

LEE COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA

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MINUTES OF THE LEE COUNTY FIRE ADVISORY BOARD

AUGUST 30, 2006

The Lee County Fire Advisory Board met on August 30, 2006, in the Small Conference Room at the Lee County Government Center.

The following members were present:

- Donald Andrews, Jr.
- Roger King
- Doc Oldham
- Royce Gaines
- John Altenburger
- Larry Kelly
- Derrick Clouston

The following members were absent:

- David Smitherman, Ex officio member
- Bob Brown, Commissioner

Chairman Donald Andrews called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Chairman Donald Andrews presented the minutes and asked for a motion to accept them. Motion was made by John Altenburger seconded by Larry Kelly to approve the minutes, motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Donald Andrews introduced Chief Benny Nichols as the facilitator to the board for the next two meetings in which the goals for Lee County fire protection will be determined.

Chief Nichols then began the session with establishing the ground rules for the discussions for the meeting. Each member of the board would be allowed to speak on each goal presented and discuss the wording and perceptions. The Fire Advisory Board decided it would be best to determine broad based goals and do the same with the County Fire Chief's Association on September 6. Only after the goals are agreed on and set by both bodies will the tax method be discussed. The chosen taxing method would be the one that is most advantageous to help meet the agreed upon goals. After reviewing each goal that was set at the previous meeting of the Fire Advisory Board, each was rewritten to help broaden the scope of each and to help the members of the Fire Advisory Board understand what the goal encompassed. The goals that were decided on at this point are as follows:

1. Bring unrated properties within Lee County inside a rated fire district.
2. Where feasible, departments are encouraged to work towards lowering their ISO rating with a target of a district wide 6 rating.
3. In association with the Fire Chief's and Office of Lee County Fire Marshal strive to identify and harmonize the fire service in Lee County through training competencies, equipment and staffing.
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.

Roger King had to leave the meeting at 8:15 pm.

Donald Andrews asked Derrick Clouston what needs his office had and how it tied into the goals stated above. Derrick advised that due to a recent assessment of all inspections done since 2001, and the challenges that are currently being faced he needed immediate assistance on a daily basis and requested the Fire Advisory Board to approve asking the Commissioner's to fund an additional fire inspector as stated in the Rural Fire Protection Task Force Report (Recommendations 1 & 4). Doc Oldham made the motion and was seconded by John Altenburger. Larry Kelly and Royce Gaines voiced concerns of what the position would be responsible for and what would this position do to the current county fire budget. Derrick responded by stating that the county currently has salary reserve in place to cover the position until the new budget and in the FY 07/08 budget he would provide justification for further funding for his department. Derrick also stressed that due to the statutory requirements that he would have no choice but to make code enforcement the priority within his office since all he had was one full time person and other areas would become secondary. After this conversation the motion carried unanimously.

Therefore, being no further business to come before the board, Doc Oldham made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by John Altenburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.