

**TWIN STATE FIRE MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE ASSOCIATE MEMBER COMMITTEE MEETING**

Attending: Chief Gregg Hartwell, Chief Willie Minot, Chief Richard Morris, and Chief Allan Clark
Absent: Don Hammond

Identification of the Issue

Chief Minot explained that he was concerned with Landaff considering abolishing their Fire Department as Bath would be responding to three Associate Members which was causing his town money for which they received nothing in return. The cost of responding was more than just sending apparatus, but his firefighters are paid and that was a real out of pocket expense.

Chief Minot indicated that his read of the Article VII, Section 4 of the By-Laws, provided that Bath, could be compensated for the costs at the rates identified in that section.

Chief Clark advised that the issue was raised at the Sugar Hill Town Meeting when it was learned that the Police Chief is responding outside of the local area because he has a K-9 dog. The concern was why Sugar Hill was not being reimbursed from Towns that would never provide mutual aid to Sugar Hill.

Chief Hartwell advised that he has met with both his Selectmen and that of Lyman and advised both that Twin State was considering that Mutual Aid towns would be seeking reimbursement for response to Associate Members. The Lisbon Selectmen indicated that they were not going to bill Lyman for the mutual aid response and then pay the mutual aid town, but they understood the reason why mutual aid towns would want reimbursement. The Lyman Selectmen understood and thought they were still getting a good deal, but questioned why they should be required to be a member of Twin State and pay dues if they received nothing.

Chief Morris advised that dealing with Benton was not going to be as easy as dealing with Lyman, but he agreed that mutual aid towns should be compensated. He indicated that it might be wise to not have an Associate Membership. He recognized that it would be loss of some income to Twin State as Associate Members currently pay \$2,000 per year.

After discussion it was recommended that the Associate Membership category be deleted from the By-Laws.

Both Lisbon and Haverhill have annual contracts and both contracts charge a fee plus charge for apparatus and firefighters per call with apparatus being charged at the rates in the By-Laws. It was agreed that their contracts would need to contain a clause that would require the non-fire department towns to have to pay any mutual aid provided at the rates in the By-Laws.

It was further agreed that a Town that provided mutual aid would submit their invoice to the contracted town who would approve it and include it with their bill since they would have the knowledge of who was on the scene and with what apparatus. The expectation being that the non-fire department would pay the mutual aid towns direct.

A copy of the contracts by a Member must be provided to the Association on an annual basis.

It was assumed that a mutual aid town that was called and cancelled or did very little on the scene before being released would not charge for their response.

Article VII, Section 4 of the By-Laws Interpretation

The current By-Laws state the following:

Section 4. Reimbursement from Associate Members and other Non-Members

Any member responding to a municipality that is not part of a recognized Mutual Aid District or to a town without a fire department shall be responsible for any and all costs incurred by other member departments who respond at the rates sets by the Board of Directors annually at the Annual Meeting of the Board. All charges are per hour calculated based on one hour increments. The initial rates shall be as follows:

- a) P u m p e r \$ 3 0 0*
- b) A e r i a l \$ 3 2 5*
- c) T a n k e r \$ 1 5 0*
- d) R e s c u e \$ 1 0 0*
- e) C o v e r \$ 1 5 0*
- f) F i r e f i g h t e r \$ 1 5*

It was agreed that this section of the By-Laws gives towns the right to invoice the contracted town for mutual aid response to an Associate member. It was agreed that the contracted town should not be responsible for payment and the Associate Town should be responsible.

After discussion, it was recommended that the By-Laws to be changed to state:

Section 4. Reimbursement from Non-Members of the Association

Any Member who contracts with a Town to provide Fire Protection should contain a clause in their contract which indicates that the Town receiving mutual aid will be charged at the above rates and that it is the responsibility of the contracted Member to receive and approve any invoices from a Mutual Aid Member and that the Town receiving the mutual aid will promptly pay the mutual aid departments direct. Failure to promptly pay the mutual aid Members would be a material default in the contract between the Member and the Town without a Fire Department. A copy of the contract will be submitted to the Association's Secretary within thirty (30) days of the contract being signed by both parties.

Any member responding to a municipality that is not part of a recognized Mutual Aid District or to a town without a fire department shall have the right to charge the community receiving the mutual aid at the rates sets by the Board of Directors annually at the Annual Meeting of the Board. All charges are per hour calculated based on one-hour increments. The initial rates shall be as follows:

- a) P u m p e r \$ 3 0 0*
- b) A e r i a l \$ 3 2 5*
- c) T a n k e r \$ 1 5 0*
- d) R e s c u e \$ 1 0 0*
- e) F i r e f i g h t e r \$ 2 0*

Apparatus Rates

The rates for apparatus was discussed and it was agreed that they are reasonable and should remain as is, with the exception of a "Cover Truck". The members of the committee believed that the cover truck was covering a Member and as such there would be no reimbursement for a member providing a cover truck.

Firefighter Rates

The rates for firefighters was discussed and it was agreed that the rate should be increased to \$20 per firefighter and that this rate needs to be looked at carefully on an annual basis to reflect not only the wages, but social security, Medicare and workers compensation rates. It should not cost a Town to send firefighters to a Town without a Fire Department.

Communication

It was agreed that the proposed changes in the By-Laws to eliminate Associate members and modify Article section IV, Section 4 needed to be discussed at the Executive Committee level and then Board of Directors before bringing it to the membership.

It was agreed that Lisbon would discuss further with Lyman and that the Haverhill's would discuss with Benton.

The Association would need to advise both Benton and Landaff that the Associate membership category had been eliminated and accordingly they were not members of the Association and would no longer be paying dues to the Association.

Implementation Date

It is the intention to have the By-Law changes accepted by the Membership so that they would be effective as of January 1, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan R. Clark

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