



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Beaufort formally breaks ground for new Ribaut Road Fire Station

Beaufort celebrated the construction start of its newest fire station Wednesday and firefighters expect to move in by year's end.

Members of Beaufort City Council, Port Royal Town Council and other local leaders participated in the short ceremony Wednesday morning to kick-off construction of the \$3.3 million project.

The new fire house site is ideally situated for fire protection, Beaufort Fire Chief Sammy Negron said. The site is geographically positioned between Port Royal's main station and Beaufort's current Fire Headquarters near the intersection of Ribaut and Boundary Street.

Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling said the new fire station solves several problems.

"We are moving out of a building that is located between two schools, which is obviously not a very safe location for fire trucks. We are also moving out of a building that would need total renovation at pretty high costs," Keyserling said.

"The good news now is that we'll be moving into a fire station that is in a much better location that further secures our fire rating, which helps reduce fire insurance premiums," he said.

After months of review and negotiation, the Beaufort City Council in January agreed to move forward with construction of the new Beaufort Fire Station at 1120 Ribaut Road. The new facility will replace the outdated one beside Beaufort Middle School and across from Mossy Oaks Elementary on residential Mossy Oaks Road. City Council hasn't decided what to do with that property after the new facility opens.

Firefighting equipment will be moved from the Mossy Oaks Road station to the new station.

“Our firefighters are looking forward to moving into this wonderful new facility,” Negron said. “We will be perfectly located to serve the emergency calls from this area and into Port Royal.”

Since the city bought the original property at 1120 Ribaut Road property in September 2013, it also acquired a smaller parcel adjacent the Love House Ministries’ bowling alley. The additional land addresses road access, enabling fire vehicles to pull into the station from the rear of the property, and also enables the City to address overall drainage and stormwater run-off issues of the area.

Negron said the Ribaut Road location offers:

- Direct access to the main artery between Beaufort and Port Royal
- Easy and efficient travel times to the entire coverage area for this fire station
- Excellent geographical positioning to reinforce and enhance the ISO 2 rating that helps reduce commercial fire insurance premiums
- Limited impact on neighborhoods
- Greater distance from large schools than the current Mossy Oaks station
- Smooth traffic flow for fire vehicles, including direct access to the rear of the facility (eliminating fire trucks having to back into the bays).

The total cost of the project, including land, furnishings and technology, is \$3,299,837. Fraser Construction is the general contractor for the project.

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