

WAKE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

Thursday, January 17, 2013

Adopted Minutes

(Audio Replays of the meeting are available upon request)

A meeting of the Wake County Fire Commission was held on Thursday, January 17, 2013, 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 Tony Mauldin, Chief A.C. Rich, Chief David Cates, Chief Rodney Privette, Lee Price, Judge Keith Gregory, Billy Myrick, Bob Stagg (Phone), Judge Michael Denning, Commissioner Phil Matthews.

Other members present: Chief David Price (South Region Alternate), Chief Tim Pope (North Region Alternate, Chief Mark Haraway (West Region Alternate),

The following members were absent: Chief Tom Vaughan (East Region Alternate), Barbara Poole, Commissioner Paul Coble.

The following County officials and staff were present: Deputy County Manager Joe Durham, Budget and Policy Analyst Chad Balke, EMS / Fire and Emergency Management Business Officer Demetric Potts, and Fire and Emergency Management Training Director Ricky Dorsey.

Mr. Billy Myrick gave an invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion of Judge Denning and second by Lee Price, the Fire Commission unanimously approved the Agenda.

MINUTES

Upon motion of Lee Price and second by Judge Denning, the Fire Commission unanimously approved minutes of the November 15, 2012, Regular Meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

FIRE COMMISSION CHAIR ELECTION

Demetric Potts stated that January is the time that the Fire Commission elects its Chair and Vice Chair for the calendar year. He stated that unless there were questions he would open the floor

for nominations for Chair. Mr. Billy Myrick nominated Mr. Lucius Jones. Judge Denning seconded the nomination. There were no additional nominations. All voted in favor for Mr. Lucius Jones as Chair of the Fire Commission for calendar year 2013.

FIRE COMMISSION VICE CHAIR ELECTION

Demetric Potts opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair. Chair Lucius Jones nominated Mr. Billy Myrick. Judge Denning seconded the nomination. There were no additional nominations. All voted in favor for Mr. Billy Myrick as Vice Chair of the Fire Commission for calendar year 2013.

FUTURE of FIRE SERVICE in the FIRE TAX DISTRICT

Deputy County Manager Joe Durham stated that the Commission members had a copy of the power point presentation that he provided to the Wake County Board of County Commissioners at their Work Session on Monday, January 14th. Mr. Durham stated that they would hear him say again that we have a current financial model that is not sustainable. He stated that he would not go over the presentation in great detail he just wanted to reiterate that we have a shrinking service area with continued increase in cost over the past eleven years of 170%.

Mr. Durham stated that as we look at expectations and assumptions going forward the assumptions are that we will continue to have flat growth in revenue with increases in expenditures. Mr. Durham noted that a point he wanted to make here as he did with the Board of County Commissioners is that the growth will be less in the unincorporated areas than it will be in the incorporated areas. Mr. Durham shared again that the Fire Tax District Budget is not sustainable in its current form. The County believes that savings will be achieved through strategies such as consolidations and mergers, realignment of stations, and shared use of resources. He stated that this is a staff strategy that was presented to the Wake County Board of Commissioners and these are things that we plan on pursuing further.

Mr. Durham stated that one of the Commissioners goals is to look for efficiencies in our public safety arena with both Fire and EMS. We will start with there will be no consideration on an increase in Fire Tax District property tax rate until strategies for a sustainable fire service are identified and pursued. Mr. Durham shared that one of the things that we will be doing over the next thirty days is meeting to define some specific steps and strategies that will be used to achieve that goal. We will also look at areas for consolidations such as Falls Lake, Swift Creek, and Little River / Eastern part of the County, and also will begin meeting with the Board of Directors of the not-for-profit fire departments to begin sharing the "Future of Fire Service" with them and our goal is to talk about things that we can do to create sustainability. He stated that we know that this is not going to occur over the next sixty days or the next year or two. This is a long term strategy and there are challenges that are in front of us. He stated that he would be glad to respond to any questions or concerns.

Chair Jones stated that he understands what we are doing, he understands that we are trying to provide a better service with less money because that is probably what we are going to have. He stated that it's going to be a long term, long range plan and it's going to take a lot of time and we need to try to get everybody to buy in on what the plan is going to be, and a lot of the planning can be done administratively or at the Wake County staff level but also there should be an equal

component of the plan from the users. Mr. Durham replied that this can't be County staff driving this directing / commanding, but we will initiate those conversations and discussion that have to occur.

Vice Chair Myrick stated that typically consolidations happen with not-for-profits and towns and he wanted to know what would happen in the areas where there were no towns. Mr. Durham stated that those were opportunities as well. It would mean working with the not-for-profits in certain areas looking for consolidations and mergers there, but also looking for opportunities between the not-for-profits and municipal fire departments. Vice Chair Myrick asked if the goal was mainly to merge with the towns. Mr. Durham replied that it's about doing all that we can do to look at mergers and consolidations and we are not just targeting the towns or not-for-profits, it's doing all that we can do and we will bring back those opportunities that we have identified. It's going to require a lot of conversations and discussions in order to make this happen.

Vice Chair Myrick stated that with consolidations and mergers there should be equal or better service at a cheaper price not the same service at the same price. Mr. Durham replied that we have to create those savings that will be realized both short term and long term. Mr. Durham stated that we are not doing this just for the sake of mergers, as we are doing this we will need to identify cost savings, if not then why are we doing this.

Chief A.C Rich asked Commissioner Matthews what is Wake Counties' vision, what do you want the fire service to look like in Wake County. Chief Rich stated that he thinks this is very important because we speak in generalized terms of the "Future of " being revenue driven. He stated that one of the pieces that is important especially for our elected officials is to determine what they want because that is where it lies, and in order to have real good understanding of the way we want to look which he sees as a fundamental issue but yet a complicated methodology, but the way we want to look; the way we want to be. Do we want to be predominantly volunteer, do we want to be predominantly paid. Chief Rich stated that he sees Mr. Cooke's presentation as an idea (Mr. Durham stated that the presentation was his) a shared idea, but before we have goals and objectives he thinks we need to have a clear vision and personally he sees this as a very sensitive process and to whatever degree the Fire Commission has influence on it he thinks it is important to have collective representation because for example in the budget process last year the chief officers put together what could be considered a sustainable model through 2017 understandably collective work could be done.

Chief Rich also stated that through the Fire Chiefs Association there is a lot of feedback and input on what that vision would really be defined as, and it may be that what we determine is not consolidation, it may be incorrect for us to say that consolidation is the answer, and we may find out that there are other ways to do business better perhaps, and he thinks that if we call it a Blue Ribbon Committee, certainly for the Board of Commissioners you have such a tremendous asset the representation of these folks in this room, singular/dual people the backbone of their organizations are volunteers, folks that give of their time and he thinks that is something that we have to consistently recognize. Chief Rich stated that he would like to encourage Mr. Durham, Mr. Matthews, the Fire Commission, and all his fellow Chief's out there that we can do it and we can do it together.

Commissioner Matthews stated that we do have a great deal of talent in this room, all the Chief's wouldn't be where you are at if you weren't good at what you did and he respects all of you and at the same time we do all need to work collectively, because whatever the decision that comes out we all have to live with it. The main thing is that we have the best personnel, the equipment

we need to get the job done, and we most certainly have seen a transition from volunteerism versus the full-time due to first responders and the training that went along with that. Every department has its own issues, but what we have to do is bring all those issues together and sit down at the table and talk about them and what might necessarily work in Wake Forest might not work down in the Duncan area or some other area, so everything is brought to the table and we factor it all in and it won't be an overnight project, if it is an overnight project it won't be a good project somebody is going to get left out and he thinks that is very important that we come together collectively.

Lee Price stated that some of the concerns of the Fire Chiefs and departments is that they want to be involved in the process and work with staff on this, and when you receive the information like this, that this is going to the County Commissioners the "Future of the Fire Service" and the Chiefs and department's knew nothing about it, that hurts that trust level and makes them wonder what's going on here. Staff has come up with this plan "Future of the Fire Service" and no one else knows about this, not the Fire Commission, not the Chiefs, or anybody and that trust level goes out the window because everyone is thinking well they got a plan and we don't know about it so what are they trying to do to us. Mr. Price stated that he thinks the key is to involve everybody in this group and we can come up with some good plans and something that is cohesive that will work. Mr. Durham stated that he appreciated those comments, but wanted to say that there was nothing new from what you see in front of you, he has said it, David Cooke has said it, he has said it more than once and there is nothing new. Mr. Durham stated that there are more details but all these things have previously been shared and at the end of the day it's all about creating those cost efficiencies.

CONSIDER APPOINTMENT of FACILITIES COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Jones appointed David Dillon as Chair of the Facilities Committee.

CONSIDER APPOINTMENT of STAFFING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Jones appointed Chief Matt Poole as Chair of the Staffing Committee.

CONSIDER APPOINTMENT of CONTRACT COMMITTEE TO REVIEW AND UPDATE FIRE PROTECTION AGREEMENT

Demetric Potts reported that the not-for-profit Fire Protection Agreement was now an annual agreement so we have an opportunity that if there are going to be any revisions to the agreement we could have those revisions done by staff or there could be an appointed committee to review the agreement to see if there were areas that needed to be updated or amended. Demetric stated that during the course of the year there were several areas that mentioned that potentially needed updating. The areas are noted below:

Section 13 Composition of Board of Directors

- Add language that says that BOD members can't be compensated using Fire Tax Dollars.

Section 19 Insurance Services Offices, INC Rating

- Revise the language that references department's having an ISO rating equal to or better than a Class 6

Section 20.E. Training

- Post Incident Review Language
- Add language with regard to Standardized Training

Vice Chair Myrick made a motion that Chair Jones appoints a Contract Committee with a representative chosen from each fire service region and the Chair would appoint two additional members from the Fire Commission. The motion was seconded by Chief Cates; the Fire Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Chair Jones reappointed the Budget Committee that served for the FY 2013 Budget process to review the FY 2014 Budget process.

INFORMATION AGENDA

FIRE TRAINING CENTER PUMP UPDATE

Ricky Dorsey reported that he wanted to give the Fire Commission an update on what's been done since we talked last at the November Fire Commission meeting. Mr. Dorsey stated that the Commission had in their packet the timeline that Wake County GSA has proposed. He shared that GSA has the pump substantially completed and ready for service on May 1st. Mr. Matthews asked Mr. Dorsey what they were using out at the Training Center now. Mr. Dorsey reported that now they were using trucks to draft. He stated that one of the major concerns was that they were unable to provide the Essential Schools, so the main goal is to get back in service so they can offer the school as soon as possible. Mr. Matthews asked if that was as soon as it could be done. Mr. Dorsey replied that this is the time line that GSA has given.

Vice Chair Myrick asked if the cost for the repair was still the \$6,000 that was previously reported. Mr. Dorsey reported that GSA had to go back to do a cost estimate, the information that was provide at the last meeting was an estimate provide by a gentleman from Progress Energy taking a look at it an estimating that the cost would be \$6,000 in parts, so GSA went back and did their cost estimate and their estimate is \$34,000 to do the repairs. He reported that there were a couple of valves that needed to be replaced; there was also a hole in the pressure reducing valve so that has to be replaced as well. The designers estimate is \$34,000, so this would need to go out for bid and we are hoping that it will come back under that. Vice Chair Myrick asked if the Commission needed to take some action since they took action authoring \$6,000 for labor.

Commissioner Matthews asked if it were the State of NC GSA handling the project. Mr. Dorsey stated that it was Wake County GSA. Mr. Matthews asked Mr. Dorsey who he was working with. Mr. Dorsey reported that the he was working with Mark Dubois. Mr. Matthews stated that he couldn't see it taking five months to replace a pump. He stated that he would make a phone call the next day to see what they could do about it.

Chief Privette asked how they were able to have the recruit academy without the pump. Mr. Dorsey replied that he has been asked how they could hold a fire academy without a pump and was the fire academy more important than the Essentials Schools. He stated that was absolutely not true and that the Essentials School was the most important thing that they do at the Fire Training Center. Their concern is that they conform to live burn standards set by NFPA and deliver the school and they have an average of twenty to thirty students per school. Mr. Dorsey stated that they have nine recruits right now in the Recruit Academy and they are hoping that the pump will be in service by the time they get to the point they need to conduct live fire burn

training. The recruits are in the academy for twenty-five weeks; however it is a little different situation we can do training with them as we do with what the fire departments are doing currently, they can come out and draft for a period of time, but with the trucks we have to be careful with the time we spend drafting water for the Essentials School. Mr. Dorsey stated that there has been discussion about the fire departments bringing trucks out to get a school done in the meantime and he would entertain that if that's possible. If that's something that we could work out he was all for it. Mr. Matthews stated that he would get on this tomorrow because we didn't need to be running our apparatus out there.

Chief Mauldin stated that he heard a number of fifty-sixty volunteers that may be on a list for the Essentials School. He said that currently they have five that have been waiting, and they really can't use them until they get to this live burn school and those folks are losing interest quick. He says that every department has a process that they have to go through to get firemen onto a department. We try to get them into these schools, and he know that there are a lot of Chief's sitting in here and some may not agree with it, but he thinks that there is a way that these departments across this county can have that school. Chief Mauldin stated that he would be willing to take his truck down there and put an Engineer with it to operate it, that's what they are designed for, is to pump water and he knows himself and there may be some other Chief's out here, but waiting another five months to have an Essentials School he can't see that when we have all this equipment in this County that is designed to draft water and pump water. He says that he doesn't mind sending his truck to help out and he would like to see us get into a little more discussion with Ricky, staff, or someone to see what we can do to get this Essentials School done before that May 1st timeframe if that's possible.

Ricky Dorsey stated that if that's the Fire Commission's desire they are ready to line up the apparatus and instructors. Chief Mauldin stated that he didn't think it was a Fire Commission thing it is the Fire Chief's and the departments of this County if we have the people willing to put forth the time and the effort to get this done why can't we work together to make this happen. Mr. Dorsey shared that they already have a plan in place and it would take thirteen trucks over the course of the four day period to make this happen.

POST INCIDENT REVIEW PROGRAM UPDATE

Demetric Potts updated the Fire Commission with the following information regarding the Post Incident Review Program:

During the 15 November 2012 meeting the Fire Commission voted to rescind the Wake County Fire Commission Incident Review Program until it could be reevaluated for appropriate application. Since that meeting Ricky Dorsey, Commission Members Bob Stagg and Chief A.C. Rich met to review the Post Incident Review Program as well as the Post Incident Review language in the Fire Protection Agreement and it was agreed that there needed to be some changes to the contract language.

Commission member Bob Stagg, Wake County staff Ricky Dorsey, and Demetric Potts met with Deputy County Attorney Beth Smerko to discuss the issues and concerns and it was determined that there needed to be a revision the to the Fire Protection Agreement. Over the course of the next two months Deputy County Attorney Beth Smerko will draft several revisions to the Fire Protection Agreement and County Staff will write a Post Incident Review Policy as well as research with VFIS the impacts of Post Incident Review Reports in terms of potential exposure,

coverage, and insurance premiums. Staff will provide to the Fire Commission at the March 2013 meeting any recommendations that results from this effort.

Chair Jones requested that the information be sent out in advance of the Fire Commission meeting to give folks an opportunity to review before the meeting.

FIRE TAX FANANCIAL REPORT

Chad Balke stated that in the packet the Commission should have three reports. The first report lists all the departments with their operating budgets. Each department should have received seven months of appropriation. He stated that the next page of the report lists the revenues for the entire system as well as the expenditures for the System-wide expenses. Chad shared that one good thing to note about the revenues is that we were already at 93% of the total budgeted revenue. He also shared that the 2012 actuals were at .6 above what was budgeted. So there was some minor improvement but the revenue was basically flat.

Chad stated that other report is the Capital Improvement Project. He said that there wasn't much to mention other than we will have some clean now that some revenue has come in and we post the revenue to the respective projects.

Vice Chair Myrick asked who would be working on the County Fire budget. Chad replied that it would be a combination as it was last year of him, Demetric, and we would be looking for some direction from Deputy County Manager Joe Durham and other members of county management.

FY 2014 FIRE TAX BUDGET KICKOFF

Mr. Chad Balke reported that there was an updated budget calendar placed on the table in the lobby for anyone who needed to pick one up. He stated that the budget request were due February 4th. Department meetings with Demetric and him would start in February as well and they would be developing a staff recommendation in late February early March. Staff recommendation will be made to all the Fire District stakeholders, Fire Commission, Budget Committee, and County Management and at that point we will have more conversations. Chad stated that we plan to use the Budget Committee meetings in early March to provide an update on revenue projections, department requests, and various major issues. Chad shared that we have a Budget Committee meeting scheduled for March 27th and that's when he and Demetric would be giving their staff recommendation and would make that available. Chad said that there would be a meeting in mid to late April with the County Managers Office regarding budget requests and recommendations. He shared that this is something that all county departments do with the County Managers Office.

Vice Chair Myrick asked if both staff and the Budget Committee developed different budgets and the Fire Commission voted on the Budget Committee budget which would go to the Board of Commissioners. Chad replied that similar to last year that both would go forward to the County Manager who also makes a recommendation. The situation last year was that the County Manager used parts of both budgets along with his recommendation. Vice Chair Myrick asked what was the purpose of their Board if there were two budgets out there. Deputy County Manager Joe Durham stated that this happens all the time. He stated that they get budget requests and recommendations that go to the County Manager who has the ultimate responsibility of making a recommendation and presenting a balanced budget to the Board of

County Commissioners. He stated that the Fire Commission can submit a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners if they have a recommendation different from the staff recommendation. Mr. Durham stated that if that situation occurred then the Board of County Commissioner would know that there were differences in the recommendations.

Vice Chair Myrick asked if they would be informed if a recommendation other than what the Fire Commission voted on went to the Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Durham stated that should that happen the Fire Commission would be made aware.

FIRE SERVICES RESPONSE BOUNDARY UPDATE

Demetric Potts updated the Fire Commission with the following information regarding update to the Fire Service Response Boundaries:

In November of 2012 the Wake County Fire Chiefs were notified that Wake County GIS had completed generating the new primary response boundaries for the county fire departments. This was last done about 5 years ago with tweaks to the system over that time span. Some of the boundaries have changed slightly due to new roads, re-aligned roads, more accurate travel time information along thoroughfares, and the elimination of turn-out times as a factor. Staff feels the new boundaries are as accurate as can be as computed, but we certainly welcomed any feedback or concerns that the fire departments wanted to review and discuss.

Staff provided the fire departments with two sets of response boundary maps in PDF format One map set shows the 41 existing stations (one map per station sorted alphabetically) along with their existing primary response areas overlaid with their newly proposed response extent. The second map set shows the 4 future fire station locations (2 relocated, 2 new) and their impact on the current response areas. The new stations will be incorporated in the new station run orders as inactive stations. Then when a particular station comes on line, it will be made active in CAD.

With the update all of the existing special response classes will be maintained as they are currently set up in CAD. This includes response along Interstate highways, Out of County Aid, etc. For the incorporated areas, our goal is to maintain any town affiliated fire department as the primary responder, regardless of what appears on the maps.

Automatic Aid by the City of Raleigh and Town of Cary may change slightly since we are recalculating these areas due to new stations and roads. Those maps are currently in production and will be distributed at a later date for fire departments to review.

CHAIR REPORT

Chair Jones recognized Chris Perry as the new Fire Chief for the Town of Zebulon as well as recognizing his dad Sidney Perry as the retired Chief of the Zebulon Fire Department.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

Deputy County Manager informed the Fire Commission that they have initiated the recruitment process for hiring a Fire Services Director and they would be accepting applications through the middle of the following month and they were hoping to have somebody named by mid-April.

He shared that it would be an inclusive process and he would be asking some of them to serve as part of the interview process on an assessment panel.

Chief Mauldin asked if it would be possible to get the Fire Commission Agenda Packets more in advance of the Fire Commission meeting so it can be shared with and discussed by the members of their region. Staff stated that they would make the effort to get the packet out sooner.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chief Pope requested that we honor Chief Sidney Perry with a round of applause for his years of service and dedication.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned