

**AGENDA**  
**Avery County Fire Commission**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**December 14, 2017**

7:00 p.m. I. Convene Meeting/Invocation

7:02 p.m. II. Call to Order  
Additions/deletions to agenda  
Public Comments

Agenda Items

7:05 p.m. A. Truck Committee report  
B. Award bid for Fall Creek Truck  
C. Linville Fire Department requesting funds to replace heating furnace.  
D. Linville Fire Department wanting to know who will pay their insurance Deductible on the claims from live burn on 11/18/17  
E. Request funds to pay member ship for paid employees to join the NC State Fireman's Association. To be eligible for the death benefit. (Note: discussion on ladder company roster and volunteer rosters)  
F. Employees requesting training.

7:35 p.m. FDC Report

1. Newland 9s inspection

7:38 p.m. IV. Approval of minutes from November 9th 2017

7:39 p.m. V. Upcoming Meetings & Other Issues of Concern

Next Fire Commission regular meeting will be January 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 7pm in Avery County Commissioner's board room  
Avery County Firemen's Association meeting January 4th, 2018 at Mayland Community College Avery Campus at 7:00pm.

7:40 p.m. VI. Closed Session Personnel G.S. 143-318.11(a) (6)

8:20 p.m. VII. Adjourn

## AVERY COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION MINUTES

The Avery County Fire Commission met in a Regular meeting on Thursday, November 9, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Boardroom, Newland N.C.

Johnny Mathes led prayer.

### I. CALL TO ORDER (7:00 p.m.)

Chairman Mathes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All Board members were present. Charlie Franklin was absent.

### II. ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA: None

### III. PUBLIC COMMENTS (7:01 p.m.):

1. **Mike Laws, Green Valley:** (1) Mike noted that the type of Narcan recently distributed to each fire station by the Fire Commission is not the type which can be replaced by EMS. Jim Brooks stated that Charlie Franklin would purchase the correct Narcan and distribute it to all departments. (2) Mike stated that his chief is allowing him to address another issue. He noted that all rovers were in place except for at Green Valley and Frank. There is a top-notch applicant and some wanting to transfer. He understands that with rovers, even though hired by the Fire Commission, when they're on a fire scene they fall under the authority having jurisdiction which is that fire chief's district. If someone (working for him) does not function to the level of their certification then he's responsible. This applicant must be able to function at the level that he, Steve Carver and Josh Henson can. Bring the applicant that the Fire Commission wants to Green Valley and if they can function in 3 scenarios (on everyday basis which we do), then our fire department has no problem with them. Our membership is beginning to question why other departments have that 2nd person and Green Valley and Frank don't. If they can function on a structure fire as a truck operator the Chief has no problem. Mike will bring 4-5 officers and the truck and to see if they can function.

Chief Dean Gibbs spoke regarding the medical supplies, specifically trading out with EMS. He noted they will trade out with fire departments, but they must have a 6- month notice. They need enough time to use the supplies.

2. **Jeremy Hayes, Fall Creek:** Jeremy stated he had brought Jeff Duncan with Anchor Ritchie Fire Trucks with him. He pointed out that the bid offer which had been turned in by them was the only one, so they would be building the glider kit/pumper tanker to replace the one that was crashed last February (19 months, 3 days, 4 hours ago). However, he received a call on Monday from the gentleman who was too be building the glider kit. He had gotten information from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) saying they are no longer allowed to do these kits. The regulations for a 2019 truck with EPA changes, negates glider kits. According to Freightliner (an "R" vehicle) the chassis comes from Mexico with an 8-week lead time. As of November 1, 2017, 8 weeks later puts it in 2018. 2018 is when trucks are built for the next year, so that you get the chassis' and other equipment started January 1st, load them up with all the different equipment needed on

them and then they are sold around August and September as 2019 model vehicles. We missed our date by 9 days as of today. We made phone calls to warn the representatives of this fire service that we were running out of time and we needed to move on this. No one was interested - there was no response, so when we asked if there was any way to move forward we were told no, that 90 days was the standard set time. This 90 days pushed us too far. He asked how to proceed. They have been working on this 14 months. Jeremy asked Jeff how long they had been holding Fall Creek's truck at his company and Jeff responded over a year. Jeremy stated that they've been through 6 (Truck Committee) meetings putting all the information together and he's tired (of the process). Their plan was great, but it's not available. He called the NC rep of the EPA and got no response. There were 8 different fabricators. Jeff noted they all refused to build glider kit due to changes now in effect. He stated that 2 of the largest in the US, Fitzgerald and Harris, said no. The glider kit option cannot be used. If this had been done in August, it could've been done. Now that it's past November 1st it's not a choice. This is the reason Jeremy asked him to attend the meeting. Jeremy noted that the truck was designed to meet every requirement that Fall Creek and the Truck Committee had as it applied to the district / community needs. This will cost more money, but we have exactly what we want on paper. We can't re-use the parts we were going to. Jeremy asked Jeff what his company would charge for storing their fire truck for the past year. Jeff noted this would depend on the outcome of this meeting. Jeremy pointed out that Anchor Ritchie was the only bidder and he wants permission to award them the contract to build the truck. More money will have to be spent, but it wasn't because he didn't warn (of the deadline). He does not want to waste another year. Fall Creek has been without a truck for 19 months. Matt McClellan and Charlie have worked pain-stakingly and Anchor Ritchie is ready to build for us. Jeff then noted that back in August the glider kit would've been \$75,000 and included changing the engine out, etc. He noted that the vehicle must have a new chassis at a cost of \$115,000. This is \$40,000 over original price, so the bid of \$360,000 is now at \$400,000. (Jeremy said this was same ballpark as approved Green Valley truck). Chairman Mathes asked for clarification of the amount requested and Jeremy stated \$400,000 versus \$360,000. Jeff noted the truck will be just the same except for the chassis. Jim Brooks asked what the old chassis was worth? Jeremy said it could be sold. Jeff said the engine and transmission are good and that's why they were trying to re-use them. They can be put into another truck, but he'll have to research the value. He noted the truck has a 430-horse-power "Caterpillar" engine with an Allison 4000 transmission. He has no idea what it's worth. It has 12,000 miles on it. Corey Hughes asked what had insurance paid on it and Jeremy answered \$126,000 which is in their account, set aside in a separate fund. Charlie is aware of all their funds. Their "O" starts at \$125,999.

Chairman Mathes asked for comments. He asked would the Truck Committee need to review this. Jeremy said paperwork would've been turned in but for the "hiccup". Chairman Mathes asked about specifications. Matt McClellan stated that specifications for the new truck need to be provided and Jeff agreed to provide these for the Truck Committee's review. Jeff stated specs are exactly the same as bid out and the only change in specs is with the chassis spec and he will provide them. Jeremy asked that the 90-day bid deadline be extended 30 days until next Fire Commission meeting, so that the Truck Committee can meet and resolve. Jim asked what was the deadline on the 90-day bid and Jeremy said it was today. Jeff noted that the 90 days was a Fire Commission requirement.

Chairman Mathes instructed that the Truck Committee will meet and the issue will be voted on at the next Fire Commission meeting on December 14, 2017.

3. **Jim Brooks:** Jim noted he had a memorandum from the Fire Chief of Watauga County. He noted that Ben Weinberger, Meat Camp Fire Dept. of Watauga County, will be hosting a Chief's 101 Class. It starts Monday, November 13th from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at his station. The 2nd session will either be Tuesday, November 14th or Monday, November 20th. He thought that departments here tonight would like to hear about this. Paul Buchanan agreed to send an e-mail out each fire department with the information for anyone who wishes to attend.

**IV. AGENDA ITEMS (7:27 p.m.)**

**A. LINVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT REQUEST FOR FUNDS TO FINISH BUILDING REPAIRS:** Chief Mark Taylor stated that Charlie had sent Roy an email to confirm that they had money to cover their repairs. He confirmed they do have the necessary funds for these repairs.

**B. FIREMAN'S ASSOCIATION - FUNERAL BELL PURCHASE:** Bobby Powell made the request to use Fireman's Association fund balance for purchasing a funeral bell and stand such as one used at recent funeral. Paul Buchanan stated that for both bell and stand, the amount would be approximately \$700. It would be stored at the Fire Marshal's office.

**Motion made by Matt McClellan, second by Corey Hughes for Fireman Association to move funds from their fund balance to purchase funeral bell and stand. This amount is not to exceed \$700.00. Chairman Mathes asked for further discussion. Motion approved by those in attendance.**

**C. FORESTRY GRANT DISCUSSION:** Bobby Powell stated he had received an email last week regarding the NC Forestry Grant. The Forestry Grant will be opened back up this year on January 2nd. They've changed the way it works. We can receive up to \$5,000 which could be a total of \$10,000. It's all forest related equipment such as trucks, skid units, equipment for firefighting (like protective equipment or communications equipment). Chairman Mathes asked for confirmation that it's \$5,000 matching. Bobby stated it's \$10,000 or \$5,000 matched (5 and 5). He noted they could still do the turnout gear as we had done before – forestry packs and forestry gear. They can still do GSA State contract. Chairman Mathes noted that \$30,000 was the (current) Fire Commission match per station. Jim Brooks stated that with the State giving \$35,000 instead of \$30,000, and knowing that this saves half the cost on equipment, they should try to match the \$35,000. This is a grant just like the State's - it's just from the Federal government. It's offered in the Fall, so you can go in and get the full amount and then there's time to think ahead what equipment is needed from the \$30,000 State grant. Anytime we can get equipment half price, it's foolish not to save that money. We need to make sure everyone fills out the (application) completely. The way he read it, it's for anything used on forestry. We can double-check that turnout gear is covered and make sure all the departments have the funds to match 100%. It's not a big increase for us because we were willing to match \$1,500. This is a \$3,500 increase per department. Jim noted they would fund the \$5,000 and then when they receive the State grant, if they don't use it all - then that's another issue. He feels most departments will use \$35,000. Others agreed.

**Motion made by Jim Brooks, second by Bill Beuttell to fund \$5,000 matching Forestry Grant. Chairman Mathes asked for further discussion. Motion approved by those in attendance.**

Matt McClellan noted his opinion that granting of extra funds to Green Valley will cause problems down the road. Chairman Mathes called for a vote.

**Motion made by Jim Brooks, second by Bill Beuttell to approve an additional \$35,000 toward purchase of Green Valley's truck. This increase will allow for purchase price up to \$400,000. Chairman Mathes asked for further discussion. Motion approved by Jim Brooks and Bill Beuttell. (No vote was made by Board members Corey Hughes and Matt McClellan).**

Chairman Mathes noted there were two "yes" votes and two non-votes. The two "yes" votes carried the vote. He asked could the truck be used for a back-up. Jim clarified that until something happens down there, could it be used by the County. He hopes if Eric Wiseman gives Green Valley a truck that it can be put at the airport for use by the County.

Kennie McFee asked if it was appropriate to have Charlie contact Toyne to proceed. After further discussion, Kennie was instructed to contact the Toyne salesman directly with go-ahead of purchase.

**FDC REPORT (7:50 p.m.) - No report given.**

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 14, 2017 and OCTOBER 12, 2017 (7:50 p.m.)**

**Jim Brooks noted the following corrections:**

\* September 14, 2017 minutes: Page 4 - 5th sentence "opposite sleeve" **correct to** "opposite **chest**".

\* October 12, 2017 minutes: Page 4 - 4th sentence "it has become obvious to Banner Elk " **correct to** "**Linville**".

\* October 12, 2017 minutes: Page 4 - 5th para. - 11th sentence "Jim noted he has been a fire chief for 46 years." **correct to** "Jim noted he has been a **fireman** for 46 years."

**Motion made by Jim Brooks, second by Bill Beuttell to approve September 14, 2017 and October 12, 2017 meeting minutes with noted corrections. Motion approved by those in attendance.**

**VI. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND OTHER ISSUES OF CONCERN (7:52 p.m.)**

-Next Firemen's Association meeting will be December 7, 2017 - Newland Volunteer Fire Department at 7:00 p.m. (Chief's meet at 6:30)

-Next Fire Commission Regular meeting will be December 14, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in Avery County Commissioner's Board Room, Newland.

**VII. CLOSED SESSION (7:52 p.m.) - NONE**

Chief Gibbs stated that Josh Henson was requesting to take a class. This issue will be tabled until the next Fire Commission meeting.

**VIII. ADJOURN (7:53 p.m.)**

**Motion made by Jim Brooks, second by Bill Beuttell to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved by those in attendance.**