



MINUTES

**Holly Springs Fire-Rescue District
Commission Board of Fire Control
Tuesday, September 7th, 2010
7:00pm**

A public meeting of the Holly Springs Fire-Rescue District Commission Board of Fire Control was held on Tuesday, September 7th, 2010 at 7:00 pm. in the Social Hall of the Holly Springs Fire Department administrative building. Chairperson Ryan Phillips presided. The following members were present or absent as indicated:

List Present or Absent

Commissioners

Chairman Ryan Phillips - Present
Vice-Chairman K. Roscoe Kyle Jr. – Present
Commissioner Hugh Jackson. – Present
Commissioner Kelly Waters - Present

Administration

Interim Chief W. Brent Blackwell – Present
Secretary Bonnie Fulton - Present

Visitors

CPA Ken Everham

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notices of this meeting were posted on district website, posted on public information board, & mailed to the local media or other interested parties that formally requested such copies.

Invocation was rendered and the beginning prayer was led by Commissioner Hugh Jackson.

Agenda items were addressed out of order as indicated.

1. APPROVAL OF August 3rd, 2010 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Kyle moved to approve the August 3rd, 2010 meeting minutes as printed and/or e-mailed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips and carried.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following unfinished business was addressed and actions listed:

• **Vote on CPA for Audit**

Commissioner Waters motioned that we use Lee, Broome, McVae and Assoc. Theirs was the only quote that was submitted in writing and the associate Commissioner Waters had spoken with, Ms. Angie Brown, seemed very knowledgeable. Commissioner Phillips asked to be reminded of their quote. Commissioner Waters responded that the audit

would be \$7000 and the 6 month reconciliation would be \$5000. Commissioner Phillips then asked if she would do the work here and Commissioner Waters responded No, that the work would be done at Ms. Brown's office. Commissioner Phillips asked if Ms. Brown had worked with other fire departments, Commissioner Waters responded that Ms. Brown had mentioned 3 departments specifically that she works with. Commissioner Jackson asked Mr. Everham if he was familiar with Ms. Brown and Mr. Everham responded that N. Spartanburg FD had used her before and was very satisfied with her work.

Commissioner Kyle seconded the motion, vote was unanimous and motion was carried.

3. COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- **Update on Hose Testing**

Approximately 30-40% of the testing is complete and 6 sections have already been discovered to be bad. (Sections are in 50' lengths.) Four sections are 1.75" and 2 section are 3". The replacement cost is \$140 ea/ \$170 ea respectively. This makes a total of \$900 needed just to replace what has already been tested. Three estimates were made and all fall in the same price range. These prices were based on poly hoses, not rubber as rubber tends to deteriorate quickly over time.

Mr. Everham asked if there were any grants available for hoses. Chief Blackwell does not know. Commissioner Kyle responded that this was something we would look into.

Commissioner Phillips asked if all the spare hoses had already been replaced. Chief Blackwell responded yes and that we have no spares left.

Commissioner Kyle made a motion to go ahead and purchase the sections we know we need. Commissioner Phillips seconded. Vote was unanimous and motion was carried.

- **Update on Training**

Three firefighters had been signed up for the Rookie School. However, ESA has cancelled that class. Chief Blackwell is currently trying to get them back in OSHA training (they had been pulled out to attend the Rookie Class). Chief Blackwell asked for confirmation from the Commissioners that once a firefighter had finished his OSHA training, the department supplied him/her with new turnout gear. Commissioner Phillips wants to see this in writing, discuss it further and then vote on it as necessary.

Commissioner Phillips asked if other training for firefighters was continuing. He specifically asked about 4 firefighters that were previously discussed and if their training requirements had been met. Lt. Holleman replied that the training did in fact continue, however, this was a temporary fix only until the OSHA class became available later in the month. Commissioner Phillips asked if this would bring us completely up-to-date on training. Chief Blackwell responded that training is never complete, it is an ongoing process.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- **Vote on Funding Activities for Fire Prevention Week**

Chief Blackwell asked Secretary Fulton to make a brief presentation. It was explained that we hold a training program at Holly Springs Motlow Elementary School every year during Fire Prevention Week which is October 3-9 this year. The program includes materials such as hats, pencils, etc. This year the plan had been to fund this using money collected from our recycling program. To date this year we have collected \$645.82. We are requesting to be able to use this money and order the necessary supplies. Commissioner Phillips asked how much we usually spent on these items and Lt. Holleman responded that we had previously budgeted \$500.

Commissioner Phillips made a motion that we go ahead and purchase these supplies. Commissioner Kyle seconded. Vote was unanimous and motion was carried.

- **Vote on Interim Chief Pay Increase**

Commissioner Phillips asked Commissioner Waters if she had received numbers from the County Auditors office indicated the tax assessment for the year. Commissioner Waters responded that she had and stressed that these numbers were tentative. She stated that the assessment values were approx \$13 million which was down \$3 million from last year. Commissioner Phillips asked when the number would be firm. Commissioner Kyle responded that Sharon West's office hoped to have a firm number by the middle of the month.

Commissioner Phillips requested that this discussion be tabled until we hear from Ms. West's office. At that time we could call a special meeting if necessary to discuss this further. He doesn't feel we can make a determination without knowing what our income will be. Citizen Susan Thomas asked how much of an increase we were looking at and was not responded to.

Commissioner Kyle mad a motion that once the decision had been made that any monies given to Chief Blackwell would be made retro-active back to when he took the position. Commissioner Phillips seconded. Vote was unanimous and motion was carried.

Commissioner Jackson asked if we had a job description for the Chief's position. None of the other Commissioners were sure. It was agreed upon that this would be looked into and if one is not available, then the Commissioners need to come up with one.

- **Discuss Line of Credit/Tax Anticipation Note**

Commissioner Waters stated that according to BB&T, our line of credit expired last month. However, according to Donna Kazia from the ACOG, as a Special Purpose Group, we are not supposed to have a line of credit. But, if needed, we can use a Tax Anticipation Note (or TAN). We can actually borrow against what income we think will earn. However, the loan must be paid off by the end of the fiscal year. For example, if the loan is given in April, we have 2 months to pay it back, but if the loan is made in July, we have the whole year to pay it back. Firefighter Catalano, who has spent some time working in Mortgage and Lending, stated that we would only be able to borrow against the TAN once annually.

5. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- **Financial Report**

Mr. Ken Everham was introduced to the assembly at large. Mr. Everham explained that he was in the process of cleaning up our books and restructuring the way we kept track of them. Citizen Susan Thomas asked how the books looked and Mr. Everham responded that they looked really good.

Commissioner Phillips asked if Mr. Everham was prepared to make a statement concerning August's Financials. Mr. Everham replied that everything had been emailed to all the Commissioners and they had everything they needed. Commissioner Phillips asked if in the future, Secretary Fulton could be copied on that email and could pull the necessary numbers for the Commissioners Meetings. Secretary Fulton agreed.

Detailed Expense & Income data in separated document.

At this time, Commissioner Jackson asked Mr. Everham if he could ask him a series of prepared questions. Mr. Everham responded that he had no problem answering questions.

1. Isn't it true that your review of the accounting records at HSFD have shown that the records were kept in an organized manner and proper accounting was done by Chief Jeffcoat? Mr. Everham responded Yes.
2. Isn't it true that your review of the accounting records at HSFD has shown that for the 18 Months between 01/2009 and 08/2010, the HSFD operated at a budget surplus for all but one month, and that month it was only a \$15 shortfall? Mr. Everham responded Yes.
3. Isn't it true that this is explicit evidence that the HSFD was in sound financial condition the past 18 months? Mr. Everham responded Yes.
4. Isn't it true that the HSFD had a cash surplus account with approx. \$120,000 in it at the time Chief Jeffcoat was terminated? Mr. Everham responded Yes.
5. Isn't it true that your review of the accounting records at HSFD has shown that these 18 months had Chief Jeffcoat's full salary and benefits included in the budget? Mr. Everham responded Yes.
6. Isn't it true that your review of the accounting records at HSFD has shown that all things being equal to the past, The HSFD can pay the Chief's salary and benefits without causing a budget problem? Mr. Everham responded that in July maybe but in the future maybe not.
7. Isn't it true that you provided this board with a paper from Sharon West that would permit the HSFD to stay at the millage rate of 18 mils without any legal problems? Mr. Everham responded that the paper from Ms. West was turned over to Commissioner Waters without his reading it.
8. People has said that they believe this department has been operating with 2 sets of financial records and that the Chief had been skimming money from one of those sets of records. Had Mr. Everham seen any evidence that supported these accusations? Mr. Everham responded that he had seen absolutely no improprieties in the financial record keeping what so ever.

6. CITIZENS ADGENDA

Mary Lu Elias – To the Commissioners “Did you honestly believe this would all disappear in a few days back in June? That the residents would forget about it all after tempers had cooled down?

To Commissioner Waters: Have you met with Mr. Kyle and Mr. Phillips to discuss Fire Department business and without Mr. Jackson’s knowledge since the last Board of Commissioners meeting? Commissioner Waters responded No.

To Commissioner Kyle: Have you met with Mrs. Waters and Mr. Phillips to discuss Fire Department business and without Mr. Jackson’s knowledge since the last Board of Commissioners meeting? Commissioner Kyle responded No.

To Commissioner Phillips: Have you met with Mr. Kyle and Mrs. Waters to discuss Fire Department business and without Mr. Jackson’s knowledge since the last Board of Commissioners meeting? Commissioner Phillips responded No.

Since I see only your names as Defendants for your court appearance scheduled for 9/29 @ 1:00pm, Mrs. Waters, Criminal Court Case #M122319, The Sate of South Carolina vs. Kelly Waters, and NONE of us as taxpayers of the Holly Springs Fire District, I ask you to confirm here and now that you and you alone will be paying for your legal fees for your scheduled court appearances on the 29th and beyond and that the taxpayers will not be footing your bills?

Commissioner Waters responded that since this was still in litigation, she felt that it was improper to discuss this during this meeting. Ms. Elias stated that the question had nothing to do with the pending case and could be answered. Commissioner Waters responded – No Comment.

Ms. Elias then asked Commissioner Kyle the same question. Commissioner Kyle replied – No Comment.

Ms. Elias then asked Commissioner Phillips the same question. Commissioner Phillips replied – No Comment.

Ms. Elias then asked the Commissioners to please explain why Chief Jeffcoat has not been offered an apology and his position back? There was no response from the Commissioners.

At this time, Commissioner Phillips made a motion that in the future all requests to speak at future meetings be made in writing by the Friday prior to the Commissioners Meetings @ noon. Secretary Fulton was given papers that citizens could sign and turn into her or Chief Blackwell to be added to the agendas as approved. Motion seconded by Commissioner Kyle. Vote was unanimous and motion carried.

7. **ADJOURNMENT & CLOSING**

- Chairperson Phillips ask if anyone attending meeting have questions regarding what was discussed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm and floor was turned over to Sandra McMakin to discuss Ladies Auxiliary business.