

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

Thursday, May 13, 2010

ADOPTED Minutes

(Audio Replays of the meeting are available upon request)

A meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, May 13th, 2010, 7:00 PM, in the Wake County EMS Training Facility, Cary Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Lucius Jones called the meeting to order.

The following members were present: Chief Cecil Parker, Ms. Ann Suggs (via telephone), Chief Freddy Lynn, Chief A.C. Rich, Chief Mark Haraway, Mr. Keith Gregory, Ms. Barbara Poole, Mr. Billy Myrick, Mr. Robert Stagg, Chief David Cates, Battalion Chief Lee Price, and Chief Tom Vaughan.

Members absent were: Chief Tony Mauldin, Commissioner Paul Coble, and Chief Rodney Privette.

The following County officials and staff were present: Director of Fire and Emergency Management Raymond Echevarria, Budget and Management Analyst Jason Horton, and Public Safety Business Manager Demetric Potts.

Mr. Myrick gave an invocation.

The agenda was approved as submitted.

MINUTES

Upon motion of Chief Cecil Parker and second by Battalion Chief Lee Price, the Fire Commission unanimously approved minutes of the March 18th, 2010, regular meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

FIRE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Budget Committee Chair Billy Myrick opened discussion with a brief overview. He turned discussion to Budget and Management Analyst Jason Horton. Mr. Horton presented the Budget Committee's recommended FY 11 fire tax district budget. He informed the Fire Commission the guiding principles for budget development were:

- Maintain an 8.0 cent tax rate;
- Include additional positions;
- Funding for mandated state retirement increases;
- Possible merit (pending County decision);
- Operating impacts of Garner Station #4.

Mr. Horton provided a presentation on the recommended operating and capital budgets. The recommended budget includes:

- Revenues
 - Recommended tax rate of 8.0 cents;
 - Revenue growth assumption of -0.45% in FY11;
 - Operating/capital distribution adjusted to 84%/16%;
 - Apparatus sales totaling \$9,000;
 - Recommended revenues total \$20,204,000.
- Department Appropriations
 - Department appropriations increased to \$16,514,571 (4.5% over previous year) includes:
 - Annualized new and reclassified positions;
 - Adjusted retirement for departments participating in the Local Government Retirement System;
 - Assumes one-time merit of 2.0% for full-time employees;
 - Reoccurring flat adjustment of \$7,500 per department;
 - Includes \$430,000 in department debt service (capital sources).
- New Staffing Expansion \$301,500
 - Includes nine (9) positions beginning no earlier than November 1, 2010.
- System-wide Expenses \$825,352
- Contribution to Fund Balance \$53,077
- Transfer to Capital Budget \$1,671,000 (Projects in FY 2010)
- Apparatus
 - Five (5) engine replacements, two (2) rescues, and six (6) small vehicle replacements.
- Facilities
 - Planned Facility Repairs;
 - Stony Hill UST remediation continuation.
- Equipment

- Small capital, air bottle, and turnout gear programs; pager and defibrillator replacements.
- Fire Tax District Debt Service \$1,140,000 for Prior Year Capital Purchases (Apparatus)

The Budget Committee identified other issues for future analysis:

- Long-term department appropriation strategy;
- Municipal cost-shares;
- Pre-existing debt payoff analysis;
- Clarifying line descriptions;
- Further development of budget object analyses.

Next steps in the budget process are:

- Fire Commission consideration (May 13)
- County Manager's recommendation to Board of Commissioners (May 17)
- Public hearings (June 7)
- Board of Commissioners adoption (June 21)

After the presentation, Fire Commission members discussed possible uses of the \$7,500 base increase and whether the base increase should be used for personnel increases.

Mr. Bob Stagg motioned to accept the Budget Committee recommended budget with a change that the \$7,500 base increase cannot be used for personnel expenses and that departments provide Wake County's Fire Marshal a line item budget by August 1, 2010, detailing where the funds are going to be used. Chief Parker clarified that the fire tax budget recommendation for a 2% merit will not be included if the County does not fund a 2% merit. After clarification that the fire tax budget will mirror the County's recommendation for merit, Chief Parker seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER RECOMMENDATION TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR RADIO PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

Chief Roof advised the Fire Commission of the need to perform preventative maintenance on the existing 800 MHZ radios based on manufacturer recommendations. Chief Roof informed the Fire Commission that the request is to reallocate approximately \$42,000 from contribution to fund balance to fund the radio maintenance while the radios are being reprogrammed for the rebanding project. Chief Lynn motioned to accept the recommendation. After a second by Mr. Stagg, the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER RECOMMENDED FIRE PROTECTION AGREEMENT

Director Echevarria presented a recommended fire protection agreement to the Fire Commission. Director Echevarria informed the Fire Commission the Contract Committee

began meeting in August 2009 to begin revising the contract. The Committee has provided updates to the Fire Commission and fire chiefs during contract development and incorporated feedback from earlier drafts. There are two contracts – one for not-for-profit fire departments and one for municipal fire departments. The new contract:

- Addresses composition of not-for-profit fire department boards of directors
- Provides actions for contract noncompliance
- Requires compliance with fire service compensation plan
- Provides additional financial controls
- Provides plan to improve fire insurance ratings
- Provides for additional training requirements
- Requires background and driver license reviews

After discussion, Mr. Stagg motioned to approve the revised fire protection agreement. After a second by Battalion Chief Lee Price, the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION AGENDA

FIRE TAX FINANCIAL REPORT

Jason Horton advised the Fire Commission there are no outstanding issues of note at this time.

CHAIR REPORT

Chair Jones congratulated Fire Commission member Keith Gregory on his recent appointment by the Governor to 19th District Court judge.

FIRE/RESCUE DIRECTOR REPORT

No report.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Stagg stated that one issue that came up during contract committee discussions is the variety of fire helmet color schemes. Fire Commission members discussed impact of standardizing color scheme. After discussion, members agreed to ask equipment committee to survey current practices and consider developing a recommendation for standardization of probationary firefighter helmet color.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chief A.C. Rich addressed the Fire Commission. He asked the Fire Commission to have the Budget Committee evaluate equity in funding operating budgets. He requested that the Budget Committee evaluate departments based on what they need to operate.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned