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MFSI Update for County Meetings: May & June 2021

This report is dedicated to the memory of Ellsworth Deputy Fire Chief Robert “Bobby” Dorr, who passed away from cancer on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.



Folks,

I hope you are all well and hanging in there. Things here at MFSI have been very busy with many new and exciting projects, and warm weather paving the way for more training opportunities.

We would like to dedicate this report to the memory of Deputy Chief Robert “Bobby” Dorr, who died of cancer on Wednesday, May 5, 2021. All of us at MFSI extend our sincere condolences to the City of Ellsworth Fire Department on their tragic loss. Despite receiving a cancer diagnosis in January 2020, Deputy Chief Dorr continued to serve his community until the very end, and was deeply beloved by those within the Maine fire service community and far beyond.

We’ve personally had the great privilege of working very closely with Bobby over the years on skills end tests held at the Ellsworth Fire Training Facility - he was a steadfast professional who cared deeply about the future of the fire service in Maine, and his passion for fire training was evident in every action he performed. He will be missed dearly. We send our very best to his family and his fire service family throughout Maine.

Rest well Deputy Dorr - we’ll take it from here.

Director Jimmy Graves

1. Summer & Fall Operations

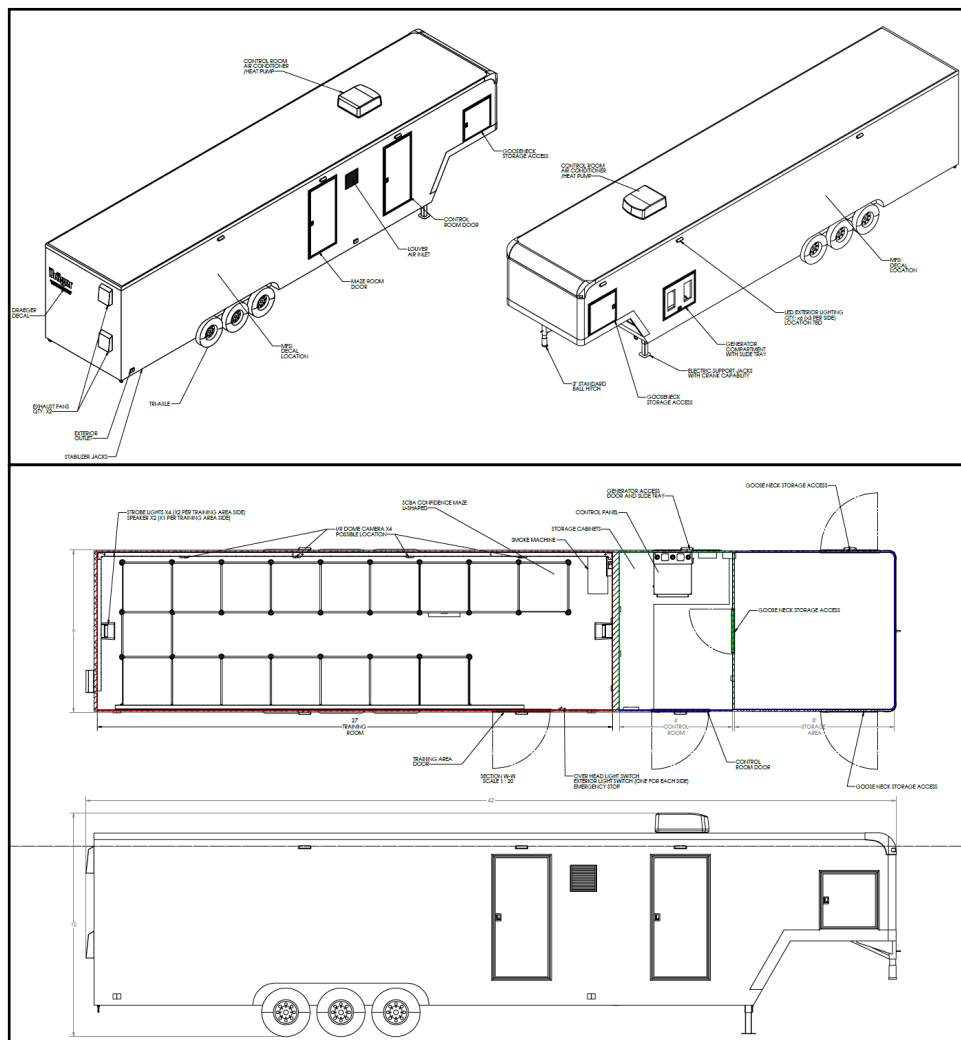
As the vaccine rollout continues across the state, many of us are still left with more questions than answers regarding what the coming months will look like for in-person activities and COVID-19 safety guidelines. MFSI is no exception. That said, Southern Maine Community College did recently update their requirements for face coverings during outdoor gatherings - the revised protocol for face coverings is now available [online](#), alongside other SMCC COVID-19 updates. MFSI will continue to follow all policies and guidelines set forth by SMCC, the broader Maine Community College System, and the CDC.



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2. AFG Grant Update

In case you missed it: MFSI recently signed a contract with Drager to construct our third SCBA Air Management trailer! The anticipated timeline for delivery is to receive the trailer late this summer, and then provide training opportunities as soon as possible. Anyone that would like to use this new piece of equipment will need to attend a Train-the-Trainer on its setup and use. We look forward to utilizing the new “Red Maze” as it is already being called:



If you have questions about the AFG funding process, or any other items you would like us to consider for future grant purchasing, please send Deputy Director Roy (jroy2@smccme.edu) an email. We will be happy to consider any items for the betterment of this organization and the firefighters of the State of Maine.

3. The Importance of Training Documentation

Many of you know that the MFSI team tends to have a “packrat” mentality. We have training records on file that date back into the 1980s - far beyond what we are legally required to keep, in terms of the mandatory timeline for records retention. And as mentioned in prior reports, we have been working to digitize these archives so that they will be further protected from the damage that can occur to paper files over time.

As we progress on this task, I wanted to bring attention to the importance of documentation of training in accordance with Maine State Law, Bureau of Labor Standards rules, and NFPA

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1401: *Recommended Practice for Fire Service Training Reports and Records*. I cannot stress enough the importance of proper documentation of training activities. If I could give anyone in the Maine fire service my own personal advice, it would be: make sure you keep a copy of all documentation for your own records. Make sure it is true and valid, and will stand up to strict scrutiny. Society has become extremely litigious - as such, fire training professionals must be hyper vigilant with documentation. We like to say that if a training event is not recorded by proper means, then it did not occur.

We encourage everyone to look into the Maine State record retention laws in order to keep your record management up to date. Here is a great article on the subject: [How to Build NFPA 1401 Compliant Training Records | Emergency Reporting](#). Our office will do all we can to help in any way we can.

4. Written & Skills Tests

The skills testing season is upon us, and preparation for June skills exams is currently underway. The first test was conducted on April 25 at the Yarmouth Fire Training Facility - the photos below were taken by Director Graves during the exam. We would like to congratulate all that have successfully passed the test and are (or are close to being) Certified Fire Fighters in Maine. We are all very proud of your efforts.

We continue to administer written exams as well, primarily at our offices in Brunswick, although we have added a secondary location in the Bangor area in order to meet demand. Please visit our [website](#) for test dates and the most current information on COVID-19 guidelines.





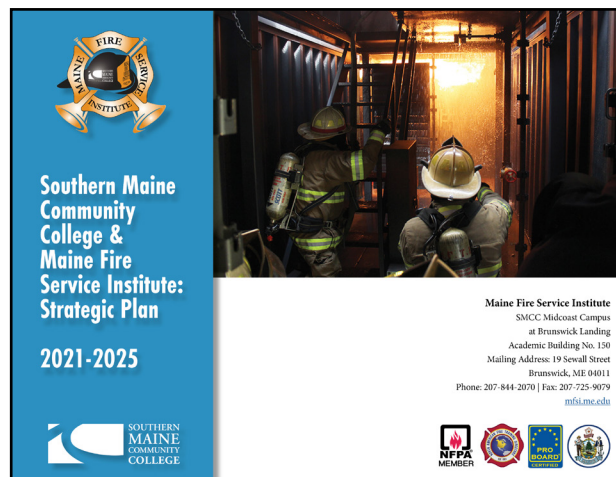
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5. MFSI 2021-2025 Strategic Plan

We recently hit the one-year anniversary of COVID-19's tremendous impact on fire training in the State of Maine. After such a confusing and unpredictable time period, we feel it is important - now more than ever - to provide a sense of focus and a clear picture of MFSI's path forward.

This sentiment is at the heart of our newly developed 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. The



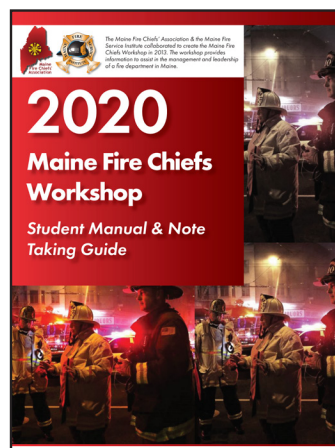
document contains a great deal of information about the organization itself, and the history of how and why MFSI exists today - but also a detailed list of what our goals are for MFSI's future, and an outline of areas that we intend to focus on over the next few years.

A draft of the Strategic Plan has been shared with our Advisory Committee and will be discussed at the next committee meeting on June 4, 2021.

6. Maine Fire Chiefs Workshop

MFSI and the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association recently partnered in an official agreement to revamp, revise and update this very valuable training program to Maine's Fire Chiefs and Chief Officers. The program is invaluable and provides the attendee a comprehensive understanding of important information such as:

- Legal Aspects
- Professionalism & Politics
- Leadership
- Financial Management & Planning
- Coaching, Counseling & Correcting
- Training Safety & Risk Management
- Incident Management
- Community & Media Relations



The program is taught by State of Maine Fire Chiefs, with years of experience and knowledge of fire service management in every aspect of the job today. MFSI strongly supports this program and it can be requested by a Chief Officer by going to the Maine Fire Service Institute's [website](#) and placing a course request. We will then put you in contact with a Maine Fire Chiefs' Association Representative to organize the particulars of the program. Together we can make a brighter future for the Maine Fire Service in its entirety and better serve the people of the great State of Maine. For more information about the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association, please see their [website](#).

This workshop is being offered in York County currently - a large volume of applications were received, and we are excited to see so many participants in this valuable program!



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7. We'll Miss You, Melissa!

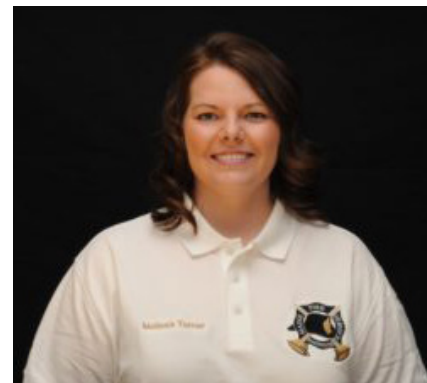
It is with heavy hearts that we share the news that Melissa Turner (Accountant I, Finance Liaison) will have her last day at MFSI on May 21, 2021. Melissa began working with MFSI in the fall of 2012 and has been a powerhouse behind our operations ever since. She has contributed to virtually every program delivery since then, and her efforts were key in many new processes within MFSI. Melissa's contributions helped get fire training re-energized and moving forward - here are just a few of her projects of which we are particularly proud:

- The reestablishment of the MFSI Live Fire Training Grant Process in 2016, which was key to safe and efficient live fire training
- Assisting with the administration of the AFG Grants
- Procuring the live fire training trailer and other training props
- Setting up a uniform standard for our instructors
- Spearheading the redesign of the MFSI website
- Realigning job descriptions for key staff members to better reflect current operations
- Assisting with the improvements of *many* administrative processes within MFSI

She was best known for having a smiling face at our programs and interacting with our guests during programs offered here at MFSI. She always made sure folks enjoyed their time with us during fire training events.

To our instructors, Melissa was a key support person who answered their questions, helped with contracts and other paperwork, and ensured they had the meals and lodging they would require as they visited communities throughout Maine.

Please reach out to her and thank her for her many years of service to the Maine Fire Service! She will be missed dearly, but we wish her well and hope she will remain a strong advocate for fire training in Maine.



8. LD242 - An Act to Support the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission

By now, most of you have no doubt become acquainted with LD242, an act designed to ensure that:

- Live Fire Training Facilities are geographically located across Maine
- Quality training is readily available for more distant and rural firefighters
- Equitable training & testing is provided by fire instructors and training agencies
- Local resources are leveraged to maximize return on State taxpayer investments

We ask for assistance from all of you in advocating for this very important legislation. For more information about the act, check out the [LD242 Talking Points](#) and [LD242 Frequently Asked Questions](#) resources compiled by the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission.

Your continued advocacy to your Senators and Representatives is greatly appreciated!

	
LD242 An Act To Support the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission	
LD242 removes the sunset provision & funds the MFPSC Live Fire Training Facility Grant Program	
Maine Fire Protection Services Commission LD242	
 <p>From this... To this... Our Firefighters Deserve It! Franklin County Regional Fire Training Center Est. 2020</p>	<p>Firefighters in Maine are required by the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards to train, maintain, and be proficient in tasks before performing those tasks on the fire ground. Few fire training facilities in Maine meet national standards relevant to today's firefighting needs. Many of our current training facilities are failing structurally and are lacking in geographic location - with Maine's rural firefighters severely under served. We are working to reverse these issues with grants: provided locally and leveraged with well managed fire training programs. As determined by our 2018 study and report - Our goal is to provide and support compliant live fire training facilities within an hours travel time for over 90% of Maine's Firefighters. LD242 helps us meet our goals for Maine firefighters, our citizens, and taxpayers. Please help continue our success! Support improvements for Maine's Firefighters — support LD242</p>



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9. National Fire Academy Maine State Weekend

We are very happy to report that the NFA Maine State Virtual Weekend was a success thanks to the hard work and efforts of Maine State Coordinator, Paul Froman. Director Graves, Training Program Manager Walter Morris, and Coordinator Froman attended "Training Program Supervision" along with many other fire service professionals from Maine, Indiana, Florida, Arizona, and Pennsylvania.

We hope that in 2022, it will be safe for us to be back on campus - there is nothing better than attending the National Fire Academy and we urge all Maine Fire Officer and Fire Fighters alike to attend. It is an honor to be able to participate in this invaluable training weekend each year.

MAINE STATE WEEKEND

MAY 1-2, 2021

Presented by the National Fire Academy

Important Information

Each student must obtain a student identification number (SID). You cannot use a Social Security Number for registration. If you do not already have a SID please go to <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femased/register.aspx>. NOTE: Keep your SID number! You will need it for any future classes or courses affiliated with the NFA.

Registration Deadline

Deadline for submitting your Part 1 application for the 2021 virtual weekend will be **March 20, 2021**.

New Coordinator

Contact Information:
Paul D. Froman MSW
Coordinator
Cell: 207-294-2285
Email: pfroman@smccme.edu

Welcome to our 33rd year!

This year marks the 33rd year Maine firefighters would have had the opportunity to participate in programs offered by the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Sadly, despite our wish to be back at the academy in person, COVID19 has not made this possible. However, after consultation with the folks at the NFA and the representatives from Florida and Indiana we will be able to offer six (6) courses virtually during the same weekend instead.

Registration Information

Due to this years unique online offerings the registration process has changed. There will not be a paper application this year. Instead there will be a two part online registration process. Part 1 is our registration process and Part 2 is the NFA registration. Due to this years circumstances and the fact we will not be going to the campus there will be no registration fee for these courses.

10. Recruitment

MFISI is considering another instructor hiring process which would potentially take place in the fall of 2021. This is in the very early stages of discussion at this point. We may be specifically seeking out instructors in geographical areas where we have the greatest need, as we are sometimes faced with difficulty finding instructors in certain counties. Again, this is very preliminary - but if you have someone from your department that is a go-getter and you feel would greatly benefit the needs of MFISI, please let us know!

MFISI Instructors have access to a wealth of resources via the online Instructor Portal, which went live in 2019 with the generous support of SMCC's I.T. department.

11. National Fire Academy Program Planning

Unfortunately, MFISI was forced to cancel the April offering of F0602 - Shaping the Future due to low enrollment. However, F0646 - Leadership in Supervision: Creating Environments for Professional Growth went ahead as planned and was very well attended - many thanks to all who helped make this possible!

Due to difficulty in securing an NFA instructor with the current travel restrictions, we have had to postpone the planned 6-day "N0312 Command & Control of Fire Department Operations at Target Hazards" which was originally scheduled for this month.

Planning is underway for our fall offering of National Fire Academy Programs, to take place either in Bangor or Brunswick (TBD). The programs are as follows:

- Fire Investigations
- Leadership in Supervision: Perspectives in Thinking

Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page this summer for the program details!



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12. Fire & Emergency Services Instructor I & II Hybrid Program

We are wrapping up the latest Fire & Emergency Services Instructor I & II program, which was a hybrid delivery model of in-person courses in Westbrook and Topsham, as well as videoconferencing via Zoom. We have over 100 newly certified Fire Instructors across the State of Maine!

We are planning a program in the fall with three locations for the in-person portion of the course:

- Kittery, York County
- Gorham, Cumberland County
- Oxford, Oxford County

Please watch for our flyers in late July for more details.



13. Specialty Trailers Information

We recently refreshed the formatting of our specialty trailers' annual schedules, and this felt like a good moment to remind our community about the availability of these trailers and the process required to request them for training.

These are shared fire training assets that MFSI provides in conjunction with other agencies/groups. We are very grateful for the community partnerships that make such high quality training possible here in Maine!

The three specialty trailers in question are as follows:

- **The Car Fire Prop** – Shared Training Asset with the Greater Portland Area Metro Fire Chiefs
- **The Pump Training Trailer** - Shared Training Asset with the Greater Portland Area Metro Fire Chiefs
- **The MAST (Mobile Alarm, Sprinkler Training Trailer)** Shared Training Asset with the Town of Scarborough

Please visit our [website](#) for more information on these trailers and how to request them.

That concludes our May & June update. We want you all to know we are here to assist you in your training needs so you all go home at the end of the alarm. Kindly submit a report to Director Graves and Deputy Director Roy in an email stating items of concern that result from your county's meeting. We will address them as soon as possible. THANK YOU.

Please stay safe out there, we need you all.

With much respect,
Director Jim Graves