

**Wake County Fire Commission
MINUTES FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1999
ADOPTED 3/16/99**

Time:	7:11 PM - 9:12 PM
Location:	Knightdale Fire Station #2 Clifton Road and Poole Road
Present :	Yevonne Brannon, Wake County Commissioner Tom Vaughan, East Region/Primary Phil Mitchell, South Region/Primary Ken Farmer, South Region/Alternate - arrived late Ed Brinson, West Region/Primary Tony Chiotakis, West Region/Alternate George Mills, North Region/Primary Bill Stevenson, President of Firemen's Association Cloyce Anders, External Facilitator Charles Sannipoli, Citizen/Consumer Ned Perry, Citizen/Consumer Bonnie Woodruff, Citizen/Consumer Ray Echevarria, Interim Director-Fire/Rescue Division
Absent:	Max Ashworth, Citizen/Consumer Rodney Privette, East Region/Alternate A.C. Rich, North Region/Alternate Nancy Schwarm, Citizen/Consumer Blaine Parks, Citizen/Consumer(Alternate)

Topic:	Discussion & Summary of Topics:
Meeting Called to Order:	The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM.
	Ray distributed handouts: 1. <i>Revised Budget Forms for the Swift Creek Fire Department</i> 2. <i>Budget Review Committee meeting notice</i>
	Roll was taken.
Public Comments:	None
Old Business:	Motion to adopt 1-19-99 minutes as read. Motion approved.
	Prior to report of the committees, Mr. Anders asked how many attended the winter fire chief's meeting at Nags Head

	<p>the previous weekend? No one attended. Mr. Anders stated the winter chief's meeting was about planning and the future of the fire service. He served as a moderator on panel and heard three fire chiefs discuss their perspective of fire services. Noted that it is time for the fire service to take a leadership role. Mr. Anders congratulated Mr. Stevenson on holding budget workshop this coming weekend. The fire service can earn creditability if we step up to the plate and take responsibility, challenge and look at the future for the citizens, county, and emergency services personnel. Must look at county as a whole and accept challenge before us. Expressed full confidence that we will work within budget. May need a couple of years of intense planning. There has not been a planning committee for fire services before in this county. While we have individual stations, we now have one tax rate for the county. Have to change method of thinking about tax. This is a big challenge. Moved to hear committee reports.</p>
COMMITTEE REPORTS:	
Budget Review:	<p>Mr. Stevenson commented that the Budget Committee does have a challenge.</p> <p>Thanked Chief Brinson for securing a site for the weekend workshop. The workshop will be at the Ramada Inn Blue Ridge Road across from the Fairgrounds. The workshop will begin at 8 a.m. on Saturday, February 20, 1999, and if a second day is needed, will return on Sunday, February 21, 1999. Would like to get done in one day.</p> <p>Depending on what happens at the weekend budget workshop, the Tuesday meeting may need to be worked in at a later time.</p> <p>It is the budget committee's understanding that the budget is to be ready by March 16th.</p> <p>Ray affirmed the date and added that the final recommendation should be to everyone before the Wake County Fire Commission meeting of March 16, 1999.</p> <p>Chief Chiotakis commented that he feels pressed by this new process. Feels there is a lot of information to be looked at. March 16th is new date to him.</p> <p>Mr. Anders commented that the March 16th date was discussed at the previous Wake County Fire Commission meeting.</p> <p>Ray stated that several chiefs did meet with the Budget Director. March 1st is the actual date. Mr. Boutwell is giving us a couple of weeks longer.</p>

	<p>Chief Mills stated previous budgets were due by April 1st. Asked what is County going to do beyond the March 16th date? Is someone going to overrule the budget?</p> <p>Ray stated that the deadlines have changed. The deadline used to be April 1st. This year the deadline was moved to March 1st for all County departments. If the Wake County Fire Commission recommends a budget and tax rate that represents a good value, does not know anyone will overrule. Strongly feels the recommendation of the Wake County Fire Commission will be respected.</p> <p>Ms. Brannon commented that unless Ray says something is wrong, do not want to overrule staff's deadline. May speak with Mr. Boutwell about the date while at retreat.</p> <p>Mr. Anders believes what Chief Stevenson has going on this weekend may make the March 16th deadline. We will try to make the March 16th deadline; otherwise, we will have to bring entire Wake County Fire Commission back to meet to discuss the budget.</p>
<p>Capital Improvement Program:</p>	<p>Mr. Sannipoli advised the Capital Improvement Committee is to meet this Friday and have not met prior to this meeting. Stressed that several parts of the budget will affect the capital improvement plans.</p> <p>Mr. Anders suggested looking at payment schedules and interest rates of current capital obligations.</p> <p>Mr. Sannipoli requested a list of fire departments. Needs to identify person to call to ask budget questions.</p> <p>Mr. Anders mentioned one of the areas to look at is to explore what other alternatives are there for financing. Is there something more efficient. Rather than try to budget one year, spread out payments over a period of time.</p> <p>Ms. Brannon suggested speaking with Cam Frazier. He has creative financing skills.</p>
<p>Contract & Performance Requirements:</p>	<p>This subcommittee has not yet met.</p> <p>Mr. Anders stated he would chair the committee since this committee has not yet met. Has gone through and made basic changes. This is something to be done.</p>
<p>Planning:</p>	<p>Mr. Perry asked Ray if he would send out the minutes from the January 14, 1999, meeting.</p>

Mr. Perry, Ms. Woodruff, and Mr. Stevenson met on Thursday, February 9, 1999, at 2:05 PM, at the Fire Administration Office in Cary. Ms. Woodruff took minutes for the committee and will have them available in the near future. Discussed priorities of the fire service.

First, standardize fire station plan. That plan can be amended and is to serve as a long term plan for putting buildings up. Building sites would need to be approved. Accept for consideration on July 1, 1999, all unincorporated sites in county by approved by Wake County Fire Commission.

Second, Y2K Readiness Program. Discussed a need for a central coordinator. Would best be handled by staff knowledgeable about Y2K. Possible option that county staff appoint a Y2K readiness coordinator. The coordinator would be responsible for accepting written correspondence from the first day of each month from the fire chiefs. The fire chief reports would need to be brief and to the point. The coordinator would then be responsible for reviewing, compiling reports, and mail to fire chiefs and Wake County Fire Commission members by the 20th of each month. This is to get information in and information back out in a timely manner.

Also discussed amount of support for sprinklers. Ms. Woodruff had questions about sprinklers and what can be done to encourage sprinklers. The Planning Committee adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Future Fire Station Locations

Mr. Anders noted the first recommendation is to become effective July 1, 1999, for future locations approved by Wake County Fire Commission. Why that date?

Mr. Perry responded that July 1, 1999, was used for fiscal year reasons.

Mr. Anders commented that from planning committee stand point, certain unincorporated areas, the necessity of fire protection need urban versus suburban rules.

Mr. Perry stated it is conceivable that a fire department may look at land that might not be a good site. Make the consideration as a team for those sites.

Mr. Anders noted the intent is to show future sites.

Mr. Perry said it is part of the big picture.

Mr. Sannipoli noted that in the capital improvement plan, there is a significant cost in new stations.

Ms. Brannon commented there is a need for additional stations.

Mr. Perry stated this becomes a team effort for site of future station. Look at possible future annexations and distance. No more sites committed until studied.

Chief Vaughan stated looking at long term of municipal expansion of fire stations.

Chief Chiotakis commented that we have to incorporate growth plans of municipalities.

Mr. Perry pointed out that part of the master plan for site location of fire stations is to ask municipalities will they grow in the next five to ten years.

Ms. Brannon asked Ray if some of this had been done by the previous Fire / Rescue Director?

Mr. Anders believes a lot of that is being done.

Ray commented that we are looking at those areas not currently in an insurance rated area.

Mr. Sannipoli commented that we will need to look at priorities prior to where a station will go.

Mr. Perry stated that to develop plans, does not cost that much. It helps to plan around other jurisdictions. The committee will look at criteria for a site.

Ms. Brannon suggested that the EMS Task Force may compliment the planning committee.

Ray suggested a possibly co-sharing a location. This may be an operating expense to share with EMS and possible to possibly share office space with SO.

Ms. Brannon stated that co-sharing a site would be a good solution. When visiting in Phoenix, she saw a site that fire and EMS shared. When the final EMS Task Force report is available, will invite all Fire Commission Members to come.

Mr. Perry commented that Cary Station 5 has a mini police station. This is a possible solution for future sites. The real benefit is to the community.

Look at locating land this current year. Might want to accelerate date for implementation of site locations.

Chief Mitchell questioned would town not have a say so in site location?

Chief Vaughan stated towns did not elect to join.

Mr. Anders stated we would not dictate; we would work with the city.

Chief Mitchell then questioned Wake County Fire Commission does not have final say so?

Mr. Perry stated would look at site and see how to find support for site.

Chief Mitchell asked are municipalities going to have say so?

Mr. Woodruff stated there is a lot of work to be done prior to a site proposal.

Chief Vaughan expressed agreement with the concept.

Mr. Anders pointed out a building is a future asset.

Mr. Perry made a motion that as of February 16, 1999, that for all unincorporated areas, all future fire site locations be approved by the Wake County Fire Commission.

Ray stressed areas financed by fire service tax district.

Motion seconded by Mr. Sannipoli.

Motion carried.

Y2K Readiness

Ray advised there is a staff member from Fire/Rescue division assisting with Y2K. Our division coordinator is Ricky Dorsey.

Mr. Perry stated concern that not sure planning committee is qualified for Y2K compliance. Not intending to commit a person.

It was stated that Ricky Dorsey could coordinate Y2K.

Mr. Perry stressed accountability of sharing information.

	<p>Get information to Ricky by first of month and Ricky would in turn get information out to each fire chief by the 20th of each month. Wants information coming and going regularly.</p> <p>Mr. Anders suggested that Ray implement by working with the fire departments.</p> <p>Chief Mills not in favor of having to generate another document each month.</p> <p>It was suggested to set up a survey with a due date.</p> <p>Chief Mills then stated his concern is the CAD system.</p> <p>Ms. Brannon stated she went to a County presentation two weeks ago that the County anticipates being in compliance by July 1.</p> <p>Mr. Anders stated he had heard the City had hired contractor to look at the issue of CAD.</p> <p>Ray suggested going to web sites. Also suggested collecting inventories from departments .</p> <p><i>Break at 8:20 PM; Resumed at 8:30 PM</i></p>
Mutual Aid Distribution	<p>Mr. Anders stated the options for fund distribution for mutual aid distribution are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By Department 2. By Station 3. By Region <p>Chief Brinson, Chief Vaughan and Chief Chiotakis motioned to distribute by region.</p> <p>Chief Mills motioned to divide by department.</p> <p>Ray advised to let him know how the region wants to spend money.</p> <p>Motion carried to divide by region.</p>
Closet Station Response	<p>Ray advised that due to conflicting schedules, many of the fire chiefs were unable to attend the January 25, 1999, Fire Chief's Council meeting. Would like to table until the next Fire Chief's Council meeting scheduled for April 22, 1999.</p>
NEW BUSINESS:	
Budget Workshop	<p>Chief Vaughan opened the discussion by stating he had</p>

started reviewing all department budget requests. Current proposed budget is \$8.3 million on a 10 cent rate. Adding up the budget requests on hand, he came up with a total budget request of \$12.48 million. If capital improvement, expansion, and depreciation were eliminated from budgets, leaving operating expenses and debt expense, would then have a budget request of \$8.1 million. Which is \$200,000 less than the \$8.3 million. Concerned about what kind of service can we provide

Mr. Anders questioned the appropriated or actual amounts for this year.

Ray advised do not have actual for this year's budget, yet. Will get another estimate in the near future. For FY 97-98, received \$6.7 million.

Mr. Sannipoli noted that the department budget totals for this year versus last year are higher.

Chief Vaughan stated the increase is for paid personnel to respond to first responder. Cut out everything but Operating Expenses and Debt Expenses and those two line items came to \$8.1 million.

Mr. Perry stated that ultimately the Commissioners will decide how much they will want to spend for service.

Mr. Anders stated that he feels much will be accomplished in the budget workshop. In fire service throughout the state, you will look after the people you serve.

Ms. Brannon stated there is a strong commitment to hold to level of service. Has heard citizens saying they want service if they are being taxed. There are folks already feel they are not getting what they pay.

Mr. Anders commented that the best bargain tax payers have are sitting in this room.

Chief Vaughan commented that between 11,000 and 12,000 calls were run.

Chief Chiotakis commented that a lot of people don't know what system they have.

Mr. Anders commented that may be getting blamed for slow communications response to answer 9-1-1 call.

Mr. Perry suggested education as a resource.

	<p>Chief Vaughan stressed have to provide service.</p> <p>Ms. Brannon stated she feels the public is not aware of Public Safety Services.</p> <p>Ray suggested positive PR, possibly through the web site. Maybe have the County public relations person doing broadcasts on services received.</p> <p>Chief Stevenson questioned how the Wake County Fire Commission did not get a public relations person on the board.</p> <p>Ms. Brannon commented that we have the best perspective of what is priority. Will push hard to get Wake County Fire Commission included on the web site.</p> <p>Chief Gupton commented that he hears about unincorporated areas not having EMS. Confident that Raleigh and Cary budgets exceed the County budget.</p> <p>Ms. Brannon stated that it would be good to have copies of the EMS study.</p> <p>Mr. Anders stated to be careful what you ask for with PR. When you start advertising level of service, it is expected.</p> <p>Chief Farmer advised that he is no longer Chief since the Town of Fuquay-Varina Fire Department and the Fuquay-Varina Rural Fire Department have merged. He suggested:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Not to serve as the alternate for the southern region2. Continue to serve until a chief is appointed to Fuquay-Varina Fire Department3. Take another person in the region to serve as an alternate <p>Ray commented there is a lot of work to be done in a short period of time. Encourage Chief Farmer remaining with Wake County Fire Commission until we get through the budget cycle.</p> <p>Chief Vaughan questioned if Fuquay-Varina will have a town representative and Ray replied NO.</p> <p>Chief Farmer mentioned there is no real change in the service; the merger is modeled after the Morrisville Fire Department.</p> <p>Ray stated that he is in favor of Ken remaining.</p> <p>Chief Mills stated the County Commissioners appointed</p>
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	<p>members to two year terms.</p> <p>Mr. Lanier advised that County Commissioners appointed the primary and the alternates.</p> <p>Mr. Anders checked the rules of the Wake County Fire Commission and it did not mention have to be a fire chief; the rules used the term representative.</p> <p>Motion to have Chief Farmer remain, Chief Brinson seconded, motion carried.</p> <p><i>Ms. Woodruff excused at 9:08 PM</i></p>
<p>Meeting Site for the March 16, 1999, Wake County Fire Commission Meeting</p>	<p>Wake County Commons Building Carya Drive off Poole Road</p>
<p>Adjournment:</p>	<p>Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.</p>

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