

# Your Charleston Fire Department

Interim Fire Chief John Tippett

Civic Engagement Workshop  
“I’m a Resident, Now What?”  
September 23, 2017

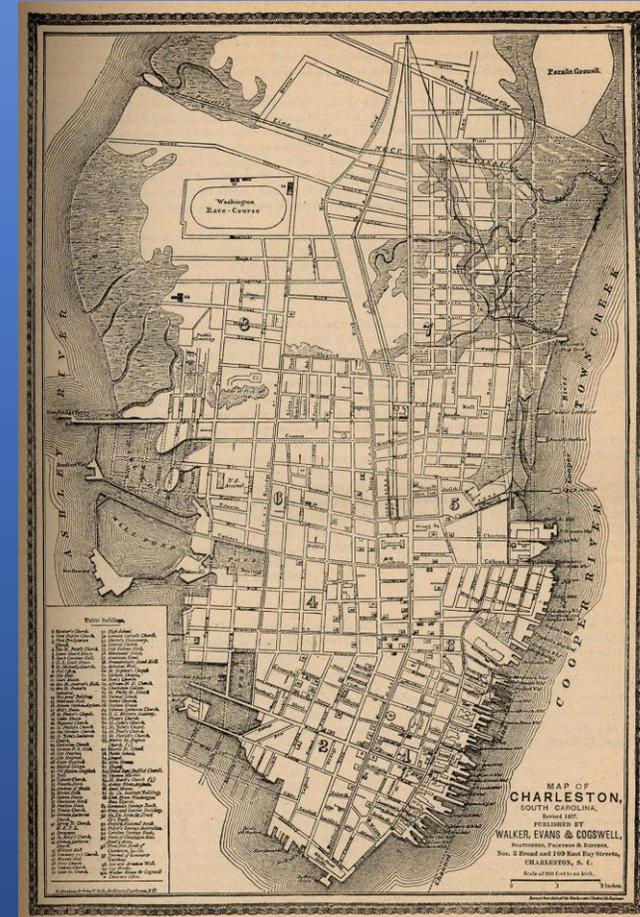


# Early History

- 1784 – First organized fire protection: Hand in Hand Fire Company.
- Volunteers & “Ward Engines”.
- 1870 – 12+ volunteer companies, 1600 volunteers.
- 1881 – 17 volunteer companies, 1110 volunteers



Phoenix & Mechanic Fire Company  
Members, circa 1855



# Early Major Transitions

- 1882 – Mayor Wm. Ashmead Courtenay & City reorganize firefighting forces.
  - Career Department Formed 1/1/1882
  - 6 engines
  - 2 trucks
  - 101 men
  - 29 horses
- 1886 - Earthquake



# Charleston Fire Department

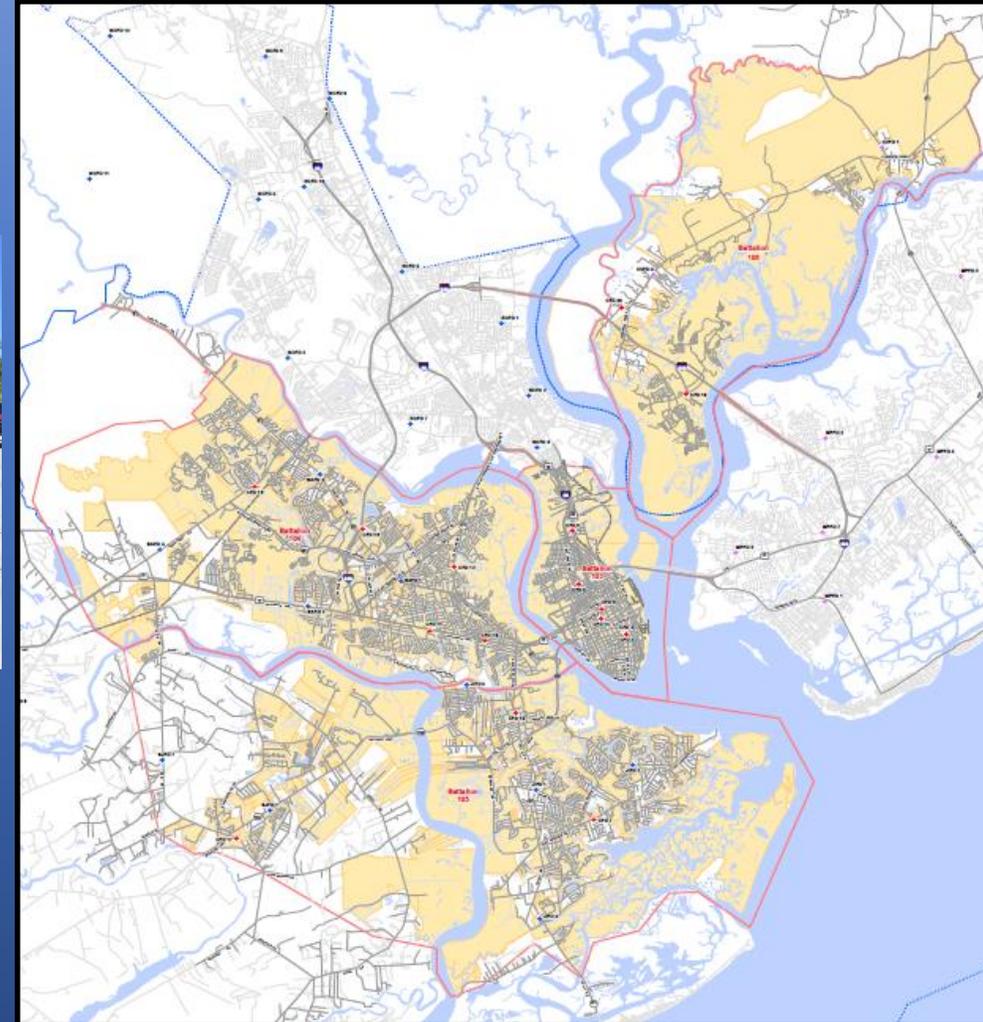
- 15 stations
  - +2 in design
- Apparatus
  - 16 Engines, 4 Ladders
  - 4 BCs
  - 1 Haz Mat Truck – cross staffed
  - 1 Fireboat – cross staffed
- 4 members per engine and ladder
- 84 members on duty per shift (Ops)



# Charleston Fire Department

## 4 Areas/Battalions

- Peninsula:  
7 companies
- Daniel Island:  
3 companies
- West Ashley:  
5 companies
- James/Johns Islands:  
5 companies



# Charleston Fire Department

- **Headquarters**

- Chief
- 2 DCs
- 3 ACs
- 1 BC Accreditation
- 1 BC Safety
- 5 Admin Staff

- **Fire Marshal Division**

- Fire Marshal
- 3 DFMs
- 8 AFMS
- 2 Admin Staff



# Charleston Fire Department

- **Training**

- Training Director
- 3 Captains
- 1 Medical Officer
- 2 Engineers
- 1 Admin

- **Logistics/Fleet**

- 1 BC
- 3 Mechanics
- 2 Admin staff



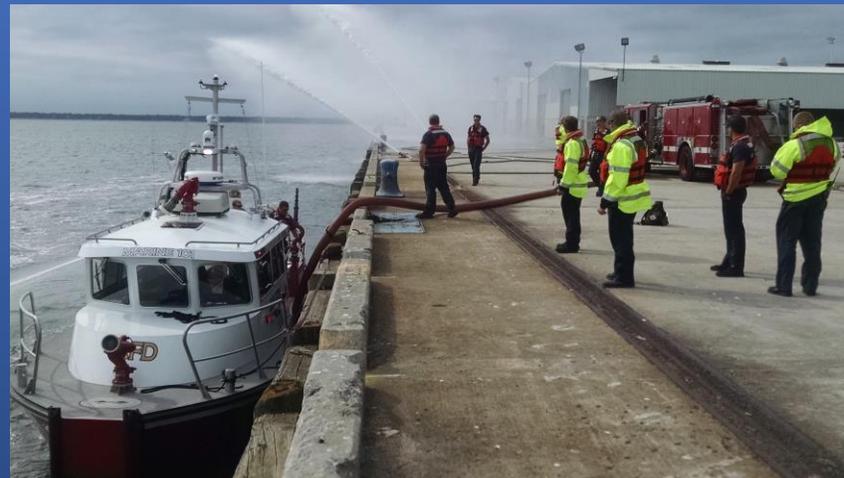
# Charleston Fire Department

## Special Ops

- Haz Mat Team
- USAR Team
- Marine Team
- Honor Guard

## Additional

- Fire Investigation Team (FIT)
- Fire Investigation Company (FIC)



# Budget

- Department in 2007:
  - Budget: 14.9 million dollars
  - Total members: 260
  - Minimum daily staffing: 62
- Department in 2017:
  - Budget: 31.6 million dollars
  - Total members: 354
  - Minimum daily staffing: 84



# Incident Activity

Year	Calls	Difference	Percent Increase
2008	7,233	765	11.83%
2009	8,506	1,273	17.60%
2010	9,243	737	8.66%
2011	14,010	4,767	51.57%
2012	16,383	2,373	16.94%
2013	17,106	723	4.41%
2014	19,030	1,924	11.25%
2015	21,169	2,139	11.24%
2016	23,060	1,891	9%
Average		+ 1,758	+ 15.8%

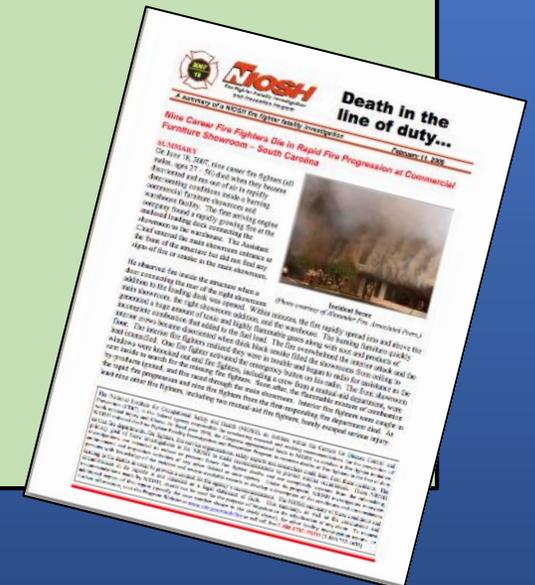
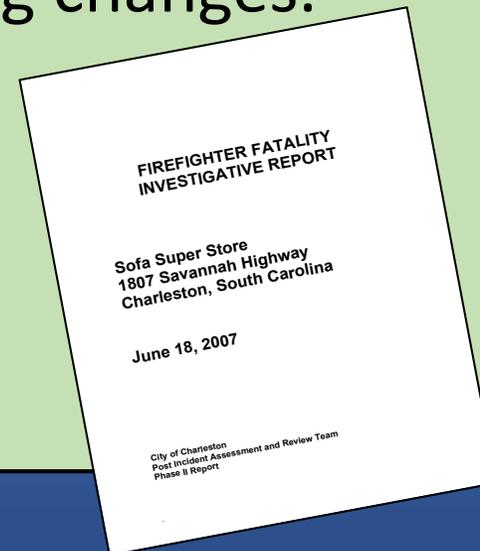
# June 18, 2007 - Sofa Super Store Fire

- 1856 - Store staff observe fire on loading dock
- 1908 - Dispatch notified
- 1909 - Initial response:
  - 2 engines
  - 1 ladder
  - 1 BC
- 1910 - BC arrives
- 1911 - Engine arrives
- 1932 - First Mayday
- 1941 - Flashover



# Fallout

- CFD pilloried for antiquated practices.
- Media “Washing Machine”
  - Local
  - Fire Service
- Independent reports called for sweeping changes.
  - Routley
  - NIOSH



# Recommendations

- **Develop a multi-year training plan for the CFD**

- Fireground Ops
- Firefighter Safety and Survival
- NIMS
- Incident Management Procedures
- Command and Control of Incidents
- Strategy and Tactics
- Company Officer Development
- Chief Officer Development
- Fire Department Safety Officer



# Recommendations

- Adoption and Enforcement of Model Fire Codes
- Implement “aggressive and effective” fire inspection and enforcement programs
- Ensure fire inspectors and building plans examiners are professionally qualified



# Process

- Conduct Needs Assessment
- Establish Performance Objectives



# Priorities

- Operations
- Officer Development
- Automatic Aid
- Infrastructure
- Training
- Fire Prevention



# Operations

- Accelerated emphasis on Safe Structural Firefighting SOP.
- Focused attention on safety.
- Introduction of Command from the Car.
- Bring down walls between CFD and surrounding departments.
- Introduce consistency across all three shifts.
- Standardize other FD operations.

# Officer Development

## 3 Elements

- Training Curriculum
- Culture & Leadership Emphasis
- Career Development & Succession Planning



# Automatic Aid

- Charleston Regional Automatic Aid Evolution
- Agreement between five agencies



# Automatic Aid

- 2010-2011 - CFD, JIFD, SAFD, STJFD, FBFD strengthen “Resource Sharing”.
  - Still “Gentlemen’s Agreements”.
- 09/01/2011 - NCFD begins Resource Sharing.
- 07/30/2012 – Formal Auto Aid Agreement Signed.



# Automatic Aid

- Safe Structural Firefighting SOG became the cornerstone.
  - Linchpin.
  - Defines Risk Assessment
  - Response Packages
  - Unit Assignments
- Departments begin collaborating on other SOGs.

Charleston County Unified Auto Aid Group



Standard Operating Guideline  
For  
Safe Structural Firefighting

# “Closest Companies” Rule\*

## All Incident Types

- Residential Structure Fire
- Commercial/Multi-Family/Assembly/Industrial
- Vehicle Collision
- Vehicle Fire
- Outside Fire
- Technical Rescue
- Marine Fire
- Haz Mat



# “Quick Dispatch”

- 1 Truck Company
- 1 Rescue Company
- 4 Engine Companies
- 3 Battalion Chiefs



# We're Stronger Together

	<b>Engines</b>	<b>Ladders</b>	<b>Rescues</b>	<b>BCs</b>	<b>Fire Boat</b>	<b>Tender</b>	<b>Haz Mat</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
<b>CFD</b>	16	4	0	4	1	1	1	330
<b>NCFD</b>	11	4	2	3	1	0	1	257
<b>SAFD</b>	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	65
<b>JIPSDFD</b>	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	53
<b>SJFD</b>	7	2	0	1	1	1	0	138
<b>Total</b>	40	12	4	10	3	2	2	843

# Scorecard

## Pros

- Faster response.
- More staffing and resources available for incident management.
- Common terminology.
- Deeper resource pool to draw from for out of service periods.
- SOPs promoting seamless operations.

## Cons

- Bureaucracy of change process.
- Achieving compatibility with widely varying funding sources.
- “Balance” between agencies.

# Major Achievements

- Certified Firefighter II.
- BLS Program.
- Officer Development & Blue Card Command.
- Auto Aid Partnerships.
- Improved Training Division.
- Addition of the Fire Marshal Division.
- Improved special operations.
- Achieved CPSE Accredited status in August, 2015.
- Achieved ISO 1/1x in June, 2015.



# Questions?

