



MINUTES FIRE SERVICE ADVISORY COMMISSION

January 15, 2026

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

MEMBERS

Vacant, District I

Commissioner Truman Nicholson, District II

Commissioner Favion Skelton, District III

Commissioner Chief Travis Collins, District IV

Commissioner Chief Larry Wilkerson, District V

Commissioner Chief Chris Smith, At-Large

Commissioner Chief Steven Swafford, At-Large

The Oconee County Fire Service Advisory Commission met at 6:00 p.m. on January 15, 2026 in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, with 6 members 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]. 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:

- Staff Liaison Miss Madison Addington called the meeting to order at 06:00.

Election of Officers:

Staff Liaison Addington opened the floor for nomination of the Fire Service Advisory Commission Chair for the 2026 term.

Commissioner Skelton nominated Mr. Travis Collins to serve as Fire Commission Chair for 2026. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Nicholson and approved by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Staff Liaison Addington opened the floor for nomination of the Fire Service Advisory Commission Vice Chair for the 2026 term.

Commissioner Skelton nominated Commissioner Wilkerson to serve as Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Chair Collins and approved by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Staff Liaison Addington opened the floor for comments on edits/corrections on Minutes for the December 18, 2025 meeting and/or the Minutes for January 10, 2026 Workshop

- Minutes from the December 18, 2025 commission meeting were emailed out.
 - Motion by Commissioner Smith to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Wilkerson. Motion approved unanimously.
- Minutes from the January 10, 2026 commission meeting were emailed out.
 - Commissioner Smith requested several corrections to the meeting minutes: on page two under Region Five, the name should be corrected from "Zac Smith" to "Aaron Smith" as the individual who provided the email update on the Cross Roads communications tower; under Discussion Items, "Fire Insurance District" should be corrected to "FDID Number" for clarity; on page three, the phrase "low response times

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for stations” should be corrected to “low response from stations”; and in the final paragraph, the wording should be changed from “decided” to “discussed” regarding transportation insurance, as no decision was made.

- Commissioner Chair Collins voiced bullet two on page three where it states, “Commission Chair Collins and Commissioner Smith discussed the potential of implementation of 40-hour staffing, Collin noted that the previous 40-hour staffing had high turn overs.” Correct to Commissioner Smith stated that.
- Motion by Commissioner Chair Collins to approve the minutes with corrections, seconded by Commissioner Nicholson. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Comment:

- Staff Liaison Addington opened the floor for public comment. Noting that anyone wishing to speak must have signed in on the sign-in sheet prior to the start of the meeting. Heard none.

County Fire Chief Report:

- Update on the first Tanker of the 6 Tankers the County purchased has its first inspection on January 28th and the other five should be periodically after. Texas Road house will be catering the Awards Dinner and stated that there has been a lot of structure fires in the past week and he was appreciative all the help and assistant in those calls.

Fire Commissioner’s Updates:

- Region 1: Vacant –
- Region 2: Commissioner Nicholson –
 - Listed discussion items from January 10th Workshop Minutes which were, radio communication, station coverage, and paid staff.
- Region 3: Commissioner Skelton –
 - Nothing to report at this time.
- Region 4: Commissioner Collins –
 - Commissioner Chair Collins expressed going over Workshop minutes as well in addition to Commissioner Nicholson’s expression.
- Region 5: Commissioner Wilkerson –
 - Commissioner Wilkerson raised concerns about bridge safety in Station 8’s district, citing a Pickens County incident where a collapsed bridge forced local departments to replace it at their own or insurance expense. He noted that some bridges in Oakway’s district may not support fire engines or tankers, potentially causing rerouting and delayed response times. He emphasized that fire chiefs and the county should review this issue proactively, as a bridge collapse would pose liability concerns and impact multiple departments, including Roads and Bridges.
 - Commissioner Chair Collins commented, stated that in a Chief’s meeting when they first posted those, Director Krein was supposed to research that because a lot of departments are on an island if they go by bridge limits.
 - Commissioner Wilkerson stated that he had a bridge in his district that was rated two tons. Work was done on the pylons under that bridge and the two-ton limit was marked as under limit and it cause issues responding to calls due to the reroute. Commissioner Wilkerson spoke with DOT and they removed the sign and send information about how the bridge limits were set.
- At-Large: Commissioner Smith –
 - Nothing to report at this time.
- At-Large: Commissioner Swafford –

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- Nothing to report at this time.

Discussion Items:

- Commissioner Chair Collins introduced discussion on reviewing the Volunteer Firefighter Incentive Program. He and Commissioner Smith proposed forming a joint committee with equal representation from Fire and Rescue, including two to three members from the FSAC and matching members from the Rescue Commission. A motion to establish the committee was made by Chair Collins, seconded by Commissioner Nicholson, and approved unanimously. Commissioners Swafford and Nicholson volunteered to serve on the committee, and discussed the program's pros and cons.
- Commissioner Chair Collins introduced discussion item two regarding expectations for weekday station staffing. A schedule developed by Commissioner Smith and Assistant Fire Chief Hollifield was implemented as a trial for 40-hour paid staffing at volunteer stations. The committee discussed the program and weighed its pros and cons.
- Commissioner Chair Collins presented the final discussion item regarding Station 24, Holly Springs' request for assignment of a Fire Department Identification Number (FDID) and direction to research compliance requirements. Concerns were raised that Holly Springs does not own its current building, and County Council James advised referring the legal aspects to the Emergency Planning Committee. Chair Collins made a motion for Holly Springs to begin the process of obtaining its own FDID and becoming a standalone fire department, which was seconded by Commissioner Skelton and approved unanimously.

Appointment of Committees for 2026 by Chairman:

- Training Committee
 - Commissioner Chair Collins nominated himself and Commissioner Skelton for the Training Committee, seconded by Commissioner Nicholson. Motion approved unanimously.
- Communications Committee
 - Commissioner Wilkerson made a motion for Commissioner Nicholson, Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Swafford for the Communications Committee, seconded by Commissioner Chair Collins. Motion approved unanimously.
- Awards Committee
 - Committee appointed for the Awards Committee

Next Meeting:

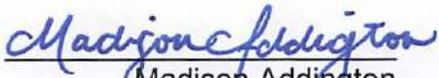
- The next Fire Service Advisory Commission Meeting will be held on February 19th, 2026, beginning at 18:00.

Adjourn:

- A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Skelton and seconded by Commissioner Nicholson and approved unanimously at 18:50

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Respectfully Submitted:


Madison Addington
Staff Liaison

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