



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

547 Charles Bancroft Hwy.

Litchfield, NH 03052

www.nhafc.org

Email: nhfirechiefs@gmail.com

Meeting Minutes of the Board of Directors – October 11, 2023

Primex, Donovan St., Concord, NH

Called to order by Chief Best at 0836 hours

Members present: Chiefs Best, Hunter, Emanuel, Thomas, Chamberlain, Carrier, Sitar and ED Lemire.

Minutes of previous meeting: Distributed and posted for meeting. A MOTION (Sitar/Thomas) to accept carried unanimously.

Financial Reports: Distributed via email. A MOTION (Thomas/Sitar) to approve both August and (Thomas/Chamberlain) September reports, carried unanimously.

Correspondence: n/a

Life Membership:

President's Report (Best) –

- Fundraising contract- Board discussed fundraising via ad book. Bob Moglia fielded questions from BOD. A motion (Sitar/Thomas) to sign the agreement with the stipulation that we get a PDF for the website, carried unanimously.
- Strategic Plan Update Status- Primex. ED Lemire to work with Rick Alpers to finalize the draft.
- Legislative meeting with Adam to review LSR titles and NHAFC status/position
- Dispatcher Training Requirements discussion – Legislation pending. Discussion ensued. Looking for feedback from dispatch centers.
- Update on Ambulance billing summit update - Next meeting is Friday 10/20 and Hunter/Sitar to attend. RESEND SURVEY as very few responded.
- Golf Tournament Discussion- 2023 report; 2024 status. 2023 netted \$6,000. Suggested that a committee be formed to assist and we start earlier for planning.
- Communications Committee
 - Who applied/responded? Chief Reinert from Farmington is interested.
- Training Committee

- Who applied/responded? Chief Cathy; Director Cutting; Chief Tice and Commissioner John Steere of Nashua. A MOTION (Hunter/Chamberlain) to seat the members who signed up and invite them to the November BOD meeting for direction.
- Committee vacancies? The Trauma Medical Review Committee vacancy has been advertised.
 - Committee rep list? Forthcoming
- Larry NHAFC President Transition
 - Transition out by November 30th?

NHAFC Planning Upcoming Meetings/Covering-Attending Meeting: October

- 10/11 NHAFC BOD Meeting at Primex 830am- All BOD
- 10/12 NHAFC Monthly Meeting at NHFA 9am- All BOD

November

- 11/1 NHAFC BOD Meeting at virtual- All BOD- Larry Unable to Attend
- 11/9 NHAFC Monthly Meeting at Zoom- All BOD
- 11/10 North Country Awards Banquet- TBD
- 11/13-15 NFPA Presidents Conf. at Quincy NFPA HQ- Emanuel to Attend

December

- 12/6 NHAFC BOD Meeting at virtual- All BOD
- 12/14 NHAFC Monthly Meeting at Fireside Inn, Lebanon- All BOD

Report of the Executive Director: (Lemire)

- The October 12 meeting will be at the NHFA.
- The November 9 meeting is proposed as virtual.
- The December meeting location will be a luncheon meeting at the Fireside in Lebanon.
- Chiefs Best, Hunter, Watkins, Lemire and Carrier will be attending the North Country Public Safety Awards dinner on November 10.
- The January association meeting will be virtual.
- I attended the NE Chiefs' conference at Mohegan Sun last week and was able to get 3 new Advocate members.

1st Vice President's Report (Emanuel)

- **2024 Bill Titles** - The House filing period for 2024 legislation was in mid-September. The Senate period for filing legislation closes on Thursday, October 12. At this point, we can only see the titles of the bills and the sponsors. The attached list includes all of the bill titles we have flagged for NHAFC for 2024. Senators can also file "confidential" legislation, meaning that the title is never made public. We may not get to see all of the titles that impact the Association before the session begins. We should start to see text of the legislation in November.

- **HB 373 (Ambulance Billing)/Ambulance Summit** – The discussions regarding ambulance services started with the introduction of HB 373 during the 2023 session. The bill sought to prohibit “balance billing” for ambulance services. It was retained by the House Commerce Committee after NHAFC and a number of ambulance providers testified against the bill. Subsequent to the Legislative session, NHAFC was invited to participate in an “ambulance summit” at the NH Department of Insurance. The goal of the summit was to bring together regulators, insurance carriers, and ambulance providers to attempt to address a number of issues, beyond balance billing, which impact the provision of service.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 20. NHAFC members should have received a short, web-based survey regarding costs for providing municipal ambulance service. If you have not done so, please take a moment to respond. At a recent meeting, there was discussion regarding development of a fee schedule for ambulance services. This would accompany a balance billing prohibition. While no details or specifics were developed, it appears that the concept will be discussed at future meetings. Moving forward, NHAFC would like to have data to demonstrate the true costs of providing ambulance services. If a fee schedule is proposed, we would want to ensure that the fees cover the actual costs associated with ambulance service since balance billing may be eliminated.

No Department’s specific information will be shared. Rather, the aggregated data should help the Association push back if a fee schedule is proposed that would be insufficient for communities which provide the service.

- **Retirement Benefits Commission** - During the debate on the state budget, language was removed, which would have eliminated the “middle tier” in Group II. The language to eliminate the middle tier was replaced a Study Commission consisting of legislators and participants (employer/employee) in the retirement system. The Commission has been meeting fairly regularly throughout the fall. While a number of issues are being discussed, many members are focused on alternatives for eliminating the middle tier. They would like to “pre-fund” any employer costs associated with the benefit change. Rather than a year-by-year state general fund allocation, the existing surplus funds could be used to address the costs. The initial cost estimates for pre-funding the revisions to benefits were higher than some legislators had hoped. Discussions continue about alterations which will restore some benefits without additional costs to employers. There will likely be legislation to implement any compromise that can be reached in the 2024 session.
- **E-911 Personnel Training Study Committee** – Governor Sununu signed HB 376 into law earlier this year. The bill created a study committee to examine the education, training, and requirements for E-911 dispatch for fire, police, and EMTs. The committee is tasked with recommending regarding uniformity in training/certifications. After several committee meetings and tours, the members

directed Legislative staff to prepare a report with their findings and potential recommendations. At this point, it is unclear what the report may say. There were proposals to require specific training for any staff that may answer E-911 calls, even if just covering while a permanent staff member was on break. This may create new training and record keeping requirements for Departments will handle emergency calls internally. We may see additional legislation on this topic in 2024.

He also shared:

2024 Homeland Grant Committee:

NHAFC needs a representative. Emanuel will be representing Seacoast Chiefs. Proposed organizational meeting on November 9, 2023 from 1- 4 pm at 33 Hazen Drive-2nd floor conference Room.

Scott Hunter will represent the NHAFC. Brent will be the point of contact with the Department of Safety.

Subcommittee of House Bill 2 Recruitment & Retention:

Emanuel met with Director Justin Cutting, Nick Mecuri, and Matt McLean at the Durham fire station on September 26, 2023 to discuss a roadmap of financial priorities for the \$150K earmarked for the NH Fire Academy.

Discussion for a proposal to utilize funding for courses to include recruit school, instructor 1, fire officer 1 and 2 course fees and potentially overtime and backfill. Cost estimating is required before taking further action.

CFSI 2024

On April 24-25, 2024, the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) will host the 34th Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner in Washington, DC.

Save the date and determine who should be attending. <https://www.cfsi.org/34th-annual-national-fire-and-emergency-services-symposium-and-dinner/>

NHMA Conference:

“Zap the Gap: How to Make Peace & Work Effectively in a Multigenerational World.” will be held Wednesday and Thursday, November 15-16th at the DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown Manchester Hotel, Manchester, NH.

The NHAFC presentation, **A Fire Chief's Perspective on Contemporary Leadership and Personnel Challenges**, is scheduled for **Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 2:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.** in the **Webster Room**. If you are presenting in a session with multiple speakers, please note that your fellow speakers are receiving this same email.

Science to Station Conference:

Emanuel will be attending the Science to Station conference in Tucson AZ the first week of November. <https://science-alliance.org/science-to-the-station-tucson>

Fire Department Safety Officer Association:

Emanuel suggested that members look at the FDSOA conference in January. <https://www.fdsoa.org/page-18155>

Seacoast Chief Fire Officer Mutual Aid District Training:

Billy Goldfeder will be speaking in Dover, NH on November 8, 2023. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/billy-goldfeder-fire-officer-and-fire-fighter-safety-seminar-tickets-729345922287>

Brief conversation about the pending legislation regarding the Retirement Benefits Commission - Scott Hunter suggested that NHAFC should reach out to PFFNH. Emanuel and Hunter should catch up with Adam Schmidt at NHAFC meeting on October 12th.

2nd Vice President's Report (Watkins) – no report

Sgt. At Arms Report (Hunter) – no report

IAFC – NED – (S. Murray) – no report

New Business: Chief Thomas asked if the board would authorize the association to accept sponsorship of 2024 HazMat grant. MOTION (Sitar/Hunter) to present it to the membership carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Motion to adjourn carried at 1110 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent T. Lemire, MPA
Executive Director