

Growth May Spell End of Two Volunteer Departments

01/24/07 101 W - + 13 - 13

[WRAL news story](#) about Wake Forest and Garner fire departments. We've been hearing about Wake Forest's plans for THREE more stations for some time. Where will they be located? Talk of the town of Garner taking over their FD has also been circulating. The town's [Board of Alderman meeting minutes site](#) recently noted "The Board agreed the discussion regarding the merge of the Fire Department will be toward what is the best long range plan and to consider the best strategy to provide fire protection" in the context of a 2007 retreat discussion topic.

As far as Garner, I would assume that Station 2 (Panther Branch area) would not be included into the town? I seem to remember they are almost 100% county. I would assume if this goes through that the new station they are looking at near White Oak and Bryan Rd would be town also? BTW anyone want to comment on a new station there as far as if true, time line etc. From the source I heard it from it must be a real possibility but did not say stage.

[nc-ghost] - 01/24/07 - 09:14

What is to make you think that the town of Garner wouldn't do like Fuquay and Apex and contract back to the county to cover that area by supplying the manpower and equipment?

White Oak and Bryan? I heard more like US 70 and Raynor Rd area.

wc-ghost - 01/24/07 - 10:12

I don't think you would see the "end" of the department, it would just be like Apex and Fuquay did after being taken over by the town. Both still have volunteers and both still contract with the county. It only makes sense in both of these towns to keep up with the growth, it makes no sense for towns that large to have contracted fire protection, they need to be brought into the town government. It also provides a system of checks and balances and can allow for more benefits for employees and the department as a whole. All I can say is that it's about time!

CFP 7021 - 01/24/07 - 13:19

I had heard the "best place" for Garner's Station was near White Oak, but land is not available so US70 and Raynor Rd is the closest available land.

Had heard - 01/24/07 - 14:09

Unfortunately, in time the vollies will go "bye-bye". Fuquay and Apex volunteers have now taken the back burner and it's all about the "P's", and not the "V's".

Guest - 01/24/07 - 18:48

Well it's in the name of progress. As these areas get bigger and bigger and the departments get busier the level of coverage expected from the citizens grows as well. The easiest way to increase the level of service in order to guarantee it is to staff the trucks 24/7, and this is best done with paid staffing. I can understand why the level of volunteerism is down as it requires more and more of these firefighters. No longer does being a volunteer in these growing municipal areas just require running calls from home and going to one meeting night a week. With the increase in required training hours, duty crew commitments and running calls from home it has become harder to balance family life with being a volunteer. While not impossible it is taking its toll. You cannot argue with more paid staff being hired at these departments and having most equipment staffed as the citizens deserve the same level of service as citizens in other municipalities. I hope that these departments can continue a volunteer tradition and that volunteers can play a role in serving their community as it is a great service at a minimal cost to the towns/departments. But there comes a time in which you have to look out for the citizens and promise them a level of service. I know there are many all or majority volunteer departments around the country that provide around the clock service with qualified and highly trained firefighters, and they are to be commended, maybe if the cards were played right the volunteers can continue to play a role in each of these departments.

It's not an easy pill to swallow on either side of the debate, but ultimately you have to do what is best for your citizens, whatever it may be.

CFP 7021 - 01/24/07 - 20:42

Man I can really start something here, but it would just be deleted or sent to "The Watchdesk". Perhaps Mike, you can send this discussion over there?

Guest - 01/24/07 - 22:39

it's already started over there...

CFP 7021 - 01/24/07 - 23:02

Consulting the Tri-Data study that was released in early 2004, they noted WFFD expansion intentions as including a new station (with engine company and tanker) on the west side of town, due to a pocket of development more than five miles from the fire station. Two primary sites were being considered, Old Stadium Drive/New Stadium Drive/Capital Boulevard and Kearney Road/Wake Union Church Road/Capital Boulevard. The latter site was noted as favored for better access. Of the sites cited as being considered, none was more than 3.2 miles from any residence in the district. Another second on the east side of town was noted as desired, to cover projected annexations. The study also noted that WFFD and Falls had had some exploratory discussions about merging.

For GFD, the study noted that the department had been actively attempting to secure land at Raynor Road and Spaceway Road for a fourth fire station. They were planning to break ground no later than 2005. The station would serve the eastern portion of Garner, noted as an area underserved. The department had also identified a possible need to relocate Station 2 when I-540 was built, due to preserve response capacity on the side of the Interstate and so volunteers could come directly from home to the fire station.

Legeros - 01/25/07 - 07:15

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