



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

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Meeting Minutes of the Board of Directors – February 4, 2026

Meeting held at the Primex facility in Concord, NH.

The meeting was called to order by Chief Watkins at 0835 hours.

Members present: Chiefs Watkins, LaRoche, D. Chamberlain, Fraitzl, Carrier, Cotreau, Wheatley, Sitar, Emanuel and ED Lemire. Adam Schmidt and Marshal Toomey joined us also.

Minutes of previous meetings: A MOTION (Sitar/Fraitzl to approve the January minutes carried unanimously.

Financial Reports: The December and January reports were presented. A MOTION (D. Chamberlain/Emanuel) motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence: n/a

Life Membership: n/a

Government Relations: (Schmidt)

Adam discussed several bills of interest to the Association and fielded questions. Marshal Toomey was present to discuss HB 1004 on sprinklers. He is not totally happy with the bill but it may be the best we can get at this point. He asked the group for their thoughts on rolling back sprinkler protection in 4 unit structures. The group did not want to roll the back in 4 unit vertical but could agree to horizontal if need be. They also spoke of HB 1555 which deals with code variances/appeals, etc. There was sentiment to oppose a local appeals process.

Scholarship Committee: (Toomey)

Marshal Toomey presented the proposal worked up by the committee for scholarships.

Report of the President: (Watkins)

- He and Chief LaRoche attended the “Five Families” meeting.
- He attended the Traffic Safety Committee meeting and is wondering what path they are pursuing.
- He has charged the Nominating Committee with presenting a slate each year

- He was concerned at how we choose attendees for CFSI. He stated that the President, 1st Vice President and Executive Director should automatically go and the remainder be chosen by the board. The discussion ensued and a consensus of the group was to informally adopt that protocol as suggested by Chief Watkins.

Report of the Executive Director: (Lemire)

- The February 12 meeting will be at the NHFA for breakfast and seminars.
- The March 12 meeting will be hosted by the Barnstead Fire Department and feature a home-cooked corned beef and cabbage dinner.
- The April Annual Meeting will be at the Common Man in Plymouth on the 9th. Our guest speaker is Chief Darryl Jones of the Pittsburg Bureau of Fire.
- We participated in a call with NHMA Executive Director Margaret Byrnes. Adam signed us in as opposing HB 1359 and HB 1360.
- Commissioner Quinn has reappointed Craig Clough to the Trauma Medical Review Board after receiving our recommendation.
- We're waiting for the notification of proceeds from our time at the Nash Casino.
- Ad book proceeds to date: Total: \$32,815.00 ; Vendor: \$22,970.00; Assn: \$9,844.00.

1st Vice President's Report (LaRoche) –

- On January 21st I had a meeting with stakeholders from the NH Ambulance Association ahead of the Data Collection Meeting
- January 23rd was the first stakeholder engagement for data collection meeting. The collection tool and directions were discussed, as well as the feasibility of the timeline presented by RAND Group. RAND was also looking for some agencies to try the collection tool. I received that this week and will identify some departments that are able to trial the tool and provide feedback.
- Last week I attended the hearing on HB 1555 to hear the debate and support the Fire Marshal.
- The Grafton County EMS study, from MRI, has been released.

2nd Vice President's Report – (D. Chamberlain) –

- He asked if Chief Mark Howard would be eligible for Life Membership. Chief Lemire will check.

Sgt. At Arms Report – (Fraitzl) –

- He hopes to meet with Chief Guarnera soon about the shirts, etc.

IAFC – NED – (Jones/S. Murray) – No report

New Business –

- Chief LaRoche asked for a MOTION to appropriate up to \$2000.00 for the seminar expenses for the Annual Meeting. Chief Cotreau moved and Chief Sitar seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business –

- Chief Emanuel reported that the Board of Fire Control will meet on February 10.
- He also mentioned the Active Shooter Incident Management (ASIM) Basic Training:
- Sessions have been conducted across the state. Kudos to NH HSEM, NHFA, NHFMO, LE, and the NHAFC for moving the program from concept to execution. Small step forward, additional work is required, but it is a step forward.
- NH DOT Fatality Summit: Monday February 9, 2026 at NH DOT
- NH DOT Highway Safety and Active Transportation will be hosting the 2nd annual Fatality Summit for partners and stakeholders. The goal is to build cooperation amongst agency partners by building upon last years Summit. Goal is to find out what agencies have done over the past year to improve their roadway safety and what steps can we take to continue making further progress. <https://www.dot.nh.gov/event/2026-nh-fatality-summit>

Good and Welfare –

- Chief Emanuel also mentioned the following:
Coffee with the IAFC Safety Health & Survival Section (SHS): 3rd Thursday of the month at 11AM
Candid conversations around the world's largest kitchen table
Grab your coffee and join the SHS Section Board and guest speakers each month for candid conversations about the topics that matter most to firefighters.
- From the latest research to real-world firehouse experiences and lessons learned from close calls, no topic is off the table. We're here to discuss the issues directly impacting firefighter mental and physical well-being. <https://www.iafc.org/about-iafc/sections/shss/coffee-with-shs>
- Safety Stand Down Program: June 14 – 20, 2026
Safety Stand Down 2026, June 14 – 20, has announced “**Firefighter FITNESS: Fit to Serve, Fit for Life**” as the official theme for this year’s campaign, focusing on the foundations of physical fitness, how they can continue to be met throughout the years, and sustainable strategies for long-term success.

Safety Stand Down is a joint initiative of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Safety, Health and Survival Section, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®), the Fire Department Safety Officers Association (FDSOA), and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). Held each year during the third week of June, the campaign works to reduce the number of preventable injuries and deaths in the fire and emergency services. In support of Safety Stand Down, responder agencies are encouraged to suspend all non-emergency activities during the campaign week to focus on training and education related to this year’s theme.

The campaign web site at www.safetystanddown.org includes resources to help departments plan for and implement Safety Stand Down. Additional tools and specific action plans for the week will be released in the weeks prior to the event.

Motion to adjourn carried at 1118 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Brent T. Lemire, MPA
Executive Director

February 4, 2026

****Addendum to the minutes:**

Subsequent to the meeting adjourning, members were made aware Chief Clough's term on the Trauma Medical Review Board was expiring in March. Chief Watkins authorized an email poll to recommend Dep. Chief Craig Clough of Loudon to the Commissioner for another term. A MOTION (Fraitzl/Wheatley) to affirm carried unanimously.

ALSO: Subsequent to the membership meeting on January 8, 2026, the board conducted a virtual meeting for the purpose of discussing a proposal to the Fire Standards and Training Commission that would eliminate ProBoard certification requirements for some programs. A MOTION (Cotreau/D. Chamberlain) that the NHAFC Board of Directors express to the Commission that it does NOT support the elimination of any requirements for ProBoard certification on any program, carried unanimously.