



## **NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.**

*Working Together to Make a Difference*

547 Charles Bancroft Hwy.

Litchfield, NH 03052

[www.nhafc.org](http://www.nhafc.org)

Email: [nhfirechiefs@gmail.com](mailto:nhfirechiefs@gmail.com)

### Minutes of a Virtual Regular Meeting of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs

Thursday, July 8, 2021 (Virtual via “Go To Meeting”)

The meeting was called to order at 0902 hours by Chief Sitar.

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

Chief Sitar welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members were introduced by the Executive Director.

NOTE: ALL VOTES AT THIS MEETING WERE TAKEN BY CONSENSUS.

**Special Guests:** Adam Schmidt from our lobbying firm.

**Minutes** of the May 13 and June 10 meetings are posted. A MOTION (Best/Chamberlain) to approve them carried unanimously.

**Financial Reports:** The June financials have been posted. A MOTION (Best/Thomas) to approve them carried unanimously. A MOTION (Best/Rhodes) to approve the March, April and May financials.

**Communications:** n/a

**Applications for membership:** 5 new Advocate Members, Paul Boudreau of AliCom; Lee Lemoine of Modular Communications; Doug Fellows of Eastern Communications; Richard Martin of Comstar and Kevin Burgess of Minuteman Security Technologies

**Life Membership:** n/a

**President’s Report: (Sitar) –**

- He reported on Director Cutting's request for support of establishing a Specialty Service sub section within the BEMS to include inter-facility transportation and mobile integrated healthcare programs. The board supported this effort.
- He reported that at yesterday's board meeting the members voted to appropriate \$800 towards expenses for the golf tournament August 9.
- He also reported that the board members had voted to support the re-nomination of Chiefs Buxton and Clark to the Fire Standards and Training Commission.

**Executive Director's Report (Lemire) –**

- Our August meeting will be virtual and one or more of our U. S. Senators may be able to join us with Federal updates.
- Our Vendor Showcase will be held with our September meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> at the Falls Event Center in Manchester. It will be our first "in person" meeting in 1.5 yrs.
- Our November weekend is on for the Red Jacket in North Conway, November 12-14.
- We will be also sponsoring a golf tournament August 9.

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Report (Beattie) – n/r**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Report (Emanuel) –**

- He is working with Chief Lemire on the Vendor Showcase professional development September 9.

**Sgt. At Arms (Best) – No report**

**Committee Reports**

**Scholarship Committee – (Dep. Toomey) –** Two applications have been received. The committee may be able to act on them by our August meeting.

**Recruitment and Retention Committee – (Chief Beattie) – (no report)**

**Division Reports**

**Fire Marshal – (Marshal Toomey)**

**ADMINISTRATION:**

**Personnel:**

Deputy State Fire Marshal Sean P. Toomey was confirmed as the new State Fire Marshal on June 2, 2021 by the Governor & Executive Council. Commissioner Quinn held a swearing in ceremony on June 3, 2021.

We are in the process of hiring several positions within the division, including:

Full time Fire Investigator- conditional offer extended/accepted,  
background in process

Part time NFIRS Program Coordinator  
Part time State Building Inspector  
Part time State Building Permit Coordinator  
Part time Fire Protection Specialist (Inspector)

We are hopeful that filling these positions will allow us to better serve the needs of our constituents.

**Budget:**

The FY22/23 budget was signed by Governor Sununu and is effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. With the passing of the budget the Mechanical Section is transferred to the Office of Professional Licensure & Certification (OPLC). The FMO will retain an inspector position to assist with state building inspections and investigative support. Additional staff resources will be available through a MOU between DOS and the OPLC. The State Mechanical Inspectors will remain in their regions and available for technical assistance to fire departments while at the OPLC.

**Website :**

The State Fire Marshal's Office has a new website. We are still in the process of changing all of the pages over to the new site, so you will have some links to pages on the old website while we transition. [nh.gov/firemarshal](http://nh.gov/firemarshal)

**2021 Legislation:**

We are following a number of bills, including:

HB 72 – Ratifying the amendments to the 2015 fire code by the  
BFC

*Status: Passed/Adopted with Amendment House,  
Rereferred in the Senate*

SB 15 - Ratifying the amendments to the 2015 fire code by the BFC  
*Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, Passed/Adopted with Amendment  
House*

HB 208 – Repealing the lightning rod program  
*Status: Signed by the Governor, effective January 1, 2022*

SB 106 – Establishing a committee to study the adoption of the 2018 fire  
code,  
*Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, Passed/Adopted with Amendment  
House*

SB 106 – Repealing the voluntary fire equipment certification program  
*Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, Passed/Adopted with Amendment  
House*

HB 377 – Relative to the FMO issuing variances to recovery  
residences/Signed by Governor

*Status: Signed by the Governor, effective July 5, 2021*

SB 133 – Relative to the FMO issuing POA permits

*Status: Committee of Conference Report Adopted in House &  
Senate*

**BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:**

***New/Active cases (synopsis of some of our cases are listed below):***

- \* On June 9, 2021, investigators and an IGL K9 team assisted the Farmington FD and PD with a fire that occurred in the early morning hours in a vacant mobile home. During the course of the investigation, criminal indicators were discovered. The investigation is ongoing by the three agencies.
- \* On June 9, 2021, an investigator responded to the Red Carpet Inn and Suites at 166 Highland St. in Plymouth to assist the Plymouth FD with a fire in the motel. The building sustained significant damage. Investigators determined that the cause of the fire was accidental and likely due to an electrical issue.
- \* On June 14, 2021, an investigator responded to 873 Cass Mill Rd. in Alexandria to assist the Alexandria FD and PD with a car fire investigation. There were criminal indicators associated with the scene. The fire remains under investigation.
- \* On June 17, 2021, investigators responded to 2 Shore Dr. Ext. in Merrimack to assist the Merrimack FD with a fire investigation of a single family dwelling where the two occupants and three firefighters sustained injury. At this time the fire remains under investigation by the Merrimack FD.
- \* On June 25, 2021, investigators and an IGL K9 team responded to 26 Hill St. in Dover to assist the Dover FD and PD with an investigation of a fire in a multi-family dwelling. There are criminal indicators involved with this investigation. At this time the fire remains under investigation.

**Fatal Fires:**

On June 24, 2021, investigators and an IGL K9 team responded to 121 First NH Turnpike (Rt. 4) in Northwood for a fire in a single family residence. It was reported that there were occupants trapped inside the house at the time of the fire. After the fire was extinguished, a single victim (occupant) was located inside the house. An autopsy was conducted and revealed that her cause of death was smoke inhalation and the manner of death was accidental. The fire is still under investigation; however, there are no criminal indicators at this time.

**Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams:**

Our two IGL Canine Teams were deployed two times in the month of June. A joint training day was conducted with the IGL Canine Team from the Manchester Fire Department.

**Public Outreach:**

Investigators are assisting with youth firesetter assessments in multiple communities throughout the state. Our youth firesetter coordinator and investigators presented to the Merrimack County's child advocacy center a case review of a recent case.

### **Training/Committees:**

Investigators attended several trainings in the month of June, some to include: a continuation of ICS-300; Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents, annual firearms training, IAAI's Investigating a Fire Fatality, Fire Investigator Health & Safety, Collecting Evidence Using Wi-Fi Routers, and training on a new CAD/records management system that the FMO is now using along with NH State Police and other state agencies. Investigators also taught at the 185<sup>th</sup> NH Police Academy on fire investigations.

### **Court Actions:**

Christopher Vincent was found guilty of Class B Felony arson in Merrimack Superior Court. He was acquitted of an additional charge of arson. This all stemmed from a fire he set 5 1/2 years ago at an unoccupied structure in Pittsfield. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled at a later date on this case.

### **BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:**

**State Building Permit System:** We processed 33 building permit applications in the month of June.

**Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:** Our staff remains available for technical code assistance. We initiated 5 educational and 7 healthcare plan reviews in the month of June.

**Variance Requests:** We processed 2 variance requests in the month of June.

### **BUREAU OF PLANNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES:**

#### **Hazardous Materials:**

Hazardous Materials coordination and coverage remains a priority. Personnel are ready to deploy if needed and may be contacted through the on-call FMO supervisor for consultation purposes.

We continue to collaborate with the regional hazmat teams relative to response, training and coordination. Grant funds from the prior fiscal year will be rolled forward to the current fiscal year.

The 2020 Emergency Response Guidebooks are available, please contact us for the coordination of delivery.

#### **Fireworks:**

This month was a busy one with retail store inspections and preparations for the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. We continue to license fireworks operators, as well as conduct required inspections at all retail stores and explosives product storage sites. Please contact us for any fireworks related items.

### **Statewide Fire Incident Reporting:**

We are working with FSTEMS to implement and pilot the new NH Emergency Reporting Software using Imagetrend.

### **Fire Standards/Training/EMS – (Director Cutting/Asst. Director Phillips)**

- Courses/Programs
  - Recruit School has started with a full enrollment.
  - The Inspector II, Instructor I and an Airport Firefighter programs have been completed.
  - Newington Firefighter I just finished and tested.
  - The Tuftonboro Firefighter I continues and the Sunapee Firefighter I program will be testing in a few of weeks.
  - Fire Investigator starts in August and is full.
  - Firefighter II in Bethlehem has started and ends in August
  - We are planning for Fall/Spring courses and will advertise the plan once finalized.
  - We are also planning on creating a course planning guide/policy that will allow departments and services to share their needs for classes and make requests.
  - We have started the process to change Administrative Rules to increase the tuition discount for certain programs for emergency service personnel as outlined in HB 2.
- Instructors
  - We are working on developing a comprehensive Instructor Recruitment Plan based on internal and external feedback.
- Software
  - We conducted our first department pilot with the RespondNH system which went very well. New departments will follow in the upcoming weeks.
    - There are 9 pilot departments.
    - Newbury and Peterborough Fire are two those departments that we have met with already.
- CPAT

- The last CPAT of the year is scheduled for Monday September 13<sup>th</sup> and will be at the academy. Candidates are able to sign up for the test until August 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Grants
  - We still have not heard about our AFG grant which if awarded will replace Engine 1,3 forcible entry door props and the current certification testing software.
- EMS
  - State of New Hampshire - Emergency Protocol - COVID19 Destination Determination v.2 – DISCONTINUATION
  - State of New Hampshire - Emergency Protocol - COVID19 v.5 - UPDATE
    - The major change to this protocol is incorporation of changes made to minimum PPE requirements as well as the discontinuation of Emergency Protocol - COVID19 Destination Determination v.2.
  - State of New Hampshire - Emergency Protocol - Temporary Mobile Integrated Healthcare v.2 - UPDATE
    - The change to this protocol is incorporation of wording to reflect the transition from authorization under the "State of Emergency" to the "Public Health Incident".
  - State of New Hampshire - Emergency Protocol PPE v.3 – UPDATE
  - We are considering a project within the BEMS that would add a Specialty Service sub-section to include Inter-Facility Transportation and Mobile Integrated Healthcare programs. This proposal would dedicate a combination of full and part-time personnel to these programs as a resource for development, management, education, training, integration and oversight. They would coordinate operations including infrastructure, stakeholder communications, and oversight of MIH application process, customer service, and efficiency and continuously improving operations and outcomes by using evidence-based methods. Funding is through a grant for two years with an evaluation on whether or not to continue these based on program success and EMS system needs

- There has been a higher than normal delay in processing Criminal History Record Information (CHRI), background checks, on any New/Lapsed EMS Provider license applications. This delay is combination of factors that are out of the control of our Division as this process is handled by the State Police Criminal Records Unit (CRU). There is an approximately three (3) to four (4) week delay in some instances. We are fully aware of the hardships that this may cause your providers and departments, and we are working with CRU to reduce these delays. If departments have specific issues please reach out to us.

### **NH Fire Standards and Training Commission – (Chiefs Clark/Buxton)**

The Commission met on June 3<sup>rd</sup> as a regular meeting and just prior to the meeting a ceremony was held by Commissioner Quinn to swear in Justing Cutting as the new Director of the Fire Academy and EMS. The Commission Chair, Jeremy Thibeault has retired and Chief Robert Buxton who is Vice Chair served as Chair. The new Chair is expected to be elected among the Commission at the September meeting.

Michael Joyal who represents the NH Municipal Association has announced that he will not be seeking a reappointment when his current appointment expires in November.

The State Budget passed with a special allocation of \$600,000 due to the efforts of Senator Hennessey of Littleton. \$400,000 is allocated to the Academy to reduce the cost of Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 courses and to be utilized to offer additional FF1 and FF2 classes. The other \$200,000 is to be added to the Fire Fund to start replenishing the fund.

Next biennium Senator Hennessey has advised that she will work to have the \$2.1 million of the Fire Fund used by the Fire Marshal's Office to be funded by the General Fund significantly increasing funds available to the Fire Academy.

The Instructor Courses are being revamped and Level II and III will be more like a college level on-line class. The Visiting Committee is to meet with the Curriculum Committee to discuss over the summer.

Since most of the Rescue Courses were removed from FF 2, the Rescue Courses will be offered as stand-alone courses. The Commission removed all prerequisites except PPE and SCBA for Confined Spaces. This has been brought forward to two public hearings and was ratified by the Commission.

The Commission intends to eliminate the designation of FF 3 as that is not a national designation. It is noted that many union contracts reference FF 3 and will need to be modified. The process will be over adequate time to allow Union Contracts to be modified.



It was noted that although the Fire Academy has approximately 300 Staff Instructors only 50 are active and many of them only teach specialty courses. Director Cutting has placed a high priority of increasing the number of Academy Staff Instructors.

The Commission voted to authorize the Curriculum Committee to seat, as soon as possible, the Visiting Committee for Fire Officer I and II. The Curriculum Committee will meet in August. The Commission does not typically meet during the summer and its next regular meeting is September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**NH Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coord. Board – (Chief Allard)**

n/r

**National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) – (Chief Corey) – n/r**

**Homeland Security and Emergency Management – (Director Harper) n/r**

**EMS Trauma Medical Review Board – (Chief Beaudoin) – n/r**

**Forest Protection Bureau – (Chief Sherman)**

- We are currently going through the Forest Ranger hiring process. We have 2 Ranger positions and 1 Captains position we are filling. They have received applications and the hiring process will be completed in August.
- The new online fire permit system went in June. There have been some minor glitches which the contractor is working to resolve, but overall the new system has been well-received. Some features of the system include:
  - Add new customers to the system
  - Log in-person permits online for no fee and print at the station
  - Quick burn tracking and lookups with a visual map (Great for Dispatch Centers)
  - Easy messaging to permittees via email and text to inform them of permit changes or cancellations
  - Updated print template
  - Administrator ability to immediately stop all sales or specific sales if weather condition change and add a restart time
- Customers/Permittees can log in at the same address as always:  
[www.nhfirepermit.com](http://www.nhfirepermit.com) or QR code:
- You as the Warden/Fire Department/Agent, can log in at the new address:  
<https://NH-Agent.BurnSafeAmerica.com>
  - Log-in with your old credentials



- If you have an issue it may be because an email address was never set up in the old system or your old password may not meet the criteria for the new system
  - Contact Jen Little for assistance [Jennifer.r.little@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:Jennifer.r.little@dncr.nh.gov)
- We have received an EMP Grant from HSEM to purchase a 5<sup>th</sup> Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) to be placed in the town of Jaffrey. This will give us much needed data for the southwest part of the state. The info. for our RAWS stations is publically available at: <https://mesowest.utah.edu/cgi-bin/droman/mesomap.cgi?state=NH&rawsflag=3> select “RAWS” on the network tab on the left of screen.

### **Board of Fire Control – (Chief Clark) –**

The NH Board of Fire Control met on May 16<sup>th</sup> and unanimously supported Commissioner’s Quinn’s nominee, Sean Toomey for Fire Marshal. Subsequently Sean Toomey was appointed as Fire Marshal by the Governor and Executive Council. The Board met in person on June 16<sup>th</sup> with Marshal Toomey.

At that meeting the Board unanimously recommended to Governor Sununu, that I be named as Chair of the Board of Fire Control. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Governor appointed me as Chair of the Board.

Marshal Toomey gave an overview of his expectations as Marshal and advised that he would emphasize customer support and acknowledged that the Fire Chiefs are the primary customer. He advised that the legislators granted the Marshal’s office the ability to issue Assembly Permits and also gave the Marshal specific authority to grant waivers to the Fire Code to accommodate Recovery Houses provided certain criteria is met.

The Marshal advised that due to the Building Code Review Board not completing their review of the 2018 version of the International Building Code and International Residential Code that the NFPA 1 and NFPA 101 version 2018 was not approved in this session as they want to keep the versions synchronized.

The Marshal advised that the relationship with the Electrician’s Board has improved and that a MOU will be signed soon and will document the cooperation between the Electrician’s Board and the Fire Marshal’s Office.

Marshal Toomey advised that the mechanical inspectors including plumbers and gas fitters will no longer be part of the Marshal’s office and will be independent like the Electrical Inspectors.

It was reported that there have been numerous fires, investigations, and convictions during the spring. The investigators have been very busy.

The Board discussed Short Term Rentals and compliance with the Fire Code. The Board concluded that they will wait for recent court cases to be determined before further exploring.

The Board does not typically meet during the summer and the next meeting is not until September 22, 2021.

### **Building Code Review Board – (Marshal Lennon) –**

Building code review board meeting notes for this week's meeting July 9, 2021 10-12 am at the NHFA.

We will be voting on the following changes:

2018 International Plumbing Code (IPC)  
2018 International Mechanical Code (IMC)  
2018 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSA)

These new editions have no impact to the fire service.

We are beginning to discuss the following codes for adoption.

International Residential Code (IRC)  
International Existing Building Code (IEBC)

### **Manufactured Housing Installation Standards Board: (Chief) n/r**

### **Division of Emergency Services and Communications – (Director Doyle) –**

- **REMINDER: Impact of the 10-digit dialing requirement for all local calls in New Hampshire – required as of October 2021. Check your speed dials / transfer #'s in your Comm. Centers!**
- 9-8-8 Planning Coalition meetings and Subcommittee meetings held via Zoom. Subcommittee for 911 / L.E. review of process flow for call referral (PSAP to Headrest) and alternatives to LE Response, training & education needs and access to CMHC's and CIT's; Justin Romanello is now a member of the subcommittee, our meeting is this afternoon. Working on developing a training module to be developed re: what is 988 as well as an overview presentation for Fire & Police Chiefs & NHEDA;
- Met with NASNA at the bi-annual meeting with statewide 911 Administrators – discuss matters of mutual concern and legislative efforts at the National level;
- Site visits to FD's and Comm. Centers will be forthcoming;
- E9-1-1 Commission Meeting was held, In person, at the IPOC on Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at 1 – minutes are forthcoming;
- Communications equipment was deployed to assist with Bike week, and preparations are underway for NASCAR next week;

- Members of the Division were recognized by NHEDA as “Essential First Response Recipients”, a small ceremony with their Board and our employees took place in Laconia;
- Met with Public Safety reps from Bedford and Amherst to reconciel and addressing conflict;
- Met with OnStar reps to highlight changes and technology associated with the delivery of 9-1-1 related emergency notifications to the PSAPs;
- In-person Mutualink Trainings in 4-hour blosks are being offered through the SWIC’s office, at the Fire Academy, more information can be obtained by emailing the SWIC at [NHSWIC@dos.nh.gov](mailto:NHSWIC@dos.nh.gov) ;
- Starting discussion about a “Nurse Triage” protocol in the PSAP – will ask for several memebers of this group to participate in a focus group on the concept and viability;

**E-911 Commission – (Chief Thomas) –**

- NH has had several new towers added. FirstNet is exceeding their goal of full coverage for the state, and mapping is continuing.

**IAFC Director – (Chief Christopoulos) –**

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

- He reported on the NEAFC conference in Portsmouth and listed the new officers of the association.
- The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference next year will be June 22-25 in Worcester, MA in 2022.
- FRI will be held in two weeks in Charlotte, NC. There are some rooms left at the Westin at this point.

**Old Business –**

**New Business –**

**Good and Welfare –**

- Chief Carrier reminded all of the NHAFC Golf Tournament on August 9 at Lochmere in Tilton.

The next meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, August 12 at 1600 hours.

A MOTION (Best/Thomas) to adjourn the meeting carried at 0951 hours.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Chief Brent T. Lemire, Ret.  
 Executive Director/Secretary, NHAFC  
 July 8, 2021