ORDINANCE NO. 13-2018/19

COUNCIL-ADMINISTRATOR FORM OF GOVERNMENT FOR FLORENCE COUNTY

[An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 18-2013/14 And To Provide For The Creation Of The Florence County Unified Fire District Board.]

WHEREAS:

1. For the safety, welfare and convenience of the public, and the County of Florence, Florence County created the Unified Fire District; and

2. In order to fulfill the goals of Council to effectively provide for the safety and welfare of the citizens of Florence County and to plan, organize, direct and administer fire programs and fire emergency response operational guidelines for the Florence County Unified Fire District and to forecast fiscal requirements, Council deems it appropriate to establish the Florence County Unified Fire District Board.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE FLORENCE COUNTY COUNCIL DULY ASSEMBLED THAT:

1. Chapter 12 of the Florence County Code of Ordinances, Article II, Section 12-23 is hereby deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

Sec. 12-23 – Administration of the Unified Fire District.
   i. The Unified Fire District shall be under the direction of the County Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator or such other official or department as the County may from time to time designate. Such county official charged with the direction of the district shall be advised by the Florence County Unified Fire District Board.
   ii. The Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator shall establish and be responsible for centralized purchasing of all materials, supplies and equipment in accordance with Florence County procurement code.
   iii. All expenditures by/for the Unified Fire District must be submitted through the Florence County Finance Department for payment directly to vendors, service providers, etc. and must adhere to all guidelines pertaining to claim for payments and purchase orders.
   iv. All contracts or agreements must comply with County procurement code, other County regulations and be approved by the Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator, County Administrator and County Council.
v. The Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator shall be responsible for the implementation of a District-wide standardization of all rolling stock and equipment.

vi. The Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator shall implement a centralized maintenance schedule and service for all equipment, buildings in an effort to ensure quality assurance, maintenance and appropriate annual budgeting for replacement of equipment.

2. There is hereby created the Florence County Unified Fire District Board. The Board shall consist of seven (7) members, composed of one (1) representative from each of the following respective geographic area districts: Johnsonville Fire Department, Inc., Sardis-Timmonsville Rural Fire Department, Howe Springs Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., Hannah Salem-Friendfield Fire Protection District, Inc., West Florence Rural Volunteer Fire Department, Windy Hill Volunteer Fire Company and Olatna Rural Fire Department, Inc. The members of the Board shall be appointed by and shall serve at the pleasure of Florence County Council.

3. Members of the Board shall be appointed to serve staggered four (4) year terms. All terms shall commence July 1st and end June 30th of the appropriate year. Members shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. Three seats shall initially be for a term of four (4) years; three seats shall initially be for a term of three (3) years; and one seat shall initially be for a term of two (2) years.

4. Unexpired terms shall be filled for the duration of the term in the manner prescribed for the original appointment.

5. The Florence County Unified Fire District Board shall meet at regular intervals but not less frequently than once each calendar quarter. Members of the Board are expected to attend meetings. An attendance roster, including the names of members who attended and who did not attend, shall be included in the minutes of each meeting. Absence by any member from three (3) consecutive meetings without a valid reason, such as illness or personal pressing commitments, shall be considered a voluntary resignation by the member.

6. The Chairman of the Board shall notify the County Administrator of resignations due to absence from meetings and other resignations and vacancies caused by death, disability, transfer of residence outside of the County or other causes, within 30 days of the effective date.

7. At the first meeting subsequent to July 1st of each year, the Florence County Unified Fire District Board shall elect from their membership the following officers for terms of one (1) year: Chairman and Vice Chairman.

8. The duties of the Chairman are to preside over all meetings and represent the Board when the board is not in session.

9. The duties of the Vice Chairman are to perform the duties of the Chairman in his or her absence.

10. The Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator shall be responsible for maintaining the records of the Board and shall file copies of minutes of all Board meetings with the office of the County Administrator.

11. The Florence County Unified Fire District Board shall conduct its business consistent with the applicable rules of Florence County Council.
12. All meetings of the Board must have a majority of the membership present to conduct business.

13. The Board shall recommend the hiring and discharge of all full time employees of the non-profit corporations to the Florence County Administrator, who shall have final hiring and discharge authority. The County Administrator may on his own initiative discharge for cause any full time or part time employee of the non-profit corporation.

14. Florence County Unified Fire District Board shall present to the Florence County Finance Director in March of each year an annual budget for fire programs and fire emergency response, with recommendations for improvements or changes desired. All reports and recommendations shall be submitted to the County Administrator and the Committee on Justice and Public Safety so that necessary recommendations may be prepared concerning review by Florence County Council. Florence County Council shall have the ultimate authority on any recommendations or improvements to either approve or deny.

15. Florence County Unified Fire District Board shall be subject to and governed by the statutes of the State of South Carolina, the ordinances of Florence County, and all rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, relating to county departments, agencies, boards and commissions and members, employees or personnel thereof. These entities are responsible to the county administrator for compliance with such ordinances, statutes, rules and regulations.

16. The Board’s duties include:

   i. The development of standard operating procedures/guidelines, training standards, fire inspection programs, and fire prevention programs.
   
   ii. Assist in the assessment of buildings, equipment, and manpower of the respective fire districts and develop a strategic plan to deliver fire and rescue services in the Unified Fire District.
   
   iii. Advise on all operational aspects between Florence County and the non-profit corporations (fire departments) within the Unified Fire District.
   
   iv. Other duties related to operating the seven (7) fire departments located within the Unified Fire District as deemed appropriate by the County Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator, upon approval by the County Administrator and/or County Council as necessary.

17. The Board shall be authorized to exercise such powers with respect to the function of the Florence County Unified Fire District subject to approval by Florence County Council, the following:

   i. Purchase of such firefighting and emergency scene operations equipment as the Board deems necessary for the purpose of controlling fires and protecting life and property and shall be subject to the Florence County procurement code and subject to approval by the Florence County Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator, the Florence County Administrator and the Florence County Council, as necessary.
   
   ii. The Florence County Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator shall establish and be responsible for centralized purchasing.
   
   iii. Selection of sites or places within the area where the fire-fighting equipment shall be stored.
iv. Procurement and supervision of the training of emergency personnel to ensure that the equipment shall be utilized for the best interest of the Florence County Unified Fire District.

v. Upkeep, maintenance and repair of vehicles and other firefighting and emergency scene operations equipment and to that end shall, as often as is deemed necessary, inspect such equipment.

vi. Cooperate or enter into contracts or agreements with any public or private agency which results in improved services or the receipt of financial aid in carrying out the functions of the Florence County Unified Fire District, provided, however that such contracts and agreements shall be subject to the Florence County procurement code and subject to approval by the Florence County Administrator.

18. All provisions in Ordinance No. 05-2013/14 are hereby repealed.

19. Florence County Code, Chapter 12, Article II, Section 12-24 is hereby repealed.

20. If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of the Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application and to this end, the provisions of this Ordinance are severable.

21. This Ordinance shall become effective July 1, 2019.

ATTEST:

Connie Y. Haselden, Council Clerk

Approved as to Form and Content
D. Malloy McEachin, Jr., County Attorney

SIGNED:

Waymon Mumford, Chairman

COUNCIL VOTE: approved

OPPOSED:

ABSENT: 0