

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION
Thursday, September 18, 2008
ADOPTED Minutes

(Audio Replays of the meeting are available upon request)

A meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, September 18, 2008, 7:00 PM, in the Wake County EMS Training Facility, Cary Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

At the request of Chairwoman Ann Suggs, Chief Vaughan called the meeting to order. Vice Chair Lucius Jones conducted the meeting upon his arrival.

The following members were present: Chair Suggs, Chief Tony Mauldin, Mr. Billy Myrick, Chief Mike Cooper, Mr. Bryan Lane, Chief Scott McCollum, Commissioner Paul Coble and Mr. Robert Stagg.

Members absent were: Chief Cecil Parker, Senator Vernon Malone, Chief Chris Wilson, Chief Mark Haraway, Chief Rodney Privette, and Mrs. Barbara Poole.

The following County staff were present: Deputy County Manager Joe Durham, Fire/Rescue Services Director Raymond Echevarria, Budget and Management Analyst Jason Horton, and Public Safety Business Manager Demetric Potts.

Mr. Myrick gave an invocation.

Chief Vaughan introduced Mr. Stagg, who made some opening remarks.

MINUTES

The minutes of the July 17, 2008 regular meeting were presented. Mr. Myrick made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stagg to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

CONFLICT OF INTEREST / CODE OF ETHICS

Director Echevarria presented information on the County's conflict of interest policy. According to the policy, a conflict of interest for a Fire Commission member exists only when the member could receive a direct personal financial benefit from an issue under consideration. Collateral involvement in an issue is not deemed to be a conflict of interest. The Fire Commission can recommend a more stringent conflict of interest/ethics policy if it desires.

Several members expressed the desire to continue using the County policy and not to enact a more stringent policy.

FACILITY COMMITTEE

Chief Brinson presented a report from the Facility Committee. The report included an update on the dormitory project. See attached report for details. There was no action requested on this item.

Chief Brinson presented a draft interlocal agreement with the Town of Garner for the future fire station in the southeastern area of Wake County. The committee recommended approval of the draft agreement so that it could be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for their approval.

Mr. Myrick expressed concern on the proposed funding percentage for the fire station. The interlocal agreement includes a provision that the Town of Garner fund approximately 15% of the land and construction costs, EMS would fund 25%, and the fire service tax would fund the remainder approximate 60%. Mr. Myrick expressed that the Town of Garner's share should be higher than the proposed 15 percent. Chief Vaughan echoed the concern relative to the funding percentage.

Director Echevarria provided a brief history of the station site selection and proposed area to be protected. He indicated that the County has demonstrated a need for this fire station for several years. Based on these needs, the cost distribution was based on the distribution of the new station's first due incidents in the County and in the Town. The distribution of incident demand is used as a proxy for need. A utilization agreement has not been developed. The utilization agreement will outline funding percentages for staffing and other operational costs.

Chief Cooper made a motion to approve the interlocal agreement as presented and recommend approval by the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was seconded by Chief Mauldin. The motion passed unanimously.

APPARATUS COMMITTEE

Chief Woods presented the apparatus committee report. Chief Woods informed the Fire Commission that the Committee has followed up on Western Wake's small vehicle. Western Wake's small vehicle will be transferred to the Swift Creek Fire Department.

Chief Woods presented a recommended policy on reviewing, replacing and delaying fire apparatus replacement.

Chief Woods presented information on fuel consumption measures. The committee reported recommendations to fire departments to conserve fuel.

Chief Woods informed the Fire Commission of the cost impact of upcoming changes in the national fire apparatus standard. The standard changes could increase the cost of future apparatus purchases by approximately \$25,000 per vehicle.

Chief Vaughan explained that he felt that a single unit response in closest station areas was appropriate and should be explored with Raleigh and Cary. Although no formal action was taken, the general consensus of the Commission was that this should be explored and implemented if acceptable with Raleigh and Cary.

FIRE TAX BUDGET UPDATE

Jason Horton distributed a report on budgeted versus actual expenses of the fire service tax district. This is a new report that is available and will be distributed at each Fire Commission meeting for informational purposes.

Jason Horton presented information on the status of fire tax capital projects. He recommended cleaning up the capital budget by closing out completed projects and moving balances to uncommitted funds. Mr. Horton requested the Fire Commission recommend that Budget and Management Services be authorized by the Board of Commissioners to clean up the capital projects in the fire tax budget.

Chief McCollum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Coble, to recommend the capital clean up as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Chief Vaughan asked a question regarding discussions with the County Manager related to collection fees and retirement funding. Director Echevarria updated the Fire Commission on the meetings. There is an Ad Hoc Committee appointed by Chair Ann Suggs that is meeting with the County Manager and other county staff. The Committee is working on a fire tax model that is sustainable for five years without requiring a fire tax increase to support ongoing costs. The Apparatus Committee assisted in the sustainable fire tax model work by developing recommendations to

reduce future fire apparatus replacement costs. Additional meetings are scheduled to continue the discussions.

Chief Vaughan inquired about the fire station closure evaluation process. Director Echevarria informed the Fire Commission that the process is pending a meeting between the County Manager and Raleigh's City Manager to determine Raleigh's interest in the project.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON FIRE COMMISSION COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Chief A.C. Rich provided an overview of recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee on proposed changes to the Fire Commission's committee structure. Chief Rich explained that the Ad Hoc Committee recommends:

- Standing committees (apparatus, facility, compensation, budget, and staffing) would consist of one primary voting person from each region, one alternate/secondary person from each region, no citizen, and a Committee Chair appointed by the Fire Commission Chair.
- A quorum would consist of four of the five voting members being present.
- No person may serve on more than two committees.
- No Fire Commission member could serve as a voting member of the standing committees.

Mr. Myrick expressed concern on excluding citizens and Fire Commission members from committee membership.

Chief Vaughan proposed the following changes:

- Delete #B-5 (related to Commission members serving on committees)
- In #B-7, delete the word "not"
- In #C-4, change wording to reflect the majority of the members

Chief McCollum proposed that clarification be made that region representatives be appointed by the region, not the Chair. Director Echevarria offered reasons for Chair appointments in the past and explained that the recommendations were based on region recommendations.

Chief Vaughan made a motion to approve the recommendations with his proposed changes. Mr. Myrick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION AGENDA

CHAIR REPORT

No report.

FIRE/RESCUE DIRECTOR REPORT

Ray reported that the County's Human Resources department is working with the Compensation Committee to update the salary schedule in the compensation guidelines.

Mr. Myrick inquired about the Public Safety organizational structure as a result of former Public Safety Director John Rukavina's departure. Director Echevarria informed the Fire Commission that the County's Fire/Rescue Services Division now reports directly to Deputy County Manager Joe Durham. A review is being conducted to explore the possibility of merging Emergency Management and Fire/Rescue Services.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting Handouts

ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR COUNTY ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

By submitting this electronic application, I pledge that, if appointed I agree by my signature below that, if appointed, I pledge to comply with the following ethics guidelines for advisory boards and commissions as adopted by the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

I. DECLARATION OF POLICY

The proper operation of democratic government requires that public officials and employees be independent, impartial and responsible to the people; that governmental decisions and policy be made in proper channels of the governmental structure; that public office not be used for personal gain; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government. In recognition of these goals, a Code of Ethics for County officials is hereby adopted. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all such officials by setting forth those acts or actions that are compatible with the best interests of the County.

II. APPLICABILITY OF ETHICS POLICY

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all elected and appointed County officials, members of County boards and commissions appointed by the County commissioners, and other County employees.

II. FINANCIAL AND PERSONAL DISCLOSURE

Any County official or employee who must officially consider any public matter involving his financial or personal interests, or those of his immediate family, shall first publicly disclose the nature and extent of such interest and shall abstain from acting thereon unless provisions of state law require otherwise.

III. GIFTS AND FAVORS

No official or employee shall knowingly accept any gift, whether in the form of money, thing, favor, loan or promise, when it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence or reward an official action on his part. Gifts, meals, other favors of an incidental nature and of minor value, or legitimate political contributions shall not be included in this policy.

IV. APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, OR CONTRACT AWARD OF RELATIVES OR BUSINESS PARTNERS

Public officials of the appointing authority must disclose on the public record any person of their immediate family related by blood or marriage, or business interest who is being considered for appointment, employment or contract award by that authority. Immediate family related by blood and marriage are to include: spouse, child, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, step-, and in-law relationships for preceding categories.

MEMO TO: Fire Commission Members
FROM: Ed Brinson, Chairman
DATE: September 18, 2008
SUBJECT: Facility Committee Report

Since the last Fire Commission meeting the Facility Committee met on September 10, 2008 at Fairview Fire Station No.1. We respectfully offer the following report.

FIRE STATION DORMITORY RENOVATION PROJECT

The project is continuing to move forward. As expected with all projects of this nature the milestone dates that were presented last month have moved out several weeks. As new dates are published, we will report those to the Fire Commission. The architects are in the second round of reviews with each department to ensure the preliminary blueprints and plans are correct. The engineering firm is working on the sprinkler system designs and have visited all fire stations.

Sprinkler system water is still being explored with some of the departments. AQUA is available in some areas as a source of water for the system. However, AQUA is currently quoting a \$500 to \$700 monthly meter fee for their service. County staff is negotiating a lower meter fee for these applications. There may be other opportunities to save tap on fees as we move forward.

Stony Hill asked that their proposed plan be reevaluated by the architects and engineers and we have requested Patrick McHugh with Facilities Design and Construction to honor their request.

Chief Cooper from Durham-Highway sent a request to the facility committee on September 12, 2008 to have their fire station removed from the dormitory renovation project. Their facility already has accommodations for sleeping 4 firefighters and no renovations are required.

Once the sprinkler retrofit project begins, we will readdress the sprinkler retrofit project at Durham-Highway.

Preliminary cost estimates show that the project is still within budget and we are looking for opportunities to reduce the overall cost of the project.

STATUS OF THE LAND PURCHASE FOR GARNER STATION 4

At the last Fire Commission meeting, the location of the fire station was endorsed and county staff was directed to move forward with developing an Interlocal Government Agreement (ILA) with the Town of Garner for the purchase of the land.

County staff and the county manager met with Town of Garner (TOG) officials and agreed on the items that the ILA should contain. The ILA was reviewed and endorsed by the members present at the last facility committee meeting. Essential items in the ILA included:

- Ownership of the land by Wake County.
- Cost sharing of the land purchase with the TOG.
- Cost share payment terms.
- Cost sharing the design and construction cost.
- An option for Wake County to sell the fire station to the TOG should they start a municipal fire department.
- Fair market sales agreement with the TOG should the county decide to sell the fire station.
- **Fire Commission Action Item:**
 - Endorse the ILA between Wake County and the Town of Garner for the land purchase, design and construction of a fire station in Southeastern Wake County. This endorsement will allow the purchase of the land to be placed on the next Board of Commissioners agenda.

WENDELL FALLS FIRE STATION PROJECT

No action has been taken on this project since the last Fire Commission meeting.

FUQUAY-VARINA HEADQUARTERS FIRE STATION RENOVATION PROJECT

No status change. The CIP project documents are still pending.

HOPKINS FIRE DEPARTMENT RENOVATIONS

The facility committee has received a CIP request from Chief Woods regarding renovations and repairs to the Hopkins fire station. As reported in previous Facility Committee meeting minutes, there is a need to evaluate this station for repairs and renovations. Such repair and renovations include replacing the building siding, code compliance issues with existing fuel tanks, adding an administrative area and some septic tank work.

The consensus of the facility committee is that this request will need an architectural and engineering assessment through Facilities Design and Construction. Therefore, we recommend that this request be tabled until we are nearing the completion of the dormitory project. Once we have a better understanding of the total cost of the dormitory project, we will work with county staff and the Fire Commission to see if the repairs and renovations are feasible and can be accomplished with anticipated surplus funds from the dormitory project.

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION APPARATUS COMMITTEE

TO: Fire Commission

FROM: Apparatus Committee

Subject: Apparatus Replacement Plan Recommendation

As per direction of the Fire Commission on Thursday July 17th 2008 the Apparatus Committee in order to be financially responsible to the County we will implement the following rules effective FY 2010 for Apparatus replacement.

1. **Review:** Look at all Apparatus that is currently on our Capital replacement plan and determine if it needs to be replaced, delayed, or not replaced at all reducing our Fleet size.
2. **Replace:** Replace the Apparatus if it is a First out, and meets criteria initially set forth in the replacement plan. Or if a continued cost of maintenance to operate justifies replacement, the determination will be on a case by case basis, age & mileage will be a factor.
3. **Delay:**
If an individual Station is on the Fire Commission list for possible closure, delay all replacements until a decision is made to either close or not to close the Station, this will be the same criteria being utilized by the Facilities Committee.
4. **Reduce:** Reduce the fleet size by the following:
 - a. Status of Department has changed, i.e. Station has closed or is not in CAD as a recognized station.
 - b. More pressurized hydrants have been put in place requiring less need for Tankers.
 - c. Mutual Aid can assist reducing requirements of individual Departments and still meet ISO requirements.

The Apparatus committee recommends the attached changes to the replacement schedule as shown. We have also made adjustments to costs that would be associated with our decisions. We would like for these recommendations to be brought to the Fire Commission for approval.

**WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION
APPARATUS COMMITTEE**

**TO: Wake County Fire Commission
2008**

September

FROM: Apparatus Committee

Subject: Recommendations for Fuel Consumption

The Apparatus Committee feels we have several very viable ways to recommend reduction in fuel costs within the County.

- 1. We recommend that we start talks with Raleigh, Cary, and Durham County, to try and stop sending multiple units on First Responder calls, i.e. a Raleigh Unit and a County Unit, or two (2) County Units to the same call, or send closest station only. This would have to be a Policy change with the above cities and Wake County agreeing in some cases, others it will have to be an internal operational change.**
- 2. Fire Commission adopt and enforce a Policy that no one adds their self to another dispatched Departments call unless requested by the initial unit dispatched, or a Chief Officer requests more units.**
- 3. Review the attached document for the types of calls and the number of units responding to each type of call in particular to Fire Alarms, we recommend that each Department adopt the ISO standard for responding to Fire Alarms.**
- 4. Utilize Brush Units or Admin Vehicles for First Responder calls in lieu of a larger Engine/Pumper Tanker, if possible.**

The Apparatus Committee feels that these are a few ways to reduce fuel costs and to keep Departments fuels costs down, this does not preclude any Department with coming up with their own ways to help reduce costs.