

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

AGREEMENT made this date of February 23, 2024 by and between the Town of Durham, New Hampshire (hereinafter "the Town") and the Durham Professional Firefighters Association, (herein after "the Union") and jointly referred to as "the Parties".

WHEREAS, the Parties are signatories to a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that began January 1, 2021 and will expire on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the fact that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated economic implications for the New Hampshire and Seacoast labor markets relative to firefighter wages outlined in the existing five-year labor agreement, it became necessary to evaluate firefighter wage structures and required medical certifications at the time of hire at the Durham Fire Department within the confines of the CBA; and

WHEREAS, it had not been possible for either party to predict future widespread firefighter labor market disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the CBA; and

WHEREAS, three (3) consecutive firefighter search processes conducted in July, September, and October of 2023, ultimately yielded no successful candidates to fill vacancies at the Durham Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, two current firefighter vacancies are causing an ongoing strain on existing firefighter staff members and are negatively impacting mandatory shift coverage overtime hours worked; and

WHEREAS, a recent survey amongst seven local communities demonstrates the wages offered by the Durham Fire Department for A-EMT and Paramedics, as outlined in the current CBA, are eight to ten percent (8-10%) lower than the average and have begun to lag with respect to other Seacoast fire departments; and

WHEREAS, as part of a cooperative and mutually beneficial effort to identify strategies in order to attract and retain high quality firefighters at the Durham Fire Department within the confines of the CBA;

NOW THEREFORE, the Parties agree through this Memorandum of Understanding to interpret the remaining existing wage schedules contained on pages 72 and 73 of the CBA as follows:

1. All A-EMT Firefighters will be paid using the Paramedics scale effective April 1, 2024 for years 2024 and 2025.

2. On April 1, 2024 Firefighters will move up one step on the scale.

3. The top three Firefighters shall have no additional step but shall receive one additional personal day in 2024 and 2025.

4. Basic EMTs will be paid at the A-EMT rate for years 2024 and 2025 and will not be required to obtain their A-EMT certification, however, they shall not progress past Step 3 while they remain as a Basic EMT. The parties believe this will enable the Durham Fire Department to be more successful hiring new firefighters within a tightened labor market while also providing a clear economic incentive for new hires to obtain their A-EMT.

5. Paramedics will be paid at five percent (5%) over the rate being paid an A-EMT.

6. All of the sections cited above will take effect on April 1, 2024.

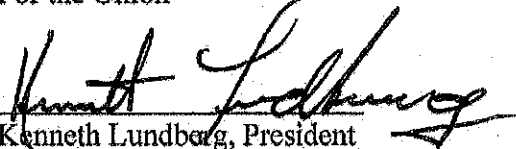
WHEREFORE, the Parties intending to be bound by these mutual promises have executed this Memorandum of Understanding on the date first cited above by their authorized representatives:

For the Town:



Todd I. Selig, Administrator
Town of Durham

For the Union



Kenneth Lundberg, President
Durham Professional Firefighters Association

3-06-24 (KL)