Executive Committee Budget Work Session
Georgetown, SC – Litchfield Beach
September 9 -11, 2026

Attendance: Jason Dennis, Mike Norket, Billy Barnes, Pierce Womack, Ben Waring, Ryan Eubanks, Terry Sheriff, Brent McClellan, Larry Kardos, Charles Lamoreaux, Jamie Helms, Bryan Bailey, Bick Lewis, Brook Dennis, Zorrina Harmon, Ashley Boltin

September 9, 2026

11:10 am Called to order by President Dennis.

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation
Jamie Helms led the Pledge of Allegiance and provided the invocation.

President's Remarks
President Dennis welcomed those in attendance and thanked everyone for being present. He expressed appreciation to Midway Fire Department for hosting the meeting.

Host Fire Chief's Welcome
Chief Brent McClellan welcomed attendees to Midway Fire Department and provided a brief overview of the department and surrounding area.

A motion was made by Mike Norket to approve the minutes from August 11, 2026, as presented; seconded by Ben Waring. All in favor.

Budget Work Session – Mike Norket

Mike Norket commended staff for their continued efforts to maintain the Association's strong financial position.

The committee conducted a detailed, line-by-line review of the proposed budget, including monthly budget allocations and financial statements. A budget summary sheet was also reviewed. It was noted that member services have not been reduced and, in several areas, services have increased.

Vehicle Replacement
Discussion was held regarding the need to replace a Tahoe currently being used as a pool vehicle due to its high mileage and increasing maintenance needs. The proposed plan is to purchase a new vehicle for Director Helms and transition his current vehicle into the pool fleet.

Commercial Lawn Mower
The need to purchase a commercial lawn mower was discussed. Staff have evaluated several models through demonstrations, and the anticipated cost for equipment that best meets the Association's needs is approximately $12,000.

1% Audits
The committee discussed the current process for conducting 1% audits. Staff may be able to conduct certain spot checks in-house, with Bryan and Jeff assisting with this process, potentially reducing the amount of work performed by the outside firm. It was noted that each fire department should be audited at least once every five years. Discussion was also held regarding the possibility of soliciting bids from other firms to evaluate available options and costs for audit services.

Past Presidents
A new **$5,000 line item** was included in the budget to support the Past Presidents group.

Training Officer Academy
An additional **$25,000** was included in the budget to support two Training Officer Academy classes each year.

South Carolina Firefighters Foundation
Discussion was held regarding incorporating the South Carolina Firefighters Foundation into the Association's mortgage arrangement, eliminating the need for the Foundation to pay rent.

Busted Plug Fire Hydrant
The Association will receive the Busted Plug fire hydrant. The City of Columbia will cover the cost associated with transporting and relocating the hydrant to the Association. Staff will explore the availability of hospitality tax funding to assist with establishing and displaying the hydrant at the Association's building.

Lunch
Lunch was provided during the work session.

A motion was made by Mike Norket to authorize the Executive Director to explore the purchase of a vehicle and lawn equipment, with the total expenditure not to exceed $100,000. Billy Barnes seconded the motion.

The motion was amended to specify that the funds would come from the current fiscal year's budget and that the expenditure would be completed by September 30, 2026. Billy Barnes seconded the amendment. All in favor.

Committee Reports

Legislative Committee – Jamie Helms
Several legislative successes were reported, including funding for SC FAST and Palmetto 800, as well as an increase in cancer-related funding within the State Fire budget. Fire service and law enforcement earmarks were approved, and $500,000 in funding was approved for the Heritage Center.

Discussion was held regarding recent confusion surrounding the status of firefighter cancer legislation. Following public statements by Representative Teeples, Executive Director Jamie Helms contacted Charleston IAFF Representative Jon Baker seeking clarification. Subsequent conversations were held involving Baker, Representative Teeples, and Director Helms regarding the legislation and concerns raised about the Association. It was clarified that no member of the Association's Executive Board receives a financial benefit from the cancer policy.

The Association plans to continue working with members of the House and Senate conference committee to explore a reimbursement-based approach as an alternative to a research program.

The legislative report was released the previous week. Additional discussion was held regarding the veto and appropriations process and its potential impact on fire service funding.

Advisory Committee – Ashley Boltin, on behalf of Chairman Ross Vezin
Ashley reported that applications for the 2027 Leadership Institute have closed, with 27 applications received. The selection process consists of three phases. The committee will meet in the coming weeks to begin Phase I, which includes reviewing and scoring applicant essays.

Fourth Vice President – Billy Barnes
Billy Barnes reported that he has several upcoming meetings scheduled.

Past Presidents – Pierce Womack
Pierce Womack reported that the Past Presidents have a meeting scheduled for early October.

Supervisory Committee – Ben Waring
Ben Waring reported that the committee continues to assist with audit-related tasks and departments requiring assistance with corrective actions. Work is also underway to develop policies and procedures related to department mergers and to update the 1% videos. Jeff also has several upcoming meetings scheduled.

Member Benefits Committee – Ryan Eubanks
The committee met virtually on September 3. The Member Benefits and Recruitment & Retention Committees are working collaboratively to explore supplemental insurance policies that could help offset volunteer workers' compensation costs using a percentage of V-SAFE funds.

The committees are working with SCFIS to evaluate available policy options and are informally polling fire departments to gauge support for the potential use of V-SAFE funds. Initial informal feedback has been generally supportive.

Additional initiatives discussed included potential DNR discounts, database information for an impact study, meal and supply discounts, and possible new partnerships with Cancer Guard and Fire K.

The committee is also revisiting the possibility of a retiree insurance pool. Additional information will be presented to the Executive Committee at its November meeting.

The Member Benefits Committee is scheduled to meet again in November. Brook and the communications team will also be developing video content to support committee initiatives.

Training & Education Committee – Terry Sheriff
The SCFIS training schedule was reviewed, with registration scheduled to open October 1.

The Training Officer Working Group has developed 47 objectives for the proposed Training Officer Academy. The group will work to refine those objectives into a one-week program and begin developing the curriculum and schedule.

The 2027 Fire-Rescue Conference Call for Presenters will close at the end of September. The committee is also working with the EMS Committee to ensure training opportunities are available that address EMS-related needs.

Richard Ray has been confirmed as the speaker for the Fall Quarterly Meeting.

Ashley reported that the hotel contract for the Fire Service Improvement Conference (FSIC) has been signed. Concerns raised by the hotel regarding excessive outside alcohol being brought onto the property during previous events were also discussed. Staff and committee members will evaluate ways to better manage this issue for the 2027 conference.

Health & Safety Committee – Brent McClellan
Brent McClellan reported that the OSHA Working Group meeting went well. The committee continues to explore ways to assist departments with firefighter physicals and improve communication and awareness regarding available health and safety resources.

Firefighter cancer awareness and prevention will be incorporated as a topic within the Officer Academy. The committee is also exploring additional local training opportunities and health and safety topics specifically geared toward department safety officers.

Strategic Planning Committee – Larry Kardos
Larry Kardos reported that the committee has a meeting scheduled for September 14 to review the current Strategic Plan, assess progress, and identify completed objectives that can be removed or updated.

Bylaws Committee – Charles Lamoureux
Charles Lamoureux reported that the President, Committee Chairman, and Executive Director have met to review several areas of the Association's bylaws. Discussion has included committee objectives and structure, terms of service, the roles of special and standing committees, and clarification of the Bylaws Committee Chairman's role as Parliamentarian.

Staff Reports

SCFIS – Zorrina

SCFIS met on August 27, 2026. The 2026–2027 SCFIS Budget was reviewed and approved.

SCFIS and Founders Insurance Services will be meeting to discuss opportunities for future collaboration and partnership.

Communications – Brook

Brook provided the following communications and marketing updates:

- Filming is underway for an updated 1% Overview video and SC FAST video.
- Planning is underway for an updated Foundation video.
- Member Benefits skits are scheduled to be filmed in November.
- FSIC registration will open October 1 for members and November 1 for non-members/open enrollment.
- FOA 2701 applications will open October 1.

Events & Programs – Ashley

Fall Quarterly Meeting
The Fall Quarterly Meeting will be held October 21, 2026, in Florence, SC, at the Staybridge Suites. Battalion Chief Richard Ray of Durham Fire Department and firefighter with Creedmoor Fire Department will serve as the guest speaker.

The meeting will follow a new evening format, with registration beginning at 4:30 p.m., dinner at 5:00 p.m., followed by the meeting and evening training.

Fire Service Improvement Conference (FSIC)
Registration will open October 1, 2026, with members receiving priority registration before remaining spaces are opened to non-members. Member registration is $50 for the weekend to help offset food costs, and non-member registration is $375. The complete class lineup is available online.

2027 Fire-Rescue Conference
The Call for Presenters for the 2027 Fire-Rescue Conference closes September 30.

A meeting was held with the State Fire IST Team regarding its role at the 2027 conference. Due to competing demands during conference week, the Association will take a different approach and utilize committee members and local fire service personnel to assist with functions previously supported by the IST Team.

Exhibitor registration is also being finalized. Phase I will open October 1 for returning exhibitors, followed by registration for new exhibitors on November 1.

Fire Chief's Conference
Hotel accommodations and conference registrations have been completed. Attendees will arrive Sunday and depart Thursday. Registration has been secured for the President, First through Fourth Vice Presidents, Past President, Supervisory Committee Chairman, and Executive Director Helms.

Committee Activity
The OSHA Committee and Conference Committee have met. The Advisory Committee will meet in the coming weeks to begin reviewing the 27 applications received for the 2027 Leadership Institute**.**

Additional Updates

- The Burn Children's Fundraiser Golf Tournament is scheduled for October 5, 2026.
- The Fire Department Coffee partnership with the Foundation is scheduled to begin in October.
- Executive Committee members interested in serving as evaluators for the Leadership Institute Group Projects were asked to contact Ashley. Presentations will be held September 25, 2026, at the City of Charleston Headquarters.

Heritage Center – Carter Jones

Shawn Irvin and John Bowers attended the Fire Heritage Museum Network meeting and returned with valuable information, ideas, and contacts that will assist with the development of the new museum.

The Heritage Center received several financial donations and donated artifacts during the month. The Center is also anticipating receipt of a significant collection from Chief Sleigh, potentially including two hand pumpers, a hose reel, hose wagon, steam engine, and an Ahrens-Fox triple combination fire engine.

Additional projects include documenting the history of the Marion Fire Department and assisting South Side with historical information related to Hans Walker.

Carter also participated in a Fire Officer III Review Panel.

Leadership Institute – Greg Bulanow

The Leadership Institute met at State Fire in July and will meet in Charleston during the last weekend of September. Participants will present their group projects on Friday, September 25.

NVFC – Keith Minick & Jack Kirlin

South Carolina's two NVFC representatives, Keith Minick and Jack Kirlin, will travel to Kentucky to attend the fall NVFC meeting.

Brick - Administrative & Member Services

1% Accounting Services – Jana Kassianos

Jana continues working with County Treasurers to obtain 1% distribution totals while awaiting the State's release of 1% funds to the counties.

Preparations are underway for annual dues invoicing, which must be mailed October 1. This process includes verification of department rosters, member counts, and Training & Education fees.

Additional activities include processing IFSTA book orders for the Academy, fire departments, and schools, as well as routine accounts payable and accounts receivable responsibilities.

Upcoming activities include filming the updated 1% video and participation in the Health & Safety Committee meeting.

Member Outreach – Jeff Allen

Jeff continues coordinating the scheduling of the sign trailer and burn trailer in preparation for Fire Prevention Month in October. He is also working to schedule upcoming home shows.

Administrative Assistant – Kim Voisine

Database maintenance and cleanup remain ongoing. Current projects include updating Past Presidents' information and moving self-pay members to individual accounts and rosters.

Recruitment and Retention activities are also underway, including the committee's first meeting of the 2026–2027 year. Monthly volunteer and career inquiry information was provided for review.

1% Coordinator – Jeff Oswald

The Beaufort County 1% Regional Training Class was held August 28, 2026, and hosted by the City of Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department. The class included 27 attendees representing nine fire departments and three counties.

The Darlington County 1% Regional Training Class is scheduled for October 6, 2026, and will be hosted by Darlington County Fire District. Five participants were registered at the time of the report.

The Oconee County 1% Regional Training Class is scheduled for November 2, 2026, and will be hosted by Oconee County Emergency Services. Registration will open once the host site is finalized. This will be the final scheduled 1% Regional Training Class for 2026.

Discussions are underway regarding future regional classes in Aiken, Charleston, Newberry, and Spartanburg counties. Additional host departments are being sought for the 2027 training schedule.

The updated 1% Overview video is scheduled to be filmed September 14 at the Sheriff’s Association.

Jeff continues conducting department meetings and training throughout the state, addressing routine 1% responsibilities and assisting departments with audit-related matters. Issues involving Corinth-Shiloh VFD/Tax District and the former Sandy Run Calhoun VFD were reported as resolved.

SC FAST – Patti Graham

Training & Outreach

SC FAST continues to provide peer support and educational programs throughout the state.

Upcoming Peer Training includes Boiling Springs Fire Department officers during winter 2026–2027, South Greenville on February 9–10, and Prisma EMS Greenville on October 7–8, 2026.

Upcoming SC FAST 101 programs include Lake Cunningham Fire Department on October 13 and 16 and Boiling Springs Fire District in September. Planning is also underway for training with Daufuskie Island Fire Department.

A Loving and Living with a First Responder program is being planned for Beaufort Fire.

Post Critical Incident Seminar

The Post Critical Incident Seminar (PCIS) will be held November 9–11, 2026**,** at the Barefoot Landing Conference Center in North Myrtle Beach, with the team arriving November 8.

Registration is open for responders, spouses/significant others, team members, observers, clinicians, and volunteers. Observers are limited to 10 participants and must observe an entire seminar before becoming part of the team.

Tentative dates for the 2027 Mile In Our Boots program are April 22–27, 2027, in partnership with Colleton County Fire Department. Work is underway on the program schedule and continuing education opportunities through the National Board for Certified Counselors.

PeerConnect has agreed to fund the South Carolina pilot program through December 2026. Data will continue to be collected to evaluate the program and explore opportunities for future funding and potential continuation as a statewide resource.

SC FAST and its chaplains responded to several incidents requiring peer and behavioral health support, including an August 27 off-duty firefighter fatality involving the City of Beaufort and an employee death at a Greer-area facility.

SC FAST is scheduled to participate in the Science to the Station Health & Safety Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, November 3–5, 2026.

Additional outreach efforts include first responder education at the Lancaster County Career Center, continued collaboration with Dr. Matt McKeithan, participation in the Boiling Springs Greenville Benefits Fair, discussions with Battle Buddies regarding

expanding service and facility dog programs to first responders, assistance with developing a peer support team at SRS, participation in the Lowcountry Firefighter Support Team Behavioral Health Summit, and continued work with Hoofbeats Ranch to connect departments and agencies with equine-based wellness opportunities.

Executive Director's Report – Jamie Helms

Executive Director Helms **recognized** Joe Palmer for 18 years of service with the Association**.**

Director Helms reported that a meeting was held with Jonathan Jones and Amy Williamson regarding the State Fire IST Team's involvement with the 2027 Fire-Rescue Conference. Due to the significant demands placed on the IST Team by other activities occurring during conference week (Fire Marshals Conference & Country Music Festival), the Association will take a different approach for 2027 and will not utilize the IST Team in its traditional conference support role.

The change will also allow IST Team members greater opportunity to participate in and enjoy the conference. State Fire will remain actively involved in the conference through its exhibit booth and the Fire Safe SC Awards.

At 4:00 p.m., a motion was made to recess the meeting until the following morning. The motion carried.

<u>September 10, 2026</u>

Meeting Reconvened

At 9:30 a.m., President Dennis called the meeting back to order.

President Dennis opened the floor for questions and additional discussion.

Fleet Replacement Plan
Discussion was held regarding the Association's vehicle replacement plan. Consideration was given to replacing two vehicles annually due to vehicle mileage and general wear and tear. It was noted that establishing a regular replacement cycle could help maintain reasonable mileage across the fleet, including vehicles transitioned to pool use, while also preserving trade-in value.

Chief Mike Norket joined the meeting by phone.

The Finance & Audit Committee presented a motion out of committee to approve the 2027 Budget as presented, with the addition of a permanent vehicle replacement line

item of $75,000. The line item will provide funding for the purchase of one vehicle each year, as needed, to maintain a regular vehicle replacement cycle.

Roll Call Vote: Mike Norket, Billy Barnes, Pierce Womack, Ben Waring, Ryan Eubanks, Terry Sheriff, Brent McClellan, Larry Kardos. Motion carried unanimously.

Fleet Management
The Association's Policy and Procedure Manual will be updated to address fleet management and vehicle replacement procedures.

Team Building
Brook led the group in a team-building activity.

State Fire Marshal
Discussion was held regarding the State Fire Marshal position in light of the upcoming change in gubernatorial administration.

Firefighter Memorial
An update was provided regarding the Firefighter Memorial. The Memorial Committee will meet to review the current memorial site and discuss needed updates and renovations. Due to changes in Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) eligibility rules, 66 names are anticipated to be added to the memorial this year.

Lunch was served.

President Dennis thanked everyone for attending and noted that the group would participate in a tour of Hobcaw Barony that afternoon.

At 12:37 p.m., Pierce Womack moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Larry Kardos and carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

Online Committee Reports

Conference Experience Committee - Committee met to discuss the things that went well and areas that need improvement from the 2026 event. Also discussed the direction for the 2027 convention. For planning purposes, keep in mind the 2027 convention coincides with the Carolina Country Music Festival and the South Carolina Fire Marshals annual conference.

Training & Education - T&E Committee: FSIC 2027 is coming together and registration will open October 1st. Call for presenters is currently open for Fire-Rescue and will close at the

end of September. T&E will meet to review classes in October. Will work with EMS Committee to bring EMS classes to Fire-Rescue 2027. Training Officer Working Group: Group met on 09-02-2026 and have reviewed and combined objectives to move closer to drafting a program structure. Program is moving ahead of schedule. SCFA Advisory: Next meeting Wednesday, November 4th @ 1000.

Member Benefits - New Business: Synopsis of joint meeting with R&R committee to discuss potential initiatives to improve volunteer recruitment and retention through supplemental insurances and conferencing. Zorrina nad teaam will assist the committe with gathering information for decision making. Potential funding source could be VSafe program funds (2%). Both committees suggest long range goal of legislative solutions to improve wording related to FF workers compensation. Old business: SCDNR hunting and fishing license benefit still ongoing and continuing investigation of feasibility; Meal discounts - no new information. Exact Sciences - They will present their products to the committee potentially in November; FireK - Representation from FireK presented to the group. They are a 501c3 nonprofit who provide cancer screenings for firefighters. They currently use the Galleri product for screening. They typically conduct an avaerage of one test per month. They have 21 applicants currently in queue. They are asking for stronger partnership with the association for awareness. The group thanked them for their work. Open dialogue was had related to current queue (backlog) and funding if a rapid influx of screening requests were to occur. FireK offered to work to gather funding and engage in any increase in potential applicants for screening. The committee agreed to continue to discuss and would reach back to FireK. The committee discussed options for retiree insurance. Zorrina and team will gather information for decision making. MB committee will be invited to conversation with BCBS to better understand the feasibilities for affordable retiree insurance. Next meeting at South Spartanburg Fire District in Roebuck, SC on November 5th. Adjourned.

Chaplaincy Committee - Working with the Association and training committee to bring Essential of Fire Chaplaincy class to be held during Fire Improvement Conference to held at the Double Tree Hotel in Columbia.

Strategic Planning - Meet and greet for new committee members, work through the plan decide what is complete and where action is needed, discuss with standing members any noted action items for the plan and what the next steps are, standardized meeting schedule for committee going forward.