

FIRE STAKEHOLDER GROUP (FSG)

MINUTES

February 13, 2018 1:00 P.M.
5300 Laurel Road, Venice FL 34275

- I. CALL TO ORDER (1:15 P.M.)
- II. ROLL CALL

Present: Michael Brown, Salvatore Favalaro, Helen Moore, Edward Murray, Pamela Schierberg, and Kathleen Rogers-Wilson

Also attending: Fire Chief Shawn Carvey, Finance Director Linda Senne, Finance Controller Joe Welch, and Fire Admin. Assistant Tammy Short
- III. APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes approved as presented. Motion by Ms. Moore, Seconded by Ms. Schierberg.
- IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - A. UPDATE – INFORMATION BY CHIEF CARVEY
 - Used only Nokomis and Sarasota County. Other agencies were only a handful. The skewed count for 2017 was due to data entry methodology. This will be will be changed moving forward.
 - Most of the County’s calls where assistance given was due to the County not having an aerial unit in the south county area.
 - Assistance received was based on meeting minimum staffing requirements for fire response. Staffing a 2-man unit requires an increase in units responding.
 - Increase over the last few years as a result of increased population within the city and neighboring communities.
 - B. METHODOLOGY OPTIONS

Members discussed:

 - Flat Rate and hybrid options.
 - Charlotte County method briefly reviewed.
 - Request Stantec to present information with group including flat rate and hybrids.
 - If it is on the tax bill, the public will perceived it as a tax regardless of name.
 - C. ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
 - Engine replacements
 - Corporate donation
 - Fire Station 1
 - Replacement plan
 - Temporary station

D. REFERENCE MATERIALS

Controller Joe Welch reviewed charts presented with agenda.

Discussion included

- Fire fee study results.
- Anticipated fee to provide a stable revenue source for department that had a more fair distribution among those receiving services.
- Original drafts included fire stations and engine replacement costs. Stantec had spread the costs over 5 years. Council withdrew the station replacement costs to lower the funds required.
- The letters going out to the public had to include the maximum rate that could be collected over time and did not include station replacement costs. Comments included that the letter was very confusing and shortsighted. It should have included the whole picture including stations.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Other items discussed included:

- Blends available including flat rates.
- Consensus that the Fire Department budget is lean.
- Increasing millage rate by .25mills with a designation for ½ of the overage set aside for fire department use.
- Additional one-cent sales tax. This would allow for non-citizen users of services to support the services. Noted that one-cent sales tax funds goes to the general fund can only be used for capital items.
- EMS calls are more than 60 percent of the Department's call volume yet name on County tax bill is misleading.
- Ensure terminology presented to public represents both components emergency medical service (ambulance) related as well as fire.
- Communication plan – need to have one in place prior to release of information. Public meetings, website, etc. For initial fire fee there were public meetings, Q&A page posted, hotline, etc.
- Council presentation to be in May. Need to have two recommendations, Plan A and a Plan B.
- Questions regarding the cost of EMS compared to Fire.
- Current shortfall needs to be remedying as well as funding future needs.
- No state laws regarding mandating the City's reserves levels.

B. Meeting Schedule

Note the mornings were set to end at noon but may finished earlier any day. It was hoped to keep meetings to two (2) hours.

02/27/18 – 2 PM to 4 PM

03/05/18 – 9 AM to 12 PM

03/12/18 – If Stantec not available on 02/27 or 03/15.

03/22/18 – 9 AM to 12 PM

04/05/18 – 2 PM to 4 PM

04/19/18 – 2 PM to 4 PM (Need to have draft in place.)

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

- A. Mike Rafferty – Requested all emails from the general public be made part of the formal public record, possibly as part of the minutes. This is to avoid creating additional work for City Clerk as a records request.
- B. Tom Bidden – Requested members to go to City website and view council meetings where fire fee discussed and watch public responses.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting recessed at approximately 3: 05 PM

Disability Information

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing assistance to participate in any of these proceedings should contact Lori Stelzer, City Clerk at 941-486-2626, 401 W. Venice Avenue, Venice Florida 34285, prior to the meeting. (FS 296.26)

Appeal Notice

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Committee/Board, with respect to any matter considered at such hearing/meeting, such person will need a record of the proceedings and that, for this purpose, such person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based, and which record is not provided by the City of Venice. (FS 286.0105)