



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

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Minutes of a Meeting of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs

Virtual - Thursday, July 9, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 0903 hours.

After a salute to the flag, a moment of silence was requested for departed members

Welcome from Host: n/a

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS. ED Lemire called the roll of members on the meeting.

Special Guests: Ashley Marcoux, Director of Outreach for Congresswoman Maggie Goodlander. Also, Steve Pecora from Governor Ayotte's office.

Minutes: A MOTION (Fraitzl/D. Chamberlain) to approve the minutes of the June meeting carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: The June reports have been posted. A MOTION (Cathy/D. Chamberlain) to approve them carried unanimously.

Communications: n/a

Applications for membership: ED Lemire stated that we have two (2) new applications that have been approved, Chief Tyler Taatjes of Milton, NH and Asst. Chief Devon Pageau of Rochester, NH.

Life Membership: The Board of Directors has awarded Life Membership to Chief Edmund Walker of Peterborough.

President's Report: (LaRoche) –

- He thanked the Governor's Office for sponsoring a virtual call on HB 340 that described the language and clarified the intent.

- He received a call about background checks for non-affiliated members. That requirement has been present for decades. It's been a new item on the application.
- He reminded members of the link for the ground ambulance survey.
- The 2026 Grant Committee will be meeting next Wednesday, July 15.

Report of the Executive Director: (Lemire)

- July 10 membership meeting will be virtual.
- In August, we will again be at the Town and Country Inn in Gorham/Shelburne ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 6. The Professional Development Committee has plans for a seminar for that meeting.
- The August 5th Board meeting will be virtual.
- The September membership meeting will be on the 10th for breakfast at Lakes Region Community College.
- The Scholarship Program has been advertised and posted. We have received four applications so far.
- Chief Carrier and I met with our accountant last week and were able .

1st Vice President Report/Professional Development Committee - (Chief D. Chamberlain) - No report

Government Relations – (Schmidt) – *Submitted in writing for the minutes* NHAFC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – July 9, 2026

On June 4, the House and Senate completed their work for the 2026 legislative session. At this point, Governor Ayotte has acted on most of the bills that were passed by the Legislature. Not all of the bills have made it to her desk yet. In a surprise to many, Governor Ayotte has vetoed over twenty bills since the end of the session. Since the Republicans have majorities in the House and Senate, it was not anticipated that so many bills would be vetoed. The House and Senate will schedule a session later this year to vote on whether or not to override the vetoes.

The Governor has **signed into law** several bills that we have been following for NHAFC including:

- **HB 1705 (small department/EAP)** – The bill establishes a fund to cover the costs of enrolling and supporting first responders from small communities into the state-provided employee assistance program (EAP) and outlines eligibility, enrollment, and reporting requirements for the Department of Health and Human Services. Eligible communities would be those with “.. Volunteer first responders and full-time first responders from towns with 5 or fewer full-time, paid first responders...” The effective date for the bill is 7/1/2027. This would align with the adoption of the next state budget. The enactment of the program will likely be aligned with its ability to receive funding at that time.

- **HB 1555 (Code Applicability Appeals)** The bill allows the state fire marshal to hear de novo appeals of local fire chief decisions within set timelines and grants them statewide authority to approve, deny, or allow project-specific alternatives and code modifications under the state building code. The bill has an effective date of 7/1/2027. This will allow for any budgetary needs the fire marshal may have to implement the bill to be considered as part of the next budget process.
- **HB 1577 (utility/emergency response coordination)** –The bill is intended to allow utilities to share individual customer data with a municipality's authorized public safety officials for emergency coordination purposes. During testimony in the House, the NH 911 CARES program was referenced as an existing program which helped address the issues the bill intended to address. Chiefs and local emergency response agencies may be contacted by individuals or utilities regarding implementation. The new law will go into effect in the next 60 days.
- **SB 423 (PTSD Commission Extension)** – The bill would re-establish the Commission to study the incidence of PTSD in first responders. The Commission was “sunset” after a number of years. The NHAFC will continue to have a member on the commission.

It is expected that the final set of bills will make it to the Governor’s office for her consideration within the next 30 days. At that point, all of the bills will have been acted upon.

Finally, as a reminder, the House and Senate have also set deadlines for filing bills for the 2027 legislative session. Legislative Service Requests (LSRs) are drafting requests for legislation. The deadlines are as follows:

House:

- **Tuesday, September 1, 2026.** First day for incumbents running for re-election to file LSRs with complete information.
- **Friday, September 11, 2026.** Last day prior to the General Election for incumbents running for re-election to file LSRs with complete information.
- **Wednesday, November 4, 2026.** First day for all Representatives to file LSRs with complete information
- **Wednesday, November 18, 2026.** Last day to file LSRs with complete information (4:00 p.m.) Ten-day signoff begins.

Senate:

- **Monday, September 21, 2026.** First day for incumbents seeking re-election to file Legislative Service Requests (LSRs) with complete information.
- **Friday, September 25, 2026,** at 4:00 p.m. Last day for incumbents seeking re-election to file Legislative Service Requests (LSRs) with complete information.

- **Wednesday, November 4, 2026.** First day for Senators to file Legislative Service Requests (LSRs) with complete information.
- **Wednesday, November 18, 2026, 4:00 p.m.** Last day for the Office Legislative Services to accept drafting requests for Senate Bills.

2nd Vice President Report (Fraitzl) – No report

Sgt. At Arms (Wheatley) – No report

Committee Reports

Scholarship Committee – (Marshal Toomey/Chief D. Chamberlain)

- Eight applications have been received.

Division Reports

Fire Marshal: (Marshal Toomey)

Fire Standards/Training/EMS – (Director Wholey)

Administration

Personnel

- We continue to work within the hiring process under Governor Ayotte’s Executive Order to receive waivers for position vacancies.
 - Three full-time positions – Program Assistant, RespondNH Coordinator, and Administrative Assistant to the Director – have been approved by the Governor.
- As of June 26, Dave Simpson has been promoted to the rank of captain and will be working with the Bureau of Certification and Support.
- As of July 10, the Division has hired 13 new part-time instructors. An additional 6 conditional offers have been sent to new part-time instructors.

Grants

- Through July 31st, New Hampshire DHHS and GO-NORTH are accepting grant applications for the Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) projects through the Rural Health Transformation Fund: <https://healthynh.org/initiatives/rural-health-transformation-program/>

Special Projects

- Phase 2 of the Firefighters First Cancer Screening Initiative is coming up with information sessions for the fall appointments on July 21 and 23 via Zoom. Pre-registration is not required, and the links are on the Firefighters First website:
<https://www.firefightersfirst.nh.gov/>
 - Fall 2026 appointments will open on August 4 at 9:00 am. Testing will run from September 14 to October 30. Appointments may be accessed through a portal located on the Firefighters First website:
<https://www.firefightersfirst.nh.gov/appointment-scheduling>
- The *Law Enforcement Officers, Professional Firefighters, and Emergency Medical Technicians Career Development, Recruitment and Retention Program* established in New Hampshire RSA 188-F:70 remains active and available. Emergency Service Dispatchers are also eligible.
 - Program details: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/resources/recruitment-retention>

Mental Health & Resiliency

- *NAMI Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training* – Franklin – July 20-24
- *Mental Health First Aid* – Concord – September 15

Legislative/Administrative Rules

- The proposed Trauma Rules are working through the internal DOS process.
- Administrative Rules to make the full transition to ETA's and sunset the former process have been developed and are working through the internal DOS process for submission to JLCAR.

Outreach

- A total of 17 staff attended a two-day training session on *Managing Disciplinary Challenges in the Fire Service* on June 3rd and 4th at the Academy.
- Captain Brunelle attended the Jackson Fire Department Open House for their new station on June 6th.
- Bureau Chief Bibeau and Captain Burns attended the MAFCA Mutual Aid meeting in Jaffrey on June 18th.
- Assistant Director Phillips and Captain Brunelle attended a meeting with NH DoT, the FAA, and Jacobs Engineering on June 23rd at the ARFF Site regarding upgrades to the ARFF training yard.
- On June 30th, Captains Graham and Williams, along with 15 of our instructors, toured the Seabrook Station Power Facility to better understand their training needs.

Curriculum

Firefighter

- The development of Firefighter II has concluded. The Firefighter Visiting Committee voted to recommend the new curriculum to the FSTC Curriculum Committee. The next steps include the FSTC Curriculum Committee reviewing the recommendations, making any required modifications, and voting to bring the curriculum to the full Commission in September. If approved, the curriculum will go to public comment between September and November.

Fire Officer

- The Fire Officer visiting committee met on June 17th for their orientation to the development process and an overview of the Officer programs. Their next meeting will be on July 22nd at 0900 at the Fire Academy, where they will discuss changes to the proposed curriculum materials, define the testing specifications for both programs, and vote to present the curriculum to the FSTC Curriculum Committee.

Fire and Emergency Services Instructor (I, II, & III)

- A joint team of Bureau of Certification and Support and Bureau of Emergency Medical Services have begun a curriculum update process for the Instructor series. This update is focused on ensuring the programs align with the new NFPA 1020 standards, support the needs of the NH EMS education system, and prepare State Certified Fire Instructors (SFI), NH EMS Instructors (EMS-I), and NH EMS Instructor/Coordinators (EMS-I/C) to perform the essential functions and expectations of their respective licenses.

Bureau of Firefighter Training

Courses/Programs

- Firefighter I & II
 - *Firefighter I* – Concord – August 3 - November 7
 - *Fall Recruit School (FF I & II)* – August 10 - October 9
 - *Lakes Region Community College (FF I & II)* – October 26 - December 18
 - *Firefighter II* – Hampton – September 15 - October 31
- Driver Operator
 - *Driver/Operator: All Vehicles* – Bethlehem – August 31 - September 16
 - *Driver/Operator: All Vehicles* – Bethlehem – September 22 - October 13
 - *Driver/Operator: All Vehicles* – Candia – October 7 - October 28
 - *Driver/Operator: All Vehicles* – Keene – October 20 - November 10
 - *Driver/Operator: Pumping Apparatus* – Bethlehem – October 26 - November 12
 - All inquiries for these programs should be directed to driveroperator@dos.nh.gov
- Hazardous Materials
 - *Hazardous Materials Operations with PPE & Product Control* – Bethlehem – September 15 - 20
 - *Hazardous Materials Operations with PPE & Product Control* – Concord – September 29 - October 4
 - Hazardous Materials Awareness:
<https://www.nhfaemslearning.org/login/index.php>
- Airport Rescue Firefighting
 - Fall Live Fire Recertifications may now be scheduled:
<https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/training-education/aircraft-rescue-firefighter-training>
 - *Airport Firefighter* – Concord – October 12 - 17
- “On My Time” Program
 - We continue to offer guidance to departments participating in this program.

Apparatus/Equipment

- Engine Three remains out of service.

Facilities, Prop Usage and Projects

- Lebanon Fire Department conducted Live Fire training in the Concord “A” Building on June 25th.
- Lincoln Fire Department conducted Live Fire Training in the Burton “A” Building on June 28th.
- Seabrook Fire Brigade wrapped up their six weeks of training for the Spring on June 18th.
- The ARFF Site was active for recertification on June 18th, with Massport, Pease, and Presque Isle using the trainer.
- Construction work on the Investigator burn pods is ongoing.
- The NH Emergency Services Explorer Training Academy will be on the Concord campus from July 12th to July 17th.
- Camp Fully Involved will be on the Concord campus from July 25th to July 31st.
- Captain Williams coordinated training for the newly purchased FireVent prop on June 9th.
- We took delivery of two trailers to be used for the Technical Rescue programs on June 10th, and we picked up two new golf carts on June 18th for use on our Drillyards.
- The 50th anniversary of the first Recruit School was held on June 11th.
- On June 18th, the Bureau completed the grading process for the Technical Rescue program RFPs, which have been sent to the Division of Administration for final selection. This RFP process is an effort to identify companies that can help bridge the current gap in technical rescue program delivery.

Bureau of Certification and Support

Courses/Programs

- Instructor I/II/III Programs
 - *Instructor I* – Concord – September 11 - October 16
 - *Instructor I* – Brentwood – October 30 - December 11
 - *Instructor II* – Virtual – September 29 - December 7
 - *Instructor III* – Virtual – May 4 - July 13
- Fire Officer I/II Programs
 - *Fire Officer I* – New Hampton – September 9 - November 4
 - *Fire Officer I* – Concord – October 26 - January 4
 - *Fire Officer II* – Virtual – October 15 - November 19
- Fire Investigator Programs
 - *Fire Investigator* – Concord – August 20 - November 5
- National Fire Academy & Specialty Programs
 - *Incident Safety Officer* – Concord – August 8 - 9
 - *Command and Control of Incident Operations* – Concord – August 30 - September 4
 - *Supervising Emergency Medical Services* – Concord – September 26 - 27
 - *Managing Disciplinary Challenges in the Fire Service* was presented by Curt Varone in a two-day program at the Richard Flynn Campus on June 3rd and 4th. The program was attended by more than 70 participants and received very positive feedback.
 - The NFA course call for fiscal year 2027 is complete and will be added to the course catalog soon. If you would like to see a specific NFA program or host an NFA program at your department, please contact Captain Burns at Anthony.T.Burns@dos.nh.gov.

Education Technology

- 2026 Course Development & Project Progress Status:
 - FFI/FFII Lesson Planning for Online Learning Development in full swing.

- 4 module Lesson Plans approved
- 14 in various stages of completion

Instructors

- New State Fire Instructor applications are available on RespondNH.
- Applications for renewal closed on June 30th:
 - Renewals: 178
 - Expired: 35
 - Active/Current New Hampshire State Fire Instructors: 237
 - New State Fire Instructor Applications In-progress: 67
- The required audit of at least 10% of all renewal applications has been completed.

Program Support

- The FSTC Fire 901 background check requirements for non-affiliated applicants is under consistent enforcement. Applicants who have not completed the required background check will not be admitted to Commission-sponsored training programs until the requirement has been satisfied and eligibility has been confirmed.
- CPAT applications are in the process of being revised to include an online payment option.

Testing & CPAT

- Monthly Testing numbers continue to climb. Year -to-date the Division has offered 593 monthly testing exams including 419 written and 174 psychomotor exams.
 - Submissions for monthly testing must be entered by the last day of the month prior to the month you wish to test:
<https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/certification-testing/monthly-testing>
- The Division finalized the administrative and operational changes necessary to begin collecting fees for first-time monthly testing examinations in July. More details about this change can be found here: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/certification-testing/monthly-testing>
- Year-to-date, 148 candidates have tested for CPAT and 100 have passed (68%). There are three remaining CPAT tests for the year:
 - August 6 – Merrill Fay Ice Arena – Laconia
 - October & November – Nashua (Location and date TBD)

- Department member assistance is needed for CPAT on testing days. Please confirm available personnel to assist with PC Nick Poulin at Nicholas.a.poulin@dos.nh.gov prior to the test date.

Bureau of Emergency Medical Services

Boards and Commissions

- The Medical Control Board will meet on July 16th at 0930.
- The Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coordinating Board will meet on July 16th at 1300.
- The Trauma Medical Review Committee will meet on August 19th at 0930.
- The Privacy Committee will meet on August 26th at 1300.

Clinical Systems

- Work continues on Version 10.0 Protocol Development.
- All EMS bulletins may be found on the website: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/ems-systems/ems-bulletins>

Compliance

- There are currently 25 active investigations and ongoing cases.

Courses/Programs

- EMS in the Warm Zone
 - Awareness and Operations courses are available free to students through our online training platform: <https://www.nhfaemslearning.org/login/index.php>
 - The RTF Concepts class is a half-day, in-person training with grant funding opportunities available. Questions regarding the program should be directed to Shawn Croteau at Shawn.A.Croteau@dos.nh.gov.

Data Management

- Under guidance from the U.S. Fire Administration, all fire response information shall be recorded using the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS). The Data Management team continues to work closely with the Fire Marshals office on fire incident reporting system.
- For departments using NHESR, the Division's NHESR team continues to work with fire departments to assist with the transition. Questions may be directed to NHESR@dos.nh.gov.

Operations

- NH EMS System, July 2026
 - Licensed EMS Unit – 310
 - Licensed EMS Providers – 6,591
 - Licensed EMS Vehicles – 472 Ambulances and 11 Helicopters
- A new course change form has been published on the FSTEMS website for instructors to report changes to course details: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/resources/initial-course-requests/ems-course-update-form>
- Educational Training Agencies (ETA) support and relicensing are ongoing with no observed issues. Since inception, we have seen an average of a 5% increase in NREMT pass rates across all levels of initial training.
 - 23 licensed ETAs with 2 more in-process
 - The Administrative Packet for the application and licensing information can be found on the Division website: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/licensing/eta-licensing>

Preparedness and Special Projects

- Staff continue to support AED, MIH, and IFT programs and outreach around the state. There are 14 current MIH programs in the state.

Fire Standards and Training Commission – (Chiefs Clark/Miller) – No Report

Homeland Security and Emergency Management – (Director Buxton) – *Report submitted for the minutes.*

- **HSEM**
HSEM operations continue under reduced staffing, with essential functions maintained and priority placed on mission-critical activities. Thank you to all who participated in the work sessions contributing to the update of the three-year IPP. The TED team is in the process of finalizing our plan for the next three years. Additionally, we are preparing for Staff transitions, with our Section Chief of Community Services retiring early fall.
- **FEMA**
We have been informed that the Regional Administrator has taken a leave of absence. Currently, the Deputy Regional Administrator is filling this role in an

acting capacity. Engagement with FEMA Region 1 leadership remains strong, emphasizing regional preparedness coordination. Carroll County's federal disaster declaration request has been submitted and is under review. This is for a flooding event that took place June 10th and 11th.

- **Grants**

EMPG grant activities are on track, with the FY26 application well underway. The Homeland Security grant program for the FY 26 application is also underway. Thank you for your continued participation in this process.

- **REP**

Coordination with Seabrook Station leadership remains active, focusing on preparedness and regulatory expectations. Seabrook Station has seen some staff adjustments with the retirement of Dave Currier at the end of June. Planning for the upcoming graded exercise has begun, with interagency scheduling in progress. Annual assessment activities have been completed for FY27. We are currently working to develop assessment notice for the communities involved in the Seabrook Station Response Plan.

- **Project Updates**

The School Mapping Project continues on schedule. We continue to work with the NH Department of Education as we prepare for community engagement. The initial contact will be made through the local school districts. Please make sure you are maintaining communications with your respective districts. The anticipation is that you are an active participant in this project. The New Hampshire Disaster Relief Rules have been adopted by JALCAR. We will work to get a formal notification out to each of you in the coming weeks.

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Professional Development Committee – (Chiefs D. Chamberlain/Cathy)

- They are working on the presenter for the August meeting, possibly Chief Schaefer from Boston Fire and he will speak on the culture of Fire Departments.

Division of Emergency Services and Communications – (Director Doyle)

- Laconia Facility Update: Facility is taking shape – @ 89 % complete...Tentatively September 8 for completion. Interior finish work and landscaping is underway;
- Genasys Emergency notification platform ([NH Alerts](#)) is up and running, If you are interested in becoming a POC for your community to use the ENS for local messaging, please let us know. The statewide ENS system is offered to local communities at no cost. For more information, reach out to Matt White, matthew.w.white@desc.nh.gov at DESC;

- Community Events / school visits reminder – connect with our Public Outreach / Education Team for more info: Patrick Cavanaugh (603-271-6911), DESCPIO@dos.nh.gov;
- Radio Communications currently deploying NHICNET Radio equipment at 48 sites and will continue through the summer – grant extended to the Fall. First and second phases almost complete;
- WEA / Emergency Alert protocol development continues B/T DESC and HSEM...provide guidance on how to disseminate a WEA via IPAWS (for agencies that have authorized access), and how you can request one, if necessary through the Supervisor's desk in the PSAP;
- **Social Media Update:**



- **Public Information/Outreach:**
In June, the Division used its social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, and X) to promote public safety awareness and emergency preparedness. Throughout the month, posts focused on summer safety, employee recognition, and reminders to always know your location when calling 911. Additional messaging highlighted Division outreach, public education initiatives, and resources designed to help residents and visitors stay safe and informed. Engagement remains strong across all social media platforms.
- Advisory Council on Emergency Preparedness and Security (ACEPS) Meeting on 6/18;
- Summer Safety News Conference on 6/19 at Hampton Beach;

- Littleton/Lisbon FirstNet coverage discussion with Governor's office and FirstNet / Littleton, LRHC and Lisbon Public Safety;
- National Assoc. of State 911 Administrators (NASNA) Annual meeting & National Emergency Number Association (NENA) Conference in Columbus. Focus on FCC reporting, updates to national legislation re: NG911 funding and various discussions and sessions related to AI solutions for call-taking, QA, etc.;
- 2026 Homeland Grant Review Committee discussion / update on accelerated process for submitting and reviewing applications;
- Any questions, comments, concerns please reach out: (c) 603-931-2298 / mark.e.doyle@desc.nh.gov

E 911 Commission – (Chief Thomas) – No report

Forests and Lands – (Chief) – No Report

NH Information Analysis Center – (James Heinz-liaison) –

- He described the various incidents (possibly terrorist) taken place around the world.

Commission to study the Incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in First Responders – (Chief Watkins) – No report

Board of Fire Control – (Chiefs Clark/Emanuel) – No report

NH Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coord. Board – (Dep. Chief Paquette) – No report

National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) – (Chief Cathy) –

- He reminded members that membership

EMS Trauma Medical Review Committee (Dep. Chief Clough) – No report

Building Code Review Board – (Asst. Chief Pouliot/Chief Reinert) – No report

Manufactured Housing Installation Standards Board: (Chief Blanchette) –
No report

NH Drug Overdose Commission – (Chief Thomas) – No report

New England Fire Chiefs – a Division of the IAFC – (Chief Jones) –

- He reported that this year's Expo will be at Mohegan Sun August 26 to 28 and will include a broader focus on professional development.
- He also reminded members of the \$3.2 m SAFER grant given to the NEAFC for volunteer departments and various clothing items. If they attend the Recruitment and Retention Program at the conference, they may be eligible for paid coverage under the grant.

Old Business –

New Business –

Good and Welfare –

- Dustin Stream is again hosting the NH Fire and Rescue Conference will be held at the LRCC on September 12, 2026.
- Rick Alpers and Derek Martel from Primex shared information about their need to increase rates for on-call and part-time fire departments due to the changes in the cancer presumption legislation. The actuarial projections will be applied in upcoming informational meetings and handouts.

Raffle – n/a

The meeting was adjourned at 0940 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,
Chief Brent T. Lemire, ret.
Executive Director, NHAFC

July 9, 2026