



# MINUTES FIRE SERVICE ADVISORY COMMISSION

March 16, 2023

Oconee County Administrative Offices, Council Chambers  
415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691

## MEMBERS

Commissioner Charlie Vissage, Region 1  
Commissioner Tony McAlister, Region 2  
Commissioner Austin Grant, Region 3  
Commissioner Bruce Brock, Region 4

Commissioner Brandon Burton, Region 5  
OCES Director, Scott Krein  
Fire Chief, Chris Smith,  
Secretary, Steven Zahn

The Oconee County Fire Service Advisory Commission met at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all members and Steven Zahn, Secretary present.

**Press:** Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [[www.oconeesc.com/council](http://www.oconeesc.com/council)]. In addition, it was made available [upon request] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

No members of the media were present.

## Call to Order:

- Chairman Burton called the meeting to order at 1800. Chairman Burton began by requesting a revision to the agenda to add discussion of secretary appointment as well as discussion of appointment of a liaison for the fire chief's association. Chairman Burton made a motion to add these items to the agenda, Chairman Vissage seconded the motion. Chairman Burton moved on to request approval of the meeting minutes from the February 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 Fire Service Advisory Commission meeting. Comm. Brock motioned to approve the minutes with Comm. Vissage seconding. Members unanimously approved the minutes.

## Radio Communications Committee Report:

- Steven Zahn reported that the Communications Committee did not have a meeting within the last month. No further updates.

## Director Scott Krein's Report:

- Discussion regarding sending cancel call notifications via Active 911. It is not possible to cancel a call through Active 911 originating from dispatch without first closing the call. If there is still a unit or officer on scene, dispatch cannot close the call and send a cancellation message. This is not an option right now.
- Wildland strike team: In the past, we have had both paid and volunteer members on the wildland strike team. Through some recent grant funds, we have a new trailer to

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house the wildland strike team equipment. We are almost done with the upfit. We still have to get graphics done. This is a very inactive team, but it is important. A lot of the volunteer membership has fallen off the team. We want to reiterate that this team is for everyone. Wildland forestry classes are required S130, S190, and also a SCFA class. We will get a walk scheduled soon. Please bring this up to your membership and encourage participation. Our risk for wildfires increases in the fall.

- Opioid program discussion: Looking at getting Narcan available to everyone. We originally started as a ROLL program but this dropped away as we began EMT response with standing orders. We were not able to be a part of the role program as well as have the EMT standing orders under DHEC. We will soon be able to administer Narcan under both programs as long as we follow the guidelines. This will allow fire departments and rescue squads to carry and administer Narcan with the proper training and documentation.
- Discussion regarding job classifications and positions. These job descriptions are subject to change as we identify more classes that are needed. We are considering adding a fire specialist and engineer position as we build these out in the future. Plan to create a matrix or a schematic to guide firefighter's path for career development and planning training.
- Budget planning discussion: We are in the process of planning next years budget to finalize. We plan to bring this proposal next month. A lot of things are changing due to inflation so there will be some differences from last year. The amount of direct aid to the individual departments will be the same. It is still intended that the individual departments will be billed for the third party hose testing if necessary. It was not necessary this year because of monies coming in from the airpack replacement. It is possible that next year the individual departments will need to pay their share.

### **Chief Chris Smith:**

- SOG 204.00 - Determination of fire origin and cause. Updated SOG for fire investigation outlining collection of evidence, etc. If cause cannot be determined, make sure to request the FIT team to assist.
- SLED is coming to headquarters on April 5<sup>th</sup> to teach a first responder's role in fire investigations course. It is recommended that all chief officers come take this course.
- SOG 204.01 – FIT Team. Outlines training and requirements for membership and advancement on the county fire investigation training. Review this document for minimum requirements to join the team as well as an application form.
- Volunteer new member application- Packet includes application, request for criminal background check, and ID data sheet that must be sent to the EOC and then to HR to start the online paperwork. Comm Brock asked a clarifying question about background checks. It is not an NCIC background check. The SC Firefighter's Association pays for the SLED SC background check for firefighters, but we also subscribe to an additional third party background check service. We do this for a more comprehensive background check but also because rescue squad members do not get the free background check paid for by the SC Firefighters Association. Comm Brock also asked if the county could notify the chief officer via email once HR has completed the background check and Paylocity part of the paperwork for new members. There is

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currently a lack of communication when a new member's paperwork is complete and good to go.

- Director Krein requested that Brady Norris be added to all department rosters so that he can manage it from a training standpoint.

### **Fire Representative Reports:**

- Region 1: Comm Vissage report all is good
- Region 2: Comm McCallister requested prayer request for Brad Preeve of West Union FD who is facing health problems.
- Region 3: Comm Grant brought up a follow-up discussion about new reporting software. First Due vs ESO Solutions. The consensus is that First Due will be the better software due to the high cost increase of ESO.
- Region 4: Comm Brock had a question about the 40 hour staff not being in the station enough hours per week. Chief Smith stated that they offered three 40 hour positions the day prior and still have three openings that will be holding assessments for soon. Hopefully all 40 hour positions will be filled in the near future. Also brought up clarifying questions regarding physicals and the county offering more guidance for members who wish to go to their own doctors and obtain clearance from specialists who they see. Chief Smith is working on a form to summarize what is required by NFPA 1582 for a physical. Comm Brock explained that some members must receive clearance from a specialist (such as a cardiologist) prior to performing a cardiac stress test. Comm Brock states that this will be an ongoing conversation and will continue to work on it.
- Region 5: Chairman Burton had a question about the first responder awards and if a press release was sent to the papers. Director Krein stated that photos and a press release was done and also put out on the social media site. Chairman Burton also reminded commissioners to make sure they are communicating with and meeting with your district chiefs.
  - Chairman Burton continued to the added agenda item of discussion a secretary appointment for the commission. Steven Zahn is stepping down after serving for over a decade. If you have a recommendation for a secretary appointment for the commission, please bring it to the April meeting.
  - Chairman Burton asked for a member to serve as a liaison for the Chief's Association. Motion by Comm Vissage to nominate Comm Brock to serve as this liaison. Seconded by Comm McCallister. Motion carried.

### **Next Meeting**

- The next Fire Service Advisory Commissions Meeting will be held on April 20 2023, beginning at 1800.

### **Adjourn:**

- A motion to adjourn was made by Chairman Burton and seconded by Commissioner Vissage and approved unanimously at 18:48.

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