

NEW HAMPSHIRE FIRE STANDARDS & TRAINING COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF MEETING May 7, 2015 (Approved)

Voting Members Present:

Robert Buxton, William Campbell, Timothy Carney, Stephen Carrier (Chair), J. William Degnan, Michael Joyal, Kerry LeBlanc, Richard McGahey, Kevin Pratt, Nancy Smith

Voting Members Absent:

Peter Lennon, David Lindh, Jr., Brad Simpkins, Jeremy Thibeault

NHFSTEMS Staff:

Deborah Pendergast, Director; Jeffrey Phillips, BFTA Bureau Chief, June Connor, Administrative Assistant (minutes)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Item 1. Call to Order The meeting of the New Hampshire Fire Standards & Training Commission was called to order by Chair Carrier at 9:10AM on Thursday, May 7, 2015 at the Richard M. Flynn Fire Academy, 98 Smokey Bear Blvd., Concord, NH. A quorum was present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Carney.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bureau Chief Phillips pointed out an incorrect name used in the minutes from the March 5th meeting; Nick Antonucci should have been Nick Mercuri. *A motion was made by Commissioner Degnan; seconded by Commissioner Buxton; to approve the minutes from the meeting on March 5, 2015 as corrected. Commissioner Pratt abstained. The motion was passed unanimously.*

III. CHAIR’S REMARKS

Chair Carrier welcomed Robert M. Buxton to the Commission. He is the career chief representative from the NH Association of Fire Chiefs. Chief Buxton introduced himself to the Commission. He has been in the NH fire service since 1991 and has been the chief of the Hudson Fire Dept. for the last 18 months.

Chair Carrier reminded the Commission members that they were invited to have lunch with state legislators touring the campus after the meeting.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Item 1. Emergency Medical Services (Bureau Chief Nick Mercuri)

Chief Mercuri was attending the Trauma Conference at Concord Hospital; Director Pendergast read his report to the Commission members. A copy is as follows:

- Field services
 - Licensing season is completed and about 400 licenses were deactivated because of non-renewals. It appears most were providers that were not relicensing, but some are due to not filing. If you have any providers with issues please contact Diane Carrier in licensing.
 - We are working through a process to enable a service to place a vehicle in reserve status without having to give up the vehicle’s license and relicense when putting it back into service.
- Data
 - We continue to use the data in TEMSIS to assist providers and services to know how they are doing. The latest information we are working on is stroke data. We are finding with minor changes the quality of care is improving and the reporting is also improving as well.
 - “TEMSIS tips with Todd” has started. We have two YouTube videos,
- Mobile Integrated healthcare
 - The rule has been filed and we anticipate going before JLCAR possibly in July. Once this is done it will become active and services can begin to apply to use the MIH protocol.
- Protocols
 - Rollout is being finalized and is due any day.
- Warm Zone training
 - We are evaluating a program and are coordinating with DHS. We should be able to make a decision shortly.
- Trauma
 - We have secured a grant for a trauma system evaluation and are working through the contracting process. This evaluation will provide a report on positive aspects as well as opportunities for improvement. We expect the process to take about 10 months.
 - Trauma registry has been approved and is a module of TEMSIS. This is for hospitals to use and will allow us to better track trauma cases and coordinate trauma data.

- National continuing competency program (NCCP)
 - This has started and providers can use the system. This will drop the number of recertification hours for transitioned providers. It is not available to providers who have not transitioned to the new levels.

Item 2. Fire Marshal's Office (J. William Degnan)

Arson Awareness Week: An event was held at the Fire Academy this week that got media attention. An emphasis was put on the use of accelerant detection canines. This event comes on the heels of the arrest of Gregory Bruno in Raymond for arson related charges. The investigation is on-going, and more felony charges are expected to be made in the case.

Collaboration with the NH Fire Academy: Continuing Education is taking place up at the North Country Training Facility. Practical inspection skills are being taught and have been well-received.

Carbon Monoxide Bill has been re-introduced by Congresswoman Kuster. Last year, the bill never got to the floor for a vote. The bill puts the responsibility on making sure that carbon monoxide alarms are properly tested and listed according to national standards with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

July 23, 2015: A regional representative from the Insurance Safety Offices will present a program for fire chiefs at the North Country Training Facility.

Pipeline emergency training: The Fire Marshal's Office is collaborating with the Fire Academy and the NHAFC on May 14th and 16th to present two train-the-trainers on pipeline emergencies.

Public Education section: "Remembering One Conference" was held in which 24 teams were trained in a fire and fall prevention program for the elderly. If anyone is interested in having this training in their community, please contact Mary MacCaffrie (603-223-4289) or Sheryl Nielson (sheryl.nielson@dos.nh.gov) at the Fire Marshal's Office.

Fire Code: Hopefully, this bill is still alive; it is in the Senate, and the committee has not yet scheduled their executive session. The concern is that they are trying to delay the implementation of the new code.

Item 3. Forest Protection Bureau (Chief Simpkins – not present)

No written report was submitted.

Item 4. Curriculum Review (Bureau Chief Jeffrey Phillips)

- Programs are starting to wind down. Testing is going on today (May 7, 2015) at the Academy for the Lakes Region Community College (LRCC) Firefighter I and II programs.

- There is an increase in requests for company officer programs, Fire Officer I and II, to the point where we are not fully funding them because there is no more subsidized funding left. Students/Departments will be paying the full tuition cost.
- An Instructor II/III program finished at the Academy about a month ago with a full class of students. There is also one going on up in Whitefield with 11 students.
- The Instructor I program at the Academy is 2/3 complete. Nineteen out of twenty of the students attending this program are taking it for department company officer promotion reasons.
- The Fire Officer Visiting Committee met once last week to review the curriculum. The committee is still satisfied with the Jones and Bartlett book. They are considering making changes in some of the required projects and making improvements in the evaluation documents for those projects.
- The NFPA 1002 Visiting Committee met last night (May 6, 2015). Bureau Chief Phillips is hoping to have their final report ready for the Commission by the meeting in June.
- Commissioner McGahey asked if any complaints had been received about the low scoring on exams. He received a complaint from the Manchester School of Technology that some of the questions on the test do not match the Jones and Bartlett textbook. Bureau Chief Phillips answered that he has not seen a large failure rate, but rather a large ineligibility rate, particularly from the LRCC and high school students. He added that the Academy is in the process of going through the accreditation process, and this fall, all of the exams will be re-done and based off of the validated test bank for the respective publishers. Jones and Bartlett is coming up with a validated test bank. They have already submitted it to ProBoard for approval. The problem we have currently is that the test bank we use writes most of its questions off of the IFSTA text which then back-references other texts. The wording in the questions is problematic and sometimes contradictory. With the new testing system, we will have the ability to modify questions as deemed necessary. Captain Bob Pragoff will be the exam “go-to” person at the Academy. He will be doing statistical analyses of the exams.
- Meredith Lund is the point person for all of the high school firefighter programs. Though Bureau Chief Phillips is currently working with John Connell at LRCC, a new Academy staff course coordinator will be hired in the fall to run the college firefighter programs.

- Commissioner Pratt asked if there would be any more Firefighter II programs. Bureau Chief Phillips answered that no programs have been announced for the fall yet, but that there would be more Firefighter II programs; it is not yet known how many and where.

Item 5. Hiring Practices (Commissioner Richard McGahey)

The Hiring Practices Committee met for the first time on April 30, 2015 due to the promotion of Commissioner McGahey to District Chief in Manchester. (Congratulations go to Chief McGahey!) A summary report was submitted, and a copy is as follows:

**New Hampshire Fire Standards & Training Commission
Hiring & Training Requirements Subcommittee**

AGENDA

Thursday, April 30, 2015

9:00am

Department of Justice Building

Room 324

33 Capital Street, Concord NH

Committee Members: Robert Buxton, Michael Joyal, Richard McGahey,
Brad Simpkins, Nancy Smith

Members present: Michael Joyal, Richard McGahey, Brad Simpkins
and Nancy Smith

- Define and Clarify hiring requirements, addressing the use of background checks in the hiring process.
- Fingerprints and Criminal Records Checks. Each applicant shall meet the following requirements relative to the applicant's fingerprints and criminal and motor vehicle record checks.
- The hiring authority shall cause each applicant for employment as a full-time or part-time career fire fighter to be fingerprinted, notwithstanding that the applicant may already be employed by another agency. The applicant's fingerprints shall be submitted to the division of state police for the purpose of determining the existence of any criminal history record. The hiring authority shall also check for the existence of a criminal history record and motor vehicle violation history record in New Hampshire and wherever the applicant has resided.
- No applicant who has been convicted of a felony under federal law, or the law of this or any other state, province, territory or country, unless he/she has been pardoned, shall be appointed as a full time or part-time career fire fighter.
- QUESTION OF THE COMMISSION
Citizenship: No person shall be appointed as a full-time or part-time fire fighter unless he/she is a citizen of the United States.
- Find better and more regular ways of communicating hiring information to Fire Chiefs throughout the State.
- An annual booklet distributed and added to the Executive Fire Officer Curriculum
- Some Departments have not followed the current Hiring and Training Requirements in accordance with Chapter 700 of the administrative rules. Members hired have not had, nor passed, the CPAT Physical Ability Test Requirements as established in Part 702.01.

How do we hold towns, village districts, precincts or cities accountable to the standard?

A review and discussion with staff regarding Fire 500 Requirements

Discussion points regarding the subcommittee report:

- There is a concern that adding fingerprinting as a hiring requirement for full-time, paid career firefighters and fire chiefs could add a financial burden.
- Director Pendergast stated that there is already an introductory booklet for new fire chiefs. **The information in this booklet could be included in the Fire Officer I and II programs.**
- A discussion ensued about departments that are not following the hiring requirements. It was clarified that the FST Commission, unlike the Police Standards model, does NOT issue certificates to firefighters after they have been hired. Firefighters are only certified for completing courses. The FST Commission and the NH Fire Academy are not “licensing” agencies. There are departments who hire firefighters knowing that they do not meet the hiring requirements. At this point, there is no consequence for doing this now that the NH Retirement System’s focus is solely on whether or not a firefighter has a paid, full-time position.
- **Questions to think about:**
 - **Should the FST Commission become a disciplinary board?**
 - **Should the FST Commission become a certifying board?**

V. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

Director Pendergast was present and gave the following report:

Facilities:

North Country classroom nearing completion, going for occupancy permit

Classes are now being held there on a regular basis.

Still waiting for an answer from FAA regarding funding of the upgrades and repairs to the ARFF site, our back-up is that it is in our capital budget for July 1.

Grant funds:

New turnout gear is being ordered from our 2013 AFG grant, mini pumper is going to G&C for final ok to purchase

Order is being placed for fit test equipment, that program will begin on July 1 beginning with TtT for the equipment

2014 Grant for air packs, ambulance, smoke machines and simulation mannequin is moving forward through the process, word should come anytime confirming the award.

Drill yard equipment:

Flashover container bid has been awarded and that purchase is moving forward

Some pagenite has been replaced in the A building, we are trying to keep up with the maintenance needed there.

We now have Concord's Engine 3 as part of our fleet to hold us until the 2 new engines arrive and are in service.

Budget:

Capital budget items are still in the budget to this point.

The Fire Fund is still intact at this point, and steps have been made to decrease the draw from other agencies.

We are still closely watching the fund and its sustainability.

We lost several part time employees because of the State's policy on not having employees hold multiple state positions. We will be replacing those positions that are mission critical.

Programs:

[Policy for Medical Clearance](#), final draft to be distributed

Several visiting committees are active currently.

Hiring rules:

The letters that were sent out to all NH Fire Chiefs were met with some questions, but for the most part we are now having a higher degree of compliance.

Discussion of the Director's Report:

- Commissioner Joyal spoke about whether or not the FST Commission should take a position regarding the "State as One Employee" policy due to concerns about the loss of instructors and staff. Commissioner Smith explained that there is an on-going investigation of the state from the Federal Dept. of Labor regarding our compliance with the Fair Standards Act; the concern is about past practices regarding the use of part-time employees with more than one job who exceeded the number of hours without being paid overtime. It is not just a matter of getting a waiver, but of having enough funds in the budget to pay overtime. The other difficulty is that different state departments have no way of seeing each other's payroll, so there is no way of telling if a part-time employee has exceeded 30 hours. Commissioner Joyal expressed his concern for those who work part-time for more than one agency and do NOT exceed the 30 hours. Bureau Chief Phillips explained that the biggest issue for the Academy will be the Wildland instructors who also work for DRED and do not exceed 30 hours; waivers will be requested for these individuals. A formal letter from the FST Commission could be very helpful to these individuals.
- Commissioner Campbell asked about the logistics of fit-testing all instructors. If they do not have a certificate saying they have been fit-tested within the last year by their departments, then the Academy will do the fit-testing.

- Budget question: Is it true that in the fall there will only be one funded Firefighter I class? Jeffrey Phillips stated that the budget has not yet been established but he estimates that there will be more than one.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Item 1. Medical Requirements for Training

(already covered in Director's Report above, with a link to the document)

Item 2. FFII Skills Review Committee

Bureau Chief Phillips summarized the committee's report submitted by Deputy Chief Anderson. A copy of the report from May 5th is as follows:

At the request of the New Hampshire Fire Standards and Training Commission, several members of the NFPA 1001 Visiting Committee were brought back together to investigate the need for a FFI Skills Review module during the FFII program. A brief history of the inception of the module is included in this report, along with the findings of the Committee.

The FFI Skills Review module was created when reviewing Standard changes for the 2008 edition of NFPA 1001. The observation of many instructors and staff was that basic FFI skills degraded over time depending on whether a student was a member of a busy Department and/or one that actively trained. Because of this degradation in skills, the FFII practical activities of LP Fire Control and Building Fire Suppression suffered greatly and created frustration for the instructional staff and disappointment and lack of confidence for the students. The FFI Skills Review module was designed to minimize or eliminate these problems.

The 2008 Visiting Committee constructed the module consisting of what they identified as "core" skills with Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (including Search and Rescue), Hose, and Ladders. The class is sixteen hours in length and designed to be delivered consecutively; often scheduled for two four hour evenings and one eight hour day.

On 16 March 2015, the reassembled Visiting Committee, comprised of New Hampshire Fire Standards & Training and Emergency Medical Services Uniformed Staff and FFII Course Coordinators, met at the Fire Academy. The consensus of the group was that the FFI Skills Review module is a valuable component of the FFII program and should remain with some recommended modifications.

It was determined that the core skills necessary to effectively perform in the FFII practical modules are: the 24' single person ladder raise, donning PPE/SCBA, Search and Rescue, hose packing and stretching pre-connected lines, and the standpipe evolution.

The module should continue to be delivered in sixteen hours. The first eight hour session would take place at the beginning of the program and would be used to instruct and carefully supervise the students while performing the skills. The second day would occur just before the Building Fire Suppression module and the students would be expected to perform the skills with minimal direction and supervision, following the definition of the 1001 Standard for FFII.

Standard Evolutions will be developed to assist our instructors with consistent delivery of the program.

A list of personnel who participated in the 16 March meeting is listed below. If you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

NHFSTEMS Uniformed Staff:

Chief Jeff Phillips
Deputy Chief Andy Anderson
Captain Nick Antonucci
Captain Scott Doherty
Captain Bob Leuci
Captain Meredith Lund

NHFSTEMS Course Coordinators:

Senior Staff Instructor Bob Irish
Senior Staff Instructor Gary Johnson
Senior Staff Instructor Mark Lemay
Staff Instructor Ted Tillson

Motion made by Commissioner McGahey; seconded by Commissioner Campbell; to accept the recommendations made by the NFPA 1001 Visiting Committee and Deputy Chief Anderson for the Firefighter I Skills Review; passed unanimously.

Item 3. Update: Visiting Committee liaison list

- NFPA 1001 – Chief McGahey
- Fire Officer – Chief Carrier
- 1030 Series (33 and 35) – Peter Lennon
- 1041 Instructor – Jeremy Thibeault
- Haz Mat (vacated by Chief Klauber; to be replaced by Commissioner Buxton)
- Driver Operator – Chief McGahey
- Wildland Firefighter I – Brad Simpkins
- Technical Rescue Series – David Lindh

Committee leaders are usually replaced by those who replace them on the FST Commission. However, **if there is anyone on the Commission who has a special interest in heading up a committee, please let Chair Carrier know.**

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Item 1. Request for a Haz Mat Decontamination Visiting Committee

The intent of this committee is to look into potentially changing the curriculum in order for it to eventually become a ProBoard course.

Item 2. Request for NFPA 1003 (Aircraft Firefighter) Visiting Committee

Motion made by Commissioner McGahey; seconded by Commissioner Buxton; to establish visiting committees for both Haz Mat Decontamination as well as Aircraft Firefighter; passed unanimously.

VIII. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Legislators will be touring the campus today. Lunch will be served at 11:30.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Buxton; seconded by Commissioner Pratt, to adjourn the meeting at 10:30AM.

Bureau Chief Phillips reminded everyone to be prepared with Academy Award nominations for the June 4th meeting. **Some commission members are finding it difficult to come up with nominations outside their own geographic areas and would appreciate input from others.**

“Academy Awards” should be put back on the agenda for the June 4th meeting.

Remaining 2015 schedule:

9:00AM meetings: June 4, and September 3, 2015.

The November 5, 2015 meeting will begin at 3:00PM and be followed by the Academy Awards Ceremony at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah A. Pendergast, Director