



ST. JOHN'S FIRE DISTRICT

FIRE CHIEF RYAN KUNITZER

COMMISSIONERS

CHAIR, WILLIAM THOMAE
VICE CHAIR, DEBRA LEHMAN
LEROY BLAKE
ISIAH WHITE
STEVE ROLANDO
MARY JONES
ROBERT WRIGHT
BROOKS MCGOUGAN
JACKIE STANLEY
TERRILYNN DURHAM



St. Johns Fire District Commission

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the St. Johns Fire District Commission was held on February 12, 2024, 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

Isiah White
Debra Lehman
Robert Wright
Leroy Blake
Jackie Stanley
Terrilynn
Durham

Members Absent

Brooks McGougan
Bill Thomae
Steve Rolando

Others Present

Ryan Kunitzer, Fire Chief
Kevin Henson, Deputy Fire Chief
Robert Whaley, Assistant Chief
Shawn Flanagan, Battalion Chief
Ramona Brown, Controller
Danielle Chambers, Accounting Manager
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 January 8, 2024
 - i. Commissioner Lehman requested a motion to approve the minutes of January 8, 2024, with Commissioner Wright's request to update Chief's Report Section B, from "We flooded Station 2" to "Station 2 was flooded".
 - ii. Commissioner Wright motioned, Commissioner White seconded, no opposed, the motion was carried.

III. Public Comments

- a. Resident Eric Britton (Former Commissioner) stated his concern with the December meeting with the VP of Choate stating he believes the meeting was allegedly an illegal meeting and he thinks some things need to be rectified.

IV. Chief's Report

- a. Chief Kunitzer reported last month he talked about some changes to our deployment plan and model. He stated we are going to move forward with those plans to put a rescue resource in service next door at Station 7. Target date for that to happen is March 2nd. The new Ladder 702 is going to be in service down at Kiawah. He stated that this is a temporary solution we will monitor and make any adjustments as needed.
- b. Chief Kunitzer reported in our Fiscal Year 24 budget, we approved the ability to have a Captain on every single one of our apparatuses. Our staffing has not led us to do that yet, however we have personnel that will be promoted on March 2nd. Afterwards we will have a Captain on every single apparatus that we have excluding the tender, which is operated by an Engineer.
- c. Chief Kunitzer reported he met with the new Mayor of Seabrook, and they talked about some ARPA funds that they have available under a Joe Biden stimulus. He stated he has been trying to campaign a little bit for some high-rise vehicles throughout our jurisdiction because we are going to need at least two new ones.
- d. Chief Kunitzer reported he also met with Charleston County EMS and they discussed some operational measures that they are doing. They also talked about the staffing of both departments. He stated they really had a good discussion and advised he also offered some ways that we can help them as well.
- e. Chief Kunitzer reported our Personnel continues with the EMT and EMT Advanced Class.
- f. Chief Kunitzer reported we have already begun work on next year's fiscal budget that is due March 15th. He stated that last year we requested an extension and that they granted it last year, so we sent out that request again to at least give us another week or two. He stated we do not anticipate any issues there, but does anticipate

getting with finance, strategic planning and building committees for meetings over the next month or so as we start to plan out next year's budget. He added we also need to make some decisions on some Capital expenditures as well.

- g.** Chief Kunitzer reported we have taken a delivery of Engine 5 and Engine 7 and the ladder. Both Engine 5 and 7 were placed in service the same day we received them. They had them ready to go so they started delivering service right away which was good because that very same day Engine 7 blew a head gasket on the engine so he authorized a \$40,000 repair to that apparatus because that will be one of our main reserve trucks.
- h.** Chief Kunitzer reported Marine 701 is in service and he wants to find some dates this spring when the weather's nice for the Commissioners to take a little boat ride if they desire, so that they can see that our Personnel did a great job. He stated we had Marco Island Fire Department in Florida come to see our boat because they are building the same one and they wanted to check it out, which was a great opportunity to give them.
- i.** Chief Kunitzer reported we are trying to finalize a date in March for a larger promotional award ceremony. He is hoping to have that done this week so he can get the dates as soon as possible.

j. Incident Breakdown for February 2024

- i. Johns Island – 191 incidents
- ii. Kiawah Island – 54 incidents
- iii. Seabrook Island – 31 incidents
- iv. Wadmalaw Island – 29 incidents

k. Human Resources Report

- i. Chief Kunitzer reported a total of 2 out with workman's comp.
- ii. One out on Parental leave due to the birth of a child.
- iii. Posting for certified firefighters with testing on March 11th and 12th.
- iv. The process for fulfilling the open Assistant Fire Chief position has started.

V. Financial Report

a. Monthly Financial Report

- i. Controller Ramona Brown reported that the Remaining Goal is 42%, the actual is 46%.
- ii. The Operating balance as of 01/31/2024 is \$8.9M. The Local Government Investment Pool balance is \$12K.
- iii. January revenue included insurance benefits from retirees.
- iv. The Charleston County wire transfer received was \$3,871,986 for December collections.

- v. Non-standard overtime for January is \$61,978.
- vi. Capital Projects bank balances as of 1/31/2024.
 - 1. 2021 balance: \$18,620
 - 2. 2022 balance: \$955,367
 - 3. 2023 balance: \$2,187,289
- vii. Dashboard Summary
 - 1. Operating expenditures are \$10.9M which includes encumbrances.
 - 2. YTD non-standard overtime is \$651K.
YTD salaries including regular and standard overtime is \$4,296,000.
YTD vacation/sick pay is \$335K.
The staff efficiency for January is 81%.
 - 3. No COVID-19 related personnel expenses YTD.
- viii. Controller Ramona Brown reported.

VI. Attorney's Update

- a. Attorney Donald Howe reported there was a status conference with Judge Michael Scarborough, and we told him that we were in the process of trying to negotiate things. He stated he and the Chief are supposed to meet with someone from St John's Water on February 21st, however there was some delays, but they are hoping to get that meeting done and then come back in March with some proposals.

VII. Unfinished/Old Business

- a. N/A

VIII. New Business

- a. Chief Kunitzer reported we had sent out an RFP last month for the replacement of our SCBA which is self-contained breathing apparatus or air packs. He provided detailed pricing from Safe Industries. He advised as part of the RFP we only received one bid back even though we sent it to multiple vendors. He advised the list includes all of our equipment we need; the SCBA's, 184 cylinders 140 face pieces and some other miscellaneous equipment that goes with that as well. He stated we originally allotted, as part of the grant, a little over a million dollars but the bid came in below that. This has already been built into this current Year's budget and if it does not go over Revenue, we will take that out of the fund balance. He stated this would be a motion to authorize the expenditure of \$932,000 from Safe Industries for our replacement of SCBA. He also advised along with that we are also spending a little over \$8,000 because once we get the new air packs, we need to fit test them so that they are correct on the person's face, and this would require a new fit testing machine as well.

- b. Chief Kunitzer requested a motion to approve the SCBA purchase of approximately \$932,000. Commissioner Lehman motioned, Commissioner Blake seconded, none opposed, the motion was carried.

IX. Committee Report

a. Building Committee

- i. Chief Kunitzer reported that during the last building committee meeting that was held last Friday, the 9th, they all received the cost estimation for various capital projects from the David Myers Group. Those were given to each building committee member to review. He advised he is going to send the digital copy to the full commission so that they can review as well. He also advised, as a reminder, we hired him as a consultant to look at several various possible capital projects for us to undertake and these were assessments back on what those costs look like and ideas that we could do on those. He stated that we have that in and now we will start making some decisions based off of that.
- ii. Chief Kunitzer reported that Choate has a completion date of April 26th for the new Maintenance building. He stated, he and several of our staff members met on site a couple weeks ago because we have some allowances left over for various shelving and storage and they selected placement for such items.
- iii. Chief Kunitzer reported that the ARB at Kiawah River is reviewing the site plan submittal, and we are hoping that this is the last time before that property is conveyed to the county. He advised he does not have an update on the lease.

b. Finance Committee

- i. Commissioner Lehman reported the last meeting was on January 25th and the main topic of that meeting was the midyear review, They did talk a little bit about meetings that they have to have on strategic, finance, building and on the bond issues. She stated the largest part of the next bond issue will be the various buildings, but they also have equipment purchases that they are going to have to make. She advised they are going to be meeting no later than early March and they will probably have to evaluate operating increases and capital increases as well.

c. Human Resources Committee

- i. N/A

d. Strategic Planning Committee

- i. Commissioner White reported that he wanted to reiterate that they will be meeting along with our Finance meeting, and they are going to prioritize what they are going to do in the future to come, as building equipment and what have you. He advised once they get their meetings up and running, then they can bring back a better idea and let everyone know what we they are about to do.

X. Public/Firefighter Comments

- i. N/A

XII. Commissioner Comments

a. Commissioner White

- i. Thank the new Commissioners and happy to have them. Let all employees know we are thinking about them, be safe and do the best job you can do.

b. Commissioner McGougan

- i. Not Present

c. Commissioner Durham

- i. N/A

d. Commissioner Wright

- i. I'd like to second what Ike said, welcome to the new members.

e. Commissioner Blake

- i. Welcome the new members, thank you for being here. I'd like to thank the updates on the various road closures and accidents. Please tell your friends and family, if you're driving the vehicle put the phone back, if you want to talk, pull up on the side and then talk. Thank you.

f. Commissioner Thomae

- i. Not Present

g. Commissioner Stanley

- i. I feel privileged to get the opportunity to serve the public from this capacity. I will work hard at it, so the fun is starting. I am always ready.

h. Commissioner Rolando

- i. Not Present

i. Commissioner Lehman

- i. I'd like to welcome Terrilynn to the commission and Jackie in his new seat. I'd like to thank the finance department and the HR responsibilities that your area is taking care of, and I know it's your end and there are a lot coming and just want you to know that you're appreciated.

Chief Kunitzer requested a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss contractual matters. Commissioner Lehman made a motion, Commissioner Blake seconded. All in favor, none opposed, the motion passed.

Commissioners reentered session.

Commissioner Lehman motioned to adjourn, Commissioner Wright second. All in favor, none opposed, the motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 5:59PM.