. The amendment also requires a structural analysis for all installations.

- DES: Our office has been working with DES on aboveground and underground storage tank installations. The DES Oil Compliance Section has adopted rules that incorporate several NFPA Codes and Standards to include NFPA 30, 30A, 31, 37 & 110. We have been working to address the proper application of the codes.
- Administrative Rules: We have started work on the review and update to Saf-C 6000, the State Fire Code with an anticipated completion of December 2019. Anyone with comments or suggestions are encouraged to forward your information to our office through the fmo@dos.nh.gov email.
- School Inspections: A reminder that fire chiefs are required to inspect each of their private and public schools within their jurisdictions each year and reports shall be submitted to the SFMO no later than December 15th.

Bureau of Planning and Support Services:

- Side-by-side Sprinkler Prop: The first demonstration was held on Friday October 11 during the NFPA 1 and 101 2015 code update class. This demonstration was well received and the trailer will be available for use by local fire departments at public education events in the spring of 2020.
- Fire Prevention Week Events: This year the NH FMO public education unit attended the highest number of events so far to support local fire departments. The FMO was able to distribute printed materials and resources from NFPA, as well provide FMO public education props to support this year's message.
- Hazardous Materials: We are continuing to meet with all the NH stakeholders regarding the FMO Hazmat Coordinator Position. We will be compiling this feedback in an effort to evaluate the state's current needs and future direction.
- Social Media/Public Outreach: In October there were 24 social media posts to include the side by side trailer demonstration and fire prevention week events. There were also 14 educational workshops that were presented around the state.
- Swift Water: We are coordinating efforts with HSEM, members of the swift water response team and NH Fish and Game to better understand the current statewide capabilities of swift water rescue and to build upon those to meet the needs of the state.
- Urban Search and Rescue: In the future we will be working to understand

the current statewide capabilities of USAR and trench rescue and to identify the available statewide resources that can be coordinated for a response.

Fire Standards/Training/EMS – (Director Pendergast)

Logistics- Now that we have been awarded the AFG for 2018, we are working with vendors to replace the lining for the A building on the drill yard. The J Building, which is used for technical rescue and other non-fire scenarios, continues to be built out and furnished as a residence. We have formed an apparatus committee and have begun looking at specifications for our new aerial truck. This Committee is headed by Capt. John Keller. The Bethlehem facility “white house” training building has undergone some cosmetic upgrades to include new siding, removal of an old and broken flagpole and some tree and brush removal.

Programs - The Fire Investigator Certification class is having their final exam today. The students have provided verbal feedback so far and are giving excellent reviews of the program and the instructors. We hope to graduate the 16 students that started on day 1. Our Fire Officer II has begun and will run for the next several weeks. The New Instructor candidate training program has been successful with 5 new instructors now hired on as probationary instructors for our fire and EMS programs. The Rye Firefighter I program is about halfway complete and the feedback and evaluations are very favorable at this point in the program.

Budget- The Continuing resolution has come to an end and we are now working off of our 2019/2020 biennial budget. The 2019 FEMA Assistance to Firefighter Grant program application period is opening early December and we will be submitting an application.

Other news: On October 4, Executive Councilor Cryans toured our drill yard and firehouse. We discussed new equipment and apparatus purchases, and other resource needs of our Division. We also viewed demonstrations by our Lakes Region CC FF I program students as well as our Fire Investigator students. Finally, he toured the technical rescue building observing the many uses of this resource. We have instituted an easy-to-access student evaluation form in an online format. This was one of our initiatives in our Customer Service Plan. To date, we have received feedback from over 500 students in the last 3 months and our average rating for course satisfaction is 4.55 out of 5.

Communications: Myself and Senior Staff had several interactions and meetings with our stakeholders over the last several weeks: -Attended the Twin State mutual Aid meeting in Bethlehem -I continue to meet with new Fire Chiefs at their stations- in the last few weeks I have met with Chief Dion of the Bradford FD, Chief Haas of the Dover FD, and Chief Blanchette of the Loudon FD. We also have the Kingston and Berlin Fire Chiefs meetings to be scheduled. -Members of Senior staff met with folks from the

Seabrook Power plant Fire Brigade and discussed their plans to build a new training facility on the seacoast and collaborate with DOS for the future of the training site. - Attended the Homeland Security grant program committee meeting - Attended a meeting of the North American Fire Training Directors at the National Fire Academy - Attended a meeting of the Seat Belts for All NH coalition with members from HHS, other Dept. of Safety personnel, Highway safety, medical community and injury prevention. Our Division presented data on injury severity for unbelted vehicle occupants.

National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) – (Chief Corey) –

- No report

Homeland Security and Emergency Management – (Director Harper)

- No report

EMS Trauma Medical Review Board – (Chief Allard) (No report)

Forests and Lands – Chief Sherman – (No report)

Building Code Review Board – (Chiefs Powers/Tetreault)

- No report

Manufactured Housing Installation Standards Board: Chief Powers

- No report

Board of Fire Control – Chief Andrus / Chief Clark

- No report

Emergency Services and Communications – Director Doyle

- No report

E-911 Commission – (Chief Thomas) – He mentioned action being taken to eliminate having to dial 9 before getting out on phone systems for emergency calls. He also mentioned that action is being taken to identify specific lines in large building specific to emergencies.

New England Division of the IAFC – Chief Rhodes (no report)

New England Association of Fire Chiefs – Chief Jones deferred to Chief Carrier, who reported that they are moving forward with the merger. The lawyers are working at the process now.

Recruitment and Retention Committee – (Chief Beattie) – (no report)

Old Business –

New Business –

Good and Welfare –

A MOTION to adjourn, carried at 1411 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Chief Brent T. Lemire, Ret.
Executive Director/Secretary, NHAFC
November 9, 2019