

**TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA
FIRE COMMITTEE**

Monday, November 5th, 2018

Municipal Complex, Committee Meeting Room, 3rd Floor

MINUTES

Members Present: Bob Brimmer, Chair; Jim Owens,
Kevin Cunnane

Members Absent: Tom O'Rourke

Staff Present: Eric DeMoura, Mike Mixon, Amanda Knight

Mr. Brimmer called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm.

1. Approval of Minutes from the October 1, 2018 meeting

Mr. Owens moved for approval of the minutes; motion seconded by Mr. Cunnane. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

3. Employees years of service recognition

Captain Tim Haak was recognized for 10 years of service to the Mount Pleasant Fire Department. While he has been serving here at Fire Station 2, he has also received his paramedic license and was promoted to Captain.

4. Discussion of the Fire Department Resiliency – Charts from Chief Mixon



Chief Mixon stated that Mr. Cunnane asked for the topic of Fire Department Resiliency to be placed on the agenda.

BUILDING FIRE

Residential Fire		Commercial Fire	
Units	Personnel	Units	Personnel
Four Engines	12	Four Engines	12
One Ladder	3	Two Ladders	6
One Battalion Chief	1	Battalion Chief	1
One Squad	2	One Squad	2
One Ambulance	2	One Ambulance	2
One EMS Supervisor	1	One EMS Supervisor	1
Total Minimum	21	Total Minimum	24
Remaining Units	Personnel	Remaining Units	Personnel
Two Engines	6	Two Engines	6
One Ladder	3	One Squad	2
One Battalion Chief	1	One Battalion Chief	1
One Squad	2		
Total Minimum	12	Total Minimum	9

Chief Mixon stated that the above slide represents the current deployment for residential and commercial fires. He reviewed the number of personnel that are assigned to each type of call and what is left during the call to cover the Town. He stated that during a fire or significant call mutual-aid from the City of Charleston or North Charleston is called to backfill the stations or help on the scene as needed. Chief Mixon also stated that MPFD is working with the Consolidated Dispatch Center and will be sending a second Battalion Chief on structure fires. That second chief will immediately coordinate any needed mutual-aid. He also stated that during the strategic planning process a need for a third ladder truck at Station #4 was identified.

BUILDING FIRE

Units	Personnel
Four Engines	12
Two Ladders	8
Two Battalion Chiefs	2
One Ambulance	2
One EMS Supervisor	1
One Squad	2
Total Minimum	27
Remaining Units	Personnel
Two Engines	6
One Ladder	4
One Squad	2
Total Minimum	12

Chief Mixon noted that the Fire Department is looking at moving toward a single deployment model for all fires. He stated Mount Pleasant is an affluent community and many of the homes are large enough to be considered a small commercial structure. With this type of model more personnel would be placed on the scene to handle the fire. This would help return units to service faster, but also reduce the workload on the firefighters. He stated that under this model MPFD would still rely on mutual-aid at times.

RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

- Normal Operations
 - 1L, 4E, 1BC, 1SQ, 1A, 1EMS (21)
- Modified Operations
 - 1L, 2E, 1BC, 1A, 1EMS (13)
- Disaster Operations
 - 1L, 1E, 1A, 1EMS (9)

Chief Mixon stated that the dispatch center currently uses a tiered deployment model when assigning units to a call. The center typically functions under a Normal Operations status unless an event dictates the need to change the operation level. If a thunderstorm moves through the County and a larger than normal call volume is experienced the dispatch center will move to Modified Operations. Chief Mixon stated that fewer units are dispatched, but the Battalion Chiefs have the discretion to call for more units if they are needed. Disaster Operations follow the same criteria but send even fewer units.

MUTUAL AID/AUTOMATIC AID

- Adding second Battalion Chief to response
- Identify potential benefits of using auto-aid partnerships.
- Analyze projected response data for responses into, and out of, the Town.
- Conduct meetings with auto-aid partners

Chief Mixon stated that it is now time to revisit the merits of using an automatic-aid approach. He stated that during the strategic planning process it was identified as one of the initiatives that need to be examined for value.

Mr. Brimmer stated that the personnel reflected in the chart are individuals on shift. He asked if there were protocols in place to call in off-duty personnel if they are needed.

Chief Mixon affirmed that there are measures in place to call off-duty personnel to the scene if needed using a paging software. He stated that many times they are used to assist in cleaning equipment and returning units to service.

Mr. Cunnane stated that every time he gets these numbers there is a new way of presenting them. He asked what level of firefighter training does the EMS Supervisor have?

Chief Mixon stated that the EMS Supervisor is not trained as a firefighter, but the NFPA 1710 has a section that specifies having units available to transport from the scene.

Mr. Cunnane asked if they are counted as firefighters.

Chief Mixon stated that they are not counted as firefighters. He stated that EMS assist in setting up rehab, providing water and Gatorade, and taking vital signs of the firefighters.

Mr. Cunnane asked what type of fire truck the Squad arrives in?

Chief Mixon stated that they arrive in a Tahoe, but the firefighters on that unit are fully outfitted with turnout gear and an air pack.

Mr. Cunnane asked if they were a firefighting unit?

Chief Mixon stated that they do not have a pump or water on their unit.

Mr. Cunnane stated that they could not go in under the two-in/two-out and they don't really count as a fire truck. He stated that the numbers reflect them as firefighters even though they are not and that the firefighting force is now down to 16.

Chief Mixon stated that they are firefighters.

Mr. DeMoura stated that staff does not provide inaccurate numbers on reports.

Mr. Cunnane stated that the members on the squad cannot be counted as firefighters on a residential fire and that it was a yes or no equation.

Chief Mixon stated that the members on the Squad are firefighters.

Mr. Cunnane stated that the squad has firefighters, but the ambulance and EMS supervisor are not.

Chief Mixon stated that was correct, but EMS is used to staff rehab as it is outlined in NFPA.

Mr. Cunnane stated that they are not going into the building or making a rescue.

Chief Mixon agreed and noted EMS is there if we pull a victim out of the fire and they can transport.

Mr. Cunnane stated that it is almost like counting the first two cops because they can take someone to the hospital. He stated that it was disingenuous to include them.

Mr. Brimmer stated that this was a response number that represented all personnel that respond to fires and are not necessarily all firefighters.

Chief Mixon stated that the Battalion Chief is not actively fighting fire but is counted in the numbers.

Mr. Cunnane stated that a typical fire response will require both ladder trucks. He stated that it appears as though it is being ignored in the response model and added to the resiliency section to make it look like there is adequate coverage. He stated that he did not believe that there is adequate coverage for a second fire in the Town.

Chief Mixon stated that two engines and a squad responding to a second fire would not be considered an effective response force. And this would be the reason that mutual-aid would be called.

Mr. Cunnane stated that was why he placed this topic on the agenda. That over the last two months he showed how the ladders were spread thin and the engines were spread thin. He asked if there are two fires at once and a mayday is called how do you get more people?

Chief Mixon stated that the help would be coming from mutual-aid.

Mr. Cunnane stated that any location in Town would have an extended response time from mutual-aid. He stated that even one fire going on with a mayday would be difficult.

Chief Mixon stated that in the current deployment model one of the positions that is staffed is the R.I.T. Team (Rapid Intervention Team).

Mr. Cunnane asked how many people are on the R.I.T. Team?

Chief Mixon stated a minimum of three, sometimes four.

Mr. Cunnane stated that the numbers are now down to 15 firefighters available to handle the fire. He stated that if there was a collapse one R.I.T. Team would not be enough. He stated that a full alarm would be needed. He asked how long it would take for mutual-aid to arrive from the City of Charleston of North Charleston.

Chief Mixon stated that during a large fire the entire complement of on duty firefighters may be sent to the scene and would address that immediate problem.

Mr. Cunnane asked how long would it take for a City unit on Huger Street to get from downtown to Town Hall at 5pm?

Chief Mixon stated that it could be 15 minutes if traffic was heavy on bridge.

Mr. Cunnane stated that there is no backup plan. He stated that things often happen at the worst times. He stated that the Fire Department needs to be honest with the citizens.

Mr. Brimmer stated that he is not comfortable saying that the fire department isn't being honest with the citizens. He stated that if Mr. Cunnane wants to propose a different standard it is fine. But he shouldn't call into question the Administrator, the Fire Chief, or the fire department.

Mr. Cunnane stated that of the 21 shown in the deployment model 3 are not firefighters and 2 are not coming on a fire truck and the actual number should be 16.

Mr. Brimmer stated that there is nothing in the chart that says everyone noted is a firefighter and it is not appropriate to call into question the honesty and integrity of our staff.

Mr. Cunnane stated it is not about honesty and integrity, but more about what he knows about firefighting. He noted that he has never seen EMS counted as firefighters.

Chief Mixon stated that it is outlined in NFPA 1710 to have EMS personnel on a fire.

Mr. Cunnane stated that for a normal fire it seems the fire department has trouble addressing it because there are not enough firefighters and the spacing of the units. He stated that it is a failure at the policy level and not a reflection of the firefighters on the truck.

Mr. DeMoura stated that was reflected in the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Cunnane stated that hotel and high-rise fires require a minimum of 43 firefighters as per the NFPA 1710 to which Chief Mixon confirmed is in the standard. Mr. Cunnane stated that if we continue to allow these buildings to be build, we are knowingly putting people at risk and he wants it on the record and known. The standard is not being met and the fire department needs to be bolstered. Mr. Cunnane stated he looked at the Strategic Plan an it is good. But he wants it to happen quicker.

Chief Mixon stated that in the same standard (NFPA 1710) it notes that mutual-aid and automatic-aid can be used to fulfill any of those numbers.

Mr. Cunnane stated that was technically true, but he doesn't believe that they can get here quick enough to make a difference on the fire ground. Except in limited situations. Anything deep into the Town would take a long time for them to get here. He stated that the high-rise buildings are not being covered properly.

Mr. Owens stated that he is not comfortable in speaking negatively about the department, and he feels that Mr. Cunnane is not necessarily doing that. Mr. Owens stated that Fire Department has done a good job in providing service to the Town. He thanked Chief Mixon for providing the information. He agrees that we should look at producing a more effective and efficient department, but it would take time. Mr. Owens stated that we are not where we want to be, but we are getting there. He stated that he does not feel the citizens are unprotected. He stated that even if the entire department is used on a call that mutual-aid would be there to assist. Mr. Owens stated that Council looks to the Fire Chief and Deputy Chiefs to grow the department.

Mr. Brimmer stated that Mr. Cunnane is owed a thank you for bringing up these topics and allowing a better understanding of the issues. He stated that the responsible thing is being done through the strategic planning process and gradual moves are being made toward the future. He stated that for the remainder of the meeting we have two very detailed plans in the Strategic Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan. Mr. Brimmer recommended that Committee takes a broad look at the plans today and uses the next month to thoroughly review the plans. Mr. Brimmer stated that everything that was presented today and in previous committees has been touched upon in the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Cunnane stated that he wanted to clarify something. He wanted to ensure that he is not going against the firefighters, he supports them. But, he is trying to address it at the policy level. He stated it was not the Chiefs fault for allowing this to happen, but the politicians fault. He stated that the Fire Department needs to move in a better direction. He stated that the firefighters work hard, and he is not speaking out against them.

5. Review of Emergency Operations Plan – Amanda Knight

Mr. Brimmer introduced the topic.

Amanda Knight, Town of Mount Pleasant's Emergency Manager gave an Emergency Management Update presentation.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT | November 5, 2018

Amanda Knight stated that on November 8th there will be another Be.Flood.Ready. event at the Armory in Mount Pleasant. This event will focus on the Remley's Point area.

BE. FLOOD. READY.

November 8, 2018
Mitigation and Preparedness
Flood Modeling
Comprehensive Plan Engagement



- ✓ Plan Ahead
- ✓ Be Informed
- ✓ Take Action

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN



Ms. Knight started to build this plan upon her hiring in September of 2017. During Hurricane Irma she was able to observe the operations of the Town and the current function of the EOC. She stated that things have moved well in developing the plan.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN



- Concept of Operations
- Organization of Assignment and Responsibility
- Direction, Control, and Coordination
- Information Management
- Logistics and Resource Management
- Training and Exercise

Ms. Knight stated that it was her goal to create a plan that was fully implementable in Mount Pleasant and was also a living document that could grow and change with the needs of the Town.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Foundation

- NIMS/ICS
- County, State EM
- All Hazards
- Living Document

Critical Priorities

- Preservation of Life
- Property & Environment
- Continuity of Government
- Recovery

Emergency Operations

- Operational Conditions
- OPCON 5 thru OPCON 1
- Incident Action Planning

The Foundation of this plan is built on the National NIMS/ICS framework. This initiative is inline with the County and State and is an all hazards-based plan. The focus is on the capabilities and not just the hazards. Critical priorities for the plan will always be preservation of life, property and environment, continuity of government, and recovery.

Mr. Cunnane asked why is the public informed of the OPCON level. He feels that it confuses the public and can produce some panic among the citizens that don't understand the system.

Mr. Owens stated that it was an effort to inform the public and the citizens would hear the information from sources other than the Town.

Mr. Cunnane stated that using the OPCON was not truly telling the public what is going on.

Ms. Knight stated the sharing the OPCON levels shows collaboration between the State and County Government. It also shows transparency.



ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Ms. Knight outlined the organizational assignments, responsibilities, and the workflow of developing an emergency plan. All departments have a role to perform the functions of the EOC; however, they are also responsible for resuming the normal operations of the Town.

Mr. Brimmer stated that the EOC was running well during the last hurricane.

Incident Information

- Operational Information
 - Situation Reports
 - Status Reports
 - Emergency Notification
- Public Information
 - Press Conferences
 - Press Releases
 - Talking Points
 - Social Media

Communications Systems

- Networked Platforms
- Radio
- Satellite

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Mr. Brimmer asked if the Town Legal Department was available for consult during the last storm.

Ms. Knight stated that there was not a need for legal with the situation found during the storm.

LOGISTICS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



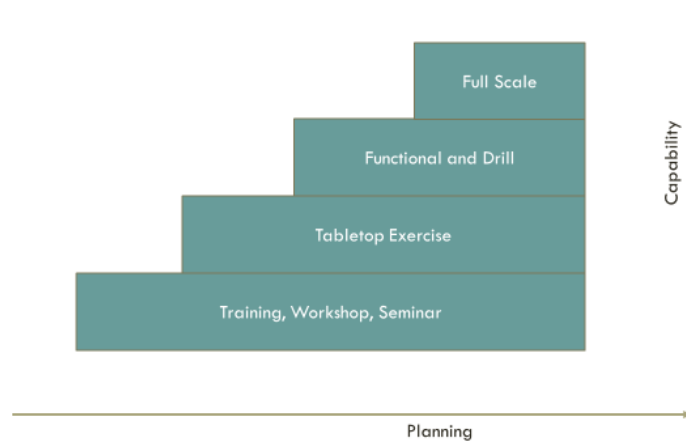
Mr. Cunnane stated that the EOC was run well and all departments operated well, including Ms. Knight.

Mr. Owens also stated that all involved in the EOC did well.

Mr. Brimmer stated that our US Senator was also impressed with the level of the EOC organization. He also thanked Ms. Knight for the plan.

Mr. Cunnane stated that not everyone is as prepared as Mount Pleasant. He feels that other jurisdictions should be relying on us as a result of our preparation.

TRAINING AND EXERCISE



6. After Action Report on Hurricane Florence – Amanda Knight

CORE CAPABILITIES

Operational Coordination
Situational Assessment
Public Information & Warning
Operational Communications
Infrastructure Systems
Recovery



Assessment

EM Program



STRENGTHS

- Early Activation
- Coordination
- Bolstered EOC
- Geographical Divisions
- Information Management

CONSIDERATIONS

- Strategic and Tactical Procedure
- Redundancy
Communications Systems
Generator Backup

Mr. Brimmer stated that there are some budget allocations as part of the plan.

Ms. Knight stated that she will be assessing future budget needs.

Mr. Brimmer stated that we should explore grant opportunities.

7. Review of 2019-2023 Strategic Plan – Chief Mixon

Chief Mixon gave an overview of the Fire Department's 5-year Strategic Plan. Chief Mixon thanked the Committee and Mr. DeMoura for being supportive during the process. Chief Mixon told the Fire Committee that after many hours of surveys, meetings, discussions and reviewing the information that three themes, five goals, and forty-six strategic objectives had been established for the Strategic Plan. The three themes are centered around Operational Excellence, Community Engagement, and Organization Resiliency. Chief Mixon stated that he and his staff wanted to enter this process with a clean slate and free of any preconceived notions. He stated that the plan developed organically. The detailed document was given to the Fire Committee Members, so they could review it over the next month and discuss it at December's Fire Committee Meeting. Chief Mixon stated he believed this is a strong foundation for the future and the Fire Department will be looking beyond five years in developing large projects.

Mr. Owens asked how many people are certified through the Town in CPR training.

Chief Mixon stated that last year approximately 800 people were certified, but the Fire Department wants to increase that number.

Mr. Owens stated that his daughter took the class and he was himself considering it.

Chief Mixon stated the bystander CPR saves lives and it has occurred many times already in Mount Pleasant. He also stated that there was no cost for the class for Town Residents.

Mr. Cunnane stated it was an excellent report. He mentioned the increase in staffing levels and more apparatus in the report could save lives. He also wants staff to look for grants that could increase CPR training. Mr. Cunnane mentioned that many of the initiatives could save lives.

Mr. Brimmer stated that it is a very comprehensive report. He stated that some of the initiatives cost money, but many of them do not have a cost associated. Mr. Brimmer mentioned that as we go forward the public needs to know more about what the Fire Department does. He stated that there are many ways to inform the public through social media and other means. Mr. Brimmer asked about the funding that was set aside previously for additional firefighters.

Mr. DeMoura stated that Council had set aside around \$250,000 for additional firefighters.

Chief Mixon stated that in January the Fire Department will hire 4 firefighters to increase the staffing on one of the ladder trucks. He also mentioned that over the next three years there is a plan to increase staffing incrementally.

Mr. Brimmer thanked Chief Mixon for having the plan in on time and mentioned all of the staff that worked on the plan.

Chief Mixon stated it was a team effort and his staff and the personnel on the street produced many of the ideas in the plan.

Mr. Brimmer stated that moving forward implementation of the plan could occur. He also stated that going forward he would like a quarterly update on the progress of the plan.

Mr. Cunnane asked Chief Mixon if he was familiar with the SAFER grants. Chief Mixon affirmed that he was. Chief Mixon stated that he and his staff could utilize grant funding opportunities if it was the direction of Committee.

Mr. Brimmer closed the meeting.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Mike Mixon, Jr

11/09/2018