

EVERY FIRE ASSOCIATION - CHIEF'S COMMITTEE

June 7th, 2018 - Fall Creek VFD Station 2

The regular monthly meeting of the Chief's Committee was called to order by Chief Bob Garland.

Members discussed the meeting Monday, June 4th with the Avery County Commissioners, Avery Fire Commission, Josh Dodson, Deanna Ballard and the Avery County Fire Chief's. Mark Taylor felt like the commissioners thought there was a resolution of problems. Josh Dodson wanted to know if this was the case - if not, he wanted to know what the Chief's want?

Bob Garland addressed the group and noted that he was the oldest member of the group. He reminded everyone that County commissioners in the past would meet the departments with their minds made up and ignored our budget requests. He also noted that there had been problems in the past with the fire commission. He said the current County Commission and Fire Commission could be talked to and were responsive the needs of the fire service. He thought that both had done a good job. He recommended that the chief's meet with the Fire Commission and work things out. Mark Taylor said that he was not looking for more money - he just wanted to change some of the processes and procedures. He also explained the process & time frame to dissolve the current fire commission. He then said that he did not want to do that. Kenny McFee said that he had no problem with changing the Fire Commission to: 3 Chiefs from the Association and one member appointed by the County Commission and the 5th member elected by the other 4. Members noted that Chief Dean Gibbs - a county employee would not be able to serve. Mark Taylor noted that some chief's may not be competent when it comes to the budget details. He recommended that delegates come from the general memberships of each department. Kenny McFee moved that: the Association ask the County Commissioners to change the makeup of the Fire Commission to 3 delegates from the Avery Fire Association; 1 delegate appointed by the County Commissioners and the 5th elected by the other 4. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. All departments were represented except Frank and Banner Elk.

Kenny McFee asked members to consider eliminating the requirement that members appointed by the Fire Association must live in Avery County. He used Chief Pudney as an example. Members agreed that a fire department member in good standing should be able to represent their department - irrespective of where they live. Kenny recommended that departments refuse to sign the county contract until these two changes are made - either by memorandum of understanding or by statute change. Members noted that the county would have to give up one of their delegates. Members discussed the good job that Bill Beuttel has done and hoped that the Commissioners would put him back on - all agreed. Chief Pudney reminded members that they would need to look at the Association's bylaws and election process.

Members discussed medical supplies that are supposed to be replaced by EMS. It was noted that the rescue squad was \$ 1,875 over budget because they were unable to get the supplies that they needed. Defibrillator pads were discussed. Members decided to ask for \$ 5,000 per department from the EMS budget rather than trying to dictate what supplies would be provided.

Jim Brooks reminded members that as their representative, he should be requested to bring association issues to the Fire Commission. He also reminded members that the commission was receptive to paying for federal grant writers. He asked members to consider asking the commission to begin a program of purchasing mechanical CPR machines for each department. Ken Journey's rating study was discussed and Jim asked departments if they would be receptive to having Ken create a plan for each department individually?

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.