

# WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, November 21, 2002  
**(ADOPTED January 16, 2003)**

A regular meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, November 21, 2002, at 4:30 p.m. in the EMS Training Classroom located at the Wake County Commons Building, lower level, Cary Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina. Ms. Cathy Lohr presided as Facilitator and called the meeting to order.

**Roll of Members Present:** Tony Chiotakis, **West Region/Primary**  
Paul Dunwell, South Region, Alternate  
Cathy Lohr, **Citizen/Consumer**  
Tony Mauldin, **South Region/Primary**  
Billy Myrick, **Citizen/Consumer**  
Dewey Poole, **Citizen/Consumer**  
David Price, **Firefighter's Assoc. President**  
Ron Roof, **North Region/Primary**  
Tom Vaughan, **East Region/Primary**

(The bolded Membership Type equates to members eligible to vote.)

**Members Absent:** Cloyce Anders, External Facilitator\*  
Herb Council, **Wake County Commissioner**  
Rodney Privette, East Region/Alternate  
A.C. Rich, North Region/Alternate\*  
Buddy Scarboro, **Wendell Town Representative**  
Ann Suggs, **Citizen/Consumer\***

**Staff Present:** Raymond Boutwell, Budget & Mgmt Director  
Jennifer Willis, Budget & Mgmt Analyst  
John Rukavina, Public Safety Director  
Catherine Clark, Public Safety Business Manager  
Ray Echevarria, County Fire Marshal  
Chris Perry, Deputy Chief Fire Marshal  
Charles Ottaway, Shift Supervisor  
Sherry Scoggins, Executive Secretary

There were 15 guests present at the Wake County Fire Commission meeting.

Ms. Cathy Lohr stated the presenter of the Compensation 101 Study was on a deadline for a flight and the Fire Commission would hear the presentation first and then go back for roll call and adoption of the minutes.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Compensation 101 (Catherine Clark):**

Ms. Cathy Lohr recognized Ms. Catherine Clark, Public Safety Business Manager. Ms. Clark introduced Ms. Ruth Ann Edwards of the Waters Consulting Group, which is the firm selected to assist with the Fire Compensation Study. The floor was then given to Ms. Edwards. Ms. Edwards presented an overview to the Fire Commission and guests with a power point presentation as well as sharing hard copies titled "Wake County, North Carolina Fire Services; An Introduction and Overview to the Compensation Study Approach; November 21, 2002".

Ms. Edwards took questions from members. Mr. Poole expressed concern on the volunteer compensation since volunteers maintain the same certification as the paid personnel. As part of the study, there is a dedicated email address ([wakecounty@watersconsulting.com](mailto:wakecounty@watersconsulting.com)) and toll free number (1.800.662.0931) where persons may ask questions and a response will be given in 24 hours. The completion date of the study is March 31, 2003.

### **Adoption of 9/19/2002 Minutes and 10/24/2002 Special Minutes:**

Chief Chiotakis motioned to approve the minutes of the September Wake County Fire Commission meeting and the October Special Wake County Fire Commission meeting. Motion seconded by Captain Price. The Wake County Fire Commission unanimously approved the September 19, 2002, meeting minutes and the October 24, 2002, special meeting minutes.

### **Update on Fire/EMS Capital Facility & Equipment Study:**

Ray Echevarria was recognized to give an update on the Fire/EMS Capital Facility & Equipment Study. After the special Fire Commission meeting, staff met with the Rescue Chief's Association and made presentation. The Rescue Chief's Association also supported Tri-Data as the consultant. Currently in the process of negotiating an agreement with Tri-Data and when done will do a kick-off meeting similar to the Compensation Study.

### **Discussion on Emergency Incident Rehabilitation Protocol (Dr. Brent Myers):**

Ray Echevarria introduced Dr. Brent Myers. Dr. Myers is our associate Medical Director and will become the Medical Director upon retirement of our current medical director, Dr. Vaughan. Dr. Myers requested to present a proposed protocol on rehabilitation.

Dr. Myers distributed three handouts:

- Wake County Procedures, Fire Scene – Response Procedure
- Emergency Incident Rehabilitation Report (Spreadsheet)
- Fire Scene – Treatment Protocol

These protocols were initiated by EMS as a means of determining when it is safe to return fire personnel to a fire scene. FEMA and Fire Administration references were used to develop protocol that is to go into effect on January 1, 2003. Dr. Myers then went over each of the handouts with the Fire Commission members and guests. The rehabilitation protocols are to standardize the procedures across the county.

Mr. Poole motioned to support the EMS protocol as a minimum standard as a working procedure. Motion simultaneously seconded by Chief Mauldin and Mr. Myrick. Ms. Lohr then restated the motion as the commission to go on record adopting the EMS standard protocol as the minimum standard for Wake County fire departments. Motion approved unanimously.

Discussion followed pertaining to cost of EMS transport when fire personnel are transported to the hospital. Mr. Boutwell stated Jennifer has this item on her to do list and John Rukavina would follow up on the issue of charging fire personnel for transport. (Mr. Myrick requested follow-up at next meeting – Agenda Item.)

### **800 Mhz Update (David Price):**

Mr. David Price was recognized and he provided an update of progress on the 800 Mhz radio system. He noted that the fire fleet map work group had reached consensus on using a non-tactical setting for the portable radio “emergency” button. He also reviewed the issue of the number of portable radios assigned to each fire department. He reminded the members that, at the last Fire Commission meeting, an addition of 101 portable radios had been proposed, at a total cost of \$381,000. He reported that, since that last meeting, he’d met with Public Safety staff, where the following alternative proposal had been identified:

1. Add a portable radio for each aerial ladder (for a new total of three portable radios per aerial ladder);
2. Add a portable radio for each rescue truck (for a total of two portable radios per rescue truck); and
3. Add an extended control console to each pumper and pumper-tanker, which would “free up” one portable radio on each such unit.

He noted that this alternative would cost \$180,000 – less than half the cost of adding 101 portable radios.

Ron Roof motioned for the Wake County Fire Commission to recommend revision to the radio contracts to allow for the addition for remote headsets for large apparatus and appropriate budget adjustment. Motion seconded by Dewey Poole. Motion approved unanimously.

**Capital Fund (Requested by Chief Roof):**

Mr. Raymond Boutwell was recognized and distributed handout "Fire Tax District – Revised Financial Report 6/30/02 (Unaudited)". First page is the unaudited 7/1/01 beginning fund balance through 6/30/02 ending fund balance. The second page is current fire tax district fund status as of November 18, 2002. Third page is the fire tax district capital fund status as of November 18, 2002. For the January meeting, put down on paper those things that have occurred in the past as commitments for the future that has yet to occur. Lay out a five-year plan that has been approved by the Fire Commission. Attempt to have this to you by January.

Ms. Lohr suggested that this come as an update to each Fire Commission meeting.

*The Wake County Fire Commission took a short recess at 5:50 PM.*

*The Wake County Fire Commission resumed at 6:02 PM.*

Chief Chiotakis was recognized. The 9-11 events were close to home. Mike Chambers was called to active duty and has just returned and is with us tonight and recognized Mr. Chambers.

**800 Mhz Update (David Price):**

Chief Ron Roof requested to amend the previous motion pertaining to the 800 Mhz Update.

The motion to the Wake County Fire Commission was recommend revision to the radio contract for remote headset and appropriate budget amendment. Seconded by Mr. Poole.

Ron Roof amended motion to add extended control consoles and additional portable radios as proposed by David Price. Seconded by Captain Price. After discussion, Mr. Boutwell recommended to put on one list all the pieces of equipment and how many radios are being talking about. A spreadsheet will be sent out with the recommendation of the equipment. The amended motion passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Discussion of establishment and/or identification of minimum standards for service delivery as part of the FY 2003-04 budget process (Chief Chiotakis):**

Chief Chiotakis was recognized. Recommended the need to move forward with minimum standards of service for the next budget season and suggested the contract be used as a starting point. Ms. Lohr suggested a committee of three or more persons to start looking at for next budget year for consideration.

Chief Vaughan motioned for chairman to appoint a committee to look at minimum standards in Wake County. Seconded by Mr. Myrick. Motion approved unanimously.

If anybody is interested in serving, please let the chairman know.

Discussion followed on supporting idea to get standards developed and protocols identified and work into next years budget and the then work into a (long-range) strategic plan.

### **Discussion and identification of budget issues for next year (specifically compensation equity issues) (Raymond Boutwell/Chief Chiotakis) & Discussion on a consensus process for development of a “pay per call” system for all department (Raymond Boutwell/Chief Chiotakis):**

Mr. Boutwell was recognized for both items and would like to will do this as a report on the regional concerns. Issues that arose were:

- Compensation – such as a Captain at one station earning less than a Captain at another station; being addressed by compensation study.
- Volunteer Pay Per Call – Varying rates being paid; being addressed by compensation study.
- Access versus Excel for budgeting
- Municipal / County cost share – will meet in the next 4 to 6 weeks to meet with the town managers
- Capital Process
- Fair Shake
- Consistency
- What is level of service? Define that level of service.
- Role of Fire Commission – look at policy issues globally not individually. Departments don't think it's appropriate to justify individual budget to the Fire Commission.
- Discussion about fund balance and level of fund balance.

Those are the different issues heard by the Budget Office.

Dewey Poole was recognized and offered to share copies of the procedures of the Fire Commission. Would like to have put on the agenda as an item at the next meeting. Suggest that everyone review guideline on what Fire Commission is to do and if there is a specific item that you want brought before the commission, we need to be made aware of that in time to get on agenda along and then any information that needs to go along with it.

Mr. Boutwell gave update on process of budget. On December 16 will have information out on the number kinds of things and by November 1 would have the non-number things out and those have been sent out and has examples of program descriptions if anyone needs a sample (handout) if anyone needs.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### **Apparatus / Facilities:**

Mr. Billy Myrick, chair of the Apparatus/Facilities subcommittee was recognized. To date has visited half of the Wake County departments and will finish up next Tuesday. At that time will have meeting with the Apparatus/Facility Subcommittee. If anyone has any issue they would like addressed, please contact him.

## **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Rukavina was recognized. Requested Mutual Aid contracts be turned in.

Mr. Rukavina was asked the status of three of the County Fire Protection contracts. Commented that the County Manager is currently working with those departments. Chief Vaughan requested a follow up on the status of the Fire Protection contracts.

Mr. Rukavina shared concerns that earlier this summer the Fire Commission adopted a policy on accountability. What he heard today was a county wide standard on rehab with EMS. He asked if the Fire Commission had considered a process for promulgating such standards.

Chief Roof was recognized and requested this item be put on the agenda reference traffic light control. Requested staff to check with county on ability to satisfy the state requirement for traffic light control.

Mr. Rukavina was recognized. Each fire department member needs to fill out (or participate in filling out) questionnaires on the compensation study, and wants everyone to be included in this study so the study will be workable in

years to come. December 10 & 11 are the dates the Waters Consulting Group will meet with the different fire service regions. Everyone has an opportunity to participate in the process.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**(30 minutes maximum time allotted per item/Maximum 3 minutes per person):**

Ms. Amy Shekita of Western Wake Fire/Rescue was recognized. Concerned about the way the Fire Commission has to vote on items. With all these studies, particularly the pay for call and volunteers, find out what do the volunteers think about it. Commented that it is interesting that people don't know why some departments have not signed contract and the Fire Commission should know. Since the Fire Commission represents all the departments, should think about actions.

**Next meeting is January 16, 2003, at 7 PM, at the EMS Training Classroom, lower level of the Commons. The EMS Training Classroom will be the meeting site through the May meetings.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

**Handouts:**

- **Booklet, Wake County North Carolina Fire Services, An Introduction and Overview to the Compensation Study Approach, November 21, 2002 (Ms. Edwards of Waters Consulting Group)**
- **Wake County Procedures, Fire Scene – Response Procedure (Dr. Brent Myers)**
- **Emergency Incident Rehabilitation Report [Spreadsheet] (Dr. Brent Myers)**
- **Fire Scene – Treatment Protocol (Dr. Brent Myers)**
- **Fire Tax District – Revised Financial Report, 6/30/02 (Unaudited); Fire Tax District, Fund Status as of November 18, 2002; Fire Tax District, Capital Fund Status as of November 18, 2002 (Mr. Raymond Boutwell)**
- **Program Description, Budget Form #1 – 4 (Mr. Raymond Boutwell)**

## **ACTIONS OF THE WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION:**

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