



# South Carolina Volunteer Strategic Assistance Fire Equipment Program

## V-SAFE Panel Meeting Minutes Feb. 22, 2022 at 1 p.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 emailed [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 James Caggiano

The meeting was posted and advertised pursuant to all South Carolina laws, rules, and regulations. Chairman Caggiano called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

### II. Roll Call of Members

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

V-SAFE Panel Members									
Jonathan Jones	V	James Caggiano	V	Barry McRoy	V	Tony Dicks	V	Tommy Keaton	V
Bill Dunlap	P	Steve Arsenault	A	Randy Swinton	A	Dennis Jackson	V	Thomas Rivers	V

*P: Phone V: Virtual A: Absent*

### III. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Chief Tony Dicks made a motion to approve the Feb. 22, 2022 agenda. Chief Dennis Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

Chief Barry McRoy made a motion to approve the Dec. 13, 2021 minutes. Chief Bill Dunlap seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

### IV. Region 6 Vacancy

Panel members recognized and welcomed Chief Dennis Jackson of New Holland Volunteer Fire Department. He replaced Chief Glenn Poole after he passed away. Chief Poole, a long-standing member of the V-SAFE Panel, was remembered with a moment of silence.

**V. Scoring Process and Timeline Review**

Chief Jones informed the panel the application period closed Feb. 11, 2022.

The V-SAFE account is estimated to have \$1,540,489.67. There will be more funding available for disbursement after calculating any returned funds and the next quarterly deposit of \$517,000. Approximately 68 grants will be awarded based on a \$30,000 request.

There were 76 grant applications totaling \$2,250,792 in requests this year.

The scoring Portal is open Feb. 22, 2022. It will close at 11:59 p.m. on April 1, 2022. Staff is requesting two weeks to complete the scoring sheet. The next V-SAFE grant meeting will determine final grant recipients.

Susan Duncan provided several scoring reminders. These include: 1) partial funding consideration is listed at the bottom of the scoring sheet, 2) all questions and panel member comments are required, and 3) applications cannot be re-scored (each application stands on its own merit).

Chief Jones will provide Chief Jackson, the new Panel member, a scoring tutorial. Chief Caggiano, as chairman, is a non-voting member and will not have access to scoring.

The Panel was informed by Chief Jones that all applications had been independently verified and met the volunteer requirement.

Chief Tony Dicks asked about approving used equipment. Per Chief Jones, the Panel has viewed it as acceptable, if still covered by the manufacturer's warranty. If new equipment is one cycle behind the standard, that is acceptable as well, as long as it still has the full manufacturer's warranty.

Chief Jones stated grant requests have historically not been approved if the fire department lacks the necessary additional required funding. Additional needed funds must be explained in the narrative section of the application and the department must have them on hand.

Chief Tony Dicks asked about installation costs. Chief Jones reminded the Panel those costs, such as extractor installation, are allowable.

**VI. Financial Need Formula Review and Approval**

Chief Jones explained the financial need formula, as suggested by a previous Legislative Audit Council review, as follows:

*The fire department's annual budget divided by population, plus the annual budget divided by call volume, plus the annual budget divided by number of stations, plus the annual budget divided by square miles, and then divided by five.*

$$\frac{\text{Annual Budget} + \text{Per Capita Budget} + \text{Budget/Station} + \text{Budget/Sq. Mile} + \text{Budget/Call}}{5}$$

5

Once the formula is applied, Chief Jones applies a base-10 score to the applications – the lower the number, the higher the score (10-1).

A motion was made by Chief Barry McRoy to adopt the financial need formula. Chief Thomas Rivers seconded. Motion carried unanimously without discussion.

Chief Jones shared with the Panel that six submitted applications indicate no call volume (no NFIRS data) in 2020. They will automatically receive a "1" for that portion of the formula. The submission of call volume is not required by law. Staff asked those departments for an explanation to be included in the narrative section.

**VII. Old Business**

None

**VIII. New Business**

Chief Jones informed the Panel that Slater-Marietta Volunteer Fire Department submitted an amendment request asking for flashlights. In their original request, they were approved for 11 sets of turnout gear. However, due to a price increase, they could only purchase nine sets. Due to also being approved for a second grant for fire helmets, they have \$1,020 remaining in V-SAFE funding. Since flashlights could be considered as part of PPE, there was no opposition to the purchase.

**VII. Adjournment**

Chief Barry McRoy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chief Thomas Rivers seconded the motion. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for the week of April 15, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 1:31 p.m.