

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

July 10, 2025
Tele-conference
Gaithersburg, Maryland

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Anita Powell, Chair
Commissioner Mark Dempsey
Commissioner Jane Callen

STAFF PRESENT:

Fire Chief Corey Smedley
Battalion Chief Ashley Robinson
Battalion Chief Anthony Scott

OTHER:

Lou Kaufman, President WVRS
Gregory Albrecht, President Laytonsville
Stanley (Buddy) Sutton, Chief

100 – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Anita Powell called the meeting to order at 1907.

101 – REPORT OF THE COMMISSION CHAIR

Chair Powell thanks the president and the members of the Laytonsville Volunteer Fire Department for allowing the FESC commissioners to join them for this FESC meeting.

Chair Powell clarified remarks made in March 2025 minutes regarding attendance to events, and encourages commissioners to go to the station to meet with the staff and thank them for their duties, as well as attending events they are invited to.

Chief Powell attended the MCFRS graduation. Chair Powell offered that it was well done, and she sees a lot of opportunities for future students. Commissioner Powell also attended the EMS awards on June 10 and 11, 2025.

Chief Powell thanks the Fire Chief for both invitations.

Chair Powell would like to set up a meeting with the Fire Chief and commissioners to have a conversation about the structure of the Commission, to include by-laws.

102 – REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS

None

103 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion passed to approve the February, May, and June 2025 meeting minutes.

104 – FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT

Meeting minutes should be prepared the week after the meeting in order to review, approve, make comments, and/or make adjustments to minutes as appropriate, prior to the upcoming meeting. The Office of the Fire Chief is looking at who is responsible for meetings, and if the responsibility is to stay with the Office of the Fire Chief, it will be done, otherwise the Fire Chief will encourage a conversation.

July 1, 2025, starts the fiscal year 2026 budget. MCFRS received a 6.23% increase in budget funding. However, almost \$1,000,000 in savings was taken from the budget that specifically impacted the Hyattstown Volunteer Fire Company staffing, leaving a relief factor of a few positions to cover other areas throughout the county.

MCFRS is currently supporting Texas regarding the floods using the Incident Support Team (IST).

Recruit Class 56 graduates July 11, 2025, with 28 personnel. Recruit Class 57 started class approximately three weeks ago, and the class is now with 39 personnel. Currently, Recruit Class 58 is going through the process of hiring with regard to the background process for just under 1,500 applicants. For Recruit Class 57, there were 1,619 applicants, which is 11.3% increase from class 58.

The Fire Chief, in conjunction with Division Chief Michael Kelley and Assistant Chief Burns, will continue to work to build class schedules at the academy that will accommodate volunteer scheduling and appropriate courses.

The Fire Chief and the Union worked with the Office of the County Executive and applied for a Safer Grant for 20 new firefighters to upstaff trucks. The methodology used to identify which trucks will be upstaffed has to do with the un-sprinklered residential high rises.

MCFRS is having their Inaugural Girls Wired for Fire Experience starting with 24 young ladies, which will begin the last week of July through to August 1st. The Fire Chief is really excited about the experience and believes it will be a good process that will help incorporate all of the department partnerships including the MCVFRA, LFRDs and the IAFF. The Fire Chief believes that this will increase the awareness of the fire service to females who would like to get involved with the fire service.

July 15, 2025, marks the Fire Chief’s inaugural year.

The Fire Chief discussed recruitment and attrition, as well as having names/candidates that are not hired by MCFRS to be offered positions within the LFRDs. The Fire Chief will get demographics of the students for Commissioner Callen for Class 56 and 57.

200 – BUSINESS ITEMS

None

300 – DISCUSSION

301 – OLD BUSINESS

- Chair Powell would like an update on the annual report

302 – NEW BUSINESS

- Commissioner Powell would like to discuss future meeting locations re: libraries and schools.

- Commissioner Powell is stating there used to be reports from resource groups in the past and would like to see that come back for future agendas – examples: MCVFRA and the Union. The resource group would have their own agenda number outside of the public comment.

400 – Public Comment

- President Sutton expressed thanks for being allowed to hold the meeting at Laytonsville. Commissioners were grateful.

500 - Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Commissioner Callen and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2000.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Anita Powell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of the first name being a large, stylized capital 'A'.

Chair Anita Powell