



ST. JOHN'S FIRE DISTRICT

FIRE CHIEF RYAN KUNITZER

COMMISSIONERS

CHAIR, WILLIAM THOMAE
VICE CHAIR, DEBRA LEHMAN
LEROY BLAKE
ISIAH WHITE
STEVE ROLANDO
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, January 13, 2025, 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
Jackie Stanley
Leroy Blake
Brooks McGougan
Steve Rolando
Bill Thomae

Members Not Present

Terrilyn Durham

Others Present

Ryan Kunitzer, Fire Chief
Kevin Henson, Deputy Fire Chief
Nathan Prouse, Assistant Chief
Brian Yuncker, Assistant Chief
Chris Whaley, Assistant Chief
Shawn Flanagan, Battalion Chief
Scott McCullough, Battalion Chief
David Hardwick, Chief Fire Marshal
Teresa Vaughn, Human Resource Manager
Danielle Chambers, Controller
Christie Palmer, Administrative Assistant
Spencer Wetmore, 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 December 9, 2024
 - i. Commissioner Wright motioned, Commissioner White seconded, none opposed, the motion was carried.

III. Public Comments

- a. N/A

IV. Chief's Report

- a. Chief Kunitzer reported around the holidays we did have a shift that worked Christmas Eve and Christmas Day because of our new 48-hour schedule. They approved the staff that were working Christmas Day for double time for their efforts.
- b. Chief Kunitzer extended his thoughts and prayers to all those in California (in reference to the wildfires).
- c. Chief Kunitzer reported that the annual report was complete and pointed out that each Commissioner was provided a copy. He encouraged them to take a look at the report that highlights some of the work STJFD did in 2024, and not just our operations personnel, but our administrative staff, support services staff as well.
- d. Chief Kunitzer reported that we've made quite a bit of investments and some equipment and particularly medical equipment over the last couple of years. He reported that those things pay off as he stated we responded to a call for a pulseless patient and luckily Crews were able to respond quickly hook him up to an AED and we were able to get a pulse and circulation back. He stated the patient was down for more than 6-7 minutes in the parking lot, he does not know the outcome of that situation, but knows our guys performed at a really high level to hopefully have a better outcome for that patient.
- e. Chief Kunitzer reported that the annual awards that we had last year at the Citadel, we're going to do that again. He advised we have not set a date yet, but will let them know so that they can attend.

- f. Chief Kunitzer reported that the Compensation Committee, made up of internal members such as administrative staff, firefighters, and battalion chiefs, is looking at a new compensation plan for our personnel.
- g. Chief Kunitzer reported that the Professional Standards Division have been working hard as they completed live burns in December and then this month they are doing live burns at night and working with our auto partners as well.
- h. Chief Kunitzer reported we have begun our midyear budget review and will meet on the 22nd.
- i. Chief Kunitzer reported that the Engineer testing concluded, we have Captain testing next week and pump testing for apparatus was mostly completed last week.
- j. Chief Kunitzer reported that the recruits that we have had at Mt. Pleasant will graduate this Friday on the 17th and they will be heading to EMT Class right after.
- k. Chief Kunitzer reported that we are hiring for 2 firefighter positions that will be going to the Columbia Fire Academy starting in March. He added what is nice about this is that they are doing a fire academy and then EMT academy right after that. He stated that hopefully the recruits come out with Firefighter II and EMT.
- l. Chief Kunitzer reported that we had 2 more paramedic specialists to round out the three. He stated that they started last week.

m. Human Resources Report

- i. HR Manager, Teresa Vaughn, reported that the 2 paramedics started on January 6th. She added that the lead diesel mechanic has also started.
- ii. She reported that we have 2 spots for the Fire Academy. The academy starts 3/17/25 in Columbia.
- iii. She reported that we had 1 Captain separate and 2 on workers' comp.

n. Incident Report January 2025

- i. Johns Island – 194 incidents
- ii. Kiawah Island – 43 incidents
- iii. Seabrook Island – 26 incidents
- iv. Wadmalaw Island – 48 incidents

V. Financial Report

a. Monthly Financial Report

- i. Controller Danielle Chambers reported that the Remaining Goal is 50.00%, the actual is 51.18 %.
- ii. The Operating balance as of 12/31/2024 is \$6M. The Local Government Investment Pool balance is \$13K.
- iii. December revenue included retiree reimbursements and GovDeals proceeds from sale of F-350 truck for \$6,555.

- iv. The Charleston County wire transfer received was \$1,905,056 for November collections.
- v. Controller Danielle Chambers reported we are now receiving money from Kiawah for the paramedic reimbursement.
- vi. Non-standard overtime for December is \$68,757.
- vii. Capital Projects bank balances as of 12/31/2024.
 - 1. 2021 balance: \$83
 - 2. 2022 balance: \$25,135
 - 3. 2023 balance: \$394,325
 - 4. 2024 balance: 16,980,854
- viii. Dashboard Summary
 - 1. Operating expenditure is \$1.6M which includes encumbrances.
 - 2. YTD non-standard overtime is \$482K.
YTD salaries including regular and standard overtime is \$4.2M.
YTD vacation/sick pay is \$380K.
 - 3. No COVID-19 related personnel expenses YTD.

VI. Attorney's Update

- a. Attorney Spencer Wetmore reported they will be speaking in executive session regarding St. John's Water. She also stated that she is still waiting to hear back from Charleston County regarding the lease Kiawah River.

VII. Unfinished/Old Business

- a. N/A

VIII. New Business

- a. Procurement of two (2) Tender apparatus from FES in the amount of \$993,420.
 - i. Commissioner Lehman made a motion to approve the purchase of the 2-tender apparatus. Commissioner McGougan seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed, the motion passed.
- b. Commissioner Lehman reported that she was not going to make any changes to the committee assignments as she was going to just have everyone stay on the same committees. She also mentioned she just wanted to remind everyone that Wednesday, January 22nd at 1:00 here at headquarters, we are having a combined meeting of HR, Finance and Strategic.

IX. Committee Report

a. Building Committee

- i. Commissioner Thome reported they received the proposal from Liollo Architecture for the design at Station 5. The proposal seems a little high, so David Myers (our construction manager) is investigating. He is in the process of negotiating that with Liollo. If he is not successful, we will

move on to the second architect as a possibility.

- ii. Commissioner Thome reported the Kiawah River RFQ is out and is due by the end of this month.

b. Finance Committee

- i. Commissioner Lehman reported they did not have a meeting, and they will be discussing the midyear report at the January 22nd meeting.

c. Human Resources Committee

- i. N/A

d. Strategic Planning Committee

- i. Commissioner White reported he had a meeting Chief Kunitzer and we are on track on keeping up with the growth of the island, buying equipment and all we need to keep going on but mainly they are very interested and want everyone to know that we do have our employees in mind because they do all operating on these new equipment we are getting so we are well on the way of doing it right in an orderly fashion. He advised he will keep them up on what is going on.

X. Firefighter Comments

- a. N/A

XI. Commissioner Comments

a. Commissioner White

- i. I just want to hats off to the crew that went up there and aided the gentleman who was in trouble at the sheet metal shop down the street. I want to commend all the Commissioners that we continue to work hard to keep things going on the island here and that we really try our best to pay attention to what's going on with our employees. I think that's very important with all that's going on around us as we got our employees and their families on our minds to keep things straight as we go along.

b. Commissioner McGougan

- i. I want to start with Happy New Year to everybody. I don't recall the details, but I had a neighbor of mine purposely make a phone call and two thumbs up for an excellent response on the medical call there in Chisolm Green. The guys are doing a great job. Training division, you can go ahead and pat yourself on the back.

c. Commissioner Wright

- i. Happy New Years to everyone. And to thank the firefighters for their hard work and any administrative staff.

d. Commissioner Blake

- i. Happy New Year to everyone.

e. Commissioner Thomae

- i. I have no additional comments.

f. Commissioner Rolando

- i. Happy New Year and I have received a couple of comments from constituents regarding the new paramedic. They are noticing our paramedic, so thank you very much for that. And stay safe.

g. Commissioner Stanley

- i. Thank all the personnel for a great job they continue doing. We are here to support you. Reach out to us if you need something. Thank you.

h. Commissioner Lehman

- i. I would like to wish you a Happy and a Healthy New Year. Hopefully we'll have a better year this year than we did last year and thank you for all your hard work. I get a lot of compliments from people in Seabrook Island, too on St. John's fire district.

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:39 pm.