



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

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Meeting Minutes of the Board of Directors – April 1, 2026

Primex Facility – Concord, NH

The meeting was called to order by Chief Watkins at 0833 hours.

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

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

Financial Reports: The March reports were presented. A MOTION (J. Chamberlain/Buxton) to approve, carried unanimously.

Correspondence: n/a

Life Membership: n/a

Government Relations: (Schmidt)

He submitted an updated legislative chart for the meeting. He highlighted three bills:

1. HB 1109 - Relative to notice requirements regarding state employee investigations. The hearing on the bill was held last week. In addition to the sponsor, PFFNH testified in favor. They stated that individuals who are suspended need to know the basis for the suspension. Their testimony indicated that suspensions of fire fighters happens more often than legislators may realize. Lack of communication creates uncertainty and erodes morale in the fire house. NHMA testified in opposition. They highlight potential conflict with CBAs, as well as with existing state statutes and rules. The Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee has not yet acted on the bill. It would be good to know if NHAFC has concerns with the proposal.
2. HB 1224 - relative to the default budget for official ballot town meetings. This bill has passed the House, but has not yet been heard in the Senate. There was a similar bill last year which Governor Ayotte vetoed after NHAFC, and other groups weighed in, outlining concerns regarding impacts to first response

budgets if the default budget eliminated funding for any vacant positions. HB 1224 proposes similar revisions to reductions in the default budget, but includes new language intended to address concerns relative to first response budgets. It would be good to get feedback on the language.

3. HB 1555 – relative to enforcement of the state fire code. We have discussed this bill a number of times. The hearing last week went well in House Executive Departments and Administration. It could pass the committee soon, then the House. It would be good to ensure everything is “good to go” because this may make its way through the process in the very near term.

Scholarship Committee: (Toomey)

- Marshal Toomey presented the final outline for the Scholarship Program. A MOTION (Fraitzl/J. Chamberlain) to approve the concept carried unanimously.

Report of the President: (Watkins)

- He spoke of the trip to CFSI and the meetings with the delegation.
- Director Buxton is looking for a volunteer to serve on a committee entitled “Utilization of AI for Hazard Mitigation and E.O.P’s”. UNH received a grant for this program. Deputy Chief Eric of Bedford will serve.
- Chief Thomas is seeking a third member for the Audit Committee. Chief Sitar will continue to serve.

Report of the Executive Director: (Lemire)

- 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. Vendors have donated \$5,450.00 in monetary and in-kind items. Rooms in the block are still available.
- The May 14 meeting will be virtual.
- The June 11 meeting will be a breakfast meeting at the NH Fire Academy.
- The July meeting will be virtual
- In August, we will again be at the Town and Country Inn in Gorham/Shelburne. The Professional Development Committee has plans for a seminar for that meeting.
- The North Country Public Safety Awards banquet will be held on Friday, October 30, 2026.
- Members attended CFSI and found it productive and worthwhile.
- We experienced a trademark infringement issue with our certified officer program. I will share the letter with the board once I scan it. We will have to rename our program. I responded to their letter positively.
- We have revised the Scholarship Program to reduce the number of yearly grants and Marshal Toomey would like to have it approved by the BOD and the Annual Meeting next week.

1st Vice President’s Report (LaRoche) – No report

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

- No report

Sgt. At Arms Report – (Fraitzl) –

- The vendor for saleables will have a table at the Annual Meeting.

IAFC – NED – (Jones/S. Murray) –

- Chief Jones spoke of the SAFER grant and the requirements. They are as follows:

The goal of this program is to attract new Volunteer Emergency Responders for the above mentioned six New England States. NEAFC will help offset the onboarding costs of new recruits each year throughout the four-year grant period by offering reimbursement for NFPA 1582 physicals, basic firefighter training (First Responder, EMT, Firefighter-1 & Firefighter-2), and personal protective equipment (PPE). In addition to assisting with new recruit onboarding costs, this program also offers Membership Dues Assistance for NEAFC Membership, State Fire Chiefs Association Memberships, International Fire Chiefs Association (IAFC) Membership, and National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) Membership.

Each eligible Volunteer Emergency Responder recruited after 9/24/2025 may receive reimbursement for the following with a two-year commitment to a recognized Volunteer or Combination fire department.

NFPA 1582 Physical: Up to \$400 for a NFPA 1582 compliant physical with a corresponding Physician 1582 Sign-Off Form confirming a "Pass" and "Fit for Duty" status

Firefighter Basic Training: Up to \$2,500 for First Responder, EMT, Firefighter-1, and Firefighter-2 training expenses, including travel to attend training (i.e. mileage, lost wages, federal per diem rate for meals, and GSA rate lodging). Within the first 12 months of appointment, newly recruited volunteers must meet the minimum fire and EMS training requirements of the department. Whenever possible, departments will cover these training expenses or facilitate training in-house.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Up to \$4,125 for a full set of structural or wildland PPE (SAFER eligible NFPA compliant turnouts) for new recruits who have successfully passed a NFPA 1582 physical and who have completed or are enrolled in Firefighter-1 level training (or departmental equivalent). One set of PPE per Volunteer. Per FEMA, all PPE must be delivered prior to submitting for reimbursement.

If Firefighter is compensated in a combination department, may only make 20% of paid career personnel.

□ Period of Performance from 12/23/2025 – 12/22/2029.

- He also spoke of FRI in Kansas City, MO August 12 to 14 and the NEAFC Conference August 26 to 28 at Mohegan Sun in CT.
- Chief Murray reminded the group that his term is up in August and we will have to nominate a replacement. Chief Murray will put the notice out today and interested members will be asked to apply before next Wednesday.

New Business –

- Asst. Chief term on the BCRB is up but he would like to continue. A MOTION (Fraitzl/Buxton) to recommend reappointment, carried unanimously.
- We need a new representative to the NVFC to replace the Atkinson Chief.
- The SERC has been resurrected and the NHAFC has a spot that is vacant. We will advertise the slot.
- The Audit Report was reviewed and presented by Chief Cotreau. A MOTION (Fraitzl/LaRoche) to have Chief Carrier will consult with our CPA for reporting requirements and the Audit Report.
- Chief Emanuel moved, seconded by Chief Sitar to send a letter of recommendation to the International Code Council for Marshal Toomey
- Chief LaRoche reported that Lakes Region dispatch will be moving to their new facility. They have a new lease agreement that has an increase in rent and a few other items that are not acceptable. He wanted to let the organization know that they may seek counsel from the NHAFC if the need arises.

Old Business –

- 2026-27 Budget. A MOTION (Fraitzl/J. Chamberlain) to recommend the budget as presented, carried unanimously. Prior to the vote, discussion ensued on the salaries for the Treasurer and Executive Director. (Both left the meeting while the discussion ensued). A MOTION (Sitar/Fraitzl) to set the rated for the Treasurer at \$5,000 and the Executive Director at \$21,600, carried unanimously.
- The Report of the Nominating Committee was accepted by the board for presentation at the Annual Meeting.

Good and Welfare –

- Chief Sitar stated that this was his last meeting and thanked the group for everything. He mentioned that he will need replacement for his work on the certified officer program and other committees he is on. Chief Watkins thanked him for his contributions.
- Chief LaRoche spoke briefly on the ambulance billing issues and is preparing a boilerplate document for review. Anthem contacted him with issues on the document. He just wanted to let members know of the issues he is experiencing.
- Chief Emanuel thanked everyone for the years of friendship and professional development during his years going through the chairs.
- Chief Lemire thanked Chief Watkins for his support as his term comes to a close.

Motion to adjourn carried at 1046 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Brent T. Lemire, MPA
Executive Director

April 1, 2026