

# ST. JOHNS FIRE DISTRICT

COMMISSIONERS:  
WILLIAM THOMAE, Chair  
ERIC P. BRITTON, Vice-Chair  
LEROY BLAKE  
MARY JONES  
DEBRA LEHMAN  
STEPHEN ROLANDO  
ISIAH WHITE  
ROBERT E. WRIGHT  
BROOKS MCGOUGAN

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RYAN KUNITZER, Fire Chief

## St. Johns Fire District Commission

### MINUTES

The regular meeting of the St. Johns Fire District Commission was held on May 8, 2023, at Headquarters, 1148 Main Road, Johns Island. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

#### **Members Present**

Leroy Blake  
Isiah White  
Debra Lehman  
Robert Wright  
Mary Jones  
Eric Britton  
Bill Thomae  
Steve Rolando  
Brooks McGougan

#### **Members Absent**

#### **Others Present**

Ryan Kunitzer, Fire Chief  
Jackie Stanley, Deputy Fire Chief  
Shawn Flanagan, Battalion Chief  
Ramona Brown, Controller  
Christie Palmer, Administrative Assistant  
Donald Howe, Attorney

The commission meeting was conducted in-person and virtually through Zoom; all members of the public may observe and participate in the meeting:

Via video conference at:  
ZOOM Meeting ID: 630-661-0867  
Passcode: 170170

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notices and agendas were emailed/faxed to the Post & Courier and persons requesting notification in compliance with FOIA regulations.

## **I. Call to Order**

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Roll Call

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

- a. Regular meeting of April 10, 2023.
  - i. Commissioner Thomae requested a motion to approve the minutes of March 13, 2023.
    1. Commissioner White motioned, Commissioner Wright seconded, none opposed, the motion was carried.

## **III. Public Comments**

- a. No public comments.

## **IV. Chief's Report**

- a. Chief Kunitzer welcomed our new Commissioner, Brooks McGougan to St. John's Fire District and allowed him to introduce himself to those in attendance.
  - i. Commissioner McGougan told us that he retired from STJFD in 2014 and looks forward to serving on the Board.
- b. Chief Kunitzer thanked everyone who came to Station No. 4 in support of the blessing of the new engine. He also thanked the Kiawah Photography Club for the donation of several photos to Station 4.
- c. Chief Kunitzer reported we selected a bid from Pierce for the heavy rescue apparatus. An email was sent for approval; however, the estimate delivery is the end of 2025.
- d. Chief Kunitzer reported that we have 6 recruits scheduled to graduate on Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup>.
- e. Chief Kunitzer reported that he and Commissioner Thomae are scheduled to attend Station Design Conference in St. Louis.
- f. Chief Kunitzer reported they had two leadership sessions and great discussions arrived with the team building.
- g. Chief Kunitzer reported that a new Human Resources Manager will start at the end of this month. She comes from the Aviation Authority and already has a background in government finance and government benefits.
- h. Chief Kunitzer reported the Accounting Manager will be starting on Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- i. Chief Kunitzer reported we will have a firefighter hiring phase to begin in June.
- j. Chief Kunitzer reported the chassis for the brush truck has finally arrived. Waiting on a timeline for getting the rest of it built.

- k. Chief Kunitzer reported on September 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am, at Kiawah Town Hall, we will have a Strategic Planning meeting and advised this will be a larger meeting with our external stakeholders from across the district from different agencies.

**l. Incident Breakdown for May 2023**

- i. Johns Island – 184 incidents
- ii. Kiawah Island– 79 incidents
- iii. Seabrook Island – 55 incidents
- iv. Wadmalaw Island – 36 incidents

**m. Human Resources Report**

- i. Chief Kunitzer reported staffing efficiency is 85%.
- ii. Chief Kunitzer reported that he is hoping to fill the position of Deputy Fire Marshal that was posted internally. He also reported that an announcement will go out tonight or tomorrow for Battalion Chief and additional positions that we have added.
- iii. Chief Kunitzer reported Accounting Manager and Human Resources Manager Positions have been filled.

**V. Financial Report**

**a. Monthly Financial Report**

- i. Controller Ramona Brown reported that the Remaining Goal is 16%, the actual is 27.70%.
- ii. The Operating balance as of 4/30/2023 is \$14.6M. The Local Government Investment Pool balance is \$12,013.
- iii. April revenue included insurance reimbursements.
- iv. The Charleston County wire transfer received was \$260,924.88 for March collections.
- v. Non-standard overtime for April is \$51,618.66.
- vi. Finance is continuing their ongoing review of equipment and facilities maintenance line items.
- vii. Capital Projects bank balances as of 4/30/2023.
  - 1. 2021 balance: \$307,820
  - 2. 2022 balance: \$4,256,856
  - 3. 2023 balance: \$3,451,129
- viii. Dashboard Summary

1. Property tax for March decreased from last March by \$21K. YTD roughly \$15.7M from property tax collections.
2. Operating expenditures are at \$12.9 which includes encumbrances.
3. YTD non-standard overtime is \$484K. YTD salaries including regular and standard overtime is at \$5.5M. YTD vacation/sick pay is \$431K. The staff efficiency for April is 86%.
4. COVID-19 related personnel expenses YTD are \$11K.

## **VI. Attorney's Update**

- a. N/A

## **VII. Old Business**

- a. N/A

## **VIII. New Business**

- a. Commissioner Wright motioned to give personnel district-wide a \$3,000 dollar bonus. Commissioner Blake seconded, none opposed, the motion was carried.

## **IX. Committee Report**

### **a. Building Committee**

- i. Commissioner Thomae reported there was no Building Committee meeting this month.
- ii. Commissioner Thomae reported they are still waiting for the permits.
- iii. The architect for the Kiawah River Station has been working for the last six weeks on placing the building or buildings on site that work and will be hearing from him today.

### **b. Finance Committee**

- i. Commissioner Lehman reported that they met on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and the main topic was the potential bonus for the employees. They felt comfortable with the bonus recommendations and will get more details on capital expenditures in the next strategic meeting.

### **c. Human Resources Committee**

- i. N/A

### **d. Strategic Planning Committee**

- i. N/A

## **X. Public/Firefighter Comments**

- a. N/A

## **XI. Commissioner Comments**

- a. Commissioner Rolando
  - i. Welcome to Commissioner McGougan.
- b. Commissioner Britton
  - i. Welcome to Commissioner McGougan.
- c. Commissioner White
  - i. Welcome to Commissioner McGougan and be safe.
- d. Commissioner Wright
  - i. Thank you.
- e. Commissioner Jones
  - i. No Comment
- f. Commissioner Blake
  - i. No Comment
- g. Commissioner Thomae
  - i. Welcome to Commissioner McGougan.
- h. Commissioner Lehman
  - i. No Comment
- i. Commissioner McGougan
  - i. Thanked District for our assistance with his accident on Good Friday.

***Commissioner Thomae requested a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss contractual matters. Commissioner Britton made a motion, Commissioner White seconded. All in favor, none opposed, the motion passed.***

***Commissioners reentered session.***

***Attorney requested a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Wright motioned, Commissioner White second. All in favor, none opposed, the motion passed.***

***Meeting adjourned at 7:06 PM.***