

NH Fire Standards and Training Commission**MEETING MINUTES (Approved)****March 5, 2020**

9:30AM, Dormitory Building, Classrooms 5 & 6

Richard M. Flynn Fire Academy

98 Smokey Bear Boulevard

Concord, NH 03301

Action items are in bold red.

FST Commission members present:

Jeremy Thibeault (Chair), Robert Buxton (Vice Chair), Allan Clark, Justin Cutting, Paul Parisi, Michael Joyal, William Campbell, Steven Sherman, Nancy Smith, Perry Plummer and Eric Wilking
(11)

FST Commission member not present:

Ashley Frame, J. Kerry LeBlanc, Peter Lennon and Andre Parent, (4)

Division of Fire Standards and Training & EMS Staff:

Director Deborah A. Pendergast, Assistant Director Jeffrey Phillips, Chief Nick Mercuri, Captain Dan Tice (4)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Item 1. The meeting was called to order at 9:37AM. Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 2. Members were made aware of their upcoming expirations.

- Fire Instructors and Officers Association has submitted letter to the Governor's office to reappoint William Campbell
- Chair Thibeault introduced Jason Greene and Robert Field as members once confirmed by Governor and Council

II. REPORTS

Item 1. Questions/comments regarding reports

(Division, EMS, CB, FMO, Forest Protection, Curriculum)

- Commissioner Clark asked the Director about how the mental health training is going
 - Director Pendergast spoke about the upcoming mental health first aid program and the upcoming Reach Point program on how to build resilience.
- Commissioner Buxton stated he was glad to see the ladder truck is back in-service and would like to know what impact on training it might have had
 - Director Pendergast stated no training programs were impacted and we are working through the budget and AFG process to acquire funding for it
- Commissioner Buxton asked about the advertisement is being held for Recruit School and when would it be announced

- Assistant Director Phillips stated staff had conversations this week about setting the dates and the announcement should be out shortly
- Commissioner Wilking stated that we don't want to slow down the delivery of the old program and don't see a way for this to be complete before Recruit School
- Assistant Director Phillips gave an update on the Division sponsored EMR class in Bethlehem and have a full class of 16 students
- Director Pendergast announced the two new additions to the staff with the hiring of the first State Medical Director, Joey Scollan and the new Trauma Coordinator Walter Trachim
- Chief Mercuri announced the Division's new social media initiative to increase the amount of communication the Division has.

Item 2. Legislative Report

- Chief Mercuri presented the Legislative Report. The Division is tracking approximately 20 bills
 - HB685, Ambulance Billing: an amendment has been filed to change it to a study committee
 - HB1122 added that suicide is considered work related
 - HB1304 Prophylactic is moving forward
 - SB1319 AED bill, Exercise facilities bill has been narrowed
 - SB540 Repeal of EMS Compact: being heard on the Senate floor today
 - SB670, Bans ambulances from transporting to free standing ED, this bill has been changed to a study committee

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Clark state Item 1

A motion was made (Clark/Buxton) - *to approve the minutes for the January 2, 2020 meeting; with the above changes* passed. Abstained by Joyal and Campbell

IV. SUB-COMMITTEES**Item 1. Administrative Rules Sub-Committee (Reported by Commissioner Smith)**

Committee has not met and has heard back from the Attorney General's office and need to setup a meeting.

Commissioner Clark asked for a clarification on the request to the AGs office and if the Commission had the authority to do credentialing.

The request to the Attorney General's office was to determine if the Commission had the legislative authority to implement requirements on call and volunteer firefighters.

Item 2. Curriculum Review Sub-Committee (Reported by Commissioner Clark)

Have not met since the last meeting

Item 2. Visiting Committees:

- **Haz Mat NFPA 1072** – (Reported by Commissioner Buxton)
Visiting Committee has met yesterday and posted a next meeting on May 7, 2020 to review standard evolutions for the program.
- **Firefighter NFPA 1001** – (Reported by Chair Thibeault)
Continues to meet and work through Firefighter I and Firefighter II. At the last meeting each proposed section was voted with the exception of Firefighter II and the forestry portion

Chief Sherman brought up some of the concerns on the direction the Visiting Committee. He feels the guidance is contrary to the policy that was established by the Commission.

Chief Sherman also feels the Visiting Committee is only being presented on Curriculum and 60% to 70% of the program is already developed. How is the Division already being developed with the approval of the Commission?

Chair Thibeault stated that most of the programs are developed and may need to be slightly modified based on the selection of a new curriculum.

Vice Chair Buxton stated there are two questions about the direction of the Visiting Committee and agrees with Commissioner Sherman that staff has already developed the program.

Director Pendergast spoke about how the mission of the visiting committee was created.

Commissioner Wilking stated he has met with one of the Visiting Committee member off-line to voice some concerns they feel the Visiting Committee is just rubber stamping what the staff has presented.

Commissioner Thibeault stated change in delivery is to maximize the amount of time instructors have with students to add repetition and reduces hours. Also, this guidance that was given to the Visiting Committee is based off the NH Fire Chief's recommendation.

Commissioner Cutting stated the intent Commission policy for Visiting Committees was to have staff develop the program with the Visiting Committee providing input to the recommendation.

Commissioner Clark stated he felt the direction of the Visiting Committee came from the Commission.

There was discussion among several Commission members about the amount of online training versus classroom. Commissioner Buxton stated he agrees there should be some classroom time but seems the lab portion should increase the education.

Commissioner Plummer stated he thinks it is a good thing the program is currently being updated rather waiting until the new program to be approved..

Commissioner Smith she recalls there needs to be an alternative for people to retrain and test students that fail multiple times.

Commissioner Parisi asked Chair Thibeault if he felt the Visiting was being directed by the staff

Chair Thibeault stated he feels it is somewhere in between. Health and Wellness was perfect example because the initial proposal was significantly changed by the Visiting Committee. There may be some ways to tweak the meeting to get better input and allow members to feel they have more of a voice.

Commissioner Wilking asked is the Visiting Committee getting the information based on the recommendation of the publisher? He spoke to a women that online is not necessarily better and in her case because she has two kids and a job and it is easier to go to class rather than doing things online.

Commissioner Plummer stated was not a new topic and goes back to when he was Director. Additionally, there is evidence that blended programs, which are done correctly, show to have higher test scores.

Commissioner Sherman stated that during the presentation they heard poor feedback about the online portion and it falls under a right-to-know request.

Motion by Sherman, seconded by Buxton for the Commission to provided comments the student evaluations for the Forestry module for the past 10 years. All in favor

- **Airport Firefighter NFPA 1003** - (Reported by Commissioner Clark)
Discussion moved to New Business.
- **Technical Rescue NFPA 1006** – (Reported by Chair Thibeault)
Nothing to report. An announcement needs to be sent out requesting applications.
- **Fire Officer NFPA 1021** – (Reported by Commissioner Clark)
 - Nothing to report

- **Instructor NFPA 1041** – (Reported by AD Phillips and Commissioner Cutting)
 - **Nothing to report**

Item 3. Administrative Rules Sub-Committee (Reported by Commissioner Smith)

The last meeting was November 25, 2019. The Committee requested to seeking legal advice regarding whether or not the Commission has legal authority to adopt rules that would deal with part-time or non-certified people.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Item 1. Fire Investigator Program Report (presentation in May)

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Item 1. NFPA 1003 Airport Firefighter Curriculum Approval – recommended by the Curriculum Committee

Motion by Clark, Seconded by Buxton, approve the recommendation of the Curriculum Committee on the NFPA 1003 updated.

VII. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Item 1. Strategic Plan & BASIS

The Director reviewed the Division's Strategic Plan 2020-2025. She highlighted our mission and vision, the current environment, and our four goals with the initiatives to achieve the stated goals for the next 5 years. The BASIS initiative is a program to measure success using identified key performance indicators. These items will be monitored, much like a dashboard, and used to focus Division resources.

Item 2.

Chief Brian Comeau announced his retirement as of the end of April.

Item 3.

Wilking would like to have future discussions on funding EMS programs much like we fund Fire programs. Discussion on the future sources of funding would need to be discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made (Wilking/Buxton) – to adjourn the meeting at 11:17 AM, passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING: March 5, 2020 at 9:30 AM in Classrooms 5 & 6 in the Dormitory Building