

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

Municipal Center Council Chambers

May 15, 2025; 11:00 AM

Minutes

I. **Call to Order:** *Chairman Berner called the meeting to order at 11:00 am.*

II. **Roll Call:**

Present: Russell Berner, Chairman
Adam Shubsda

Absent: Yvonne Johnstone
Jim Harrington
Steve Rolando
Al Sines
Bill Thomae
Craig Harris, *Public Safety Director*

Also Present: Captain Eubanks, *Charleston County Sheriff's Office*
Deputy Chief Henson, *St. Johns Fire District*
Deputy Chief Winn, *Charleston County EMS*
Jody Forrest, *Kiawah Island Community Association*

Chairman Berner stated that two members were present, which did not constitute a quorum. He noted that while all agenda items could be discussed, they could not make any decisions or approve the meeting minutes due to the lack of a quorum.

III. **Approval of Minutes:**

A. Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes of March 13, 2025

The approval of the March 13, 2025, Public Safety Committee meeting minutes was skipped due to a lack of quorum.

IV. **Presentation:**

A. SC State Fire Chief - Chief Chad Beam

Deputy Chief Henson of St. John's Fire District (STJFD) introduced Chief Chad Beam, Assistant State Fire Marshal over Emergency Response.

Chief Beam provided an overview of the State Fire's role in disaster response and their programs:

- State Fire has three divisions: Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Academy, and Emergency Response.
- The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) program consists of 6 teams in South Carolina, including a large Type 1 team in Columbia and five regional teams.
- For hurricane response, resources are pre-staged and deployed when wind conditions are within safe parameters (45 mph sustained, 65 mph gusts).
- The Firefighter Mobilization program allows any fire department or emergency agency to request resources after exhausting local mutual aid.
- The Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (HART) is a partnership with the National Guard, providing air rescue capabilities.

Chief Beam detailed South Carolina's Urban Search and Rescue capabilities, consisting of six teams: A Type 1 team in Columbia and five regional teams located in Charleston (South Carolina Task Force 3, hosted by the City of Charleston Fire Department), Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head Island, Columbia, and Greenville. He emphasized the teams' self-sufficiency: regional teams for three days and the Type 1 team for 14 days. The Type 1 team deploys with four 18-wheelers, 19 vehicles, eight boats, and

B. St. John’s Fire District (STJFD)

Kiawah Monthly										
Basic Incident Zone Number (FD1.32)	District 4				District 6					
Apparatus Resource ID (FD18.1)	E704	E706	L702	SQ701	E704	E706	L702	SQ701		
Basic Incident Type Category (FD1.21)									Count of Fire Incidents Grand Total	Percent of Count of Fire Incidents Grand Total
1 - Fire	2	2	2	2				1	9	7.89%
3 - Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	15		2	11	1	4		5	38	33.33%
4 - Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	1	1	1			1	1		5	4.39%
5 - Service Call						1			1	0.88%
6 - Good Intent Call	4		2	2		1			9	7.89%
7 - False Alarm & False Call	15	1	13		4	9	10		52	45.61%
Grand Total	37	4	20	15	5	17	11	5	114	100%

Deputy Chief Henson reported 114 total incidents on the island in April, broken down between Station 4 (Sora Rail) and Station 6 (Ocean Course). The majority were false alarms and EMS incidents.

Chief Henson detailed a structure fire on Burroughs Hall in early April, where first units arrived within four minutes of dispatch. The fire was contained to a screened-in porch area, preventing extension into the home. Investigators could not rule out a refrigerator appliance in the porch area as the potential origin.

Chief Henson announced that on April 24th, STJFD achieved Advanced Life Support (ALS) licensure from the Department of Public Health. This positions Squad 701 at Station 4, staffed 24/7 with ALS providers, to supplement Charleston County EMS services. "What that does do, particularly when Charleston County EMS units may be transporting somebody or they're on another call, it provides another ALS provider outside of just Beach Patrol that can provide that care if needed," he explained. The program will expand throughout the district according to its implementation plan with the Department of Public Health.

C. Charleston County Emergency Medical Services

Countywide Response Data		Overall	Bravo thru Echo	Alpha	Bravo	Charlie	Delta	Echo
Incident Arrivals	18	13	5	7	3	3	0	
% of All Responses	100.00%	72.22%	27.78%	38.89%	16.67%	16.67%	(Blank)	
Average Arrivals Per Day	0.60	0.43	0.17	0.23	0.10	0.10	(Blank)	
Average Response Time	00:12:53	00:11:24	00:16:43	00:12:26	00:10:56	00:09:30		
Fractile	50.00%	53.85%	40%	43%	67%	67%	0%	
% > 20 Minute Response	16.67%	15.38%	20.00%	28.57%	0.00%	0.00%	(Blank)	
% > 30 Minute Response	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	(Blank)	
Average Daily Total Staffing Hours <small>Transport Units Only</small>	422.12	Average Daily Core Hours						350.1
Average Daily Total Unit Type Hours	ALS 262.28	ADV 40.86	BLS 118.98	% Core BLS				34.37%
	Delta 75.68	Charlie 17.00	Alpha 0.78	% Core ADV				11.53%

Deputy Chief Winn reported March statistics for Kiawah: 24 calls with 19 transports. April showed 18 calls with 14 transports. For a system-wide perspective, she processed approximately 5,500 medical calls each month in March and April.

Deputy Chief Winn detailed her workforce of 190 field personnel with 20 supervisors, including 93 basic EMTs, 21 advanced EMTs, and 76 paramedics distributed county-wide.

Deputy Chief Winn explained their response time goals: Delta/Echo calls (high priority) target 8 minutes 59 seconds; Bravo calls target 14 minutes 59 seconds; Alpha calls (non-emergency) target 19 minutes 59 seconds. She emphasized her personal goal of reaching all calls within 20 minutes, noting they're generally achieving these targets.

When questioned about hospital transport decisions, Deputy Chief Winn explained the medical

society's 50-year policy of patient choice among Charleston's hospitals, with exceptions for specialized care. MUSC serves as the only Level 1 trauma center, requiring transport there for state-criteria trauma cases. For cardiac arrest patients who cannot speak for themselves, transport decisions prioritize facilities capable of interventional cardiology (stent placement), limiting options to Roper or MUSC rather than St. Francis.

Regarding the new MUSC facility, Deputy Chief Winn clarified that it will be a standalone ER without surgical capability. For major trauma on Kiawah, transport would bypass this facility for the main MUSC hospital, though they might stop briefly for emergency airway management if needed before continuing transport.

D. Beach Patrol

Enforcement	Subcategory	Verbal Warning	Written Warning	Citation	Violation Total
	Alcohol 15 208				0
	Alligator 15 501				0
	Assault / Resisting CEO 15 301				0
	Beach Fire 15 105				0
	Beach Storage 16 805				0
	Beach Vehicles 16 302b	9			9
	Beached Boat 16 803	1			1
	Beachfront Lighting 16 105				0
	Bike Path 15 302	4			4
	Build Permit				0
	Business License				0
	Camping / Sleeping 16 808				0
	Critical Habitat 16 604	12			12
	Disorderly 15 204				0
	Drone 7 302	1		1	2
	Dumpster Cover 15 216e				0
	Dune 16 304	42			42
	Fireworks 15 209				0
	Flashlights 16 107				0
	Glass 16 818	14			14
	Harass Animal 16 810				0
	Leash 7 201	55	10	3	68
	Littering 15 212				0
	Narcotics 15 213				0
	Noise 15 306				0
	Nudity 16 806				0
	Other				0
	Personal Article Storage 8 119				0
	Plastic 14 402	1			1
	Scavenging / Dumping 8 108				0
	Shovel 16 409	5			5
	STR Bikes / Beach Gear 14 506f	1			1
	STR Parking 14 506d				0
	STR Parking 14 506d(1)				0
	STR Parking 14 506d(5)				0
	STR Trash 14 506e(1)				0
	Swim Wade 15 314				0
	TOKI Parking 13 103				0
	Transport Cover 15 216d				0
	Trespass 15 119				0
	Waste Container 15 216f				0
	Total	145	10	4	159

Enforcement	Subcategory	Verbal Warning	Written Warning	Citation	Violation Total
	Alcohol 15 208	10			10
	Alligator 15 501				0
	Assault / Resisting CEO 15 301				0
	Beach Fire 15 105				0
	Beach Storage 16 805		2		2
	Beach Vehicles 16 302b	1			1
	Beached Boat 16 803				0
	Beachfront Lighting 16 105				0
	Bike Path 15 302	3			3
	Build Permit				0
	Business License				0
	Camping / Sleeping 16 808				0
	Critical Habitat 16 604	2			2
	Disorderly 15 204				0
	Drone 7 302				0
	Dumpster Cover 15 216e				0
	Dune 16 304	1			1
	Fireworks 15 209				0
	Flashlights 16 107				0
	Glass 16 818	2			2
	Harass Animal 16 810				0
	Leash 7 201	6	5	3	14
	Littering 15 212	11	11		22
	Narcotics 15 213				0
	Noise 15 306	8			8
	Nudity 16 806				0
	Other				0
	Personal Article Storage 8 119	1	7		8
	Plastic 14 402				0
	Scavenging / Dumping 8 108				0
	Shovel 16 409	1			1
	STR Bikes / Beach Gear 14 506f	2	17	1	20
	STR Parking 14 506d		2		2
	STR Parking 14 506d(1)				0
	STR Parking 14 506d(5)				0
	STR Trash 14 506e(1)				0
	Swim Wade 15 314				0
	TOKI Parking 13 103				0
	Transport Cover 15 216d				0
	Trespass 15 119				0
	Waste Container 15 216f				0
	Total	48	44	4	96

Mr. Edgerton reported that Beach Patrol started training on March 1st and has been continuously training since then. New rookies need 164 hours of training before they can be deployed on the beach, not including familiarization and orientation. Returning employees must complete 76 hours of annual recertification training. The organization is now fully staffed, and training is expected to be completed within two weeks.

Mr. Edgerton announced that May 19-26 would be observed as National Beach Safety Week, in partnership with the United States Lifesaving Association, with a mayoral proclamation requested for the event.

Mr. Edgerton provided details about a water rescue response earlier in the week near Public Beach Access 5. Although the incident was ultimately unfounded, the report of a body in the surf prompted a major multi-agency response, including St. John's Marine 701, Coast Guard boats and aircraft, and city resources conducting area saturation searches.

Mr. Edgerton mentioned an increase in stingray activity compared to previous years, advising beachgoers to stay alert.

Mr. Edgerton stated that statistics showed 206 leash law violations out of a total of 384 violations. He attributed the higher numbers partly to the ordinance change that moved the leash law enforcement dates two weeks earlier, without updating the signage on beaches. Despite efforts to promote awareness through e-blasts and media, the physical signs on the beach did not reflect the changes, which may have led to intentional violations or a lack of awareness.

"I don't have a sense that it's more visitors that are violators than there are owners," Mr. Edgerton stated. "I think people play the odds and hope that they don't get caught or they can talk their way out of it." Among the violations, 191 received verbal warnings, 12 received written warnings, and three resulted in citations. Mr. Edgerton explained that citations are issued when individuals refuse education about the law or are caught violating the law after warnings. He noted that violation numbers have begun to level off this week.

E. Kiawah Island Community Association

KICA Security Report
Monthly Statistics: April 2025

	2023	2024	2025
Deer Related Accidents (no personal injury)	01	0	0
False Residential Alarms	0	0	2
Vehicles passed through the Main Gate	189,358	208,773	216,190
Vehicles passed through the Vanderhorst Gate	114,069	130,656	114,372

Mr. Shubsda, Director of Safety and Security, introduced Operations Director Jody Forrest and Security Manager Daryl Smalls. He announced that the new Safety Manager, Rob Fife, who was recently certified as a CPR/AED train-the-trainer, will offer CPR certification to the community.

Mr. Shubsda reported requesting additional sheriff's deputies for May to assist with speed enforcement during increased seasonal traffic. KICA will deploy bike patrols on paths to address e-bike and other violations. Mosquito abatement begins Friday from 4-6 PM.

Mr. Shubsda reported that statistics showed vehicle entries up 5% from last year (approximately 7,500 vehicles), commercial passes up 210, special event passes up 325, and four-wheel day passes up 580 from April 2024. Total covenant violations increased by 40 from last year.

VI. Old Business:

None

VII. New Business:

A. Hurricane Preparedness Tabletop Exercise Planned for May 30th

Chairman Berner confirmed that all agencies would attend the May 30th tabletop exercise and inquired if any agency required anything from the Town in preparation.

B. CERT Activation Protocol

- Updates by Craig Harris and Others.

Chairman Berner reported ongoing discussions with Fire Chief Kunitzer about activating CERT during nighttime hours. This remains an open action item without resolution at this time.

C. Swim Across America Scheduled for June 8, 2025

Chairman Berner announced the event scheduled for Saturday, June 8th, and asked if agencies needed Town support for preparation. No specific needs were identified.

VIII. Chairman's Updates

Chairman Berner raised concerns about bicyclists not stopping at the Cassique intersection, noting this was brought to the Town Council but required a Public Safety Committee recommendation for action. He explained that Cassique residents lack the internal bike network experience of Kiawah Island, creating safety concerns when bikes stream across the entrance without stopping.

Chairman Berner proposed adding signage reading "Dangerous Intersection Ahead. Please Stop" or similar wording. He noted his personal practice of slowing at intersections, expecting bikes to "dart out."

Adam Shubsda acknowledged occasionally observing stop sign violations and supported additional informational signage for the community, though implementation requirements were unclear.

Due to a lack of quorum, formal committee recommendation approval must wait until next month's meeting.

IX. Committee Members' Comments:

None

X. Citizens' Comments:

None

XI. Adjournment:

Chairman Berner adjourned the meeting at 11:43 am.

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds

Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

4.22.2025

Date