



**MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY
FIRE ADVISORY BOARD AND LEE COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS COUNCIL**

SEPTEMBER 6, 2006

The Lee County Fire Advisory Board and the Lee County Fire Chiefs Council held a joint meeting on September 6, 2006 in the Gordon Wicker Conference Room at the Lee County Government Center.

The following Lee County Fire Advisory members were present: Donald Andrews, Jr., Derrick Clouston, Larry Kelly, Royce Gaines, John Altenburger, Roger King, Doc Oldham and Bob Brown. David Smitherman, Ex officio member, was absent.

Representatives from the Lee County Fire Chiefs Council were present as well as Chief Hayden Lutterloh, Sanford Fire Department.

Chairman Donald Andrews called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and introduced presiding facilitator, Chief Benny Nichols, Fayetteville Fire Department. Chief Nichols stated that he was there to try and help the members develop a set a goals for a strategic plan and part of that is some capital improvement.

Chief Nichols opened up the floor for discussion. Chairman Donald Andrews passed out a handout outlining the existing (4) goals of the fire service set previously by the Fire Advisory Board. Chief Nichols reiterated that in setting a goal it should be real broad and achievable. Under the goals, there should be objectives and priorities to reach those goals at some point. Chief Nichols commended the members for their goal-setting progress thus far.

Chief Ronnie Campbell, Northview Fire Department, made a recommendation for a goal concerning the funding of the Fire Marshal's salary. Derrick explained that citizens inside the City of Sanford do not use the Lee County Fire Marshal's services, so the salary is taken from the fire districts. Bob Brown, Commissioner representative for the Fire Advisory Board, stated now that the Fire Marshal's Office is now a separate department of county government, that he would advocate for the Fire Marshal's salary to come out of the general fund for the next fiscal year. Roger King suggested that a feasibility study be conducted as far as how to fund the Fire Marshal's services. Bob Brown agreed. Captain Mike Thomas, Cape Fear Fire Department, added that the *process* of the funding should also be looked at more closely.

After considerable discussion and conversation concerning wordage, a new goal between the joint members was reached:

Joint Goal #5: Evaluate the current process of funding the Fire Marshal's Office and evaluate opportunities for other funding mechanisms.

Chief Nichols called for a vote on the wording and perceptions of the goal, and therefore being no opposition, the goal was accepted unanimously.

Larry Kelly, Deep River Fire Department, intervened to speak to the Fire Chiefs Council about the correct “steps” to take in choosing a tax method. Larry explained that he had not met with the Chiefs Council prior to the joint meeting, and felt they were under the impression they were there to discuss the flat tax or no flat tax at this joint session. Larry outlined the steps in like manner: 1) Set goals (FAB and Fire Chiefs in agreement), 2) Develop Objectives (ways to carry out the goals), and 3) Funding.

Referring back to the handout of existing fire service goals set by the Fire Advisory Board, Chief Nichols opened the floor for any discussion and/or comments of each goal.

Goal 1: *Bring unrated properties within Lee County inside a rated district.*

Chief Nichols asked if there was any opposition or additions to the wording. Therefore being none, upon a show of hands vote, goal #1 was accepted unanimously as is.

Goal 2: Where feasible, departments are encouraged to work towards lowering their ISO rating with a target of district wide 6 rating.

Revised: *Fire Departments are encouraged to work towards lowering their ISO rating with a target of a district wide 6 rating.*

Chief Nichols opened the floor for discussion. There were voiced concerns about the wording of “where feasible”. A decision was made to revise the wording by deleting “where feasible” and adding “fire” before departments. After the revision and no opposition to changes made, goal #2 was accepted unanimously by a show of hands vote.

Goal 3: In association with the Fire Chief’s Association and Office of Lee County Fire Marshal, strive to identify and harmonize the fire service in Lee County through training competencies, equipment, and staffing.

Revised: *In association with the Fire Chief’s Association and Office of Lee County Fire Marshal, strive to work together to maximize the fire service in Lee County through training competencies, equipment, and staffing.*

Chief Nichols opened the floor for discussion of goal 3. There were some concerns about the context usage of the word “harmonize”. Roger King, Fire Advisory Board, clarified “harmonize” as related to staffing, equipment, and training. After some brainstorming to find a replacement for “harmonize”, Chief Nichols suggested

“maximize”, with all in favor. After restating the goal, and no oppositions to changes, goal #3 was unanimously accepted by a show of hands vote.

Goal 4: The Fire Advisory Board in cooperation with the Fire Chief’s Association and the Office of Lee County Fire Marshal will create a five year strategic and capital improvement plan to insure maximum resource utilization effective county-wide.

Revised: The Fire Advisory Board in cooperation with the Fire Departments and the Office of the Lee County Fire Marshal, will create a five year strategic and capital improvement plan to insure maximum resource utilization effective county-wide.

Chief Nichols asked if there were any oppositions or additions to the wording. After some discussion, a decision was made to leave out “Chief’s Association” and replace with “Departments”. Therefore being no opposition to the changes, the goal was accepted unanimously by a show of hands vote.

Bob Brown clarified that the goals of the fire service are recommendations that will be presented to the Commissioners at some point.

Scott Holt, Chief of Tramway Fire Department, made a recommendation for a second joint goal with several members in agreement.

Joint Goal #6: Conduct a review of current public safety communication issues, and develop steps to maximize county-wide emergency communications.

Chief Nichols asked if there was any opposition to the wordage or how the goal was stated. Therefore being no opposition, the goal was accepted unanimously by a show of hands vote.

Tim Sloan, Vice President of the Board of Directors of Cape Fear Fire Department, questioned if a timeline had been set for choosing a tax method. Chairman Andrews answered there was no timeline and no rush in making a decision on the flat tax. Chief Nichols added that a timeline would be an injustice. Bob Brown also confirmed that there is no timeline from the Commissioners.

For the next joint meeting, Chief Nichols tasked each member of the Fire Advisory Board and the Fire Chiefs Council to develop (3) objectives for each of the (6) goals to meet the needs of the Lee County Fire Service.

The next joint meeting has been set for September 27th, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at Sanford Station #3, with Chief Nichols facilitating.

Therefore being no further business, John Altenburger made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Charles Holder. Motion carried unanimously.

The joint meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m