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CHAPTER 23.

JOINT COUNTY FIRE DISTRICTS

ARTICLE 1.

MURRELL’S INLET‑GARDEN CITY FIRE DISTRICT IN GEORGETOWN AND HORRY COUNTIES (FORM NO. 5)

**SECTION 4‑23‑10.** District created; boundaries.

There is hereby established the Murrell’s Inlet‑Garden City Fire District in Georgetown and Horry Counties bounded as follows:

Commencing at the high watermark of the Atlantic Ocean on the northern property line of the property of Huntington Beach State Park and running thence in a westerly direction along the northern property line of said State Park to U.S. Highway No. 17; thence continuing in a general westerly direction along the northern property line of lands of Brookgreen Gardens to the Waccamaw River; thence in a general northerly direction along the eastern bank of the Waccamaw River to Collins Creek; thence continuing along the eastern bank of Collins Creek to Cedar Swamp; thence continuing along the eastern bank of Cedar Swamp to a point where a projection of the boundary line between Lewis Brothers and R. B. Hunsburger would intersect said Cedar Swamp; thence running in an easterly direction to U.S. Highway No. 17; thence in a northerly direction along the eastern right‑of‑way of U.S. Highway No. 17 to Melody Lane, the city limits of Surfside Beach; thence in an eastern direction along the southern right‑of‑way of Melody Lane to the Atlantic Ocean; thence along the high watermark of the Atlantic Ocean in a southerly direction to the property line of Huntington Beach State Park, the point of beginning. Also the property of Collins Creek Baptist Church situate on the West side of Collins Creek.

**SECTION 4‑23‑20.** Board of Fire Control; appointment or election, terms and compensation of members; reports; chairman.

After the creation of the Murrell’s Inlet‑Garden City Fire District, there is established a Board of Fire Control for the District to be composed of three members from Georgetown County and three members from Horry County who shall be appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of a majority of the members of the legislative delegations from Georgetown and Horry Counties. The original members of the Board shall be appointed as follows: Three shall be appointed for a term of two years and three shall be appointed for a term of four years. The members of the Board shall serve without pay and shall file annually a report with the governing bodies of Georgetown and Horry Counties not later than the first of November of each year, showing all activities and disbursements made by the Board during the year. The Board shall elect a chairman from its membership and such other officers as it deems necessary. The chairman shall not vote except in case of a tie.

If at least twenty percent of the qualified electors residing in the District petition the commissioners of election by the first of September of any general election year, the commissioners shall call an election to be held at the following general election for the purpose of electing a member to the Board to succeed the member whose term will expire during such year, for a four‑year term. Thereafter, members shall be elected in each succeeding general election for terms of four years.

**SECTION 4‑23‑30.** Duties and responsibilities of Board of Fire Control.

The Board shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

(a) To buy such fire‑fighting equipment as the Board deems necessary for the purpose of controlling fires within the money allocated or made available to the Board for such purposes.

(b) To select the sites or places within the area where the fire‑fighting equipment shall be kept.

(c) To provide and select the drivers and other volunteer firemen to man such equipment who shall serve without compensation.

(d) To provide for the hiring and paying of such permanent, full‑time firemen as shall be necessary to qualify this Fire District for the most advantageous fire protection classification as established by the rating authorities.

(e) To procure and supervise the training of the volunteer firemen selected to insure that the equipment shall be utilized for the best interest of the area.

(f) To be responsible for the upkeep, maintenance and repairs of the trucks and other fire‑fighting equipment and to that end shall, as often as is deemed necessary, inspect such equipment.

(g) To promulgate such rules and regulations as it may deem proper and necessary to insure that the equipment is being used to the best advantage of the area.

(h) To construct, if necessary, buildings to house the equipment authorized herein.

(i) To borrow not exceeding twenty‑five thousand dollars on such terms and for such a period as to the Fire Control Board may seem most beneficial for the Fire District, in anticipation of taxes. The indebtedness shall be evidenced by a note or notes issued by the members of the Board and the county treasurers of Georgetown and Horry Counties. The full faith, credit and taxing power of the Murrell’s Inlet‑Garden City Fire District is hereby irrevocably pledged for the payment of the indebtedness; provided, that in no event shall the credit of Georgetown or Horry Counties be obligated for any indebtedness of the District.

**SECTION 4‑23‑40.** Tax shall be levied and collected; moneys credited to Fire District.

The auditors and treasurers of Georgetown and Horry Counties are hereby directed to levy and collect a tax of not more than five mills, to be determined by the Board of Fire Control, upon all the taxable property of the District for the purpose of defraying the expenses incurred by the Board. All moneys collected from this levy shall be credited to the Fire District.

**SECTION 4‑23‑50.** Supervision of equipment.

The fire chief or equivalent official of the truck company to which the equipment is assigned shall have complete supervision over its use and operation and it shall be his responsibility to insure that the equipment is readily available for use at all times.

**SECTION 4‑23‑60.** Control of traffic at fires; enforcement of laws.

All members of the truck company of the District may direct and control traffic at the scene of any fire in the area and enforce the laws of this State relating to the following of fire apparatus, the crossing of fire hose and interfering with firemen in the discharge of their duties in connection with a fire in like manner as provided for the enforcement of such laws by peace officers.

**SECTION 4‑23‑70.** Interference with firemen or apparatus is unlawful; violations.

It is unlawful to interfere with a member of a fire department in the discharge of his duties in the District or to interfere with any fire apparatus used by the fire department in the District, and any person so offending shall be subject to a fine of not exceeding one hundred dollars or imprisonment not exceeding thirty days.

ARTICLE 3.

PELHAM‑BATESVILLE FIRE DISTRICT IN GREENVILLE AND SPARTANBURG COUNTIES

**SECTION 4‑23‑210.** District created; boundaries shall be shown on recorded plat.

There is hereby established the Pelham‑Batesville Fire District in Spartanburg and Greenville Counties encompassed within the lines as shown on a plat to be recorded in the R.M.C. Offices of Spartanburg and Greenville Counties.

**SECTION 4‑23‑220.** Board of Fire Control; appointment or election, terms and compensation of members; annual report.

After the creation of the Fire District, there shall be established a Board of Fire Control for the District composed of five members appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of a majority of the Spartanburg and Greenville County legislative delegations. Terms of office shall be for four years and until successors are appointed and qualify. Provided, however, that of those first appointed two shall serve a term of two years, one shall serve a term of three years and two shall serve a term of four years, the respective terms of office being designated by the Governor in his appointments. The members of the Board shall serve without pay and shall file annually a report with the Spartanburg County Board of Control and the Greenville County Council, not later than the first of November of each year, showing all activities and disbursements made by the Board during the year.

If at least twenty percent of the qualified electors residing in the district petition the commissioners of election by the first of September of any general election year, the commissioners shall call an election to be held at the following general election for the purpose of electing a member to the Board to succeed the members whose terms will expire during such year, for a four‑year term. Thereafter, members shall be elected in each succeeding general election for terms of four years.

**SECTION 4‑23‑230.** Duties and responsibilities of Board of Fire Control.

The board has the following duties and responsibilities:

(a) to buy such firefighting equipment as the board considers necessary for the purpose of controlling fires within the money allocated or made available to the board for these purposes;

(b) to select the sites or places within the area where the firefighting equipment must be kept;

(c) to provide and select the drivers and other volunteer firemen to man this equipment who shall serve without compensation;

(d) to procure and supervise the training of the volunteer firemen selected to ensure that the equipment must be utilized for the best interest of the area;

(e) to be responsible for the upkeep, maintenance, and repairs of the trucks and other firefighting equipment and shall inspect this equipment as often as is considered necessary;

(f) to promulgate regulations as it considers necessary to ensure that the equipment is being used to the best advantage of the area;

(g) to construct, if necessary, buildings to house the equipment authorized in this section;

(h) to borrow not exceeding twenty thousand dollars on such terms and for such a period as to the Fire Control Board may seem most beneficial for the fire district in anticipation of taxes. The indebtedness must be evidenced by a note issued by the members of the board and the treasurer of each county. The full faith, credit, and taxing power of the fire district is irrevocably pledged for the payment of the indebtedness;

(i) to contract for construction, engineering, and other services, for purchase of water, and for maintenance of water pipes, hydrants, valves, and equipment necessary to provide water for protection against and control of fire;

(j) to appoint and hire officers, agents, employees, and servants, prescribe their duties, fix their compensation, and determine if and to what extent they must be bonded for the faithful performance of their duties;

(k) to acquire, purchase, hold, use, lease, mortgage, sell, transfer, and dispose of any property, real, personal, or mixed, or any interest in the property, and to acquire by purchase or by exercise of the power of eminent domain.

**SECTION 4‑23‑240.** Tax shall be levied and collected; moneys credited to Fire District.

The auditors and treasurers of Spartanburg and Greenville Counties are hereby directed to levy and collect a tax, to be determined by the Board of Fire Control, upon all taxable property of the District for the purpose of defraying the expenses incurred by the Board, which shall reflect any difference in assessment procedures between the two counties. All moneys collected from this levy shall be credited to the Fire District.

**SECTION 4‑23‑250.** Supervision of equipment.

The fire chief or equivalent official of the truck company to which the equipment is assigned shall have complete supervision over its use and operation, and it shall be his responsibility to insure that the equipment is readily available for use at all times.

**SECTION 4‑23‑260.** Control of traffic at fires; enforcement of laws.

All members of the truck company of the District may direct and control traffic at the scene of any fire in the area of the District and to enforce the laws of this State relating to the following of fire apparatus, the crossing of fire hose and interfering with firemen in the discharge of their duties in connection with a fire in a like manner as provided for the enforcement of such laws by peace officers.

**SECTION 4‑23‑270.** Interference with firemen or apparatus is unlawful; violations.

It is unlawful to interfere with a member of a fire department in the discharge of his duties in the District or to interfere with any fire apparatus used by the fire department in the District, and any person so offending shall be subject to a fine of not exceeding one hundred dollars or imprisonment for not exceeding thirty days.

ARTICLE 5.

GOWENSVILLE FIRE DISTRICT IN GREENVILLE AND SPARTANBURG COUNTIES (FORM NO. 5)

**SECTION 4‑23‑410.** District created; boundaries.

There is created and established in Greenville and Spartanburg Counties the Gowensville Fire District. The district shall consist of areas of Greenville and Spartanburg Counties and more specifically described as follows:

The district is defined as an area encompassing approximately fifty square miles. The boundary lines of the district are defined as follows: Beginning at a point where South Carolina Highway 14 intersects with the Spartanburg‑Greenville County line; thence running in a northeasterly direction following the center of County Road 845 to a point being the center of the intersection of County Roads 845 and 184; thence in a southerly direction along the center of Road 184 to its intersection with U.S. Highway 11; thence following the center of Highway 11 in a northerly direction to Road S‑42‑833 also known as Caldwell Road; thence following the center of S‑42‑833 in a southerly direction, crossing Macedonia Church Road, to Rocky Creek Road; thence along the center of Rocky Creek Road to its intersection with S‑42‑210; thence southwesterly along the center of S‑42‑210 to its intersection with S‑42‑876; thence southerly along the center of S‑42‑876 to its intersection of County Road 52 also known as New Cut Road; thence northeasterly along the center of New Cut Road to a point approximately 1,000 feet west of Road 357 and joining the Holly Springs Fire District northern boundary; thence precisely parallel with the Holly Springs Fire District westerly to the Spartanburg‑Greenville county line; thence joining line no. 316 of Greenville County map 620.1 and following the Middle Tyger River northerly to the intersection of lines 315‑316 of said map; thence westerly along said line (Reference map 629.1) to its intersection with Barnette and Jug Factory Roads (Jug Factory also known as Wingo Road); thence westerly along the center of Barnette Road to its intersection with Babb Road; thence along the center of Babb Road to Highway 14; thence crossing Highway 14 to Pink Dill Mill Road; thence along the center of Pink Dill Mill Road to its intersection with Liberty Church Road (Reference Maps 629.1 and 629.2); thence westerly along Pink Dill Mill Road to a creek being the westerly boundaries of lot nos. 21.1, 21.4 (Reference map 636.4); thence following then the southwesterly and northwesterly boundaries of lot nos. 21.4, 24, 25, and 28 to a point where lot no. 28 corners with lot no. 1 just below Beaverdam Creek; thence northerly along westerly boundary of lot no. 1; thence following a northerly course along the western boundary of block map 636.1 to its conclusion at the Middle Tyger River; thence easterly to the common corner of block maps 636.1, 637.3, and 627.1; thence northerly along the common boundary of 637.3 and 627.1 to the common corner of 673.3, 627.1, and 637.1; thence northerly along the common boundary of 627.1 and 637.1 to Highway 11; thence following the northern boundary of lot no. 4 of map 637.1 in a westerly course to the corner of lot nos. 1, 2, and 4 of said map; thence to the southwesterly most corner of lot no. 1; thence northerly to the center of S. C. Highway 116; thence following the center of S. C. Highway 116 to a point being at the center of the Pacolet River also being a property line (Reference 626.1); thence northerly along said straight line of lot nos. PT6, 6.2, PT6 to the common corner of lots 8.3 and 8, being at the intersection of S. C. Highway 116 and S. C. Highway 180; thence easterly from said corner 413’; thence northerly along the southeastern line of lot 8 to the common corner of lot nos. 8 and 1; thence easterly to the common corner of lot nos. 7.3 and 7.4; thence northerly along the common boundary of map 626.1 and 623.2 to its intersection with the boundary line of map 623.1 at lot no. 1; thence easterly along this boundary line 1668 feet; thence northerly in a straight line to the center of Blue Mill Road; thence following this road to its intersection with Highway 340 also known as Blue Mill Road (Reference map 723.2); thence along the center of this road to its intersection with Highway 14 at the Spartanburg‑Greenville County line, be all measurements a little more or less.

**SECTION 4‑23‑420.** Gowensville Fire District Commission; commissioners.

The district shall be governed by a commission to be known as the Gowensville Fire District Commission. The commission shall consist of five resident electors of the district who shall be elected by the qualified electors of the district. The election shall be conducted by the Greenville and Spartanburg County Election Commissions upon a date set by the commissions. The commissions shall give notice by publication sixty days prior to the election and a second notice two weeks after the first notice, in one or more newspapers with general circulation in the district. The election commissions in both counties shall certify the five candidates receiving the highest vote as the elected commissioners of the district. Beginning with the election in 1982, the terms of the three commissioners who receive the highest number of votes shall expire December 31, 1985, and an election shall be held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November 1985 to elect their successors. The terms of the remaining two commissioners shall expire December 31, 1983, and an election shall be held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November 1983 to elect their successors. Beginning with the election in 1983, all terms shall be for four years and such terms shall commence on the first day of January in the year following the election. The election shall be held on the Tuesday following the first Monday of each of the odd years. Any vacancy occurring by reason of death, resignation, or otherwise, shall be filled by the Governor, upon recommendation by the members of the House of Representatives in Greenville County from Districts 17, 18, and in Spartanburg County, from District 38 for the remainder of the unexpired term. Upon any commissioner moving out of the area of the district, his position shall become vacant. During the period between the initial election of commissioners, and December 31, 1982, the Gowensville Fire District shall continue as provided by Greenville County Council Ordinance No. 644, adopted September 19, 1978.

Any resident qualified elector of the district may be a candidate for the position of commissioner by filing with the election commission of the county in which he resides at least thirty days prior to the election.

**SECTION 4‑23‑430.** Powers and duties of commission.

There is committed to the district the functions of constructing, operating, maintaining, improving and extending a fire protection and fire control district. To that end the commission shall be empowered as follows:

1. Have perpetual succession.

2. Sue and be sued.

3. Adopt, use and alter a corporate seal.

4. Make bylaws for the management and regulations of its affairs.

5. Acquire, purchase, hold, use, lease, mortgage, sell, transfer, and dispose of any property, real, personal, or mixed, or any interest therein, and to acquire easements or other property rights necessary for the operation of its stated functions.

6. Build, construct, operate, and maintain water lines and water mains throughout the district and all apparatus necessary for the proper functioning of same in the control and prevention of fires.

7. Purchase or otherwise acquire a supply of water sufficient to furnish proper fire protection and fire control to residents of the district.

8. Enter into contracts for the purchase of water and for maintenance of water pipes, hydrants, valves, and all equipment necessary to provide water for protection against and control of fire.

9. Appoint officers, agents, employees and servants, prescribe the duties of such, fix their compensation, and determine if and to what extent they shall be bonded for the faithful performance of their duties.

10. Make contracts for construction, engineering and other services with or without competitive bidding.

11. To purchase such fire fighting equipment as the commission deems necessary for controlling fires and furnishing fire protection in the district.

12. To select the sites or places within the area where the fire fighting equipment shall be kept.

13. To provide personnel, voluntary or otherwise, necessary to man such equipment.

14. To provide and supervise the training of any volunteers used in manning such equipment with the end that the equipment shall be fully utilized for the protection and control of fire within the district.

15. To be responsible for the upkeep, maintenance and repairs of the trucks and other fire fighting equipment and to make regular inspection of all equipment and operations.

16. To promulgate such regulations as it may deem necessary and proper to insure that the equipment shall be utilized for the best advantage of the area.

17. To construct, if necessary, buildings to house the equipment provided for herein.

18. [Blank]

19. [Blank]

20. Do all other acts necessary or convenient to carry out any function or power granted to the district.

21. The commission is vested with the power to raise funds for discharging the duties vested in it by levying a tax therefor. The commission shall notify the auditors and treasurers of Greenville and Spartanburg Counties of any desired tax, which tax shall be uniform throughout the district, and they shall assess and collect the tax as requested and the treasurers shall hold the funds and disburse them as directed by the commission. All such taxes shall constitute a lien upon the property against which the same are levied, on a parity with the lien of county taxes, and the provisions of law relating to penalties for the nonpayment or tardy payment of county taxes, and the provisions relating to sale of property for delinquent county taxes shall apply to taxes levied pursuant to this article.

**SECTION 4‑23‑450.** Rates charged for services by revenue producing facility.

The rates charged for services furnished by any revenue‑producing facility of the district, as constructed, improved, enlarged or extended, shall not be subject to supervision or regulation of any state bureau, board, commission or other like instrumentality or agency thereof.

**SECTION 4‑23‑460.** Exemption of property and income of district from taxation.

The property of and income of the district shall be exempt from all taxes levied by the State, county, or any municipality, division, subdivision or agency thereof direct or indirect.

**SECTION 4‑23‑470.** Indebtedness of district; contract provisions between district and holder of obligations.

So long as the district shall be indebted to any person on any bonds, notes or other obligations issued pursuant to the authority of this article, the provisions of this article and the powers granted to the district and the Commission shall not be in any way diminished or restricted, and this provision of this article shall be deemed a part of the contract between the district and the holders of such obligations.

**SECTION 4‑23‑480.** Supervisory powers of fire chief or equivalent official; readiness of equipment.

The fire chief or equivalent official of the truck company to which the equipment is assigned shall have complete supervision over its usage and operation, and it shall be his responsibility to insure that the equipment is readily available for use at all times.

**SECTION 4‑23‑490.** Traffic control at fire scene.

All members of the truck company or fire districts, employees or volunteers may direct and control traffic at the scene of any fire in the area of the county and enforce the laws of this State relating to the following of fire apparatus, the crossing of fire hose and interfering with firemen in the discharge of their duties in connection with a fire in the same manner as provided for the enforcement of such laws by law enforcement officers.

**SECTION 4‑23‑500.** Interference with firemen; damage to property of fire district; penalties.

It shall be unlawful for any person to wilfully destroy or damage any facility of the district, or equipment used in the operation of such facility, to interfere with a member of a fire department in the discharge of his duties in the district or to interfere with any fire apparatus used by the fire department in the district. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not exceeding one hundred dollars or be imprisoned not exceeding thirty days.

ARTICLE 9.

SOUTH LYNCHES FIRE DISTRICT IN FLORENCE AND WILLIAMSBURG COUNTIES

**SECTION 4‑23‑810.** District created; boundaries.

There is created in Florence and Williamsburg Counties the South Lynches Fire District (district). It consists of areas of Florence and Williamsburg Counties encompassing approximately two hundred eleven square miles described as follows, with the exception of the municipalities of Lake City and Scranton as they presently exist or may exist in the future and that portion of Subdistrict No. 3 of the Florence County Fire District as established by Act 1817 of 1972 not hereinafter included in the following description:

Beginning at a point in the center of the Turbeville Highway (U. S. 378) at the intersection of the Florence, Williamsburg, and Clarendon County lines; thence running due north for 1000 feet; thence turning in an easterly direction and running parallel with and 1000 feet north of the Florence‑Williamsburg County line (being the center of the Turbeville Highway) to a point 1000 feet west of Osborne Road; thence turning in a northeasterly direction and running parallel with and 1000 feet northwest of the Florence‑Williamsburg County line (being the center of Osborne Road) and proceeding across South Green Road(S‑21‑485) along said Osborne Road for 1000 feet; thence turning in a northwesterly direction and running parallel with and 1000 feet northeast of South Green Road (S‑21‑485) to the center of the Olanta Highway (S. C. 341); thence turning in a northerly direction and running straight to the intersection of Bethel Road (S. C. 403) and Hancock Road (S‑21‑514); thence turning in a northeasterly direction and running straight to a point in the center of Salem Road (S. C. 541) lying 1000 feet west of the intersection of said road with Pole Cat Road; thence turning in a northerly direction and running parallel with and 1000 feet west of Pole Cat Road to the center of Old No. 4 Highway (S‑21‑147); thence turning in a due north direction and running straight to the center of Lynches River; thence turning in an easterly direction and running along the center of said Lynches River the same being the northern boundary of Florence County School District No. 3 to a point at which said boundary leaves Lynches River; thence turning in a southerly direction, joining the western boundary of the Johnsonville Rural Fire District, and running parallel to said boundary to its intersection with the main run of Lynches Lake Swamp; thence turning in a westerly direction and continuing to run parallel to the Johnsonville Rural Fire District boundary to its intersection with South Old Georgetown Road (S‑21‑58); thence turning in a southerly direction, joining the Florence‑Williamsburg County line, and running parallel to said line (also being the center of the Old Georgetown Road), to a point at which said county line turns from said road; thence turning in an easterly direction and continuing to run parallel to the Florence‑Williamsburg County line for two and two‑tenths (2.2) miles; thence turning and running due south to the center of the Old Georgetown Road (S‑45‑39); thence turning in a westerly direction and running straight to the intersection of the Cades‑Indiantown Road (S. C. 512) and Roper Road (S‑45‑504); thence turning in a southwesterly direction and running straight to a point in the center of an unnamed dirt road lying 1000 feet south of the eastern terminus of Road S‑45‑572; thence proceeding in a southwesterly direction parallel with and 1000 feet south of Road S‑45‑572 to the center of Cooper Road (S‑45‑116); thence proceeding in a southwesterly direction parallel with and 1000 feet south of an unnamed dirt road, thence forms an extension of Road S‑45‑572 at its western terminus, to the center of Road S‑45‑591; thence turning in a westerly direction and running parallel with and 1000 feet south of Road S‑45‑591 to the center of Thomas Road (S‑45‑159); thence proceeding in a westerly direction straight to the intersection of the Ridge‑King Township boundary and the center of the Seaboard System Railroad right‑of‑way; thence proceeding in a westerly direction parallel to the Ridge‑King Township boundary to the center of U. S. Highway 52; thence proceeding in a westerly direction straight to the intersection of Sandy Bay Road (S‑45‑44) and Ditchbank Road (S‑45‑490); thence turning in a northerly direction and running straight to a point in the center of Road S‑45‑454 lying 1000 feet west of the intersection of said road and Coleman Road (S‑45‑490); thence turning in a westerly direction and running straight to the intersection of Road S‑45‑28 and the Williamsburg‑Clarendon County line; thence turning in a northeasterly direction and running parallel to said county line to the intersection with the Florence County line in the center of the Turbeville Highway (U. S. 378), this being the point of beginning.

**SECTION 4‑23‑820.** South Lynches Fire District Commission; members.

(A) The district must be governed by a commission to be known as the South Lynches Fire District Commission (commission). The commission shall consist of five resident electors of the district who shall be elected by the qualified electors of the district.

(B) The initial five commissioners shall be appointed by the Senators and members of the House of Representatives who represent any portion of the district. They shall be appointed upon a date not later than ninety days after the effective date of this article, their terms expire December 31, 1984. Thereafter, all commissioners shall be elected as provided by this article.

(C) The election shall be conducted by the Florence and Williamsburg County Election Commissions at the time of the general election. The commissions shall give notice by publication sixty days prior to the election and a second notice two weeks after the first notice, in one or more newspapers with general circulation in the district. The election commissions in both counties shall certify the candidates receiving the highest number of votes as the election commissioners of the district as provided by this section. In order to stagger the terms, beginning with the election in 1984, the terms of the three commissioners who receive the highest number of votes shall begin January 1, 1984, and expire December 31, 1988, and the two commissioners receiving the lowest number of votes shall receive two‑year terms to begin January 1, 1984, and expire December 31, 1986. At the expiration of these terms, all commissioners shall be elected for terms of four years.

(D) Any vacancy occurring by reason of death, resignation, or otherwise must be filled by the Senators and members of the House of Representatives representing any portion of the district for the remainder of the unexpired term. Upon any commissioner moving out of the area of the district, his position shall become vacant.

(E) Any resident qualified elector of the district may be a candidate for the position of commissioner by filing with the election commission of the county in which he resides at least thirty days prior to the election.

**SECTION 4‑23‑830.** Powers and duties of commission.

There is committed to the district the functions of constructing, operating, maintaining, improving, and extending a fire protection and fire control district. To that end the commission is empowered as follows:

1. Have perpetual succession.

2. Sue and be sued.

3. Adopt, use, and alter a corporate seal.

4. Make bylaws for the management and regulations of its affairs.

5. Acquire, purchase, hold, use, lease, mortgage, sell, transfer, and dispose of any property, real, personal, or mixed, or any interest therein, and to acquire easements or other property rights necessary for the operation of its stated functions.

6. Enter into contracts for the purchase of water and for maintenance of water pipes, hydrants, valves, and all equipment necessary to provide water for protection against and control of fire.

7. Appoint officers, agents, employees and servants, prescribe the duties of such, fix their compensation, and determine if and to what extent they must be bonded for the faithful performance of their duties.

8. Make contracts for construction, engineering, and other services.

9. To purchase such fire fighting equipment as the commission deems necessary for controlling fires and furnishing fire protection in the district.

10. To select the sites or places within the area where the fire fighting equipment must be kept.

11. To provide personnel, voluntary or otherwise, necessary to man such equipment.

12. To provide and supervise the training of any volunteers used in manning such equipment with the end that the equipment must be fully utilized for the protection and control of fire within the district.

13. To be responsible for the upkeep, maintenance, and repairs of the trucks and other fire fighting equipment and to make regular inspection of all equipment and operations.

14. To promulgate such regulations as it may deem necessary and proper to insure that the equipment is utilized for the best advantage of the area.

15. To construct, if necessary, buildings to house the equipment provided for herein.

16. To borrow in anticipation of taxes on such terms and for such a period as the governing body of Florence and Williamsburg Counties may deem most beneficial. The indebtedness must be evidenced by a note or notes issued by the members of the commission and the county treasurers of Florence and Williamsburg Counties. The full faith, credit, and taxing power of the commission is hereby irrevocably pledged for the payment of the indebtedness; provided, that in no event shall the credit of Florence and Williamsburg Counties be obligated for any indebtedness of the commission.

17. Do all other acts necessary or convenient to carry out any function or power granted to the district.

18. The commission is vested with the power to raise funds for discharging the duties vested in it by levying a tax therefor. The commission shall notify the auditors and treasurers of Florence and Williamsburg Counties of any desired tax not to exceed twenty mills, which tax shall be uniform throughout the district, and they shall assess and collect the tax as requested and the treasurers shall hold the funds and disburse them as directed by the commission. The commission is authorized a tax in excess of twenty mills upon a favorable vote of the registered electors of the district. All such taxes shall constitute a lien upon the property against which the same are levied, on a parity with the lien of county taxes, and the provisions of law relating to penalties for the nonpayment or tardy payment of county taxes, and the provisions relating to sale of property for delinquent county taxes shall apply to taxes levied pursuant to this article.

**SECTION 4‑23‑840.** Exemption of property and income of district from taxation.

The property of and income of the district is exempt from all taxes levied by the State, county, or any municipality, division, subdivision, or agency thereof direct or indirect.

**SECTION 4‑23‑850.** Indebtedness of district.

So long as the district is indebted to any person on any bonds, notes, or other obligations issued pursuant to the authority of this article, the provisions of this article and the powers granted to the district and the commission may not be in any way diminished or restricted, and this provision of this article is deemed a part of the contract between the district and the holders of such obligations.

The district must assume a portion of indebtedness from the Florence County Fire District to be determined by agreement of the Florence County Fire District, the South Lynches Fire District Commission, and the governing body of Florence County.

**SECTION 4‑23‑860.** Supervisory powers of fire chief or equivalent official; readiness of equipment.

The fire chief or equivalent official of the truck company to which the equipment is assigned shall have complete supervision over its usage and operation, and it is his responsibility to insure that the equipment is readily available for use at all times.

**SECTION 4‑23‑870.** Emergency vehicles.

Vehicles of the fire departments and vehicles of individual members of the fire departments in this district are designated and are deemed emergency vehicles while traveling to fires.

**SECTION 4‑23‑880.** Parking in vicinity of fire apparatus or emergency vehicle.

It is unlawful in the fire district to park within five hundred feet of a place where fire apparatus or an emergency vehicle is stopped in answer to an emergency and no person shall cause any highway, road, either public or private, in the area of fire apparatus or emergency vehicles to be blocked by his vehicle in such a manner that fire apparatus or emergency vehicles will be hindered from reaching the scene of the emergency. It is also unlawful to drive a vehicle over any unprotected hose of a fire department without the consent of the fire department official in command on any street, road, or private driveway when the hose is being used for fire fighting. A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than ten dollars or more than one hundred dollars.

**SECTION 4‑23‑890.** Traffic control at fire scene.

All members of the truck company of fire districts, employees or volunteers may direct and control traffic at the scene of any fire in the area of the county and enforce the laws of this State relating to the following of fire apparatus, the crossing of fire hose, and interfering with firemen in the discharge of their duties in connection with a fire in the same manner as provided for the enforcement of such laws by law enforcement officers.

**SECTION 4‑23‑900.** Damage to property of fire district; penalty.

It is unlawful for any person to wilfully destroy or damage any facility of the district, or equipment used in the operation of such facility, to interfere with a member of a fire department in the discharge of his duties in the district or to interfere with any fire apparatus used by the fire department in the district. Any person violating the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction must be fined not less than thirty dollars nor more than one hundred dollars or be imprisoned not exceeding thirty days.