

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION
Thursday, September 20, 2007
Adopted Minutes

(Audio Replays of the meeting are available upon request)

A regular meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, September 20, 2007, 7:00 PM, in the Wake County EMS Training Facility, Carya Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Ray Echevarria called the meeting to order.

The following members were present: Ms. Ann Suggs, Mr. Billy Myrick, Chief Tom Vaughan, Chief Mark Haraway, Chief Mike Cooper, Mr. Lucius Jones, Mr. Bill Gatewood, Chief Chris Wilson, and Chief Scott McCollum.

Members absent were: Chief Cecil Parker, Mr. Michael Fletcher, Mr. Wayne Sherrod, Commissioner Paul Coble, Chief Rodney Privette, Chief Tony Mauldin, and Senator Vernon Malone.

Mr. Myrick gave an invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Myrick made a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Jones. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Myrick made a motion to approve the minutes of July 19, 2007, which was seconded by Mr. Jones. The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

FIRE STATION CLOSURE CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

Ray Echevarria presented the current status and action plan for the service replacement of Western Wake Fire Station #2. The goal is to have an agreement in place prior to the beginning of the FY09 budget preparation cycle.

Ray called attention to the fire station closure section of the business plan. Due to the completion of the Western Wake evaluation, he solicited the Commission's

pleasure regarding proceeding with another station for evaluation. Mr. Jones expressed that he desired that the Facility Committee develop a recommendation and bring it back to the Commission. This was the consensus of the Commission.

FACILITY COMMITTEE

Chief Brinson presented the Facility Committee report. He provided an update on the status of current Heery projects and requests. The dormitory study has been received and the committee has asked the evaluators to re-study the station dorms based upon one bed for each firefighter assigned to a fire station.

The facility committee has also been working on a project plan for a fire station in Southeastern Wake County. The committee requests that the Commission adopt a resolution to forward the project plan to the Budget Committee for incorporation into the Capital Improvement Plan.

The Fire Commission discussed the need to complete the fire facility section of the Long Range Business Plan.

Chief Brinson presented a report on the Bay Leaf Fire Station #1 reconstruction. The committee recommends that the Fire Commission take action tonight after hearing the staffing committee report to make a sound decision based on priority needs. Chief Brinson presented the existing conditions at the station and the various options to address the issues identified. The committee recommends proceeding with the option of demolishing and reconstruction of the fire station at the station's current site. The Fire Commission discussed the various options.

Chair Ann Suggs asked Chief Haraway to update the Fire Commission on the Staffing Committee's efforts to prepare a staffing improvement plan.

Chief Haraway presented a Staffing Committee update. The Committee has set priorities and is working on a staffing plan to begin with the upcoming budget cycle. Chief Haraway advised that approximately 152 firefighters would be needed to meet the goals set forth by the Fire Commission, based on four firefighters per station. The rough estimates of costs for these employees would be approximately seven million dollars. The Staffing Committee is updating the estimates and finalizing the plan to present a recommendation to the Fire Commission at the Commission's November meeting.

Chief Vaughan made a motion to delay any new construction of buildings until ownership of the building and a master plan, including staffing, facility, and budget priorities, is established. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion passed, 4-Yes, 3-No, with Ms. Suggs casting the tie-breaking vote.

Chief McCollum made a motion to adopt the plan for a fire station in Southeastern Wake County and support beginning a land search for the station. Chief Cooper seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION AGENDA

STAFFING COMMITTEE

Chief Haraway provided update during the Facility Committee discussion.

APPARATUS COMMITTEE

Chief Roof presented the apparatus committee report. The brush trucks have been re-bid, based on the revised specifications. The lowest bid was by Seagrave Apparatus at a per unit bid of \$73,929. The bid will be awarded this week, and the committee will be working with affected departments to begin placing orders.

CHAIR REPORT

Ann Suggs thanked all the committees for their hard work.

FIRE/RESCUE SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT

Ray Echevarria presented several items for information. A new budget analyst has been hired, replacing Cheryl Reid. Ray advised all Chiefs to be looking for staffing surveys to collect information on behalf of the staffing committee. There has been a lot of discussion related to apparatus numbering. Ray recommended to send this issue to the CAD/800 User's Group to explore the need of changing the apparatus numbering on a county-wide basis and bring back a recommendation to the Commission.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dewey Poole spoke regarding financial obligations of identified needs. Mr. Poole explained that the Commissioners must be made aware of the financial needs of the fire service.

John Rukavina provided a status report on use of EMS units at fire service special events such as live burns or physical agility testing. The Board of Commissioners approved a policy change that allows EMS agencies to provide a standby unit at

these types of events, at no charge, provided a minimum of five business days notice is given.

Ms. Suggs requested clarification on the Board of Commissioner's action to send the Bay Leaf Fire station project back to the Fire Commission. John Rukavina provided an explanation of this action. The Commissioners wanted clarification and desired that some questions/concerns be addressed.

Mr. Myrick explained that he felt that we be sure that Commissioners are getting the message from the Fire Commission. He explained that a system of communication be established to ensure that they are aware of the Fire Commission's intentions and issues.

Mr. Gatewood explained that a priority be placed on establishing the plan and priorities so that projects are not delayed. Chief Cooper echoed those thoughts and that these projects must be expedited once the plan is completed. He recommended that this plan be presented in conjunction with the budget process. Questions were raised regarding who would compile the information from the various committees into a single plan.

Chief Cooper made a motion to appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of the chairs of the committees to assemble the comprehensive plan with priorities by the January Fire Commission meeting, including a status report in November. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gatewood and passed unanimously.

Chief McCollum thanked the committees for distributing minutes of meetings as requested.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission is scheduled for Thursday, November 15, 2007.