

# SOUTH CAROLINA FIREFIGHTER MOBILIZATION

141 Monticello Trail • Columbia, SC 29203

(803) 896-9800 phone

(803) 896-9806 fax



## MEETING MINUTES

### Firefighter Mobilization Oversight Committee

August 18, 2021 at 10 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

*Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the South Carolina State Fire, 141 Monticello Trail, Columbia, SC 29203 and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.*

*To allow for social distancing, the meeting was held via video and teleconference.*

#### I. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was posted and advertised pursuant to South Carolina laws, rules, and regulations. The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by Chairman Jones. Others in attendance included Emily Farr (LLR Director), Pierce Womack, Shawn Pratt, Kevin Henson, Mike Ellis, Mike Norkett, and Rick Dangerfield. State Fire employees included Ken Kerber, Doug Spinks, Susan Duncan, Shon Hamilton, and Chad Beam.

A quorum was present. Chairman Jones welcomed the Committee members and guests.

#### II. Roll Call of Members

SC Firefighter Mobilization Committee											
Jonathan Jones	X	Darryl Jones	X	Charlie King	V	Bruce Kline	A	Brian LeGette	A	Mark Davis	X
Kim Stenson	V	Mike Bedenbaugh	V	Phil Jolley	V	Steve Kovalcik	A	Joey Tanner	A	Mark Keel	P

*V: Virtual X: Present P: Phone A: Absent*

#### III. Approval of Agenda and Previous Minutes

Mark Keel made a motion to approve today's agenda. Darryl Jones seconded. Motion carried unanimously, without discussion.

Darryl Jones made a motion to approve the May 12, 2021, minutes. Mark Davis seconded. Motion carried unanimously, without discussion.

#### IV. Chairman's Remarks

This is peak hurricane season. So far, SC has had no activity.

It was announced Chief Steve Kovalcik, City of Greenville Fire Department, is retiring and wishes to be replaced on the committee. The Governor's Office will be notified. Chief Jones appreciates his participation and support.

Tim Wojcik, SC State Fire, announced his resignation. Chief Jones shared that Tim Wojcik prepared SC State Fire for upcoming events as well as how to navigate the SEOC. Chief Jones appreciates his years of assistance and tutelage.

Firefighter Mobilization Finance report: As of July 1, 2021, there is a cash balance of \$138,540.93 and \$165,000 will be added (annual deposit).

In FY22, the proposed FFMOB budget is about \$275,000 with \$28,000 being carried forward into next fiscal year and \$165,000 being added next year.

As a reminder, in 2000, the amount agreed upon by the SC General Assembly to fund Firefighter Mobilization was \$165,000. However, 21 years later, that amount remains the same. Going forward, some expenses will be shifted to other cost centers or staff will underwrite any excess with funds from the Fire Academy, which is the source of the \$165,000. After examining the budget and without cutting operations or functions, the amount needed going forward is more than \$165,000 per year.

USAR FY 22 Finance report: Program is funded out of the Fire Marshal's budget. Training is funded via the Academy. \$575,000 is needed for training and operations at the current level.

HART FY 22 Finance report: Program is funded out of the Fire Marshal's budget. Training is funded via the Academy. \$37,000 is needed for training and operations at the current level.

This year, there is a one-time appropriation from the SC General Assembly of \$850,000. It will be used primarily for equipment replacement. Some HART equipment is more than 10 years old – older than the recommended manufacturer's shelf life. In the future, recurring funding is needed to replace outdated and non-compliant equipment.

## **V. Mobilization Coordinator's Report**

Chad Beam, Statewide Coordinator, provided a report to committee members. He stated there was one mobilization request (supporting the Darlington Race) since the last meeting and briefly discussed the request.

He discussed the National Mutual Aid System (NMAS) and provided an update. Staff along with George Stapleton is discussing the financial aspects. The instant notification technology is working well.

Regarding the State Fire radio template – there are no new upgrades. It is working well.

He provided an update regarding Survey 123. South Carolina and three other states will now host their SAR data alongside FEMA during a deployed disaster (or in state). This has never been done and provides a single dashboard during SAR operations.

The Firefighter Mobilization Plan is complete. There are no updates or changes since the last meeting.

Future plans include looking at an RMS for Firefighter Mobilization and Urban Search and Rescue. Staff will create a PDF report to attach into D4H that will allow for better recordkeeping. Staff reviewed another management system called "DB Solutions" that 25 out of 28 federal teams use. They are considering using it for Mobilization. The system is ahead of the current D4H system. Staff is looking forward to using it on a trial basis.

Regional coordinators update: Staff is moving forward with quarterly training. Training scheduled today was canceled and will be rescheduled in September 2021.

## **VI. SC-TF1 and SC-HART Update**

Chief Ken Kerber shared a summary of events. The one-page update was shared with members along with a list of future events/exercises and an updated roster indicating 152 members.

Staff logged at least 20,025 volunteer man-hours during the last three months.

Upcoming events include Annual Mountain Training in Table Rock, SC with Greenville, Oconee and Pickens counties. The annual ORE has been postponed due to COVID concerns. Local teams had concerns and staff did not want to "infect the team" as a whole as hurricane season approaches. Plans now are to reschedule it in November 2021.

The training rock pile prop has been completely re-worked and is operational.

Shon Hamilton shared a leadership update. Jason Walters has resigned. During this time, Brian Archibald is interim task force leader. Managers have a process in place to choose the next one.

There was a recent HART incident and rescue. Oconee County had two patients stuck in the Narrows of the Chattooga River. The event lasted five hours and 21 minutes. The patients were successfully extricated. The incident report was shared by Chief Kerber.

## **VII. SC-IST (Palmetto IST) Update**

Chief Jones stated DHEC continues to produce a weekly incident action plan and are sharing it with him.

The IST completed a full ORE with 26 members in June. They were deployed to the Guardian Center in Georgia for about a week. Staff served as an IMT for the exercise.

Continue quarterly IST training which has been adapted to a COVID environment.

## **VIII. Old Business**

### **A. Hurricane Florence Reimbursement Update**

Chief Jones stated reimbursement for Hurricane Florence is pending. Out of \$1.2 million, about \$1 million was initially approved. An appeal was been submitted for the remaining amount. However, the appeal resulted in a decrease from the approved \$1 million to \$600,000. A second appeal is being prepared with assistance from SCEMD. As a result of the decrease, some department's may not be reimbursed. Sept 7 is the deadline for the appeal.

The lack of 214's is the primary reason for the denial of reimbursement. Training to fire departments is needed regarding necessary completion of paperwork.

Hurricane Dorian reimbursement has been submitted. No response as of this meeting.

**IX. New Business**

Chad Beam stated CSAR working group has been established with Steve Cauthen (SLED) serving as secretary. A meeting will be held soon to discuss upcoming hurricane season.

Florida Task Force One has an interest in coming to SC State Fire for an ORE training event.

**X. Next Meeting and Adjournment**

The next meeting was not scheduled. It will be at the call of the chair.

Darryl Jones made a motion to adjourn. Phil Jolley seconded. The motion was carried unanimously without discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.