

Exchange Club Meeting Minutes

Date: March 4, 2026

Opening

- The meeting opened with table check-ins for guests.
- Guests and new members were acknowledged.
- New members recognized:
 - Bob Jones
 - Carl Duncan Sr.

Announcements

Upcoming Meetings

- March 18: Cheryl O'Donnell from Florence Crittenton
- April 1: No meeting

Volunteer Opportunities

- Angel Walk
 - Registration information is forthcoming.
 - Volunteers are needed for setup, traffic direction, and general support.
 - Members interested in helping were asked to contact leadership, Val Leggett, or Jack Wilson.
- Annual Chili Cook-Off
 - A kickoff planning meeting is scheduled for March 12 at 5:00 PM via Teams.
 - Volunteers are still welcome.
- Farmers Market Feasibility Study
 - After chili cook-off planning is underway, volunteers will be sought for a feasibility study for a possible Spring 2027 farmers market.
- Website / Social Media
 - The club is updating its website format and is seeking photos from club and charity events.
 - Photos should be sent to Lisa McDonald or Thad Peterson.
- Flag Brigade
 - Volunteers are always needed.
 - Interested members should contact Jack Wilson.
- Golf Tournament
 - The golf tournament will be held on the first Wednesday in October.
 - Volunteers are needed.
 - Interested members should contact John Wojcik.

Fallen Hero Tribute

A tribute was presented honoring **First Lieutenant Andrew C. Shields**, age 25, of Campobello, South Carolina.

- Lieutenant Shields was a member of the South Carolina Army National Guard.
- He was killed on December 9, 2004, when the Apache helicopter he was piloting collided with another aircraft in Mosul, Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star.
- The tribute recognized his service and sacrifice.

The club then participated in:

- The Pledge of Allegiance

- An invocation
- A moment of silence for four recently killed service members

Guest Speaker

The evening's speaker was Fire Chief Ryan Kunitzer of the St. John's Fire District, accompanied by:

- Deputy Chief Kevin Hinson
- Assistant Chief Sean Flanagan

Fire District Overview

Chief Kunitzer shared an overview of the St. John's Fire District:

- Established in 1959
- Serves:
 - Johns Island
 - Kiawah Island
 - Wadmalaw Island
 - Seabrook Island
- Covers approximately 185 square miles
- Operates 7 fire stations
- Employs approximately 148 people

Key Operational Updates

- The district responds to a wide range of emergencies, with EMS calls making up about 75% of total incident volume.
- In 2025, the district became an Advanced Life Support agency, allowing crews to provide more advanced medical care before ambulance transport.
- Chief Kunitzer highlighted expanded capabilities including:
 - IV medication administration
 - Paramedic rapid response
 - New EMS interventions
- The district has also expanded special operations capacity, including:
 - Marine/fire boat response
 - Wildfire response
 - Technical rescue
 - Water rescue
 - Vehicle extrication

Weather and Emergency Preparedness

The chief discussed the district's preparation for:

- Flooding
- Snow and ice events
- Hurricanes
- High-water rescues

Training and Standards

- Firefighters undergo regular training and yearly testing.
- Chief Kunitzer emphasized the importance of:
 - Fast response
 - Technical competence
 - Continuous improvement

Current Challenges

Chief Kunitzer also shared several challenges facing the district:

- Rising apparatus and equipment costs
- Long lead times for new fire trucks
- Increased repair costs
- Continued area growth
- Traffic constraints affecting response times

Capital Projects

The district is working on:

- Station 8 at Kiawah River
- A replacement for Station 5 on River Road
- A new training/performance center

Audience Questions

Topics raised during Q&A included:

- Integration with the new MUSC emergency facility
- Emergency response during heavy traffic congestion
- Water rescue capabilities
- Fire prevention education and home safety assessments

Chief Kunitzer explained that:

- The MUSC facility should improve ambulance turnaround times
- Traffic remains a real operational challenge
- The district offers fire prevention and home safety support through its website and staff

Community Partnership

Chief Kunitzer thanked the Exchange Club for supporting the department, including contributions to the Stuff a Truck holiday assistance program for local families.

Closing

- Members were reminded that the next meeting is March 18, 2026.

Attended?	Member	Attended?	Guests	Status	\$s	PMT
Yes	Sat Victor Agusta					
Yes	Michelle Almeyda-Wiedemuth					
Yes	Alan Armstrong	Yes	Marshall Reavis	6 mo Prospect		
Yes	James Bannister					
Yes	Marlisa Bannister					
Yes	Phyllis Barber					
Yes	Joe Bauer					
Yes	Tom Berghausen					
Yes	Wayne Billian					

Attended?	Member	Attended?	Guests	Status	\$s	PMT
No	Renee Black					
Yes	Herb Boehm					
Yes	Bryan Bolling					
Yes	Lon Bouknight					
Yes	Ed Brett					
Yes	Don Day					
Yes	Bob Driscoll					
Yes	Ronald Duncan					
Yes	Bruce Edwards					
Yes	George Fink	Yes	Alan Fink	Prospect		
Yes	Bree Florees					
Yes	Kelley Garmon	Yes	Paul Lentini	Prospect		
Yes	Johnny Garman					
Yes	Richard Gwyn					
Yes	Stephen Haines					
Yes	Larry Healy					
Yes	Ed Hughes					
Yes	Bob Jones	Yes	Terri Goslin Jones	Spouse	\$55	Bill
Yes	Ed Leary					
Yes	Bob Leggett					
Yes	Milum Livesay					
No	Bruce Ludwin					
Yes	Lisa McDonald					
Yes	Rick McDonald	Yes Yes Yes	Ryan Kunitzer Kevin Henson Shawn Flanagan	Speaker Spk Gst Spk Gst		
Yes	Tom Meyer					
Yes	Jay Miller					
Yes	Bill Nelson					
Yes	Maureen Oberg			At Large	\$55	
Yes	Marty Penkhus					
Yes	Steve Penkhus					
Yes	Thad Peterson					
Yes	John Reock					
Yes	Ed Rigtrup					
Yes	Shirley Salvo					
No	Nancy Schibler					
Yes	Ron Schildge					
Yes	Bob Schmidt					
Yes	Charlie Septer					
No	John Sesody			At Large	\$55	

Attended?	Member	Attended?	Guests	Status	\$s	PMT
Yes	Glen Soden			At Large	\$55	
Yes	Robert Speziale					
Yes	Roger Steel					
Yes	Chris Stephenson					
Yes	Marj Stephenson					
Yes	Dick Trent					
No	Stan Ullner					
Yes	Tom Webster					
Yes	Pat Welch					
Yes	Jack Wilson					
No	Mela Wyeth					

Reservations	No Shows	Attendance
7 Guests	None	7
59 members	6	53
66 Total	6	60

8 Tables = 64 Seats

Count to the Seabrook Club 59-64