§ 186. Savings clause. 1. Except as otherwise provided by law, fire districts now existing shall continue to exist as now established, subject to the provisions of this chapter. Except as hereinafter provided no fire district officers shall be appointed or elected as successors to such officers holding office at the time this article shall take effect.

2. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to require the election of fire district commissioners or a fire district treasurer in any water district, highway district, town fire district, water supply district or school district in which fire protection was provided on June first, nineteen hundred thirty-three, pursuant to the provisions of article fourteen of chapter sixty-three of the laws of nineteen hundred nine, entitled "An act relating to towns, constituting chapter sixty-two of the consolidated laws," and acts amendatory thereof and supplemental thereto, if there were no fire district commissioners in or for such district on the said first day of June, nineteen hundred thirty-three; but in each town fire district established pursuant to the provisions of chapter two hundred twenty-six of the laws of nineteen hundred sixteen, in which there were town fire commissioners on the first day of June, nineteen hundred thirty-three, five fire district commissioners but no treasurer shall be elected on the fifth day of December, nineteen hundred thirty-three, upon the notice, in the manner and for the terms specified in this section for election of fire district commissioners on such date, and one commissioner shall be elected annually thereafter in the manner provided in this article. The fire district commissioner so elected shall have and may exercise all the powers conferred by this chapter or any other law upon the commissioners of fire districts but the supervisor of the town shall act as the treasurer and the town clerk as secretary of such fire district; provided, however, that in any such town fire district the fire district commissioners may submit at a special fire district election held prior to the first day of October in any year, or at any annual fire district election, the proposition "Shall the fire district treasurer be elected and the fire district secretary be appointed?" If a majority of the votes cast on such proposition submitted as herein provided be in the affirmative, a fire district treasurer shall be elected at the next annual fire district

election and a fire district secretary shall thereafter be appointed, as provided in this article. The terms of office of such fire district treasurer and such fire district secretary shall commence on the first day of January next succeeding the date of such annual election. In a town fire district established pursuant to the provisions of chapter two hundred twenty-six of the laws of nineteen hundred sixteen in which there were no town fire commissioners on June first, nineteen hundred thirty-three, the town board shall have and may exercise all the powers conferred upon fire district commissions pursuant to this chapter or any other law except that the supervisor of the town shall act as treasurer of the district and chairman of the commission and the town clerk shall act as secretary thereof. The supervisor whenever acting as treasurer of the fire district shall not be required to give the additional undertaking provided in subdivision four of section one hundred seventy-six but the undertaking executed pursuant to section twenty-five of this chapter shall include and cover the moneys and property of the fire district coming into his hands as treasurer.

3. Every incorporated fire company, and every town fire company established and existing on June first, nineteen hundred thirty-three, pursuant to sections three hundred ten, three hundred eleven and three hundred twelve of article fourteen of chapter sixty-three of the laws of nineteen hundred nine, entitled "An act relating to towns, constituting chapter sixty-two of the consolidated laws," and acts amendatory thereof and supplemental thereto, which shall have its headquarters in any water district, water supply district, or highway district, and providing fire protection in such district on the first day of June, nineteen hundred thirty-three, shall continue to exist and may provide fire protection in such districts or any of them, and each such district shall constitute a fire protection district and be subject to all of the provisions of this chapter relating to fire protection districts, so far as the same do not conflict with the provisions of this subdivision. However, any water district, governed by district commissioners, providing fire protection pursuant to this subdivision shall constitute and be a fire district, with all powers and limitations of a fire district so far as the same do not conflict with the provisions of this subdivision. The town board of the town in which any such district is located may contract with any

such incorporated fire company or town fire company for the furnishing of fire protection within such district and the amount of any such contract shall be assessed and levied upon the taxable property in such district and collected in the same manner as town charges are assessed, levied and collected. The funds so collected shall be paid by the collector to the supervisor of the town who shall apply the same in payment of the amount of such contract. The board of water commissioners, in the case of water districts to which the provisions of article thirteen of this chapter apply, or the town board of the town in the case of the other districts hereinbefore specified, shall have and may exercise any and all of the powers and duties of fire district commissioners as provided in subdivisions nine to twenty-five inclusive of section one hundred seventy-six of this chapter, and may purchase, equip and operate an ambulance for the benefit of the residents of the district and may, upon its own motion and shall, upon petition, cause to be submitted at a special or annual district election a proposition in the manner and for any of the purposes specified in section one hundred seventy-nine of this chapter. The board of water commissioners, if there be any, in the case of water districts, and the town board in the case of other districts shall annually prepare and file with the supervisor and town clerk of each town in which such district is located, an itemized and verified statement of the amount of moneys necessary to be raised in such district for fire purposes and the amount thereof shall be assessed and levied on the taxable property of such district, and collected, all in the manner provided in section one hundred eighty-one of this chapter. An annual financial statement setting forth in detail the receipts and expenditures of such district for fire purposes shall be filed by the board of water commissioners, if there be any, in the case of water districts and by the town board, in the case of all other districts, in the manner provided in section one hundred eighty-one.

4. Nothing herein contained shall affect or impair the validity or restrict the exercise of any power or limit the obligation or liability conferred or imposed by law upon any now existing fire district or the officers thereof or the qualified voters or electors thereof, except to the extent specified in this chapter.