

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

Thursday, January 20, 2011

Adopted Minutes

(Audio Replays of the meeting are available upon request)

A meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, January 20, 2011, 7:00 PM, in the Wake County EMS Training Facility, Cary Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Commission Chair Lucius Jones called the meeting to order.

The following members were present: Chief Tony Mauldin, Chief A.C. Rich, Chief David Cates, Chief Rodney Privette, Ms. Barbara Poole, Billy Myrick, Assistant Chief Lee Price, Mr. Robert Stagg (Phone), Commissioner Paul Coble, and Mr. Keith Gregory.

Members absent were: Ms. Ann Suggs.

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

Mr. Billy Myrick gave an invocation.

The agenda was approved as submitted.

MINUTES

Upon motion of Mr. Paul Coble and second by Mr. Keith Gregory the Fire Commission unanimously approved minutes of the November 18th, 2010, Regular Meeting.

Chair Lucius Jones acknowledged that there was a quorum and requested a motion to approve the Agenda with the removal of the Wendell Fire Department Proposal item. Upon motion of Mr. Paul Coble and second by Mr. Keith Gregory the Fire Commission unanimously approved the Agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

Election of Fire Commission Chair and Vice Chair

Fire and Emergency Management Director Ray Echevarria stated that it was that time of the year where we elect the Chair and Vice Chair for the upcoming year and the process that we have

followed in the past has been that we open the floor for nominations and once we receive the nominations we will precede with the voting. Mr. Echevarria stated that unless someone had a better plan we would move forward as we have in the past. Mr. Echevarria asked for nominations for Fire Commission Chair. Mr. Paul Coble nominated Mr. Lucius Jones and Chief Rodney Privette seconded the nomination. Chief Mauldin nominated Assistant Chief Lee Price. Mr. Echevarria asked if there were any other nominations and hearing none he closed the floor for nominations and moved to vote for Mr. Jones and Assistant Chief Price. Mr. Echevarria stated that we would vote for Mr. Jones first and those who wanted to vote for Mr. Jones would do so by a show of hands and since Mr. Stagg was on the phone he would have to speak up for whoever he was voting for. Those that voted for Mr. Jones as Chair for 2011 were Chief Privette, Mr. Jones, Mr. Myrick, Mrs. Poole, Mr. Coble, Mr. Stagg, and Mr. Gregory. The count was 7 votes for Mr. Jones. There were 4 votes for Assistant Chief Price. Mr. Echevarria announced that Mr. Lucius Jones would be the Fire Commission Chair for 2011.

Mr. Echevarria opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Coble nominated Mr. Bob Stagg for Vice Chair. Chief Mauldin nominated Assistant Chief Lee Price for Vice Chair. Mr. Echevarria asked if there were any other nominations and hearing none he closed the floor for nominations and moved to vote for Mr. Stagg and Assistant Chief Price. Mr. Echevarria stated that we would vote for Mr. Stagg first and those who wanted to vote for Mr. Stagg would do so by a show of hands. Those that voted for Mr. Stagg as Vice Chair for 2011 were Chief Privette, Mr. Jones, Mr. Myrick, Mrs. Poole, Mr. Coble, Mr. Stagg, and Mr. Gregory. There were 4 votes for Assistant Chief Price. Mr. Echevarria announced that Mr. Bob Stagg would be the Fire Commission Vice Chair for 2011.

FACILITY COMMITTEE

Chief Ed Brinson, Equipment Committee Chair informed the Fire Commission members that a copy of his committee report was included in the agenda packet. Chief Brinson stated that he wanted to bring the Fire Commission up to date on a couple of items and that he had one action item for the Fire Commission to consider. Chief Brinson then verbally updated the Fire Commission members with regard to the items on the Facility Committee report.

STATUS OF THE BAY LEAF STATION NO. 3, HOPKINS AND DURHAM HIGHWAY RENOVATION PROJECTS

- Bay Leaf – The project is in the final stages of planning.
- Hopkins – The project is complete.
- Durham-Highway – The project is complete.

FIRE STATION REPAIR, MAINTENANCE, AND RENOVATION POLICY

- The facility committee is requesting the adoption of a Fire Station Repair, Maintenance, and Renovation Policy by the Fire Commission. The purpose of the policy is to guide the facility committee and fire departments through a RMR budget expansion request, and the project prioritization, approval and award process.
 - The policy was an agenda item last month and action on this item was tabled until this month's meeting.
 - A copy of the policy is attached at the end of the report.

ZEBULON FIRE STATION NO. 2 CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

General Information

- Chief Perry presented a proposal to the Facility Committee on August 25, 2010 and requested the committee review the CIP request to see if there was a desire for county participation in building a second municipal fire station that would serve the north side of Zebulon. The facility committee agreed to hear the request. Over the course of several meetings, Chief Perry presented the following information supporting his request:
 - The town has been working on this project since 2002.
 - Growth is occurring on the north side of town and the current fire station, located on the south side of town, no longer meets all of the department's municipal needs.
 - Wake EMS has expressed a desire to co-locate in the new fire station.
 - The department has a desire to provide better fire protection to the north, east and western side of the district.
 - The current fire station cannot house all of the department apparatus and there is no room to expand the existing fire station.
 - The current station has been added on to three times.
 - The Town of Zebulon has already purchased the land for the fire station.
 - There would be a quicker response to the county areas being served by this fire station.
 - The department is currently meeting the response time standard of 9.2 minutes to the county areas 99% of the time.
 - The department is asking for a 20% funding match due to the station benefiting the town more than the county.
 - The Wakelon fire district is divided between a five-mile and a six-mile fire district. Currently both districts have a Class 9S insurance rating. The fire department has a desire to lower the fire insurance rating in the five-mile district and this desire can be accomplished with their current station location. Having the new fire station would allow the six-mile district to move to a five-mile district.
 - It was determined that approximately 50 occupancies are located in the 6 mile Wakelon fire district that have an Department of Insurance class 9S rating.

Costs

- Chief Perry provided a total cost estimate of \$2,012,000 for the planning, design, site work, construction, and furnishings. The 20% construction cost estimate for the county fire's portion of the project is \$402,400.00
- The estimated county portion of the monthly operating cost was \$463. The annualized cost is \$5,556. These costs include phone, utilities, insurance, maintenance, office supplies, and IT equipment and services.
- The department plans to hire three additional firefighters for this station and desires for the county to pay a portion of their salary and benefits.

Maps, Data, and Information Review

- A detailed review of maps and data provided by Chief Perry and Director Echevarria was held during the meetings. The review included the following:

- Maps of the proposed station location and county response areas.
- Maps showing closest station response.
- Maps of mutual-aid departments, locations, and travel times.
- Maps of distribution and concentration of fire stations associated with existing stations and the new station.
- Response times analysis based on 7 ½ and 15 ½-minute travel time using GIS street speed limits. The 7 ½ minute travel time is for the first due unit. The 15 ½ minute travel time is for the balance of the first alarm assignment. The following were reviewed:
 - 7 ½-minute travel times for the Zebulon and Hopkins fire departments.
 - 7 ½-minute travel times with the new fire station location and the existing Zebulon and Hopkins locations.
 - 7 ½-minute travel times with both Wendell fire stations added to the response with the current Zebulon and Hopkins locations.
 - 7 ½-minute travel times with both Wendell fire stations added to the response with the current Zebulon and Hopkins locations and the proposed new fire station.
 - Incident counts within the existing Zebulon 7 ½-minute travel time.
 - Incident counts with the proposed Zebulon 7 ½-minute travel time with the additional fire station.
- Incident counts within the fire district that had a response time of greater than 9 minutes.
- Simultaneous incident counts
- Historical response time data for the last ten years.
- Response time data over 9 minutes.

After Fire Commission discussion, Chief Tony Mauldin motioned that the Fire Commission approve the Fire Station Repair, Maintenance, and Renovation Policy. Mr. Paul Coble seconded the motion. Commission unanimously approved the Fire Station Repair, Maintenance, and Renovation Policy.

Chief Brinson stated that the last item he has on the agenda was the Zebulon Fire Station No. 2 Construction Project. Chief Brinson stated that the Facilities Committee had been reviewing a request for the past several months from Zebulon Fire Station for County participation in the construction of Zebulon Fire Station No. 2. Chief Brinson noted that currently in the Fire Commission Long Range Business Plan that there were no plans to build fire stations in areas that are in rated fire districts or areas where service level goals are being met. Chief Brinson stated that the provisions of the Long Range Business Plan do not support Zebulon Fire Station No. 2. Chief Brinson stated that the conclusions from the Facilities Committee is that the current fire station location met its established response time standards as defined in the Long Range Business Plan, the Committee agreed that the Wakelon fire district is a 9s rated fire district, and an additional fire station is not required to meet established response time standards or the 9s fire insurance rating, and the Zebulon Fire Department does not meet the established criteria for supporting an additional fire station, the Facilities Committee agreed that the further review of maps, data, and other information regarding this request is not warranted and a call for a motion to support this request was made and the motion died for lack of a second, therefore the Facilities

does not support funding a portion of construction or operation of Zebulon Station Fire Station No. 2.

After Fire Commission discussion Mr. Myrick made a motion to table the issue and refer it to the Budget Committee for a recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Coble. Fire Commission unanimously approved the motion.

APPARATUS COMMITTEE

Chief Woods stated that on the Apparatus Committee Report there were three items and he asked the Fire Commission to strike item #3 of the report.

Chief Woods shared with the Fire Commission that the Apparatus Committee along with County Staff and the Budget Office at our last meeting made the decision to move out Tanker Replacement one year, to sustain the current Budget. This means that the purchase of five tankers will be moved out one more year. Chief Woods wanted to clarify that this is the current plan and the Apparatus Committee would like to have the option to modify the plan if an emergency replacement comes up. If this should happen the Apparatus Committee would work with the County staff and the Budget Committee to re-evaluate the plan.

Upon motion of Mr. Paul Coble and second by Chief Privette the Fire Commission unanimously approved moving the Tanker Replacement out one year.

Chief Woods stated that the Apparatus Committee has been working with Wake New-Hope Fire Department for over a year going along with what the Fire Commission has directed us to do in trying to reduce the fleet. Chief Woods shared that Wake New-Hope Fire Department has agreed and he has the original signed document from Wake New-Hope Fire Department signed by their Board and their Fire Chief that they agree to give up one vehicle which would be a 1995 Tanker. This action would reduce their tanker fleet by one. At this time the Committee's plan is to place this vehicle at another fire department whereby we would not have to buy five tankers at one time we could buy four and push out the replacements another three to four years. Chief Woods stated that at this time they would not like to state which department would receive the tanker until they have had an opportunity to talk to all the departments to get an agreement. Chief Woods stated that there is money in the budget for this and they have talked to the Budget Office staff and they are in agreement with this action.

Upon motion of Mr. Paul Coble and second by Mr. Billy Myrick the Fire Commission unanimously approved the theory of purchasing and reissuing vehicles to other fire departments. Once the final details are determined the Apparatus Committee will come back to the Fire Commission for final approval.

EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

Captain Price stated that most of his report is for informational purposes only and he noted that there was one change to the report. Under Air Cylinder Replacement you can remove the

request by Wendell Fire Department to receive funding as well as the request for additional funding.

Captain Price stated that since the last Fire Commission meeting the Equipment Committee has been extremely busy. They have several areas that they are currently working on with reference to replacement items. The replacement schedule for air cylinders has been updated and the monies are available for departments to replace their air cylinders.

Captain Price informed the Fire Commission that the Purchase Order for the FY 2011 Defibrillator purchase has been approved and monies are available for that purchase as well. He stated that the Fire Service was able to see a significant savings on this purchase by piggy backing on the EMS bid including a contribution / credit by the manufacturer on the return of the older units. The Committee has a recommendation to expedite the purchase of the FY 2012 defibrillator allotment. The Committee would like to encumber the funds in late FY 2011 which would allow the Fire Service to avoid any cost increases the manufacturer may have. The current contract that EMS has expires the first week in July and this is the contract that we have been purchasing the FY 2010 & FY 2011 defibrillators. If we let that contract run out before we encumber the money for the FY 2012 units we don't know what the price is going to do and we can only ensure the current pricing through the first week of July. The Committee feels that there will be sufficient funds available after July 1st to cover those purchases. Captain Price stated that it is the Committee's recommendation to expedite the purchase of the FY 2012 defibrillators if it is the pleasure of the Fire Commission.

Captain Price informed the Fire Commission that the Committee is partnering with the City of Raleigh who is currently doing thermal imager evaluations. They expect to go to bid sometime in mid to late February. It is felt that partnering with the City will be a win win situation because they have a small number as well as the County and by combining those hopefully we can see a significant cost savings with the purchase of the FY 2011 units.

Captain Price noted that in the Agenda Packet there was information on a helmet color survey. The Fire Commission asked the Committee to review this information and bring back a proposal. Based on the discussion of the Committee it is their recommendation that the Committee adopt a standardized color to the probationary and junior fire fighters as department budgets allow for replacements. That helmet color would be yellow for probationary members and green for junior members. The Committee did see a split between Captains and Lieutenants and it the Committees recommendation that as funds are available and helmets are replaced that Captains and Lieutenants wear red helmets as a standardizing feature.

Captain Price reported that the Committee would be holding meetings with vendors early next month and begin our evaluation process shortly after that for the new turnout gear bid. The process should be complete by June.

Upon motion of Mr. Billy Myrick and second by Mr. Paul Coble the Fire Commission unanimously approved the Air Cylinder Replacement, FY 2012 Defibrillator purchase and the FY 2011 Thermal Imager purchase.

FIRE TAX FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Jason Horton advised the Fire Commission that there were copies of the financial reports in the meeting materials. He stated that he would just touch on a couple high points. When he ran the financial report a total of 89% of the FY 2011 Fire Tax District revenues had been received, and right now we are projecting to be right on target for budgeted revenues for FY 2011. Since a majority of those revenues have been posted the Finance Department has been able to move forward with posting some larger expenditures that were budgeted in FY 2011 such as the transfer to the fire CIP, and transfers to debt service. Those actuals will show up on the financial report. On the Capital Improvement side those projects are progressing at a steady rate, and he is working with Facilities, Design, and Construction; there are several projects that are nearing completion or have been completed and they are in the process of paying those invoices and commitments related to those projects and they will be closing those projects. One of which is the dormitory project that was approved by the Fire Commission a few years ago.

Jason stated that he would like to update the Fire Commission on a couple other activities that he was working on. One is that we have received audits from all the fire departments for FY 2011 and he has reviewed those and shared some of the findings with staff and we are in the process of reaching back out to departments regarding any questions we may have had that were generated out of those audits. Most of the questions that we have had pertained to leave liability estimates not being included in the audit statements, questions regarding fund balance, statements in the management letters to departments. Those three areas are the main things that we were asking questions about. We plan to share that information with the Budget Committee and that information may come to the Fire Commission at a future date.

BUDGET UPDATE

Jason informed the Fire Commission that in their packets there was a draft Budget Calendar for FY 2012. Mr. Horton stated that budget forms have been distributed to the departments, and he has received a few questions from departments related to filling out those forms. The request from departments will be due February 4th, and budget meetings are set to begin on March 9th, and right now are set to be on Wednesday nights with a start time at 6:00 PM lasting to 7:30 PM.

PAGER REPLACEMENT UPDATE

Fire and Emergency Management Director Ray Echevarria stated that at the last Budget Committee meeting there were some questions about pager replacement. Ray said that he tried to get Frank Hall who is the County Radio System Manager to attend the meeting but he couldn't make it tonight. Ray wanted to update the Commission on a couple areas 1) Where we are with the pager replacement, 2) The flow of information. Ray says that some of the feedback that he has gotten is that the flow of information regarding the pager replacement and some of the technical information getting back to the Fire Service is not where it needs to be. Rays says that he talked with Frank about that and they have taken a look at it and it is felt that part of the problem is our representation on the CAD / 800 MHz Ops Group. This group deals with issues just like this and there is a position on that Advisory Board for the County Fire Service.

Currently Darrell Cash from Wake Forest is the County's representative and it is believed that he has missed the last three or four meetings. Ray stated that he would be working with Lucius and Frank Hall to see if there is something that we could do to improve the attendance and communication. Hopefully that will help improve the communication flow.

Ray reported that the pager replacement is part of a larger project which is the FCC has mandated that Public Safety Agencies narrow band their frequencies so our tone & voice and alpha numeric pagers which operated on VHF had to be replaced with narrow band equipment to include infrastructure, devices, and radios in the stations. This affects the Fire Service and also affects EMS. So what Frank Hall is doing as part of the County's narrow banding efforts is move forward with the narrow banding project in a way that doesn't create unnecessary operational problems.

Ray reported that Frank Hall told him that he is still on pace to bid out the devices in February and he will start deploying them soon after that hopefully in March. Ray stated that we are on schedule to do the replacement this year, but Frank is working on the narrow banding project so that we replace these pagers in coordination with EMS and other work to make sure that the towers and CAD System will work.

CHAIR REPORT

No report.

FIRE/RESCUE DIRECTOR REPORT

No report.

OTHER BUSINESS

Fire Commission Member Paul Coble stated that with some additional duties that he was going to have this year he wanted to suggest that the Fire Commission allow for an alternate to sit in if he couldn't attend a meeting. He suggested that Phil Matthews, Vice Chair, Wake County Board of Commissioners serve as the alternate. By consensus the Fire Commission agreed to allow Mr. Matthews to serve as an alternate for Mr. Coble if he were unable to attend a Fire Commission meeting.

Commission Member Billy Myrick took this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Coble on being elected Chair of the Wake County Board of Commissioners as well as thanking him for his willingness to stay a member of the Fire Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chief Brinson stated that we have a Fire Chief that was retiring next month who has served on many committees during his tenure as Fire Chief, and he felt that it would be appropriate at this time if the Fire Commission would recognize Chief Ron Roof for his service to the citizens and Wake County.

Chief Brinson stated that he met with the Chief's from the Southern Region and he has a lot of items on his plate, therefore he is resigning as Chairman of the Facilities Committee and the Facilities Committee effective this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned