



Fire School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Quarterly Meeting: February 9, 2022 at 10 a.m.

Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the South Carolina Fire Academy, 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.

The meeting was held in person in the SC Fire Academy conference room. To allow for social distancing, Board members also utilized video and teleconferencing.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was posted and advertised pursuant to all South Carolina laws, rules, and regulations. The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Chair Terry Sherriff.

Roll call of members:

SC Fire School Advisory Board															
Terry Sheriff	X	Mark Davis	P	Kevin McClain substituting for Scott McClain	P	Douglas Cline	P	Brad Stio	A	Brian Horton	A	Joel Rogers	P	Tommy McDowell	A
William Brocious	A	Andrew Morris	A	Shaun Gadsen	P	Justin McLellan	P	Thomas Tardo	P	Joshua Jordan	P	Keith Drabrick	A		

P: Via Phone X: Present A: Absent

VISITORS PRESENT: Ashley Boltin, Amy Williamson, Terrell Brown, Bonita Watters, George Stapleton, Erick Adams, Julie McCabe, Rick Dunn, Ken Kerber, and Sherri Bush

- A. After roll call, a quorum was established.
- B. Superintendent Dennis Ray led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.
- C. Justin McClellan made a motion to approve the agenda. Shaun Gadsen seconded. The motion carried unanimously without discussion.

II. Approval of Minutes

Justin McClellan made a motion to approve the November 10, 2021 minutes. Shaun Gadsen seconded. The motion carried unanimously without discussion.

III. Committee Chair Comments

- Thanked SCFA staff for continuing to provide service and training during the pandemic.

IV. Superintendent's Remarks

Chief Ray presented the following updates:

- No reports of COVID infections this week.
- Current onsite recruit school has 22 students.
- Recently hired two Resident training instructors.

- Working with various associations and participating in several upcoming conferences.
- Engine Committee to finalize the specs to replace an older pumper truck. Delays are expected due to back orders within manufacturing industry.

V. State Fire Marshal's Remarks

Jonathan Jones presented the following updates:

Financial Update

Chief Jones stated:

- SCFA is currently under budget for the fiscal year due to large expenses not being delivered this fiscal year. Those expenses will be carried into the next fiscal year.
- Overall facility costs have increased due to inmates replaced with paid workers. Cost of goods and services has also increased.
- Revenue is down in public and virtual training. Although there is a 0.17 percent increase in public training, the Academy is 12 percent down compared to pre-pandemic training.
- EMD training has increased significantly this year, but down 58 percent compared to pre-pandemic training.
- Industrial revenue from one year ago has increased 24 percent, but it is still down 74 percent compared to pre-pandemic training. One contributing factor is the outstanding invoices for industrial customers who have requested 120-days to pay.
- SCFA revenue has increased 10 percent overall from last year, but is still down 24 percent or approximated \$500,000 compared to pre-pandemic training.
- AARF program requests have significantly increased.
- Governor included \$850,000 in his Executive Budget to make EMS classes free for the next two years.
- Agency requested \$1 million for reoccurring USAR and HART funding, \$10 million for construction of a new USAR building and \$2.75 million for renovation of existing USAR building.

CPIP Project Updates

George Stapleton presented the following updates:

- Drill tower project is on hold. Waiting for engineer to submit the final documents before a true cost can be assessed. Currently, \$700,000 is committed to the project.
- Parking lot expansion bids are complete. Cost estimate is \$262,000. Awaiting approval from the State Engineer's office.
- Currently in Phase II of the HVAC replacement project. Two units in the cafeteria and one in the fire station are scheduled to be replaced.
- Scope of work for the site bathroom renovations is being prepared. It will be submitted March 25, 2022, to the Joint Bond Revue Commission. It should be on the May 2022 agenda for approval.

Grants Update

On behalf of Chief Jonathan Jones, George Stapleton presented the following updates:

- Received an AFG grant in 2019 to 1) replace 29 trailers and 2) to purchase a new records management system and 3) equipment for the confined space trailers. Of the award, \$177,000 was earmarked for the records management system. It was sent out for bid in 2021. The submitted bids did not meet Division needs and were declared non-responsive. Solicitation was canceled.
- Cost of trailers has since increased. The bid was \$119,565 more than what was awarded in the AFG grant. Staff requested an amendment from AFG to transfer the \$119,565 to purchase the trailers and use the remaining \$57,435 to purchase additional rescue equipment for the trailers. The amendment was approved. Estimated delivery is March 2022.
- An additional AFG grant for \$575,000 was approved to purchase a new fire engine. Delivery will take 26 months.
- The 2021 AFG grant has been submitted. Academy requested \$530,000 for a direct capture exhaust system to be installed in the fire station. Academy also requested a mobile AARF prop, a helicopter prop, and the replacement of 20 thermal imaging cameras.

VI. SCFA Section Reports

Facilities

On behalf of Greg Bass, Superintendent Dennis Ray provided a Facilities update.

- Sewer line was struck (in error) by a contractor. Staff is working to get it repaired and marked.
- Replaced the fire station and USAR building lights with LED lights.
- Re-epoxied fire station floors.
- Installed shoreline power in the fire station.
- Painted cafeteria accent wall.
- The number eating in the cafeteria/staying in the dorms has increased.
- Staff fabricator Neal Owen resigned. Position to be posted.

Curriculum

Bonita Watters provided a curriculum update.

- Offering a Fire and Emergency Services Administration course.
- Working with EMS section to develop emergency medical technician curriculum.
- First delivery of Fire Officer IV is in Columbia in June 2022.
- Hired Greg Walker to replace Steven Fields in the print shop.
- Hired Jai-An Davidson as the new CTC coordinator.
- Hired Julian Blair as a part-time developer.
- Assigned 60 subject matter experts.

Training

Terrell Brown provided an onsite training section update.

- Selected a candidate for the Municipal Coordinator position, and a coordinator for the AARF and Industrial programs
- Assisted 16 recruit schools, graduating 198 students.
- Worked with various training agencies to create countywide training programs.

EMS

Julie McCabe provided an EMS update.

- Posted EMS Coordinator position.
- Upgrading mannequins for EMT and recruit classes.
- Receiving a donated ambulance.
- Overall pass rate for EMS in 2021 is 69 percent.
- Coordinating seven EMS classes for 2022.
- In process of hiring additional part-time instructors.

Accreditation

Julie McCabe provided an accreditation update.

- Approved for accreditation - Fire Officer IV.
- Using Intelligent Grading Solution - a new grading system.

Administration

Sherry Bush, Administrative Supervisor, provided an update.

- Administrative numbers and statistics are provided in the report.

Marketing

On behalf of Amy Williamson, Superintendent Ray presented Marketing and Special Projects updates:

- Executive Chief Officer weekend is at max capacity.
- Supporting the upcoming All Hazards Incident Management Team Association in Denver.
- Secret Service Workshop was a success with 129 attendees from multiple disciplines.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- Learning Management System path forward: Creating a committee consisting of FM and FA staff. A consultant may be employed for a business analysis to determine the best direction. A decision will be made next grant period to either have DOTs build a new system or purchase one from an outside vendor.
- Implemented a new equivalency policy Jan. 1, 2022. Academy will no longer issue transcript credit or equivalency for classes the SCFA did not teach. Moving forward, the policy is “seal for seal.” ARFF and NFA are the only exceptions.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- First episode in the ISO mini-series was a success. Recommendations from the Advisory Committee for speakers are welcome.

IX: ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Chief’s Association is holding the Spring Training Weekend in Anderson County Mar. 4-6, 2022.
- Fire Officer Academy: The Company Officer is May 16-20, 2022, at the SCFA
- Fire Instructor Improvement Conference is Mar. 24-27, 2022, at SCFA.
- Fire Rescue Conference is Jun. 8-11, 2022, in Myrtle Beach.
- Legislative Day in Columbia, SC is March 9, 2022.
- The SC Firefighters’ Association holds an open Ambassador’s meeting each month.
- Deadline to remain in compliance with SCFFA was Jan. 31, 2022.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Shaun Gadsden made a motion to adjourn. Justin McLellan seconded. Motion passed unanimously without discussion. Meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 11, 2022, in the SC Fire Academy Conference Room or via teleconference.

Disclaimer: The attached minutes are DRAFT minutes. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, statements and decisions recorded in them, their status will remain that of a draft until such time as they are confirmed as a correct record at the subsequent meeting.