

**WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1998
(Adopted 1-19-99)**

Time:	7:10 PM - 9:20 PM
Location:	Wake County Commons Building
Present :	Blaine Parks, Citizen/Consumer (Alternate) Phil Mitchell, South Region/Primary Rodney Privette, East Region/Alternate George Mills, North Region/Primary Ned Perry, Citizen/Consumer Bonnie Woodruff, Citizen/Consumer Bill Stevenson, President of Firemen's Association Cloyce Anders, External Facilitator (Non-voting) Ray Echevarria, Interim Director-Fire/Rescue Division Ed Brinson, West Region/Primary Max Ashworth, Citizen/Consumer Tom Vaughan, East Region/Primary Chuck Sannipoli, Citizen/Consumer Tony Chiotakis, West Region/Alternate A. C. Rich, North Region/Alternate
Absent:	Ken Farmer, South Region/Alternate Nancy Schwarm, Citizen/Consumer
Recognized:	David Cooke, Deputy County Manager Tim Lanier, Interim Public Safety Director Chris Perry, Shift Supervisor-Fire/Rescue Division Sherry Scoggins, Executive Secretary

<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Discussion & Summary of Topics:</u>
	The meeting began at 7:10.
	Roll was taken.
Comments by Cloyce Anders:	We are looking at a job to be done. This is critical and will have a tremendous impact on citizens of Wake County. This commission is charged with a responsibility and must also always consider this occupation as a hazard. We are fortunate to have fire services. We are blessed in Wake County to have dedicated volunteers. Volunteers are our most valuable asset. Not belittling career departments. Two handouts distributed to Wake County Fire Commission members -

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1996 Volunteer Fire Service in Delaware 2. 1994 The Volunteer Fire Service in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania <p><i>Comparing Wake County to Delaware, if the volunteers were replaced by career personnel, would need 32 people, at an average cost of \$47,250 per person times the 20 volunteer stations for a total cost of \$30,240,000. Presently these volunteer stations are currently saving the tax payers \$22 million in tax dollars for salaries alone per year. Need to perpetuate the volunteer efforts. Wanted to point out costs and it is a myth that volunteer departments are less professional than career departments. Continue improvement for fire insurance ratings for home owners. Try to go from 9 to 6. Protection class is a source of pride by various departments. There is a lot to do, must remain focused. Must be organized and people need to work together. Must join together so we can be successful.</i></p>
<p>Comments by Commissioner:</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Comments by Ray Echevarria:</p>	<p>Encouraged members to call, do not hesitate. Willing to help at any moment. Handbook may be big and was given to everyone as a frame of reference. Many fire chiefs and citizens are not aware of this information. The handbook is for the commissions use and meant to serve as a guide. Information will continue to be added.</p> <p>We are fortunate to have Mr. Anders; he is very knowledgeable in fire service issues. Also, thanks for volunteering time. This is an important commission with a lot of work to do in a short time.</p> <p>Distributed 3 hand-outs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy of Contract 2. Draft of Rules of Procedure of Commission 3. Members Roster <p>Hope to have procedures on how budget will be created, so not to start from scratch.</p>
<p>Housekeeping:</p>	<p>Meeting Dates, Time & Location:</p> <p>Commission will meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 PM at the Wake County Commons Building beginning January 19, 1999. If there is a conflict with obtaining the Commons, then will use a fire department facility.</p> <p>Notification of meetings will be sent out by the Fire/Rescue Division.</p>

	Agendas will be sent out subsequent to meeting dates.
Establish State Mission (Role) of Commission:	
Mutual Aid Funding Issues:	This is who gets funds from the county. This group will decide how mutual aid funds will be dispersed.
Single Fire Protection and Emergency Services Contract:	<p>There was some disagreement. Will need to work with it. It is here to stay. Will have to decide how funds will be used. Service district is different from response districts.</p> <p>Clarification - Not one fire district, one service tax district. Currently use 21 rural districts . All the districts can be confusing.</p> <p>ISO for those fire protection districts vary. Ratings range from 1 (the best) to 10 (non-rated). Rating is based on amount/availability of water, equipment and service logs.</p>
Fire Protection and Emergency Services Contract:	Contracts exist between various fire departments and Wake County. Will review the blank contract handout and make recommendations.
Operating Budgets of Departments:	
Capital Improvement Projects Departments:	Would include items like building.
Firefighter and volunteer incentive retention and recruitment programs:	<p>Notice in Pennsylvania study. There is a dwindling number of people to manage volunteer departments. States with strong volunteerism give incentives. Some departments have own retirement packages.</p> <p>Wake County Firemen's Association is looking at retirement benefits.</p>
Continuing Improvement of Fire Protection Systems:	
Reviewing ISO and Consultants Reports:	Review ISO.
Service District Operation Regulations and Guidelines for Wake County Fire Protection Service District:	In other words, what minimum standards.

<p>Appoint Subcommittees:</p> <p>Capital Improvement Project:</p>	<p><i>Charles Sannipoli - Chairperson</i> <i>Phil Mitchell</i> <i>Nancy Schwarm</i> <i>George Mills</i> <i>Tony Chiotakis</i></p>
<p>Budget Review:</p>	<p>Mr. Anders stated that in establishing committees, have to be concerned with the Budget Review Committee. This should be as much a responsibility of each department as the committee. Only have so much that can be spent.</p> <p>Recommendation: Each primary and alternate region representative get with the other departments within the region to prepare budgets. Then present material to the Wake County Fire Commission for review prior to turning final budget request to Wake County Board of Commissioners.</p> <p><i>Bill Stevenson - Chairperson</i> <i>Ed Brinson - West Region/Primary</i> <i>Tony Chiotakis - West Region/Alternate</i> <i>Ken Farmer - South Region/Alternate</i> <i>George Mills - North Region/Primary</i> <i>Phil Mitchell - South Region/Primary</i> <i>Rodney Privette - East Region/Alternate</i> <i>A.C. Rich - North Region/Alternate</i> <i>Tom Vaughan - East Region/Primary</i></p> <p>Mr. Parks was concerned that a citizen/consumer was not on the committee. Mr. Anders pointed out this was for the budget preparation and that it would still be presented to the Wake County Fire Commission prior to going to the County Commissioners.</p>

Contract and Performance Requirements:	<i>Max Ashworth - Chairperson Rodney Privette A. C. Rich Ken Farmer Tom Vaughan</i>
Planning:	<i>Ned Perry - Chairperson Bonnie Woodruff Blaine Parks Bill Stevenson Ed Brinson</i>
Commissioner Brannon Recognized:	Apologized for being late. Appreciates the citizens and fire department input. This is an important cross roads and will need to address stations and pay issues. Will be here at meetings and thank you for being here.
Other Business:	
800 MHz:	<p>Mr. Anders mentioned letter that Chief Mills sent a letter to Commissioner Ward about the communications systems. Will this be an issue for discussion? What is best for citizens and County?</p> <p>Chief Mills stated concern due to newly elected commissioners. Worried that new board will not proceed with the 800 MHz system.</p> <p>Recommended to support the 800 MHz system to the new commissioners. Important to exchange dialogue of support of the 1994 study and 800 MHz.</p> <p>Mr. Perry commented that it is apparent that a great deal of studies have been done. Technology appears good for now and can be up-graded for the future.</p> <p>Chief Mills concerned that this will be a political issue and not looked at as a merit issue.</p> <p>Mr. Anders commented that the Wake County Fire Commission serve as a reference for communications. The Wake County Fire Commission can not afford to become a political body. Is confident that the proper information will be received by our elected officials.</p> <p>Commissioner Brannon commented that she believed the Wake County Fire Commission would be received as a resource for information.</p> <p>Chief Mills commented that this would be a part of improving fire service.</p>

	<p><i>Recommendation:</i> Anders, Perry and Mills to generate a letter of support. Unanimous approval for letter to Wake County Commissioners from the Wake County Fire Commission.</p>
<p>Current Priority Issues of the Fire Commission:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fire Protection Contract Development 2. Performance, Service and Contract Compliance Issues 3. Funding Distribution/Service District Budget Development.
<p>Discussion on Funding Distribution/Service District Budget Development:</p>	<p>Ray stated the budget office should be sending out a timeline for when budgets are due in December.</p> <p>Chief Mills inquired would the regional chief budgets be due April 1.</p> <p>Ray advised that he had not seen a date in writing yet from the county budget office, but as soon as the dates became available, they would be sent out, possibly by the end of December. Ray also advised the need to start early and quickly on budget preparation and can use modified forms to expedite process.</p> <p>Chief Vaughan asked would budgets still go to the budget office.</p> <p>Ray responded yes, and since the service tax district is new, we will all learn together as the process is developed. The budget office did express an interest to sit in with the Budget Review Committee.</p> <p>When the budgets are brought back, can include Mr. Parks in the Budget Review Committee.</p> <p>Service tax districts are county created districts. If any municipality wants to join, municipality has to present a resolution to the county. To date, none have joined.</p> <p>Chief Chiotakis suggested to let municipalities have a liaison on the subcommittee since some municipalities are covered by volunteer departments.</p> <p>Mr. Anders commented that we need to coordinate and work with EMS. Can we compliment each other? Can we share buildings? We are here to serve and help each other.</p>
<p>Closing Comments:</p>	<p>Mr. Anders asked if there was anything else for the commission. From a facilitator stand point, anything that can be done, please present. To the chairman of the</p>

	committees, let us know the date and time of meeting so this can be forwarded to all members. Would like a report from each committee to be presented at the January meeting.
Confirm next meeting date:	The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 19, 1999, at 7 PM at the Wake County Commons Building.

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