



# South Carolina Volunteer Strategic Assistance Fire Equipment Program

## V-SAFE Panel Meeting Minutes October 14, 2022 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.

In order to provide the opportunity for social distancing, the meeting was held via video and teleconference. Members of the public wanting to attend were instructed to email [susan.duncan@llr.sc.gov](mailto:susan.duncan@llr.sc.gov) for login instructions.

NOTE: These minutes are a record of the motions, official actions taken by the Panel, and a brief summary of the meeting.

### I. Call to Order and Welcome: Chairman Josh Holzheimer

The meeting was posted and advertised pursuant to all South Carolina laws, rules, and regulations. Chairman Holzheimer called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

### II. Roll Call of Members

The following panel members were present (see below) and a quorum was established. Additionally, LLR employees Susan Duncan and George Stapleton were present.

| V-SAFE Panel Members |   |                 |   |               |   |                |   |               |   |
|----------------------|---|-----------------|---|---------------|---|----------------|---|---------------|---|
| Jonathan Jones       | V | Josh Holzheimer | V | Barry McRoy   | V | Tony Dicks     | A | Brad Hart     | V |
| Bill Dunlap          | V | Steve Arsenault | A | Randy Swinton | V | Dennis Jackson | V | Thomas Rivers | A |

P: Phone V: Virtual A: Absent

### III. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Chief Barry McRoy made a motion to approve the agenda. Chief Dennis Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

Chief Barry McRoy made a motion to approve the April 14, 2022 minutes. Chief Dennis Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

### IV. Update on Statutory Changes and New Distribution Method

Chief Jones briefly discussed statutory changes to include adding two new purchasing categories – “Communications Equipment” and “Real Properties or Improvements thereto including Upgrades and Rehabilitations.”

The purpose of the Peer Review Panel has also changed. Since grants are no longer competitive nor are applications scored, the Panel members will serve in an oversight capacity and ensure compliance. Departments still have to complete an application, obtain a quote, and share what the grant funding will purchase. Funding is now an annual equal distribution amongst eligible fire departments that apply.

Reports must be submitted every six months until all purchases have been received. Departments are ineligible for a minimum of one grant cycle if a progress/final report has not been submitted on time.

SC State Fire staff will determine the annual maximum amount of grant funding for each department based on the number of eligible applicants and the total amount of grant funding available. This past year, \$2 million was available from a regular funding source and an additional \$3 million was provided by the General Assembly. SC State Fire may elect to keep three percent for administration costs.

Currently, 405 departments meet eligibility requirements. For staff to determine the equal distribution amount, staff must know the number of departments applying. To accomplish this, a "Notice of Intent to Apply" must be completed by each eligible department.

Chief Jones virtually shared and explained the Notice of Intent to Apply process.

After the Notice to Intent to Apply has closed and the amount per department determined, the Department must submit an application. Staff will continue to answer questions and review applications. Depending on the application request, the Peer Review Panel may be asked to review and provide feedback. Random audits will continue.

The Panel considered a motion to accept and adopt the Notice of Intent to Apply process as presented by Chief Jones. The Notice will be open for 60 days.

Chief Brad Hart made a motion to approve the process. Chief Randy Swinton seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

Chief Jones explained the application process and how it was restructured to incorporate all of the changes. The application will be open for 30 days. Checks will be mailed in mid-April of each year.

The Panel considered a motion to approve the 30-day application process. Additionally, the Fire Portal affirms the department is at least 50 percent volunteer, and its chief affirms they meet eligibility requirements. Applicants must enter the quote and include a brief narrative. Additionally, the chief will acknowledge they are responsible for the balance of any project.

Chief Brad Hart made a motion to approve the application process. Chief Dennis Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

**V. Old Business**

Several fire departments returned a minimal amount of unused funds from previous grant projects. The funds will be returned to the V-SAFE grant program for future use.

Chief Jones approved several amendments via email. One example: A department was able to save grant money and requested to use remaining funds to purchase items in the same purchasing category.

**VI. New Business**

None

**VII. Adjournment**

Chief Randy Swinton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chief Brad Hart seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 11:04 a.m.