

Fire and Rescue Commission
Minutes of February 25, 2020

1.) Call to order at 6:30 p.m. by Bryan Fox, Chairman

2.) Roll Call

<u>Member</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Chuck Angier	X	
Tim Duffer	X	
Bryan Fox	X	
Brian Garrett	X	
Ben Meeks	X	
Ron Searce	X	
Keith Scruggs	X	
Bert Sellers	X	
Billy Talbott		X

Staff members present: Chris Slemm, Michael Lee, David Smitherman, County Administrator

Association Representative: Dean Fowler

Others in attendance: Vick Ingram, Board of Supervisor member; Carolyn Jarrett, Chief of Brosville Fire and Rescue; Donald Motley, Chief of Chatham Fire Department

3.) Additions or Revisions to the agenda: none

4.) Approval of the agenda: Motion by Brian Garrett to approve the agenda with a 2nd by Sellers to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

5.) Approval of previous meeting minutes: Chuck Angier made one minor adjustment to the Vision statement in the minutes from January 28th. Chuck Angier made a motion to approve the minutes of January 28th with a 2nd by Tim Duffer. Motion passed unanimously.

6.) Presentations: none

7.) Fire and Rescue Association report:

Dean Fowler reported on the Fire and Rescue Association recommended Tunstall Fire and Rescue be priority and Gretna Fire and Rescue be second priority for ambulance CIP money in FY21. Brosville Fire and Rescue be priority and Tunstall Fire and Rescue be second priority for fire apparatus FY21. Brian Garrett made a motion with 2nd from Ron Scarce to approve these recommendations and pass it to the County administrator to include in the FY21 budget recommendations.

Dean Fowler requested that Fire and Rescue Association have a representative to evaluate the insurance when bids come in. After some discussion Chris will check further with Connie Gibson, purchasing manager regarding the makeup of the evaluation committee.

Dean Fowler commended Ben Meeks for being at the last Association meeting and representing the Commission.

8.) Other Fire and EMS agency reports:

a. Cascade Fire Department was to have a representative present to discuss their request to become a transport agency. While Dr. Boro supports this, he is not willing to approve their request at this time. He would like to see 6 months more of response data. The VA OEMS website shows they have 9 EMS providers but they submitted a list to Director Slemm showing 11 EMS providers. Director Slemm had discussion with the Chief of Cascade, and they are correcting that list. Director Slemm passed along Dr. Boro's overall concern that the County has several agencies underperforming and he feels that needs to be addressed prior to adding more transport agencies. Director Slemm told the Commission that Cascade had performed well recently and had responded to most of their calls. Director Slemm suggested the Commission should hear from Mr. Adams, the president of Cascade. Cascade has also requested to move to an ALS first responder. There are some issues that need to be worked out for this work well due to some OEMS rules and regulations. Further discussion on the matter took place and it was decided to table action on this for 6 months.

9.) County staff reports:

a. Board of Supervisors Retreat: Director Slep reported to the Commission the objectives that came out of the Board of Supervisor's retreat – consolidated EMS billing, yearly audits/financial reports from the volunteer departments, create fire chief standards, infrastructure to include a training academy, high school training academy and improving regional relationships. Deputy Director Lee is already approaching the school system regarding high school firefighter class. Director Slep felt it was good feedback from the Board and appreciated their input.

b. 2015 Fire and Rescue Study update: Director Slep gave the Commission and over view and update on the 2015 Fire and Rescue Study (see attached). One main point discussed during the overview was the lack of participation from many volunteer agencies when it comes to making progress and improving the fire and rescue system. Tim Duffer suggested there should be more priority on the centralized reporting system as recommended by the study. Brian Garrett also requested the monthly EMS call data be sent to commissioners. Mr. Duffer felt that collection of data was key to improving things. Because many agencies have contracts with reporting system vendors, that decision needed to be made soon. Additionally, if we are moving toward a consolidated billing system, we must fix the reporting first. A discussion regarding the CAD and having a reporting system interface with our CAD was had. The cost to interface reporting systems with CAD remains an obstacle. David Smitherman suggested the Commission put forth a set of priorities to the Board.

10.) Unfinished Business

None

11.) New Business

a. Michael Lee presented a new Awards and Commendation Standard Operating Guideline (see attached). A motion to approve as presented by Brian Garrett with a 2nd from Ben Meeks. Motion passed unanimously.

12.) Other Matters from Commission members:

Ben Meeks requested the Commission continue to push for the 7% increase for fire and rescue agencies as requested by Director Slep in the FY21 budget; along with this discussion there it was suggested the Commission review how agencies are funded; along with this discussion there was consensus to increase the performance standards required of the fire and rescue agencies; and we need to develop a remediation plan for underperforming agencies.

A discussion was held regarding how to better evaluate each department while holding them more accountable and putting them on time lines to improvement. Dean Fowler suggested we set up a team from the Commission and Association to do annual review of agencies. Tim Duffer and Brian Garrett agreed to serve on a committee to do this.

Tim Duffer suggested stations be more responsible for utility bills and maintaining their stations.

Mr. Sellers welcomed the firefighters in the audience.

13.) Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Sellers to adjourn with a 2nd by Ben Meeks. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.