

MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2009
(Not Approved-Draft Copy Only)

Chair Jeffrey Cammack called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:00 pm in Room 438 of the Maine State House. Members present included John Arsenault, Chief Dan Brooks, Stephan Bunker, Representative Dean Cray, Chief John Dean, Chief Darrel Fournier, Gerry Gay, Ron Green, Alan Hammond (for Alan Johnston), Geoffrey Maker, Alex McPhedran, Walter Morris, Vicki Schmidt, Charles Soltan and Susan Pinette (staff). Members absent included Jay Bradshaw, Robert McAleer, Senator Richard Nass, Harty Norris, Representative Benjamin Pratt and David Wacker. Guests of the Fire Commission included William Vickerson, Counsel for the Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters, Gene Cote of the Maine Fire Instructors and Rescue Educators (MEFIRE), and Nancy Lounsbury from Southern Maine Community College.

A motion by Charles Soltan, seconded by Ron Green, to accept the December 8, 2008 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

The Fire Commission welcomed Walter Morris, Interim Director of Maine Fire Training and Education to today's meeting. Mr. Morris is replacing Ed Marks on the Fire Commission.

Committee Reports

The Spring Conference Committee updated the Fire Commission on the progress of the Spring 2009 conference. Plans to partner with the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and combine MEMA's Annual HazMat Conference with the Fire Commission's Blaine House Conference for Emergency Responders have stalled. Citing several obstacles, including cost concerns, the Spring 2009 Committee recommended that the Fire Commission consider alternate plans for the Spring 2009 Conference. The Spring 2009 Committee proposed that the Fire Commission consider a smaller venue this year and choose a date that would not conflict with MEMA's April 30th and May 1st HazMat Conference at the Augusta Civic Center. Several members suggested moving the conference to the new Hollywood Slots Convention Center in Bangor, a facility that holds 125-150 people and could accommodate up to 40 vendors. Fire Commission members discussed other partners, benefits and conflicts with alternate dates, speakers and work shops, vendors, and costs and resources. Members expressed support to go forward with plans for a Spring 2009 Conference and decided on a new place and time.

A motion by John Arsenault, seconded by Ron Green, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission holds the sixth Annual Blaine House Conference for Emergency Responders (Spring 2009 Conference) on Thursday, April 16th and Friday, April 17th at the Hollywood Slots Convention Center in Bangor. The motion passed unanimously.

The Training Facilities Committee reported on two meetings- one with President James Ortiz of Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) and another with Commissioner Anne Jordan, Department of Public Safety. Both meetings were to update President Ortiz and Commissioner Jordan of the Fire Commission's plans to move forward with Training Facilities Work Group's recommendations, adopted by the Fire Commission in December. The Fire Commission intends to work cooperatively with SMCC and DPS, as well as the Governor's Office and Legislature, to achieve these goals.

The Best Practices Award Committee nominated the Presque Isle Fire Department's Junior Firefighter Program for a Best Practice Award. The Fire Commission will vote on the nomination at a future meeting.

The Recruitment and Retention (R/R) Committee reported that they have met with Ed Holohan of Penflex, Inc. and plan to meet an additional time before drafting legislation for the 2009 legislative session. The Fire Commission asked the R/R Committee to study the issue of offering length of service award programs (LOSAPs) in Maine and the R/R Committee met in December with Mr. Holohan and other interested parties. The R/R Committee initially agreed that any LOSAP offered would be a defined contribution program. The R/R Committee also agreed on general criteria necessary to qualify for the LOSAP with the local Fire Chief responsible for deciding who meets the qualifications.

Old Business

Fire Commission members discussed whether to attempt to form a 2009 Legislative Fire Caucus despite lack of success in the past. Citing numerous activities and commitments that make it difficult for legislators to attend a monthly Fire Caucus meeting, a suggestion was made that instead of a separate Fire Caucus, members of the Fire Commission attend the established Legislative caucuses, i.e. the Rural Caucus and the partisan House and Senate caucuses. Participation from the Fire Commission would especially be important at these caucuses after the Fire Commission's bills are presented.

New Business

The Fire Commission was notified about L.D. 53 "*An Act to An Act To Permit the Use of a Common Flue for Oil and Solid Fuel Burning Equipment*" sponsored by Representative John Martin. This bill was referred to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety and will be scheduled for a public hearing later this session. Text of the bill is available at <http://janus.state.me.us/legis/>

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chair Cammack adjourned the meeting at 2:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette

Meeting Schedule and Dates of Interest

<u>Monday, January 5th</u>	MEETING	State House	1:00pm
<u>Monday, February 2nd</u>	MEETING	State House	1:00pm
<u>Tuesday, February 10th</u>	Legislative Breakfast at the Senator		7am-9am
<u>Tuesday, February 10th</u>	Maine Fire Service Day at the State House		9am-Noon
<u>Monday, March 2nd</u>	MEETING	State House	1:00pm
<u>Monday, April 6th</u>	ANNUAL MEETING**	State House	1:00pm
<u>Thursday, April 16th</u>	Spring Conference	Bangor++	All Day
<u>Friday, April 17th</u>	Spring Conference	Bangor++	All Day
<u>Monday, May 4th</u>	MEETING	State House	1:00pm
<u>Monday, June 1st</u>	MEETING	State House	1:00pm

** Annual Meeting- Election of Officers

++ Hollywood Slots, Bangor (please also note the change of dates)

To be scheduled:

Visit to the New Hampshire Fire Academy (late Spring 2009)