

ALBEMARLE COUNTY FIRE/EMS BOARD
FEMS BOARD MEETING
MARCH 25, 2026 – 1800 HOURS

A regular meeting of the Albemarle County Fire/EMS Board was held on Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 1800 hours in Room 235 at the County Office Building–McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

The following members were in attendance:

David Puckett, Albemarle County Fire Rescue
Dan Paxton, Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad
Gary Dillon, Crozet Volunteer Fire Department
Todd Richardson, Earlysville Volunteer Fire Department
Jason Tetterton, East Rivanna Volunteer Fire Company
George Stephens, North Garden Volunteer Fire Department
Timothy Cersley, Scottsville Volunteer Fire Department
Rob Knight, Seminole Trail Volunteer Fire Department
Kostas Alibertis, Western Albemarle Rescue Squad

Others in attendance:

Alyssa Mezzoni, Albemarle County Fire Rescue
Trevor Henry, Albemarle County Executive's Office
Jennifer Yerby, Albemarle County Fire Rescue

I. Call to Order

Chief Alibertis called the meeting to order at 1800 hrs.

A. Moment of Silence

Participants observed a moment of silence.

B. From the Board: Matters Not Listed on the Agenda

Chief Tetterton said he had an item to add to the agenda.

C. From the Public: Matters Not listed on the Agenda

There were none presented.

II. Consent Agenda

A. February 25, 2026 Minutes

MOTION: Chief Dillon moved to approve the Consent Agenda with the minutes as presented. Chief Stephens seconded the motion, which passed 7-0-?, [with Chief Tetterton and Chief Cersley abstaining?].

III. Committee Updates

A. Executive Committee

- B. Training Committee
- C. Operations Committee
- D. Recruitment & Retention
- E. Quartermaster
- F. Apparatus Committee

IV. Budget Review

Deputy County Executive Trevor Henry introduced Andy Bowman, Assistant Chief Financial Officer and formerly Lead Analyst for the ACFR system; Kristy Shifflett, Chief Operating Officer; and Tia Mitchell, Senior Budget Analyst.

Mr. Henry reviewed the County's budget process and stated that County Executive Jeff Richardson says they "always run out of money long before they run out of requests and good ideas and needs," so it is a balancing act. Mr. Henry presented a slide showing the lenses through which they try to make budget considerations, as well as to represent how most community members look at the services they get living in Albemarle County. He said that in defining "quality of life," feeling safe—including fire and police response—is considered a key component of that.

Mr. Henry said the County's strategic plan is a fundamental framework used by staff, and the Board makes decisions around their focus areas, which in turn inform the budget process, among other factors. Mr. Henry stated that AC44 is a comprehensive plan that represents a long-term strategy for managing growth and development; the economic development strategic plan operates on a shorter cycle, similar to the Board strategic plan. He said the plan focuses on reducing reliance on the real estate tax rate by increasing commercial development.

Mr. Henry stated that studies have shown for every dollar of revenue received from a new house, it costs the County \$1.32 to serve the community—making it a loss leader. He said residential growth requires the County to find an additional third of a dollar to cover schools and public safety. Mr. Henry said that building the commercial base is necessary to shift reliance away from real estate. Mr. Henry stated that commercial growth has not decreased, but the rate of real estate and residential growth has exceeded it, which is why the County Executive and Board frequently focus on economic development. He noted that budget studies are frequently conducted, and the most relevant to ACFR are the policing study and the fire study, which were worked on last year and are planned for implementation over the next several years.

Mr. Henry stated that another tenet of good governance and budgeting is performance improvement and cost savings. Mr. Henry said the County has intentionally built out process improvement and systems modernization over the past four years to achieve cost savings and efficiencies. He stated that investments have been made in these systems, and there is ongoing review to reduce headcount where appropriate. He said that the County is in year three of performance measures, which are advertised and

reported annually. Mr. Henry stated that a report is provided to the Board every six months and posted annually, serving as a scorecard across all organizations.

Mr. Henry said the County has focused on reducing headcount at the local government level and has reduced 17 administrative department positions over the past two years through reengineering. He stated that in some cases, projects or programs were slowed to achieve intentional headcount reduction; the net reduction appears as three because 14 positions were added, mostly in police and a few in the sheriff's office. He said the County has tried to realign opportunities in public safety to encourage growth in that area, which has been important but challenging work.

Mr. Henry stated that the tax rate for real property remains unchanged, but most assessments have increased, which has resulted in revenue growth in that area. Mr. Henry stated that food and beverage and transit occupancy are other sources of revenue, and these sources have remained steady. Mr. Henry said the Board made one change from last year regarding personal property, specifically the car tax, by advertising it as 15 cents higher than the previous year. He stated that the Board is considering dedicating this increase, which equates to \$1.7 million annually, to affordable housing. Mr. Henry said this is an assumption and not a final decision, as the Board is still reviewing town hall feedback.

Mr. Henry noted that funding is allocated to previously committed obligations. He explained that the revenue-sharing agreement is a legal agreement ratified through a referendum three decades ago at the County, which comes off the top and goes to the City of Charlottesville, and that is approaching \$21 million. Mr. Henry said last year and this year, an additional \$1.7 million was added, based on a formula that compares growth between entities. He said while funds can flow either way, they have mostly gone toward the City in his experience.

Mr. Henry reported that five-year planning is conducted, and funding for 2027 is being reviewed in the current budget process, which will be approved in May. He said the term for the next two years is "continued uncertainty." Mr. Henry stated that an economist from Virginia Tech meets monthly with the Finance department and is world renowned for forecasting economic projections for the coming two years. He said the economist describes the outlook as "partly sunny, partly cloudy," which predates recent events in the Middle East. He stated the County had been contemplating the next two years as a constrained revenue environment, leading to decisions about funding minimum operations. Mr. Henry said the County Executive has opted to use the stabilization fund, which is 1% of savings, to fund core needs this year and next, anticipating improved revenues from commercial growth in years three, four, and five due to projects such as Astra Zeneca.

Mr. Henry reported that general fund revenues are where the Board has the most discretion in allocating funds, with nearly 70% of funding coming from residential tax. He stated that schools are the primary and largest entity funded; 43% of revenues go directly to schools, which also receive additional revenues from state and federal

sources. He said schools receive about 52 cents on every dollar from corporate, state, and federal revenue. Mr. Henry said capital debt represents 10% of the budget, and public safety is second to schools at 17%. Mr. Henry reiterated that money always runs out before all needs are met, and balancing the budget is a constant challenge. He stated that the County is concerned about the next two years due to federal and global economic impacts. He said Mr. Bowman would provide the next part of the presentation.

Mr. Bowman stated that he would talk in more detail about what that 17% for public safety comprises. He said one of the key things, before discussing the fire rescue system and the police department, was to speak about the volume of partnerships that the County has. Mr. Bowman stated that the County, whether it be with the City, the University, or the other outlying counties, does many things regionally. Mr. Bowman said the County works with nonprofits who can take County dollars and leverage them into a greater return with others. Mr. Bowman stated there are actually 69 partner agencies across all of these areas that total \$41 million in the budget.

Mr. Bowman said his focus would be on public safety agencies, with the largest being the regional jail, and the cost increase with the regional jail includes increased debt service for the renovation of that facility for the first time in 50+ years. Mr. Bowman said the renovation and the County share are big drivers. Mr. Bowman stated this also includes the Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center and the Emergency Communication Center. Mr. Bowman stated that another big category is the Charlottesville Albemarle SPCA. Mr. Bowman said the County is mandated to have a pound under state code, and the County determined the best way to provide that service is with the City and with the local SPCA. Mr. Bowman stated the County has a contract that was renegotiated last year, with an escalation of about \$700,000 in the coming years.

Mr. Bowman stated that obligations are a primary budget driver. He said as calls for services increase, the County's population increases, and the County is the biggest fish in the regional pond. Mr. Bowman stated that as those agencies' costs are increasing, the County's share is also increasing, with a formula that determines each of them. Mr. Bowman reported that there are only six new positions in the entire County budget, and they are all in the police and sheriff. Mr. Bowman said Mr. Henry had mentioned that the County is down three positions over the last two years; that is negative 17 in administration and plus 14 in the police and sheriff. He noted that the fire rescue department has not had any change in personnel; there has just been a change in funding as grant-funded positions are expiring.

Mr. Bowman stated that for the police department, there are already three new officers who are supposed to begin in mid-year. He said this is in response to the public safety study done for the police department, which looked at core basic coverage needs. Mr. Bowman stated that in addition to dollars, Ms. Shifflett will speak about continuing to implement the recommendations of the study. Mr. Bowman stated that some of those things may be dollars and some may be structural— it is not just about the fire department or police department, but about how the organization, including finance and budget, works with those departments to ensure processes are lined up.

Mr. Bowman stated that every year, the County benchmarks public safety pay scales to make sure the County is competitive. He said this is true for the fire department as well. He said for public safety personnel, there is a lot of training and investment, and the more the County can recruit and train, the more responsive it can be. Mr. Bowman said the budget includes \$2.3 million for the police department to maintain their market position on the scales. Mr. Bowman stated that the sheriff, as the general district court has opened, is looking at staffing, data on inmate transports, coverage needs, and operating the new security. He said three positions are recommended to be added to their budget this year as their service continues to evolve in the new court system.

Mr. Bowman stated that emergency management is a budget-neutral change for a few years. He noted that emergency management has been nested within the fire rescue department, and after looking at the results of public safety studies and strategic input from the chiefs, it was decided to structure emergency management outside the fire department and create a new standalone Office of Emergency and Management. Mr. Bowman noted that this office would report directly to Mr. Henry and work alongside the rest of the organization in incident response with public safety agencies, regional partners, and internal matters if moving beyond emergency response. Mr. Bowman stated that some change is less about dollars and more about structure and how the County positions itself to be responsive to community needs.

Mr. Henry noted that the position would be a civilian position and is based off of the benchmarking they've done in best practice, with 230 applicants thus far.

Mr. Bowman stated that for the fire rescue system, there is a \$1.7 million obligation, and the County has been awarded four FEMA SAFER grants totaling \$12 million. He said two of these grants are being fully absorbed, and the third is in the process of being incorporated into next year's budget. Mr. Bowman said that \$1.7 million from the third FEMA SAFER grant will be added to the County's books next year. He stated that, similar to public safety, a review of the fire rescue public safety scale has been conducted, resulting in \$1.3 million being allocated for that purpose. Mr. Bowman said the budget also includes consideration of an additional grant application for eight new positions for what they are calling "FEMA V," which would address the demand identified by the public safety study. He said this application aims to increase personnel in the field and help manage the increased call volume.

Mr. Bowman said staff has coordinated with station representatives for detailed information. He stated that operating funding in the policy for volunteer stations will increase by just under \$180,000. Mr. Bowman said stations can submit one-time requests for equipment, which may vary annually based on replacement schedules, and total funding for these requests will decrease by \$167,000 next year. Mr. Bowman said there is an estimated \$1.9 million allocated for vehicle repair, maintenance, fuel, turnout gear, insurance, and training. He stated these resources, budgeted in the fire rescue department, indirectly support the volunteer fire rescue system. Mr. Bowman said this number is an estimate for 2026 and is expected to increase slightly in 2027.

Mr. Bowman stated that capital requests can be submitted through the CIP process, along with other community agencies, and North Garden, Earlysville, and Seminole Trail have received funding in recent years, and Stony Point has submitted a request for roof improvements. He said the Board would vote on approval next month, the County would proceed with implementation as with previous stations.

Chief Alibertis asked if the CIP funding was exclusive of the existing CIP for vehicle replacement.

Mr. Bowman confirmed that it would be, noting that everything coming out of this has really been building issues so far for expansions and major renovations, including an elevator at Seminole Trail.

Chief Puckett noted that the SAFER grant is for six, not eight, which aligns with the NCI study recommendation to bolster existing staffing factor and window of service reductions.

Mr. Bowman said the Board of Supervisors has been investing a tremendous amount of time in public meetings. He stated they have had six meetings where the Board has taken the County Executive's recommendation in February. Mr. Bowman said that from the time OMB gets to ask everyone questions, they have to provide all the answers to the Board of Supervisors in February. He stated they spent the better part of 16 hours in public meetings with the Board, and they are now at the point where the Board has proposed a budget for public feedback, including the proposed tax rate, affordable housing from the personal property or vehicle tax, and a series of town halls. Mr. Bowman said the Board seeks input through town halls, public hearings scheduled on the 15th, or by email, and seeks as much feedback as possible because they must weigh all ideas on balance with available funding. He said that on April 22nd, the Board will adopt the budget; the County will then communicate the final recommendations, and there is currently no change from the County Executive's recommendation.

Ms. Shifflett mentioned the cybersecurity event that occurred the previous summer and said the County is now spending additional time developing policies and behaviors toward those policies. Ms. Shifflett stated that there is no impact to the fire rescue system yet, but the County is reviewing access to technology and how people are accessing it, such as whether they are performing password resets and have proper coverage on their devices. Ms. Shifflett stated that the County will collaborate with them and the IT department regarding access to County information and systems. Ms. Shifflett stated that the County will clarify how security measures need to be improved. She noted that thousands of cyber-phishing attempts occur every month and are intercepted by County systems, but emphasized the need for strong security. She said a risk manager position was elevated to an enterprise risk manager who works with her, and they will ensure compliance with all future safety and cybersecurity protocols.

Ms. Shifflett stated that her second focus is studies, and questions can be directed to her as needed. Ms. Shifflett stated that recent efforts have centered on the movement of the emergency management office, with recruiting for emergency management underway as mentioned. Ms. Shifflett stated that the next priority is allowing Chief Puckett to settle into his role and work on his organization. She said that once these matters are resolved, the primary recommendation involves staffing. Ms. Shifflett stated that funding is limited, with the County discussing the FEMA grant, and other initiatives for the coming years have not yet been defined. Ms. Shifflett stated that once these matters are settled, they would set targets and solicit feedback and input from them.

Ms. Shifflett said that they conducted a workload analysis and examined the fire department and how it collaborates with HR, IT, and Finance. Ms. Shifflett said they are ensuring their processes are as streamlined as possible, considering whether departments can work more effectively to support fire rescue and whether fire rescue may be able to organize in a way that improves efficiency. Ms. Shifflett said they are reviewing civilian and sworn positions and evaluating whether converting some roles to civilian positions might help move things along. Ms. Shifflett stated that much of the work was connected to Finance and HR; they recognized a real need for additional IT support, which they were unable to solve this year but acknowledge will likely require more significant resources in IT.

Chief Puckett noted that while not specifically called out in the study, the contract underway is doing some process analysis and looking for efficiencies on two things: the volunteer onboarding process, which is a consistent source of frustration; and training, specifically the process of signing up for training and the systems used.

Ms. Shifflett said they are always looking at whether something that is highly manual can be done a bit faster or better and easier for all involved.

Ms. Shifflett said the third item is what Mr. Henry has already mentioned regarding performance measurement. She stated that public safety is goal one in their strategic plan, and they are constantly looking at performance and what those numbers look like, as well as what needs to be done to support that. She noted that there have been discussions about physicals and making those easier in the future, and it is within the County's ability with CARE-ATC and at the employee clinics to perform the LODA physicals—but the reason they are not doing them yet is because they felt it would not be the best process currently. She stated that a physician has not been hired yet at their Route 29 location, and they are trying to ensure they are effective and performing well before adding more people to the process. She said the County has asked CARE-ATC for improvements, and when they are deemed to be up to speed, ACFR would be informed, but that would likely be at least a few months.

Mr. Henry noted that an after-action for Chief Puckett is to make sure anything that is tied into the clinic or admin side is routed through the COO, so whatever they share is the most current and doesn't lead to mismanaged expectations.

Chief Puckett said in some cases, it's been a moving target whereas the plans and timelines change.

Ms. Shifflett agreed, stating that this is why the process with the vendor needs to be tightened up prior to adding more people to the process. She indicated that any communication on this would be accurate, and that the process itself would go well when it was time to proceed.

Chief Alibertis thanked them for presenting and said the FEMS Board would take some time to process what was presented and get back to them with questions.

V. Unfinished Business

A. Policy 337 - Firearms

Chief Puckett reported that during the last FEMS meeting policy review, there were some questions around a few specific items. He stated that they took that as a to-do from the Executive Committee, worked with the County's legal department, and had some updates.

Chief Puckett said that under definitions, "firearm," one of the questions was about a rope gun and whether they could modify the definition that was used in the County ordinance. He stated that they had a good bit of discussion about that and ultimately, they were not aware of any rope guns in the County that used explosives versus charged, pressurized air or CO2 cartridges. Chief Puckett stated that they struck it and did not think it necessarily changed the intent or applicability of the policy. He said that the second change happened under exceptions, number three, training programs approved by the fire chief or the designee. Chief Puckett stated that they struck that because it was not included specifically in the County ordinance; this and the previous one were actually requests originally from the Executive Committee to add these items.

Chief Puckett stated that the reason it came up was that some stations that have hunter safety courses, often held in community rooms, some of which are conducted by game wardens or conservation officers, which are exempted in the County ordinance. Chief Puckett stated that if there was a course being conducted by somebody outside of that group, then they would not be allowed under this policy to have firearms in the station or in the community rooms for the class. He said that those were the two components they talked about. Chief Puckett noted that number two was talked about as well, but it was not within a building so was not necessarily directly under the purview of the County ordinance and thus deemed appropriate to remain.

Chief Knight said they had talked about striking "at an emergency scene" from number two, if an organization was holding a class with a sworn officer how to handle and or render a weapon. He asked if this meant at an emergency scene, that would enable it without specifically making the training and programs approved by the fire chief, in terms of hunter safety courses, etc.

Chief Tetterton asked if the use case was so that somebody can handle the firearm inside the County facility with law enforcement present.

Chief Paxton said that was basically the discussion he and Chief McFadden had on it. He explained that if they have RTF and anything else where a law enforcement officer was going over making the weapon safe for when a law enforcement officer goes down, or if there isn't a law enforcement officer, they leave it as temporarily securing a firearm until it can be surrendered to a law enforcement officer; then the officer was the one who has the authority to bring that into the building, as they're handling it under direct training supervision. He said if they remove that one statement, it still allows for a class such as RTF.

Chief Tetterton said that would probably have to be vetted by an attorney to see if law enforcement can allow that, because as soon as he grabs a firearm and it's under his custody or control, then he's violating the ordinance. He emphasized that he wouldn't want to enter a situation where he is violating the ordinance, which in this case is a Class 1 misdemeanor in Albemarle County.

Chief Puckett responded that number two does not strictly adhere to the County ordinance, at least the exceptions they have listed, so this would be in conflict perhaps with the County ordinance—if they remove one of the exempt places and back into a building. He suggested that Lauren Bohdon from the County Attorney's Office provide input.

Ms. Bohdon explained that the ordinance is based on the state code, which gives them the authority to create the ordinance for the County, but the state law that it's based on and the ordinance is ultimately written from pertain to being in government buildings. She clarified that an emergency scene is not a government building, and they are two different things.

Chief Puckett said the suggestion on the floor was to remove the emergency scene from that language, which would then allow that brief custody in a government building.

Chief Alibertis added context that it was in the presence of a training class.

Chief Paxton said they can't specifically say "for trainings, if approved by a designee," because that's in violation of the policy. He suggested removing the emergency scene language from line item two, then if a law enforcement officer, such as they do within the RTF class, has a weapon where they're demonstrating or training how to make it safe, then handling it and returning it to said law enforcement officer could then be seen as falling within that exception to line item two.

Chief Tetterton said when they bring their rifles in, they swap out the charging [mechanism], and he was told they were CO2.

Chief Paton clarified that there's a cap primer with those.

Ms. Bohdon said if it's not a combustible material, it does not meet the legal definition of a firearm.

Chief Paxton said they did strike whether or not it can fire, as noted in 337.3, but he couldn't recall why.

Chief Tetterton asked if that was "capable of firing" and whether that language was in the County ordinance.

Chief Knight recalled that it got struck in the context of the rope gun.

Ms. Bohdon said they could potentially extend the language to better mirror the definition.

Chief Tetterton read, "The firearm need not be operable or capable of firing."

Ms. Bohdon also mentioned that state code does not have an exemption for training.

Chief Dillon noted that concealed carry classes aren't always taught by police officers, and he didn't know if they bring firearms in when they do those classes.

Chief Tetterton said the officers do bring those in when they teach classes.

Chief Paxton asked Chief Dillon to revisit his previous comments regarding hunter safety, and he asked if it was usually the game warden.

Chief Cersley mentioned that his station does hunter safety courses and concealed carry classes.

Chief Dillon noted that concealed carry classes aren't always pertaining to police officers, and he did not know if they brought firearms in when teaching those classes.

Chief Cersley said the officers do, and those police officers teach the class.

Chief Alibertis said in that case, it would be okay.

Ms. Bohdon reiterated that she didn't see anything in the state code that ultimately underlies all of this that allows a training exemption like that. She said if they need to do a training like that with an officer—even if the officer teaches it and there's no hands-on component, or if there needs to be a hands-on component—that needs to be at a facility like the gun range or shooting range where they are allowed to handle firearms. She said it needed to be a non-County building, and the gun range is a joint facility.

Chief Tetterton asked if this was a first reading or an opportunity to provide more input.

Chief Alibertis responded that the first reading was the previous week, and they accepted the modifications. He said they can vote on it tonight. He said the original policy was voted on by the Executive Committee and then forwarded to the full FEMS Board; the FEMS Board made these edits as a result of consultation with legal counsel, and it does not go back to the EC unless there is agreement that it needs to be completely reworked.

Chief Tetterton said he recalled from the last EC meeting that Chief Puckett commented this needed some more work, and perhaps that happened behind the scenes.

Chief Puckett said one of the few follow-up items he had to clarify from their previous discussions was to determine who actually delivers courses such as hunter safety and whether they'd be under the exceptions or not.

Chief Alibertis said if there's not any more discussion, the request would be a motion to approve.

MOTION: Chief Dillon moved to approve Policy 337 - Firearms as presented. Chief Richardson seconded the motion, which passed 7-2, with Chief Tetterton and Chief Cersley dissenting.

B. Incident Reporting

Chief Puckett said he would provide an update on incident reporting, stating that EMS is largely the same, with all NIMS data, possibly in a slightly different location and a slightly different user interface. Chief Puckett stated that for the fire report, it is transitioning from NIFRS to NIRS; while the fields are different, he does not believe it will be a significant challenge. He stated that the fire short form has not been available for use in the past, and it will now be an option for EMS-only calls moving forward—so if an EMS call is run and the patient care report is completed, there will be an option for the fire short form that is one question. He said they then hit complete, and it will close it out. He confirmed that sign-out is not required, despite the “pending” status.

Chief Puckett stated that because personnel information does not transfer from the PCR to the NIRS form automatically, not using scheduling may cause an error if no personnel are listed on the report. He stated they are working on this issue and are trying to reinstate the CAD import, and it may be a short-term problem; they are trying to determine whether to reconnect the CAD import used during training.

Chief Puckett stated that Joe Plumb from IT communicated earlier today about updating password security in First Due, as more patient data will soon be present in the system, necessitating password requirements. He noted that the changes will take effect the next time the user changes their password, which will expire after 90 days, but he urged them to send out instructions on changing passwords proactively so they don't have 800 people with passwords expiring after 90 days and then scrambling to access the system.

Chief Puckett said some business processes had to change during the transition. Chief Puckett stated that there is a personally-owned vehicle response, and they will be able to maintain that since NIRS allows for a vehicle type called “personally owned vehicle.” He said they will create those units, and personnel who respond directly to the scene can have their vehicle added. He stated that station response is handled differently and is not considered a unit; if users look below the apparatus section, there is a grid to add people who came to the station, so they can receive credit for responding. He said it is all on one grid, so they can add the people and then bulk assign the station, which is somewhat different from before.

Chief Puckett reported that the next piece concerns managing chief responses. Chief Puckett stated that NIRS tracks the actual vehicle along with the dispatch ID, so there is a dispatch ID for each vehicle. He stated that currently when marking up, Chief 50 is in Car 50, so a decision must be made on how to handle this situation. He stated that the dispatch ID can always be tied to Car 50, but if Car 50 is frequently used by different people, that creates a challenge. Chief Puckett said they might want to track as Car 50 in that scenario. He stated there is a way to change the dispatch ID in First Due, similar to the process with reserve units. He said Medical 11-2 can run as Medical 11, but this is not done ad hoc; it is performed as the unit responds. He said if this process is followed for a week, it can be done, but not if cars are being swapped daily. Chief Puckett stated that a decision must be made on how to handle this, so ECC can be informed about how radio communications and response records should be managed.

Chief Tetterton asked if this is something they can do in the field in First Due, or if it has to be done at an administration level.

Chief Puckett clarified that it can be done in First Due in field. He said they are probably not doing it at the time of the response, but as long as it's a planned thing, they can do that in First Due. He said it probably grabs the info at the time of the report, so they will probably have to do it ahead of the call. He noted that most of the chief IDs aren't in First Due currently, so that will have to be added as well as vehicles.

Chief Alibertis commented that it should tie to the chief and not the car.

Chief Stephens said most of the time, he's marking up as the car, but sometimes he marks up using both, depending on the car type, so CAD will update.

Chief Puckett suggested using the chief ID and attach that to the car, and if someone else is going to be using it or the chief is out for a while, they can change the dispatch ID and update the car number to attach it to that vehicle.

Chief Cersley said if he's going to the building and marks up at the building, there is no need to track that—just when he is going to the scene. He noted that ECC would need to be trained on this too. He said most of his responders are in their cars if they are going to the scene.

Chief Puckett confirmed the markup protocol and agreed that ECC would need training.

Chief Tetterton said they have some mobile units that sometimes mark up as “Mobile 24” or “Captain 24,” and he asked if those move into First Due and attach a POV to that when they do their call reports.

Chief Puckett responded that they won’t go into First Due and are probably not even in CAD; they would just be attached to the POV. He stated that he would follow up with ECC to direct having people marking up to the building, then putting it in the notes but not actually tracking the person. He added that they will also mark up for on-scene arrivals.

Chief Tetterton expressed concern about inclusion in the CAD notes.

Chief Stephens agreed that he loses his CAD notes en route to a building.

Chief Dillon said it changes over from CAD to First Due, and the best approach is to mark up as “Car 50 responding with Chief 50,” for example. He noted that once you get on scene, you establish command and will no longer be Car 50 but will instead be whatever address you have.

Chief Puckett said they would still have the same problem en route to a building if they are not tracking that, and he felt indifferent about it unless they were trying to get assigned to the call in CAD.

Chief Dillon noted that “building” is more or less for other members who are listening out so they know what’s coming.

Chief Alibertis commented that it should also stop the clock if there are already sufficient resources.

Chief Stephens said they would re-tone unless told otherwise.

Chief Tetterton asked if First Due allowed you to put the same person on multiple units, as the current system does.

Chief Cersley said they would put him on a car going to a building then he’s on an engine, but he wondered if he can still hit “okay.”

Chief Tetterton said that’s how his station does it, and they use the iPad counter.

Chief Puckett said that double counts people, particularly if they are sending to NIFRS or NIRS.

Chief Puckett said the other option is saying “Car 30 with Chief 30,” just to indicate the chief is responding but they are not tracking it. He said that would mean Car 30 is

always attached to that vehicle and it never changes; you are only verbalizing that there's a chief en route.

Chief Tetterton expressed concern that this would cause ECC to start ignoring chief units altogether and just not put them in the CAD.

Chief Paxton explained that all CARS chief officers have their CAD log, and regardless of what vehicle they get in, they log in for that MBT with their chief officer login—not the general vehicle. He added that the only difference is that the radio states they're near.

Chief Tetterton said there's a lot of nuances, because you can log into CAD under your chief name, but then you can be Chief 20, or SD2, or E22. He emphasized that whatever you select as your primary EDL is going to be included.

Chief Puckett asked if there was consensus on how to start a go-live: Attach the chief to the cars, or just have the cars be where they are and verbalize the chief. He said they can change it later on, but they have to start somewhere.

Chief Alibertis said he's in favor of leaving the cars where they are.

The chiefs discussed the possibility of the system not separating vehicles and erroneously tying them to a EMS vehicle, for example.

Chief Alibertis responded that all WARS' vehicles get separated.

Chief Tetterton stated that you can unlink it through First Due so you wouldn't be tied to it anymore. He added that they are going to keep using Chief 20, Chief 21, etc.—so however it's tracked is however it's tracked.

Chief Alibertis commented that they would know within the first week.

Chief Knight suggested that they just leave it with Chief 20 responding and so forth, and if they want to have ECC fix it on the backend or whatever else in terms of the use cases, they can do that.

Chief Tetterton said they can fix it on the back end for reporting, and they have that ability in ImageTrend currently; they can just change or add units.

Chief Puckett clarified that you can pick a unit, but that's already been attached in the report to that vehicle and dispatch ID, which are already married up and wouldn't be disassociated just by changing it elsewhere.

Chief Paxton said First due has fairly wide functionality as to who you are adding or removing, and it will always populate with a list of who got dispatched—but you still have to manually go through and click which units are on the call.

Chief Puckett stated that they haven't really decided anything, so he is going to attach the chiefs to it, and they can revisit it later. He described the timeline: April 1 at 0800 for go-live; several things would happen in that timeframe—waiting for calls to clear and removing in ImageTrend the ability to create a new report. He noted that they would still have the ability to finish or edit reports, but the idea is to start a new one to ensure it's in the right system. He said by the end of April, they need everything in ImageTrend completed so they can start the data migration in May and June, with access to ImageTrend removed July 1.

Chief Puckett emphasized that he needed assistance to ensure they get through all that in a timely manner, acknowledging that it could be bumpy around the April 1 0800 time. He said the NIFRS reports auto-generate, so as long as a call has been dispatched, there's already a report there—but on the EMS side, you have to manually create those reports. He said they will need to open and create an EMS report for any call pending, or you will not be able to start it.

Chief Puckett said ACFR has issued a number of training videos that can be done in your own time, and there was an instructor-led training that was also sent out. He added that they would be sending out an updated video that included a few things not covered. He also stated that there would be a Teams link sent with a go-live date that invites questions and facilitates troubleshooting in real time; the three following days, they would hold office hours, and there would also be First Due's usual email. He reiterated that it would be bumpy at first, but they would get there.

Chief Tetterton stated that he thought he know what was going on in terms of entering training, but he heard there are changes coming and wondered if that was clear yet.

Chief Puckett responded that they did not have that information yet, but Chief Ascoli had a meeting with First Due and was continuing to refine that process. He said First Due is rolling changes out at the end of March to see how things go, which is why he has been advocating for delaying training on this. He also acknowledged that this will break every report and dashboard they have, but that will be addressed separately.

Chief Tetterton asked if there was any change in the way ECC sent out information—email, text message, First Due.

Chief Puckett replied that it all stays the same; on the response side of First Due, nothing should change. He said he thinks they've resolved most or all of the permission things, but there is still some work to be done on access.

Chief Cersley asked who the contact was on April 1 while they are getting things up and running.

Chief Puckett responded that it would be ACFR First Due email if it isn't urgent; if it is a pressing matter, they can call him and he will either resolve it or get them to the right person. He added that using the menu on the top left, they can scroll to the bottom and

click on monthly or daily, depending on when they want to sync things. He said if they are training people or entering incident reports, that's a safe place to work with the same permissions they have in live production. He added that they will only be able to see reports that you're involved on, so it's the exact same structure as in production. He confirmed that it's the same "sandbox" environment that will persist as they go live, as it could be a good use case for training.

Chief Tetterton asked if EMS reporting was new to First Due.

Chief Puckett responded that it had been out for a while but not as long as some other vendors.

VI. New Business

A. Policy 1000 – Member Affiliation

Chief Puckett reported that this policy came to FEMS in January, and the biggest component was the operational hours, which they have moved over into personnel only in terms of status. He said from his perspective, this effectively documents what they already do—requirements for background check, physicals, etc.—and the categories are the same as they are now in terms of operational and non-operational.

Chief Stephens said he was not opposed to it, but under 1005.2, it says "orientation training, including but not limited to..." and the only training they've given out has been the HIPAA training. He asked what was in place for training current members and when they are onboarding.

Chief Puckett explained that they envisioned a very similar process to what they did to training where they come on as a new member and assign that as a training to cover the basics, practice requirements, and self-completion. He acknowledged that it is not built yet, but this is their vision for how they are going to do it.

Chief Stephens noted that they would be in violation if they passed this.

Chief Puckett responded that this is very similar to how they handled HIPAA, and he doesn't think anyone would come after them for not completing a training that they haven't even assigned yet.

Chief Stephens agreed but said the policy implies a requirement for new members.

Chief Alibertis suggested adding "as assigned" to "complete orientation training."

Chief Puckett clarified that the language would state, "complete orientation training as assigned."

Chief Stephens and Chief Alibertis agreed that "for example" should be included to specify what the requirements are.

Chief Dillon said they do LODA training anyway, and he wondered if they would still have to check the box in the central system and put people through it.

Chief Puckett said since it's done virtually, they would just try to incorporate that into whatever link they are sending out.

Chief Tetterton asked if LODA is considered part of orientation training.

Chief Puckett responded that it is.

Chief Cersley asked for an explanation of non-operational numbers, as he has admin members who are non-operational and don't do any calls. He said under his OEMS license, he does not have to have them fingerprinted and wondered if they would be required under this policy. He added that his auxiliary members include mechanics and electricians who do a lot of work for the station and collect hours, but they do not charge the station.

Chief Puckett recalled a change at the Executive Committee to add that to all members.

Chief Cersley read a clause in the policy that says, "any agency member whose involvement is not included in the operations."

Chief Tetterton asked if his Board members would be considered non-operational.

Chief Puckett said he had no issue with striking it from non-operational and then leaving it up to each station and OEMS.

Chief Tetterton clarified that they currently don't require Board members to be in any systems, nor are they subject to specific protocols like this. He noted that they are Board members and then the "brigade," so this policy applied only to the brigade.

Chief Paxton asked if "non-operational" even needs to be considered, because if they aren't requiring specific training or things like background investigations, they could scrub that entire non-operational paragraph.

Chief Alibertis replied that they use those later on.

Chief Puckett said they are eligible for benefits, and they wouldn't want to strike them altogether.

Chief Alibertis agreed and said they are covered by insurance, so their existence should be reflected in a policy somewhere in the event of an incident that affects them.

Chief Cersley agreed.

Chief Paxton said 1000.5.1 should say “all operational members.”

Chief Tetterton said it sounds like they need a new 1000.5.3 that says non-operational members are exempt from this, this, and this. He said Number 1 seems to be redundant, because it says “if this applies to all members,” “you must be an active member,” so it wouldn’t apply to him unless he were a member.

Chief Alibertis suggested combining the two and making them all operational members.

Chief Paxton asked if the other stations have an age minimum such as 16 years for an auxiliary members.

Chief Tetterton responded they have disbanded theirs, but when they had an auxiliary, the average age was about 78.

Chief Alibertis commented that it typically comes to bear with junior members.

Chief Paxton suggested that 1000.5.1 become just all operational members, and 1000.5.2 just gets rolled in.

Chief Puckett asked if auxiliary members don't do any sort of background check.

Chief Cersley responded that they don't do fingerprints, but they do a background check on them. He clarified that they used to get state police to run them but would probably get ACFR to run them now. He noted that they do have members’ sons and daughters who will come to the station and help cook and so forth, and they are under 16.

Chief Alibertis said the only time they’ve that was young people assigned to do community service, but they are not members. He suggested that they look at this for another month.

Chief Puckett stated that his gut reaction is that the top three numbers in the policy stay, so they are still doing some form of background check on them; then they can move OEMS to operational members, and perhaps the FBI background check goes down to all operational members.

Chief Paxton responded that Ms. Davis runs the background check process, so either VSPS or FBI would qualify that.

Chief Knight if they could expand 1000.7 from “notify ACFR within seven days of a member leaving service” to “less than 30 days,” but also add a clarifier that addresses a member who is terminated for cause.

Chief Alibertis said it could be a member leaving in “bad standing.”

Chief Knight responded that he recalled them abandoning “standing” as a parameter some years ago.

Chief Dillon said they could use “termination” or “expulsion” terms, as sometimes a member leaves in “good standing” just to eliminate any tension.

Chief Alibertis noted that they do need a way to indicate when a member has left under problematic circumstances so they don’t just go to another station.

Chief Puckett said they can document their status when they leave, and “terminated” is an option.

Chief Alibertis said they should mirror that same terminology in the policy.

Chief Stephens expressed concern with the timeline from application to onboarding.

Chief Alibertis suggested that they just eliminate the word “application,” because unless they pass the background check and physical, they don’t need to be known in the system.

Chief Paxton noted that they had talked about this in EC and reached that same consensus.

Chief Alibertis said they should just use the term “new member.”

Chief Puckett agreed in theory but said he would really like to hit data points as to when someone starts onboarding and when they are done, as there is a lot of discussion around the timeline and obstacles—but they can’t set a goal and track it without those. He noted that they have had a “start date,” which is when they start the process, and a “secondary start date,” which is when they become operational.

Chief Tetterton said his station has been told by the County that they cannot even do any of those processes until they notify the County, but he liked Chief Alibertis’ explanation that they don’t get notified until they are voted in by the board.

Chief Alibertis said once they get voted in by the board, then they go through the process and new member orientation; after that, they get assigned to a crew, which is when they are functional. He noted that Ms. Davis knows about them because she gets a copy of all their physicals. He said he sends the physical form, and Ms. Davis gets a copy of that so she knows they are out there; she asks if they should be put into First Due, but he tells her “no, not until they go through the process.”

Chief Tetterton commented that he liked that process and it seemed more streamlined.

Chief Puckett noted that it could be related to the requirement of affiliating with an EMS agency, which would require that notification.

Chief Paxton pointed out that they can determine that for themselves if they have their own EMS license, which most agencies don't.

B. Miscellaneous

Chief Tetterton said he would like to request that the FEMS Board adopt a resolution that would promote transparency at the FEMS Executive Committee level, a resolution that would allow a seated FEMS Board member to speak at a FEMS EC meeting if requested. He added that if something needs to be clarified, or a record needs to be corrected, this would be beneficial but is currently not the way it works.

Chief Alibertis asked Chief Puckett is chair of the Executive Committee.

Chief Puckett responded that he is not.

Chief Tetterton said the EC serves at the pleasure of the FEMS Board, so the FEMS Board can make policy for the EC.

Chief Knight said he is not on the EC, so his redress would theoretically be to go to Chief Alibertis or Chief Dillon, for example, and express his concern and ask them to bring the issue up at the FEMS-EC level.

Chief Puckett clarified that on the Executive Committee level, there is no "Matters from the Public" item on the agenda, whereas there is for the FEMS Board—but they can change this in those bylaws if it isn't in there or has just been historical practice.

Chief Knight asked for confirmation that his statement about going to an EC member and asking them to bring it up is acceptable.

The FEMS Board confirmed that this was correct.

Chief Tetterton said his request is for someone who isn't part of FEMS and doesn't feel comfortable going to someone on the Executive Committee, that person can sit in a meeting and ask if they can speak.

Chief Alibertis responded that he wasn't sure how to introduce that as procedure.

Chief Puckett said he wanted to look at the bylaws.

Chief Paxton suggested running that through the County Attorney, as there are state laws that require posting of public items.

Chief Puckett said that he had verified from the County Attorney that matters from the public are not required but are allowed, and he is not opposed to having that.

Chief Alibertis suggested that they put this on the next EC meeting agenda.

Chief Cersley said he has a member who couldn't pass the physical because of his breathing, but he only wants to do EMS and drive—and he has no intention of doing suppression. He asked if there was any movement on this or if it was a dead issue.

Chief Puckett responded that they only have one physical currently, and the ECSI study addressed possible different iterations.

Chief Alibertis said the physicals they get back can be “fit,” “fit with respirator,” or “not fit.”

Chief Cersley said this particular person is “fit with respirator” but is not allowed to do anything per ACFR.

Chief Puckett said his understanding was that this member was not fit.

Chief Cersley said he went back to his doctor and redid the process, but Chief Childress said he was not allowed to do anything. He suggested having him re-send his information, as he wants to take the EMT class that Crozet is hosting in the fall and has signed up for that as well as some other trainings through CARS.

Chief Paxton asked if he could pass the N95 test, which is required for EMS.

Chief Cersley responded that he could find that out.

Chief Cersley also said there were a few stations that put calls in immediately and others that do it within a few days, and on a recent call, notes came out for the response, but a captain from 171 deleted 76 and then put his name (Chief Cersley) on the call, then sent the report in. He said he was not on that call, and they needed to address what the proper timeframe is.

Chief Puckett said they are currently addressing this with the incident reporting policy, and they need to decide on that timeframe.

Adjournment

At 1959 hrs., the FEMS Board adjourned its meeting.



FIRE RESCUE

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www.ACFireRescue.org

ALBEMARLE COUNTY FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES BOARD ATTENDANCE LOG

Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2026

VOTING MEMBERS (OR DESIGNATES)

Chief David Puckett (Albemarle County):

Chief Dan Paxton (CARS):

Chief Gary Dillon (Crozet):

George Stephens
G. Dillon

Chief Todd Richardson (Earlsville):

Chief Jason Tetterton (East Rivanna):

Battalion Chief John Shifflett (North Garden):

George Stephens

Chief Timothy Cersley (Scottsville Fire):

Chief Greg McFadyen (Seminole Trail):

Rob Knight

Chief Dustin Lang (Stony Point):

Chief Kostas Alibertis (Western Albemarle):



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ALBEMARLE COUNTY FIRE RESCUE EMERGENCY AND MEDICAL SERVICES BOARD ACTION RECORD

AGENDA TITLE/ISSUE:	AGENDA DATE:
Consent Agenda	Wednesday, March 25, 2026
MOTION:	MOTION MADE BY: SECONDED BY:
To approve Consent Agenda	Chief Gary Dillon Chief George Stephens
SUBSEQUENT MOTIONS/AMENDMENTS:	

CALL OF THE QUESTION:	Yes	No	Abstain
Chief David Puckett (Albemarle County)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Dan Paxton (CARS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Gary Dillon (Crozet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Todd Richardson (Earlysville)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Jason Tetterton (East Rivanna)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Battalion Chief George Stephens (North Garden)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Timothy Cersley (Scottsville Fire)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Rob Knight (Seminole Trail)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Dustin Lang (Stony Point)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Kostas Alibertis (Western Albemarle)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I hereby attest that the foregoing is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Jennifer Yerby

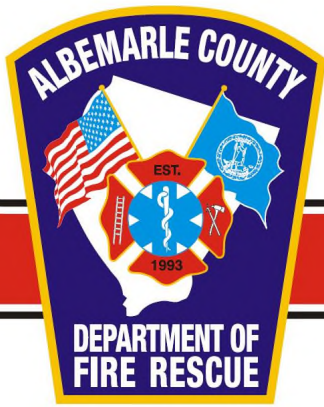
03/25/2026

Clerk

Date



- Building the Model Volunteer-Career Fire & EMS System -



FIRE RESCUE

ALBEMARLE COUNTY

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ALBEMARLE COUNTY FIRE RESCUE EMERGENCY AND MEDICAL SERVICES BOARD ACTION RECORD

AGENDA TITLE/ISSUE:	AGENDA DATE:
Policy 337 - Firearms	Wednesday, March 25, 2026
MOTION:	MOTION MADE BY: SECONDED BY:
To approve Firearms Policy 337	Chief Gary Dillon Chief Todd Richardson
SUBSEQUENT MOTIONS/AMENDMENTS:	

CALL OF THE QUESTION:	Yes	No	Abstain
Chief David Puckett (Albemarle County)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Dan Paxton (CARS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Gary Dillon (Crozet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Todd Richardson (Earlysville)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Jason Tetterton (East Rivanna)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Battalion Chief George Stephens (North Garden)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Timothy Cersley (Scottsville Fire)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Rob Knight (Seminole Trail)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Dustin Lang (Stony Point)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Kostas Alibertis (Western Albemarle)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I hereby attest that the foregoing is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Jennifer Yerby

03/25/2026

Clerk

Date



- Building the Model Volunteer-Career Fire & EMS System -