

**COMMITTEE OF THE FLORENCE COUNTY COUNCIL ON
JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY MEETING, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER
13, 2024, AT 8:00 A.M., COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM
804, COUNTY COMPLEX, FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason M. Springs, (Council District 1), Committee Chairman
Roger M. Poston, (Council District 2), Committee Member
Jerry W. Yarborough, Jr., (Council District 4), Committee Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Kevin Yokim, County Administrator
D. Malloy McEachin, Jr., County Attorney
Hope M. Jones, Clerk to Council
Mitch Fulmore, Deputy Administrator of Public Safety
Sam Brockington, Fire/Rescue Coordinator
Chief Billy Dillon, Howe Springs Fire Department
Chief Howard Worrell, West Florence Fire Department
Chief Jeff Dennis, Sardis Timmons ville Fire Department
Chief Henry Humphries, Johnsonville Fire Department
Chief Mark Floyd, Olanta Fire Department
Don Goldman, Advisory Board Member
Jason Thompson, Advisory Board Member
Alan Walden, Advisory Board Member
Jeff Stone, ESCI Consultant
Seth Taylor, Post & Courier Editor

Copies of the meeting Agenda were posted in the lobby of the County Complex, and provided to the media and others requesting copies of meeting agendas, provided to the Florence County Library for posting at the main library as well as all branches, and on the County website at www.florenceco.org/council in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act requirements for notice of meetings.

Chairman Springs called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M. Councilman Yarborough provided the invocation and Councilman Poston led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Chairman Springs welcomed everyone who was in attendance.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Councilman Yarborough made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2024, Justice Public & Safety Committee meeting. Councilman Poston seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Chairman Springs moved the New Business Item up before the Old Business on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation of Consultant's Report on Unified Fire District:

Mr. Yokim introduced Jeff Stone with ESCI.

Mr. Stone gave a quick review of the presentation. He stated the company was brought in to assess Florence County and Fire Districts. What will it look like in the next 10 to 15 years? The company reviewed the current organizational structure of the various districts, reviewed five years of data, interviewed everyone in all districts, and spoke with County Administration and other departments in the County. The report includes a Community Risk Assessment and Analysis of Florence County. This information will help with accreditation. Ten agencies cover Florence County. The presentation had several reports to assist with the analysis: Current Service Demand (culmination of five years of seven departments), and Time Continuum this is how we measure everything from the time a call comes into the 911 center until there is a unit on the scene; various pieces that can be controlled and various pieces that cannot be controlled (from the time the call comes in and dispatched out), Time Out (from when the buzzer sounds until the apparatus is in route), and Travel Time (dispatched apparatus until arrives on the scene).

Mr. Stone stated that if there was a target date of July 1, 2027, from which the Unified Fire District switched to Florence County Rescue to become one entity, the Chiefs needed to start thinking ahead.

Mr. Yokim stated there are four areas in which he will need assistance from the Chiefs: (1) goals and recommendations, (2) Organizational Chart, (3) Battalions, and (4) Florence County Fire Chief.

Chief Dillon believes the Chiefs should review the document from a week to ten days after they receive it from Mitch Fulmore. The Chiefs will meet with their notes and recommendations, and consolidate their information. The report will be given to Mr. Fulmore and Mr. Fulmore will have Mr. Yokim review it.

Mr. Yokim stated to the Chiefs if they want to meet within thirty to forty-five days, please let him know to discuss the recommendations.

Chairman Springs stated the report is a draft. He suggests the Chiefs give input. Once the final report is received then the Chiefs should merge their information.

Mr. Thompson inquired where the board members were in this process. Mr. Yokim stated when the first Florence County Fire Chief is hired, the question would be if there is a need for a board. The Board is an advisory group that transmits information from the Chiefs to the Administration but when the Fire Chief is hired, will we need the Board?

The Chiefs stated it will need some type of board for 1% money. Mr. Yokim said the current Advisory Board may go away but Mr. Yokim and Malloy McEachin will need to determine what type of board is needed.

Mr. Yokim said he doesn't believe the Advisory Board needs to do anything with the report. Each board member represents a district and Mr. Yokim stated he will leave it up to the Chief of the District if they want to discuss it with their board member.

Chairman Springs stated since the report is a draft, no action needs to be taken on it.

OLD BUSINESS:

Progress Update of EMS Staffing and Response Study:

Mr. Yokim gave an update. Mr. Yokim and Mr. Fulmore spoke with Barrott Dowdy, EMS Director, and they have solicited an RFP for the comprehensive EMS Study. The Committee has received proposals and evaluated them. The item will go before Council at the next County Council meeting.

Mr. Yokim stated there is a possibility of hiring the Florence County Fire Chief in the current budget.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Committee, Councilman Yarborough made a motion to adjourn and Councilman Poston seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:50 A. M.

Approved by the Committee at its meeting on November 8, 2024


ATTEST: Hope M. Jones, Clerk to Council