

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Adopted Minutes

(Audio Replays of the meeting are available upon request)

A meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, December 11, 2014, 7:00 PM, in the Wake County Commons Building, Cary Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Commission Chair Lucius Jones called the meeting to order.

The following members were present: Chief Tim Pope (North Region), Chief Todd Wright (West Region), Chief Rodney Privette (East Region), Chief Tony Mauldin (South Region Alternate), Chair Lucius Jones, Lee Price (Firefighters Association President), Bob Stagg (Citizen Consumer), Ricky Wright (Citizen Consumer), and Billy Myrick (Citizen Consumer) .

Other members present: Chief David Price (South Region Alternate), Chief Ron Early (North Region Alternate), and Chief Chris Perry (East Region Alternate).

The following members were absent: Judge Keith Gregory (Citizen/Consumer), Judge Michael Denning (Citizen/Consumer), Chief Garland Johnston (West Region Alternate), Commissioner Phil Matthews (WC Commissioner), and Commissioners Paul Coble (WC Commissioners).

The following County officials and staff were present: Fire Services Director Mike Wright, County Manager Jim Hartmann, Deputy County Manager Johnna Rogers, Emergency Services Manager Demetric Potts, Charlie Johnson (Fire Services), Donel Braxton (Fire Services).

Vice Chair Billy Myrick gave an invocation.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion of Chief Rodney Privette, the Fire Commission unanimously approved the Agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

PRESENTATION OF FIRE TAX DISTRICT FY 2016 BUDGET PROCESS

Fire Services Director Mike Wright informed the Fire Commission that he would begin with an overview of the Strategic Plan Process and tie that into the Budget Process and end by turning things over to Kent Green to discuss the Cost Share Study. Director Wright shared the following elements of the Strategic Plan; Standard of Cover, Cost Share Plan, Apparatus and Equipment, Facilities, and Efficiencies. He then shared with the Fire Commission the Budget Reset Elements which included the following; Standard of Cover, Develop Funding Matrix, Analysis of Apparatus & Equipment,

Analysis of Health Care Benefit Options, Compensation Study, develop Cost Share Model, and Analysis of the Fire Tax District model. Director Wright stated that when he looked into the history of the Cost Share he found the following:

- Agreements with municipalities for service of rural districts
- Methodology for costs share varied
- A defined, consistent, equitable, predictable, defensible, documented methodology does not exist
- One town provided information on inception of program
- Staff met with former employee's and reviewed archived documents

Director Wright stated that he wanted to emphasize that the model that will be presented tonight was not an updated version of a prior model staff didn't have formulas facts of figures to work from to plug in new numbers. He stated that what you will see tonight is a new creation of the committee.

Director Wright shared that the charge to the Cost Share Study Committee was to develop a newly defined methodology which allocates cost share for fire protection in an equitable fashion. He shared that some of the criterion that the committee put into place on what they wanted this methodology to be, equitable, defensible, predictable, consistent, able to update on an periodic basis, consistent, and easily understood.

PRESENTATION OF COST SHARING, FUNDING, AND SERVICE DELIVERY ANALYSIS REPORT

Kent Greene of Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), the author of the study, made a brief presentation on the scope, process, findings, and possible funding criteria for the cost share formula to the Fire Commission. Mr. Greene stated that their charge was to look at the existing model and we all know now that there wasn't one, other than that there are various funding models throughout the county for the cost share departments. He shared that they wanted to look at each of the departments that were actually cost sharing, not those departments that are completely funding by the county, not the municipal departments. Just the eight cost share departments that split their funding sources between the municipal and the county revenue. Those departments are Apex, Garner, Holly Springs, Fuquay-Varina, Morrisville, Rolesville, Wake Forest, and Zebulon. Mr. Green stated that they met with each of the fire departments, each of the Town Managers, Fire Chiefs, and pertinent stake holders. The full presentation (Attachment 1) and Cost Sharing, Funding and Service Delivery Analysis Report (Attachment 2) is incorporated into these minutes by attachment.

PRESENTATION OF COST SHARE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Fire Services Director Mike Wright informed the Fire Commission that the Cost Share Committee made the following recommendation regarding the Cost Share Methodology:

Item #1: Cost Share Percentages

Cost Share percentages (County Fire Tax District and Municipal responsibility) should be established using the criteria and weighting listed in the table below. The committee believes that this weighted multi-variable calculation when applied to all eight cost shares will fairly, equitably, and defensibly

reflects the cost of providing fire service. All data sources are available from a central data source on an annual basis; thus the calculation can easily be replicated and updated.

Committee Alternative	
Area	7.5%
Valuation	20.0%
Heated Square Footage	7.5%
Service Demand	35.0%
Population	30.0%

Rationale behind using this weighting is provided below (in weighted priority order).

Service Demand - This is a direct measure of workload, which corresponds directly with required resources. Service demand captures all human and structural activity, whether it is driven by residential, commercial/industrial, or transportation corridors.

Population – Population estimates are frequently used for governmental cost allocations, and this factor is well understood to correlate with both risk and services demand as protecting human life is the highest priority of both fire and medical first response.

Valuation – This factor is used to capture risks and service drivers not fully captured in the aforementioned variable. It is important to reflect the importance of commercial facilities, which do not have a population, but do represent economic importance, daytime “population” from employees and activity which creates service demand within the formula. Additionally, this factor reflects the risks of loss of property tax base.

Heated Square Footage – In addition to people, fire departments primarily protect structures. This variable represents the risk driven primarily by the size of the structure, regardless of taxable or market value. While some square footage in the county is unheated, but still needs to be protected, this data source represents the best proxy that County staff and ESCI have been able to identify. However, total square footage would be a preferable replacement should a credible central source be identified.

Area- Total area does not correspond as closely with service demand as the higher weighted variables above. However, there is value in assigning a lower weight to area in combination with service demand, population, and valuation. This is because total coverage area does impact station location and resource coverage requirements.

Item #2: Update Cycle

The cost share percentage should be recalculated using the most recent data every three years, to ensure cost share arrangements reflect changes in service needs.

Item #3: Heated Square Footage Data

The committee would like to replace heated square footage with total square footage, if County staff is able to identify a central data source that could be used for the purposes of the cost share calculation.

Director Wright stated that the next step for the committee is to look at the data and analyze what we have, the budget reset process needs to move forward in developing the standard of cover.

Mr. Myrick made a motion to table this discussion until there next meeting to give them more time to review the information, data, and methodology. Upon second by Chief Rodney Privette the Fire Commission unanimously approved the motion.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned