

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION
Thursday, January 21, 2010
DRAFT Minutes

(Audio Replays of the meeting are available upon request)

A meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, January 21st, 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: Ms. Ann Suggs, Commissioner Paul Coble, Chief Freddy Lynn, Ms. Barbara Poole, Mr. Billy Myrick, Mr. Keith Gregory, Mr. Robert Stagg, Chief Mark Haraway, Chief David Cates, Battalion Chief Lee Price, Chief Jimmy McCauley, Chief Cecil Parker, Chief Rodney Privette,

Members absent were: Chief Tony Mauldin and Chief A.C. Rich.

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.

Commissioner Coble motioned to amend the agenda by adding election of Chair and Vice-Chair to agenda. After second by Mr. Bob Stagg, agenda unanimously approved.

MINUTES

Upon motion of Commissioner Paul Coble and second by Mr. Robert Stagg, the Fire Commission unanimously approved minutes of the November 19th, 2009, regular meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

PRESENTATION – 200 CLUB OF WAKE COUNTY

Dr. Garner, Board Member of the 200 Club of Wake County, provided the Fire Commission a presentation on the 200 Club. The presentation explained who the 200 Club members are and the mission of the 200 Club. Dr. Garner provided posters and asked all chiefs to display the posters in their stations.

Battalion Chief Lee Price informed the Fire Commission that he is coordinating a softball fund raiser event for the 200 Club on April 10, 2010.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM CONCEPT

Chief Mark Haraway provided a presentation on the Incident Management Team Concept. Chief Haraway informed the Fire Commission that a multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction steering committee is recommending development of countywide incident management teams. Chief Haraway advised the Fire Commission that the Steering Committee seeks the Fire Commission support of the concept.

Commissioner Paul Coble motioned to endorse the concept of incident management team. After a second by Mr. Robert Stagg, the motion passed on a unanimous vote.

FACILITY COMMITTEE

Chief Ed Brinson provided the Facility Committee report:

STATUS OF THE GARNER FIRE STATION NO. 4 PROJECT

- Preparation of the construction site has started.
- A groundbreaking ceremony is planned for February.
- The structural steel should be on site in March.
- The projected opening of the station is during the month of November 2010.

FIRE STATION DORMITORY RENOVATION PROJECT

- The Bayleaf Station No. 2 renovation project will begin soon.
- The project completion dates for the remaining stations are on schedule.

BAY LEAF HEADQUARTERS FIRE STATION RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT.

- No action has occurred on the property agreement since the last Fire Commission meeting.

FIRE STATION CLOSURE PROCESS REVIEW

- The Facility Committee reviewed the latest information from Ray Echevarria regarding preliminary cost estimates for the suburban fire districts. The facility committee defers reporting on the latest information to Director Echevarria as part of his report.

WENDELL FALLS FIRE STATION PROJECT

- No action has taken place since the last Fire Commission Meeting.

HOPKINS FIRE DEPARTMENT RENOVATIONS

- The Facility Committee conducted a review of repairs pertaining to the septic system for the existing portion of the building and metal siding that has deteriorated due to age and environmental exposure.
- A future report will be forthcoming regarding these repairs.

REVIEW OF THE LITTLE RIVER RESERVOIR PROJECT IMPACT ON FIRE PROTECTION

- The purpose of the review was to assist in developing a response from the Facility Committee to the Fire Commission regarding an environmental impact study being conducted by the Army Corp of Engineers and the Department of Transportation.
- Maps and response time data analysis were reviewed for the Hopkins, Zebulon, Wendell Station No. 2, and Rolesville Fire Departments.
- Closing Fowler, Lizard Lick, and Riley Hill roads significantly increases fire department response times to the areas east of the proposed Little River Reservoir. For example, closing Fowler Road would increase response times by 248% for the Hopkins Fire Department.
- The facility committee voted to make a recommendation to the Fire Commission that they pass and forward a resolution to the Board of Commissioners that states one or more roads, including Fowler, Lizard Lick, and Riley Hill Roads remain passable during the Little River Reservoir construction project and that bridges be placed across the Little River Reservoir at Fowler, Lizard Lick and Riley Hill Roads upon completion of the project.

The Fire Commission discussed the impact of the Little River Reservoir on response times in the Eastern area of the County.

After discussion, Commissioner Paul Coble motioned to – 1) Recommend at least one road remains open across the project area during construction; and 2) Consider how fire protection will be provided using a combination of bridges and a new fire station, or other options. After a second by Mr. Billy Myrick, the motion passed on a unanimous vote.

UPDATE ON FIRE STATION CLOSURE PROJECT

Director Echevarria provided an update on the fire station closure project. He informed the Fire Commission that the City of Raleigh has provided a cost estimate that exceeds the current cost of service delivery. He also advised the Fire Commission that the proposal was under review by the County Manager's office.

Fire Commission members expressed concern about the length of time the closure evaluation process is taking, the lack of cost data, and lack of details on service delivery. Members discussed the need to evaluate fire protection on a countywide basis rather than focusing on the four fire stations.

After discussion, Battalion Chief Lee Price motioned for the Fire Commission to not support the fire station closure project and evaluate fire protection on a countywide basis. Chief David Cates seconded the motion. During discussion, Commissioner Coble offered a friendly amendment to "suspend" the fire station closure project. Chief Price accepted the friendly amendment to his motion. The amended motion passed on a unanimous vote.

FEEDBACK ON EASTERN WAKE INSURANCE FUNDING

Budget and Management Analyst Jason Horton provided a report on the status of funding for Eastern Wake Fire Department's insurance funding. The report outlined the historical budget line items for insurance.

Fire Commission members discussed the contingency funds in the FY 10 fire tax budget, and that the contingency funds would provide the funding necessary for Eastern Wake's insurance. Chief Parker provided information from the budget committee's preparation of the FY 10 recommended budget.

After discussion, Chief Parker motioned to approve the funding for Eastern Wake, and Ann Suggs seconded the motion. After continued discussion about the contingency funding, Chief Parker withdrew his motion.

Chief Parker then motioned to divide the approximate \$306,000 in contingency funds equally among the nineteen fire departments and provide approximately \$16,111 to each department as originally proposed in FY 10 Budget Committee fire tax budget recommendation. Battalion Lee Price seconded the motion. The motion failed on a tie vote, 6-yes, 6-no.

Chief Parker then motioned to provide a one-time allocation of \$11,985 to Eastern Wake Fire Department for insurance funding. Chief Privette seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 10-yes, 2-no vote.

INFORMATION AGENDA

PROPOSED FIRE CONTRACT REVISIONS

Director Echevarria provided a draft, revised fire protection contract for the Fire Commission to review before the March meeting. He requested feedback from Fire Commission members on the proposed draft and informed the Fire Commission that the contract will be on a future agenda for consideration of approval.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Budget and Management Analyst Jason Horton provided a budget calendar for the FY 11 budget and reviewed dates in the calendar. He informed the Fire Commission that budget requests are due back from fire departments on January 29, 2010.

FIRE TAX FINANCIAL REPORT

Jason Horton provided a fire tax financial report. Mr. Horton identified budget changes since last meeting related to the new firefighter position for the Fuquay Varina Fire Department. The Fire Commission discussed fire tax revenues for the current year and for next year.

CHAIR REPORT

No report.

FIRE/RESCUE DIRECTOR REPORT

No report.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Chair Jones opened the floor for nominations for Fire Commission chair. Commissioner Coble nominated Mr. Lucius Jones for another term. Chief Freddy Lynn nominated Mr. Bob Stagg for chair. Being no further nominations, nominations were closed.

Fire Commission members elected Mr. Lucius Jones to another term as Chair on a vote of 7 – Lucius Jones, 5 – Bob Stagg.

Chair Jones opened the floor for nominations for vice-chair. Commissioner Coble nominated Mr. Bob Stagg. Being no further nominations, nominations were closed and Mr. Stagg was elected unanimously as vice-chair.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Coble informed the Fire Commission of a recent incident involving missing funds from the Garner Fire Department. He reported that an audit is underway to verify the amount and that the proper authorities are involved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chief Ed Brinson addressed the Fire Commission He reminded the Fire Commission that a process was supposed to be in place to request the approximately \$16,000 in contingency funds. He recommended that future requests considered by the Fire Commission be capped at the approximate \$16,000 amount.

Chief Wright addressed the Fire Commission. He expressed disappointment about the contingency funds. He informed the Fire Commission there appeared to be a gap in the Fire Commission accepting feedback.

Chief Roof addressed the Fire Commission. He expressed concern about the fire station closure evaluation process and felt that fire chiefs should have been more involved at the end.

Mr. Ray Broadwell, Eastern Wake Fire Department Board of Director President addressed the Fire Commission. He informed the Fire Commission that Eastern Wake presented accurate information on its insurance costs and inquired whether the additional funds for insurance need to be corrected again in the upcoming budget.

Chief Chris Wilson addressed the Fire Commission. Chief Wilson advised the Fire Commission that the services mentioned in the petition are city services. He also expressed a perception that cost is determining the fire station closure evaluation and recommended that the station closure process consider funding and service delivery.

Battalion Chief Lee Price addressed the Fire Commission. He discussed the approximate \$16,000 per department in contingency funds and expressed he feels an injustice was done by not providing those funds.

Chief Freddy Lynn addressed the Fire Commission. Chief Lynn requested a process for the contingency funds be in place by the March meeting. He also requested that agendas be sent out a week in advance of the meetings, requested an updated list of committee membership, and requested the chairs of all committee send committee meeting notices and minutes to all fire chiefs.

Mr. Rodney Dickerson, Town of Garner Assistant Manager, addressed the Fire Commission. He advised the Fire Commission that detailed information related to the Garner Fire Department missing funds was asked to not be given out. He also informed the Fire Commission that service delivery in the area will not be impacted.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.