

Minutes for a Regular Meeting on Monday, October 4, 2021, at 12:00 pm at 8305 Augusta Road Pelzer, SC 29669.

Jim Darby opened the meeting and asked Chief Sutherland to pray. Jimmy Brashier was absent.

Everyone reviewed the minutes from the September meeting. Sabrina Bedingfield motioned to accept the minutes. John Jennings seconded it. All were in favor.

Jennifer Adams reviewed the financial reports and check registers for September. She explained that the bank statement was not yet ready for the meeting and the interest for the accounts was not on the statements. There were no questions about the financial reports. Sabrina Bedingfield motioned to accept the Financial Reports as presented. Donnie Freeman seconded it. All were in favor.

Chief Sutherland started the Staff Report with updates on the 2021 CIP. Brush 74 is here and the bed has been put on. The tank and pump will be installed next then the lights, siren, radio, striping and lettering. We are still looking for full and part time dispatchers. The Training Tower is on track. We have a BZA meeting on October 13, 2021. The lowest bid was chosen to do site work. It was CP Builders and it met all of the requirements in our bid package. Chief Sutherland reminded everyone that the FY22 CIP includes replacing FM80, Engine 77, 17 sets of bunker gear, UTV and adding three people. The old gator will be liquidated with a 3rd party. The three new personnel will be added to Engine 80. We sent 5 employees to an overnight drill for the state. The team from the Upstate did well and we were well represented. We also had an instructor from a class at a neighboring department call and compliment Terry Thomas on his performance in class. We sent a truck to Easley Fire Department to stand by for a funeral they had for one of their firemen. Chief Littleton sent a card to Chief Sutherland thanking our guys for helping fix the engine that was used in the procession. Chief Sutherland did not know about this until the note arrived and it was a very pleasant surprise.

Assistant Chief Finley reviewed the Operational Report for calls with everyone for August. Chief Finley said our COVID cases have settled down again. We are running a lot more COVID alerts right now. Engine 77 is currently down with cooling system issues and potentially engine issues. We are waiting to see what the mechanic says about it. Water Tender 74 potentially has a pump valve issue that we are going to try to fix.

Fire Marshal Horn said we are currently behind on about seventy-five inspections. They are mostly churches. There are a lot of plans that are coming for review. We have had two new subdivisions already this month. Training is going well. Our annual burns are October 14, 21 and 22 this year.

Chief Sutherland said Jessica Phillips hired a dispatcher that is currently in training.

Chief Sutherland reminded everyone of the Greenville County SPD meeting. South Greenville is hosting the meal, but due to COVID restrictions we are having the meeting at Piedmont Community Building. Our annual physicals will be October 25th – 27th on shift. We are hosting a SC Fire Academy class on October 28th and 29th. We cannot currently have our Christmas Dinner at Reedy Fork Church due to COVID restrictions and the number of people we expect to attend. We are currently trying to work out something different. Chief Sutherland will let everyone know if we do.

Old Business

- I. Chief Sutherland said he thought it was good idea to let everyone that went to the SPD conference have a chance to speak about the things they learned and thought the others could benefit from. He said that he got to actually have the increase for retirement for employers explained. He also said that the LGIP program and the reason why we have to use it for investing was explained. Assistant Chief Finley said the explanation of the legislation that created SPD's and why they are all so different was good. We also got to hear another explanation about the new Cancer Bill from the State Fire Marshal. Jennifer

Adams said that she learned a lot with the Ethics update and the review of record keeping for emails and text messages. They also covered Zoom meetings and policies for public speaking in the meetings. Jim Darby said that there was a presentation of the responsibilities of purchases made by employees and who is liable to pay. Chief Sutherland said that he knows that it was a lot of time for everyone to attend and it was also costly, but he feels like the benefits from it are worth it.

New Business

- I. Chief Sutherland reviewed the preliminary FY22 Budget. There were several changes made for the upcoming year. In income, Aluminum Cans sales were increased due to the income received this year. Dispatch Income increased per the agreements we have with those entities. Due to the millage increase last year and based on the total that we have received this year, millage income was increased. On the expenses, Building and Grounds was increased due to the age and possible upcoming repairs to the stations. We have broken down all the types of testing that is done on all of the equipment and put it in its own line item in the budget. The increase is due to separating out those items. Donnie Freeman asked what was included in Conference Expense. Chief Sutherland said the SPD Conferences and training, Fire Chief Conference and Fire Marshal conference. Medical calls are the majority of what we run, and they are increasing daily. Medical Expense was increased to accommodate this. We will need to buy new radios for the new employees we hire, so New Radios was increased. In Technology, Active 911 was added. The hospitals in the area were paying for an alerting paging program with grant money received. This grant has expired and we will now need to pay for this by the department. The proposed payroll number includes three new people and a 5% COLA for everyone to increase our overall pay scale. There is also an increase for EMTs/ Paramedics from \$500 bonus to \$750. We hope to continue to increase this bonus. The annual bonuses, overtime and retirement increases are also included. Physical costs increased due to the number of employees we will have. Supplies went down due to our officers doing a good job in the stations tracking them. Uniforms went up due to the increase in personnel. The new truck payment has been added for the new rescue and platform. Fuel was increased due to the current trend. We have added a station discretionary fund for the guys to purchase things. The Capital Projects include FM 80 and the Polaris Ranger from the CIP. Donnie Freeman and Jim Darby asked about the salaries. Chief Sutherland said that we are more competitive, but this is a category that we will have to continue to increase regularly. A longevity bonus was also added for 30+ years. Donnie Freeman asked why legal fees went up. Chief Sutherland said from the fees this year we know there has been an increase for our Financial Advisory and others in this category if we need their services. Chief Sutherland told everyone to review it over the next month and come back with questions, changes and ideas. We will hopefully vote on the final draft then.
- II. Chief Sutherland explained that the reassessment from 2020 caused our millage rate to decrease. We went from 42.6 mills to 40.1 mills. The amount of tax levy we receive should remain the same. This means that the overall value of the properties in our fire district has increased. The total value of a mill in our district has increased, so the amount of mills we receive has been lowered to accommodate these changes. Donnie Freeman motioned to adjourn. Sabrina Bedingfield seconded it. All were in favor.

Minutes recorded by
Jennifer Adams, Administrative Specialist

