

The County appreciates citizens who take the time to speak before Council. Public safety is a responsibility we take seriously, and we believe it is important to clearly address concerns with factual information so residents understand how emergency services operate countywide.

Emergency services in this county do not rely solely on GPS to locate residences. GPS technology has never been consistently reliable countywide. Instead, first responders locate calls for service using clearly marked physical address signs, which has long been the standard practice. When there are delays in locating a residence, it is most often due to addresses that are not visibly or properly marked. The County continues to encourage all residents to ensure their current address is clearly posted and visible from the roadway to assist emergency responders.

With regard to radio communications, volunteer firefighters are not required, nor are they able, to purchase their own radios. Radios used for emergency response are issued and managed through the appropriate departments to ensure compatibility, reliability, and compliance with operational standards as well as the security and integrity of the radio system.

Claims regarding mortgage companies calling in loans due to address or decree issues are not accurate. When requested, the County has provided letters or documentation to mortgage companies and other entities, and those communications have consistently been accepted without issue.

The United States Postal Service delivers mail only to recognized current addresses, and all county addresses have been updated and provided to the Postal Service. Mail delivery issues are handled by USPS, not the County, once addresses are established in their system.

The County has experienced a small number of brief network outages impacting phone systems over the past three years. These disruptions were limited in duration and promptly addressed. At no time has the County experienced ongoing or widespread system failures.

Saluda County departments operate under an annual budget approved by County Council. Like any budget, it represents an estimate of expenses based on historical spending, current operational needs, and anticipated future costs. While departments make every effort to remain within their allocated funding, circumstances may arise where actual costs exceed budgeted amounts. In those instances—particularly when significant, unplanned purchases are required—department heads follow the county's procurement policy to obtain the appropriate

approvals, verify the availability of funds, and ensure that expenditures are both necessary and appropriate. In addition, Saluda County actively pursues grant funding whenever possible to help offset costs and reduce the financial impact on the county's general budget.

Council and staff remain committed to public safety, fiscal responsibility, and transparency. We welcome continued communication from residents and encourage anyone experiencing specific issues to contact the appropriate department head so concerns can be reviewed and addressed directly in a timely manner.