STATE OF MAINE
127th LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

Working Group to Develop Solutions to Meet the Needs for Municipal Volunteer Personnel

December 2015

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Executive Summary

The 127th Maine Legislature established the Working Group to Develop Solutions to Meet the Needs for Municipal Volunteer Personnel with the passage of Resolve 2015, chapter 49. The resolve established the 7-member working group, which includes three members of the Legislature and four appointed representatives of the public[1].

The resolve directed the working group to perform the following duties:

- To find solutions to the recruitment, training and retention problems facing volunteer fire departments and volunteer emergency medical services providers in Maine;
- To identify the reasons for recruitment, training and retention problems and to recommend solutions;
- In their work on the above two duties, to solicit input from municipalities with volunteer fire departments and volunteer emergency medical services providers and members of the public; and
- To submit a report that includes findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety no later than December 2, 2015.

Over the course of the three working group meetings the working group heard presentations and engaged in active dialogue with fire and emergency services department chiefs, active and retired volunteer and per diem firefighters and emergency medical services personnel, a representative of the Maine Municipal Association, the Director of the Maine Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Standards, the program manager of the Division of Workplace Safety and Health of the Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Standards and the Director of Maine Emergency Medical Services.

The working group compiled a comprehensive list of suggested recommendations to address issues related to recruitment, training and retention of municipal volunteer personnel. The working group then identified suggested recommendations according to whether they required direct action by the Legislature, direction from the Legislature to another agency to review and consider a suggested action, or review and consideration by a municipality or a fire and emergency medical services department.

The working group recommendations, which are included in section III, include actions to address recruitment, training and retention. These recommendations include the following:

Recommendations

- Funding should be provided for the Length of Service Award program established in Public Law 2015, chapter 352 and enacted as 5 MRS, section 3772. This would require an appropriation or allocation to the program as authorized in 5 MRS, section 3772, subsection 10, paragraph A.

[1] Due to time commitments, one member resigned and a new appointment was not made.

- Tax credits at the state or local level should be expanded or implemented to be used to pay property, excise or other taxes imposed by the State or the municipality. Legislation would be required for state level tax credits and to amend current law on tax credits at the local level. Municipal level tax credits up to the amount of $750 may be provided to volunteers who are at least 60 years of age, as provided in 36 MRS, section 6232.

- Bell-to-bell coverage should be provided through the workers' compensation program at the state level or insurance provided at the municipal level. Providing state workers compensation coverage to volunteers on the way to and from the call site would require legislation to include coverage from the call bell to completion of return from the call for municipal volunteer firefighters and emergency medical services personnel as "arising out of and in the course of employment" under 39-A MRS, section 201, subsection 1. Providing insurance at the municipal level would not require legislation.

- Legislation should be passed to further the goal of achieving a Central Fire Academy and regional training facilities. This is a long-term commitment that working group members recommend the Legislature commit to in 2016. As part of that commitment a study could be undertaken through passage of LD 655, "Resolve, To Study the Feasibility of a State Firefighter Training Facility," which was carried over to the Second Regular Session of the Legislature.

- Municipal volunteer personnel should be provided the option of joining the State Employee Health Program. Allowing municipal volunteer personnel eligibility for the State Employee Health Program would require amendment to the definition of eligible persons in 5 MRS, section 285, subsection 1 and would require legislation.

- Firefighter and rescue personnel courses available at the technical schools and community colleges should be expanded and more financial aid made available for courses. Adding new courses would require action by the technical schools and community colleges. Providing additional financial aid would require allocations or appropriations in legislation.

- Legislation should be enacted to limit liability for firefighters and rescue personnel for volunteers, incident commanders and fire chiefs. This would require legislation to provide for immunity, by amending 14 MRS, section 164 or 8112, subsection 1.

- Additional duties should be established for the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to charge the commission with overseeing and reporting on implementation of the recommendations of the working group in its annual report in December of 2017 and 2018. This would require a resolve or unallocated law.

The working group members realize that funding will be necessary to implement the recommendations of the working group. Members did not vote on whether to support tax increases but they did suggest that consideration of tax increases may be necessary. The Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety may want to consider closely studying the feasibility of raising slightly the taxes on alcohol or raising by 2.5% the taxes on

tobacco products; however, there may be other alternatives available to address the needs regarding funding.

The working group, in its review of the list of suggested priorities attached as Appendix C, determined that actions at the local level are keys to successful volunteer fire and emergency medical services. The working group members agreed to encourage municipalities to consider implementing the following initiatives:

a. Providing benefits to firefighter and emergency medical services volunteers, including length of service award programs and stipends for travel and expenses;
b. Funding public relations campaigns, including using public service announcements, social and traditional media outlets and community outreach;
c. Expanding junior firefighter programs;
d. Working toward well-run departments that operate under effective and strong leadership;
e. Working with local firefighter unions to enable career firefighters to volunteer with local fire departments;
f. Pursuing insurance and third-party reimbursement for firefighter and emergency medical services calls;
g. Cooperating with other municipalities on training;
h. Establishing clear chains of command and operational procedures for mutual aid calls;
i. Expanding full-time daytime coverage, funding fire chiefs and funding volunteer coordinators;
j. Providing liability insurance to cover volunteers, incident commanders and chiefs; and
k. Working with banks, credit unions and businesses to provide benefits to firefighter and emergency medical services volunteers.

Recruitment and Retention

Fire departments can no longer count on the children of current members following in their parents' footsteps. Nor can they count on a continuous stream of community people eager to donate their time and energy to their local volunteer fire department. Adding to the problem, departments cannot rely on members staying active in the volunteer fire service for long periods of time.

(Source: *Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services*, U.S. Fire Administration, May 2007, page 1.)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Working Group to Develop Solutions to Meet the Needs for Municipal Volunteer Personnel (the working group) was established by Resolve 2015, chapter 49. The resolve is included as Appendix A. The membership of the working group consists of one member of the Senate, two members of the House of Representatives, two public members appointed by the President of the Senate and two public members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The public members appointed by the President of the Senate include a representative of the Maine State Federation of Firefighters and a chief of a volunteer fire department. The public members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives include a volunteer firefighter or emergency responders who may be active or inactive in that service and a representative of the Maine Fire Chiefs' association. A membership list of the working group is included as Appendix B.

The duties of the working group, as set forth in the resolve, include the following:

- To find solutions to the recruitment, training and retention problems facing volunteer fire departments and volunteer emergency medical services providers in Maine;
- To identify the reasons for recruitment, training and retention problems and to recommend solutions;
- In their work on the above two duties, to solicit input from municipalities with volunteer fire departments and volunteer emergency medical services providers and members of the public; and
- To submit a report that includes findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety no later than December 2, 2015.

The working group met 3 times during the fall of 2015. The agendas for the meetings and meeting notes from the meetings may be found at http://legislature.maine.gov/legis/opla/municipalvolunteers.htm.

In accordance with Resolve 2015, chapter 49 the Working Group to Develop Solutions to Meet the Needs for Municipal Volunteer Personnel submits its final report and provides recommendations and suggested legislation. The recommendations are included in section III.

Importance of Leadership

Many retention and recruitment problems can be traced back directly or indirectly to leadership problems. Effective leadership helps retain members as well as reduce dissatisfaction. Ineffective leadership is the most common reason for a decline in membership.

(Source: *Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services*, U.S. Fire Administration, May 2007, page 1.)

II. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ISSUES

Volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical services providers are important assets to Maine communities. Not only do they save lives and property, but they also save municipalities money. When the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, a commission tasked with monitoring and evaluating the State's fire protection services system was created in 2000, it was estimated that volunteer firefighters save Maine communities $50 million annually in local tax revenues that would otherwise be needed to fund full-time firefighters.[2] However, changing demographics, increased demands on time for training and shifts in job responsibilities have led to a decline in volunteer personnel.

Between 1986 and 2013, the rate of volunteer firefighters per 1,000 population protected decreased by 18% nationally.[3] Decreases of this magnitude generally affect rural areas more, because rural areas tend to have more departments that are staffed by volunteers only. In addition, since volunteers are often only available on a part-time basis, in order to ensure adequate responses, more volunteers may be needed. This decline leaves many departments without sufficient personnel to respond to alarms.

During this process, the working group heard that fire and emergency medical services chiefs in Maine are struggling to effectively staff their departments. Many stated that they now need more people just to get the same turnout they used to have because people have less flexibility than in the past. It will take concerted efforts at the federal, state and local level to address the loss of municipal volunteers.

Demographic changes

Changing demographics represent the biggest barriers to the recruitment and retention of volunteers. In the past, volunteers often lived and worked in the same community making volunteerism more feasible. As the movement from an agrarian economy to that of an economy of industry and technology has occurred, people have become transient and individuals are far more likely to travel for work. During daytime hours, the availability of volunteers decreases because people are too far from their community to be a contributing member of a department.

Furthermore, changes in the family dynamic from single income to dual income families has continually grown, increasing demands on time due to employment and children's curricular and extracurricular activities. This makes it difficult for a person, even if willing to volunteer, because of the lack of availability to effectively respond to calls.

Training Demands

The lack of availability to respond to calls is also a factor in the ability to meet training requirements to be a firefighter or emergency medical responder. The requirements for being a

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[2] *Maine Fire Protection Service Commission Annual Report, 2001*, Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, page 3.

[3] *US Fire Department Profile 2013*, National Fire Protection Association, Fire Analysis and Research Division, page 3.

volunteer in these fields have become increasingly more demanding at both the state and federal level. This is due partially to the expansion of services provided to include a variety of duties beyond fire suppression. Fire departments are now responding more to emergency medical calls than fires, and they potentially have to deal with other types of emergencies, such as methamphetamine labs, bomb threats and terror incidences. In order to respond to calls beyond fire suppression, more intensive, diversified training is needed to successfully mitigate and resolve emergency calls for assistance. Training is generally not a one-time thing and once basic skills are learned, more enhanced training and hands-on learning is necessary to hone the needed skills.

The working group heard from numerous presenters about the challenges the training requirements pose to the recruitment and retention of volunteers, but also heard about the importance of training to avoid disastrous consequences. Training in Maine poses unique challenges, as the state is so geographically expansive that people often have to travel great distances for certain courses. Between the travel and the time needed to train, an individual with already limited free time may feel that they cannot meet the needs to be a volunteer. Volunteering as a firefighter or emergency responder has always been taxing on a families. Adding more time commitments away from family obligations for training may decrease the ability for a household to commit to a volunteer position.

Job responsibilities

A few participants at working group meetings spoke of how the ability to use firefighting equipment to put out fires was an inducement for people to volunteer. In the past, this was the primary function of volunteer personnel, but today fire suppression is an ever-shrinking component of the job. In fact, all chiefs who spoke to the working group stated that more calls are for medical assistance than fires. The job is much more diverse today that for some the appeal is no longer there, for others that diversity is appealing; however, the increased training requirements and demands for time prevent participation.

The Public's Perception

The consensus of fire chiefs across the country is that the public's expectations of the fire department are greater today than in years past. The public expects the fire department to provide assistance for emergencies that include fires, fire alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, broken water pipes, natural gas leaks, medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, hazardous materials spills, mysterious odors, structural collapse, extrications, water rescue, and even bomb threats and terrorist incidents.

(Source: *Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services*, U.S. Fire Administration, May 2007, page 11.)

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognizing the barriers to participation from input received during this process, as well as discussing submitted priorities from interested parties, the working group decided that a focused approach may assist in negating some of the barriers and provide relief to departments that are finding themselves with too few volunteers to respond to emergency calls for fire and medical assistance.

Recommendations of the working group are as follows:

- Funding should be provided for the Length of Service Award program established in Public Law 2015, chapter 352 and enacted as 5 MRS, section 3772. This would require an appropriation or allocation to the program as authorized in 5 MRS, section 3772, subsection 10, paragraph A.

- Tax credits at the state or local level should be expanded or implemented, to be used to pay property, excise or other taxes imposed by the State or the municipality. Legislation would be required for state level tax credits and to amend current law on tax credits at the local level. Municipal level tax credits up to the amount of $750 may be provided to volunteers who are at least 60 years of age, as provided in 36 MRS, section 6232.

- Bell-to-bell coverage should be provided through the workers' compensation program at the state level or insurance provided at the municipal level. Providing state workers compensation coverage to volunteers on the way to and from the call site would require legislation to include coverage from the call bell to completion of return from the call for municipal volunteer firefighters and emergency medical services personnel as "arising out of and in the course of employment" under 39-A MRS, section 201, subsection 1. Providing insurance at the municipal level would not require legislation.

- Legislation should be passed to further the goal of achieving a Central Fire Academy and regional training facilities. This is a long-term commitment that working group members recommend the Legislature commit to in 2016. As part of that commitment a study could be undertaken through passage of LD 655, "Resolve, To Study the Feasibility of A State Firefighter Training Facility," which was carried over to the Second Regular Session of the Legislature.

- Municipal volunteer personnel should be provided the option of joining the State Employee Health Program. Allowing municipal volunteer personnel eligibility for the State Employee Health Program would require amendment to the definition of eligible persons in 5 MRS, section 285, subsection 1 and would require legislation.

- Firefighter and rescue personnel courses available at the technical schools and community colleges should be expanded and more financial aid made available for courses. Adding new courses would require action by the technical schools and community colleges. Providing additional financial aid would require allocations or appropriations in legislation.

- Legislation should be enacted to limit liability for firefighters and rescue personnel for volunteers, incident commanders and fire chiefs. This would require legislation to provide for immunity, by amending 14 MRS, section 164 or 8112, subsection 1.

- Additional duties should be established for the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to charge the commission with overseeing and reporting on implementation of the recommendations of the working group in its annual report in December of 2017 and 2018. This would require a resolve or unallocated law.

Reasons to Volunteer

Individuals are willing to give their time to volunteer emergency services organizations provided the following:

1. The experience is rewarding and worth their time.
2. The training requirements are not excessive.
3. The time demands are adaptable and manageable.
4. They are rewarded with a personal sense of value.
5. There is good leadership minimizing conflict.
6. There is ample support for the organization.

(Source: *Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services*, U.S. Fire Administration, May 2007, page v.)

IV. STUDY PROCESS

The Working Group to Develop Solutions to Meet the Needs for Municipal Volunteer Personnel met three times during the fall of 2015. Copies of the agendas and meeting notes for all meetings are available at http://legislature.maine.gov/legis/opla/municipalvolunteers.htm.

October 20, 2015 meeting

The first meeting of the working group was held on October 20, 2015 in Augusta. The meeting included the following speakers and discussions:

- **Chief Brian Stockdale, Topsham Fire and Rescue Department**, spoke of the Topsham department, which is staffed by salaried, per diem and call-in personnel. Difficulty in getting call-in personnel sufficient for response to a call is caused by fewer people working in their town of residence, more people working multiple jobs and people having less flexibility to leave their jobs to go on a call. Suggestions are: (1) more flexible training, (2) offering more volunteers more opportunities that provide increasing challenges, (3) providing incentives through improved insurance coverage that is supplemental to workers' compensation and pays for bell-to-bell coverage, (4) paying for training and (5) providing tax breaks for volunteers.
- **Chief Kenneth Brillant, Brunswick Fire Department**, spoke of the Brunswick department, which is staffed by salaried, per diem and call-in personnel. Causes of the difficulty in getting sufficient call-in personnel, in addition to those mentioned by Chief Stockdale, include family and career obligations, length of and travel for training and absence from the community during times of need. Suggestions are: (1) funding for training costs and (2) incentives such as length of service awards.
- **Chief James Totman, Phippsburg Volunteer Fire and Rescue**, spoke of the Phippsburg department, their cooperation with surrounding towns, the difficulty in keeping EMS personnel, the difficulties presented by state mandates and national tests and the limited needs of smaller towns, for instance towns without ladder trucks or poisonous snakes. Suggestions are: (1) paying part of the cost of training and (2) providing retirement benefits.

The chairs, Senator Baker and Representative Lajoie, welcomed members of the public who attended the meeting and invited their participation. These attendees included Stephen Nichols, Vassalboro Fire Department; Mike Vashon, Vassalboro Fire Department; Garret Corbin, Maine Municipal Association; and Jim Grenier, Somerville Volunteer Fire Department.

Working group members engaged in active discussion with the invited speakers and discussed the following issues:

(1) The geographic location of fire department may affect ISO rating and thus fire insurance rates;
(2) When more than one municipality responds to a call, a chief needs to be designated as in-charge;
(3) When the chief is elected there is potential for weakness since chief training and certification are voluntary; and

(4) Encouraging and providing scholarships for new volunteer and professional personnel to serve in firefighting and emergency medical services.

November 3, 2015 meeting

The second meeting of the working group was held on November 3, 2015 in Augusta. The meeting included the following speakers and discussions:

- **Chief Robert Posick, Calais Fire Department,** spoke of the Calais Fire Department, which provides fire and emergency medical services and is staffed by full-time, part-time and call-in personnel. Chief Posick spoke of the connections between recruitment, training and retention and of the positive value of specialty training and Length of Service programs. (Berwick and South Portland have operating Length of Service programs.) He asked for regional training, offering accredited classes by experienced trainers. He spoke in favor of training, even at municipal expense and even if newly trained personnel move to another community, done regionally and possibly with a centralized academy. He spoke of the positive relationship between his department and Washington County Community College and the St. Croix Regional Technical Center. He spoke of the positive impact of active community involvement and close work with high schools and the vocational technical school. Chief Posick stressed the importance of very good training with good food provided, the value of retirement benefits and Length of Service programs and the benefits of treating personnel as family. Chief Posick mentioned the good relationships Calais has with municipalities in their mutual aid agreement and of the automatic response agreement and coordinated training with St. Stephen, New Brunswick.
- **Firefighter Robert Cousins of the Calais Fire Department,** spoke of his experience signing up and getting trained, of his continuing outreach to students and younger residents of Washington County and of the benefits to the whole state of trained personnel even if they move from the community in which they were trained to a new community. Firefighter Cousins mentioned that specialty courses attract firefighters and help to maintain a level of interest.
- **Chief Nate Schools, Buxton Fire Department,** discussed his interest in paramedic/firefighting from his high school days, his training and experience as a live-in firefighter in Gorham, his work with the live-in program at the present and the importance of grant funding for the program. He discussed outreach, open houses, the Safer program (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response), scholarships and the possibility of student loan forgiveness, and the importance of training being held locally and being affordable.

The chairs, Senator Baker and Representative Lajoie, welcomed members of the public who attended the meeting and invited their participation. These attendees included Shaun St. Germain, Director, Maine Emergency Medical Services; Pamela Megathlin and Michael LaPlante, Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards; Garret Corbin, Maine Municipal Association; Walter Morse, Chief, Jefferson Fire Department; Fred Bowers, Town of Alna Fire Department Recruitment Committee; Jeff Maker, retired call firefighter, Calais Fire Department; and Jim Grenier, Somerville Volunteer Fire Department.

As occurred during the first meeting, working group members engaged in active discussion with the invited speakers and discussed the following issues:

1. The possibility of training costs that were paid for a firefighter/EMT by one municipality then being repaid to that original municipality by a municipality that later hires the trained person.
2. The importance of strong leadership in recruitment, training and retention and the possibility of required training or certification for officers and chiefs.
3. The possibility of alcohol and/or tobacco tax increases to pay for initiatives supported by the working group.
4. The importance of strong community relationships and local public relations initiatives to recruitment, retention and adequate funding.
5. Changing Maine EMS licensure requirements to enable veterans with combat medic experience to qualify for licensure.
6. The proposal under consideration in Maine EMS to require emergency medical service vehicles that are transporting a patient from one hospital to another hospital to utilize a driver who is qualified as an EMT.
7. Information on municipal volunteer recruitment, training and retention initiatives from other states and from Congress and data from Maine Municipal Association and the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission.
8. A handout entitled *Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Ideas You Can Use*, distributed by Chief Walter Morse of Jefferson Fire Department, a copy of which has been posted online at http://legislature.maine.gov/legis/opla/municipalvolunteers.htm. This article addresses public relations and marketing, recruitment strategies, promotion of volunteerism, partnerships with local businesses, community involvement, youth programs, media relations, leadership and benefits for volunteer personnel and improving Insurance Service Office grading levels in order to lower fire insurance rates.

November 17, 2015 meeting

The third meeting of the working group was held on November 17, 2015 in Augusta. Working group members worked through a lengthy list of options for recommendations (see Appendix C) and settled on eight recommendations for action at the state or municipal level, which can be found in section III.

The working group members realize that funding will be necessary to implement the recommendations of the working group. Members did not vote on whether to support tax increases but they did suggest that consideration of tax increases may be necessary. The Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety may want to consider closely studying the feasibility of raising slightly the taxes on alcohol or raising by 2.5% the taxes on tobacco products; however, there may be other alternatives available to address the needs regarding funding.

Finally working group members agreed to encourage municipalities to consider implementing the suggested initiatives found in Appendix C.

V. CONCLUSION

Many of the barriers to recruitment and retention are not likely to disappear soon. In order to respond to changing demographics and socioeconomics, federal, state and local entities need to be more proactive in finding solutions to address the shortage of volunteers. Providing incentives such as length of service awards, tax breaks, access to health insurance, comprehensive workers' compensation, immunity from liability and access to training may signal to those contemplating volunteering, and those already volunteering, that their sacrifice for their community is appreciated. In some instances, the financial incentives may be enough to entice someone struggling with time limitations due to employment and family commitments to find time to volunteer.

The recommendations in this report also recognize the importance of training and the need for training to be accessible for volunteers. Offering more courses at technical schools and community colleges and providing financial assistance for those courses may assist in sparking the interest of younger people, thus reaching a new pool of potential volunteers. Having a central academy with regional training facilities would help address time commitment issues. It could advance the diversity of training offerings, which could lead to better retention and more interest in volunteering, and it would ensure that volunteer personnel are properly trained to meet the demands of working in a department.

Providing oversight on the progress of these recommendations to the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission (the commission) helps to ensure that movement is made towards the implementation of the recommendations contained within this report. The commission is comprised of the people that are in the best position to oversee progress, and they are equipped to recognize what else may be needed to further advance towards increasing the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

However, the solutions cannot occur at the state level only. Municipalities need to be proactive, diligent, and creative in recruiting and retaining volunteers for their local fire departments. Actions at the local level are keys to successful volunteer fire and emergency medical services. The working group members encourage municipalities to consider implementing the following initiatives that were suggested by interested parties during the study process:

a. Length of service award programs and stipends for travel and expenses;
b. Funding public relations campaigns, including using public service announcements, social and traditional media outlets and community outreach;
c. Expanding junior firefighter programs;
d. Working toward well-run departments that operate under effective and strong leadership;
e. Working with local firefighter unions to enable career firefighters to volunteer with local fire departments;
f. Pursuing insurance and third-party reimbursement for firefighter and emergency medical services calls;
g. Cooperating with other municipalities on training;

h. Establishing clear chains of command and operational procedures for mutual aid calls;
i. Expanding full-time daytime coverage, funding fire chiefs and funding volunteer coordinators;
j. Providing liability insurance to cover volunteers, incident commanders and chiefs; and
k. Working with banks, credit unions, and businesses to provide benefits to firefighter and emergency medical services volunteers.

Changes in demographics and socioeconomics call for Maine to be innovative in addressing the shortfalls in municipal volunteer personnel. These volunteers provide a great benefit to communities not only in the safety they deliver, but also in dollars that they save. If what worked in the past is no longer working, it is important for state and local entities to be aggressive and collaborative in order to recruit and retain volunteer fire and emergency services personnel.

Value of Volunteers

The volunteer emergency services are an extremely valuable national resource, saving taxpayers billions of dollars annually. They are the backbone and spirit of many smaller communities. To maintain these longstanding traditions of volunteering, it is necessary to address the volunteers' basic needs – to have a sense of belonging, to assume responsibility, to have self-respect, to achieve goals, to be challenged, to be recognized, to grow and develop, to have fun and enjoy life – and when the time demands of volunteering are managed properly, recruitment and retention will be less of a problem.

(Source: *Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services*, U.S. Fire Administration, May 2007, page 170.)

APPENDIX A

Authorizing Resolve

LAW WITHOUT GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE (Originals not returned by Governor) JULY 12, 2015

CHAPTER 49 RESOLVES

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN

H.P. 339 - L.D. 500

Resolve, To Create a Working Group To Develop Solutions To Meet the Needs for Municipal Volunteer Personnel

Sec. 1. Municipal Volunteer Working Group established. Resolved: That the Municipal Volunteer Working Group, referred to in this resolve as "the working group," is established; and be it further

Sec. 2. Working group membership. Resolved: That the working group consists of 7 members appointed as follows:

1. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;

2. Two members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House, one of whom is from the party with the greatest number of members and one of whom is from the party with the 2nd greatest number of members;

3. One representative from the Maine State Federation of Firefighters, appointed by the President of the Senate;

4. One volunteer firefighter or emergency responder who may be active or nonactive, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

5. One chief of a volunteer fire department, appointed by the President of the Senate; and

6. One representative from the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and be it further

Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved: That the Senate member is the Senate chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the working group; and be it further

Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of working group. Resolved: That all appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members,

the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the working group. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the working group to meet and conduct its business; and be it further

Sec. 5. Meetings; duties. Resolved: That the working group shall meet 3 times in order to find solutions to the recruitment, training and retention problems facing volunteer fire departments and volunteer emergency medical services providers in Maine.

The working group shall solicit input from municipalities with volunteer fire departments and volunteer emergency medical services, volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical services providers and members of the public. The working group shall identify the reasons for recruitment, training and retention problems and recommend solutions; and be it further

Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved: That the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the working group; and be it further

Sec. 7. Report. Resolved: That, no later than December 2, 2015, the working group shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. The committee may submit legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 127th Legislature.

APPENDIX B

Membership list, Working Group to Develop Solutions to Meet the Needs for Municipal Personnel

Working Group to Develop Solutions to Meet the Needs for Municipal Volunteer Personnel

Resolve 2015, c. 49

Appointment(s) by the President

Sen. Linda L. Baker – Chair 1 Homeplace Topsham, ME 04086	Member of Senate
William Gillespie PO Box 46 Liberty, ME 04949-0046	Chief of a volunteer fire department
Anthony Russo 11 N. Ridge Road W. Gardiner, ME 04345	Representative from the Maine State Federation of Firefighters

Appointment(s) by the Speaker

Rep. Michel Lajoie – Chair 279 Old Greene Road Lewiston, ME 04240	Two members of the House of Rep. One from the party with the greatest number of members and one from the party with the second greatest number of members
Rep. Timothy S. Theriault 1210 Lakeview Drive China, ME 04358	Two members of the House of Rep. One from the party with the greatest number of members and one from the party with the second greatest number of members
Michael Barker* 25 Riverview Drive North Berwick, ME 03906	Volunteer firefighter or emergency responder who may be active or nonactive
Jeffery Cammack 39 Hurd Point Road Dedham, ME 04429	Representative from the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association

* Resigned after first meeting.

Staff:
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Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

APPENDIX C

Suggested Priorities

Suggested priorities reorganized by type of action required - (Recruitment = RC, Training = T, Retention = RT)

Law	
Provide benefits to FF and EMT volunteers	RC, RT
Bell-to-bell coverage through workers' compensation or insurance	RC, RT
Tax credits at state level	RC, RT
Eligibility for State Employee Health Insurance program	RC, RT
Fund LOSP	RC, RT
Forgive student loans	RC, RT
Provide retirement benefits that are transferrable	RC, RT
Fund a PR campaign, using PSA's, media, social media and community outreach to publicize need for FF and EMT volunteers, volunteer opportunities and build support and interest in volunteering	RC
Expand courses and financial aid for FF and EMT's in tech schools and community colleges	RC
Central State Fire Academy, regional training facilities	T
Fund grants for municipalities to obtain equipment and pay for training costs	T
Fund 2 or 3 volunteer coordinators to build online and in-person training	T
Statewide database in DOL to show available training courses and trainers and personnel records	T
Law limiting liability for volunteers, commanders and chiefs	RT
Provide for re-authorization of working group or oversight of recommendations of working group	
Fund 1 Fire Marshal position to work with departments, provide data	
MEMA take over MEMS	
Resolve or unallocated law	
Direct DOL BLS, OSFM and MEMS to work on training with chiefs, FF and EMT's to adopt uniform training by volunteer position (perhaps including the chief), testing and hiring standards and requirements that make training relevant, affordable and easy to access and provide a clear career path	RC, T
Employer incentives so that volunteers may respond to calls, to be developed by DOL BLS, FF, EMT's, employers and insurers	RT
Class rating system for response to a call to be developed by MEMS, fire chiefs, FF and EMT's	RT
Evaluate Maine Forest Service capacity to respond to climate changing fire	
Encourage municipalities to consider action	
Provide benefits to FF and EMT volunteers	RC, RT
Menu of benefits to choose from, including stipends for travel and expenses, funding LOSP	RC, RT
Fund a PR campaign, using PSA's, media, social media and community outreach to publicize need for FF and EMT volunteers, identified volunteer opportunities and build support and interest.	RC
Expand junior firefighter programs, offering academic credit	RC
Work toward a well-run department in which leadership and training are strong, morale is high, service and activity requirements are uniform and clearly communicated, new personnel are supported, community involvement is a priority, public is aware of proper use of department and recruitment is an ongoing effort by all members	RC, RT
Work with local fire unions to enable career firefighters to volunteer with local fire departments	RC
Pursue insurance and third-party reimbursement for FF and EMT services	RT
Municipalities cooperate on training, reciprocal training requirements, volunteer relocation	T
Clear chain of command and operational procedures for mutual aid calls	RT
Expand full-time daytime FF and EMT coverage, fund chiefs and volunteer coordinators	RT
Provide liability insurance to cover volunteers, commanders and chiefs	RT
Work with banks and credit unions and businesses to provide benefits for volunteers	RC, RT