

AVERY FIRE ASSOCIATION

December 12, 2024 - Avery County Agricultural Extension Office

President Mike Richardson called the meeting to order and addressed the group. He explained that he had ordered a ceremonial Fire Axe plaque and planned to present it to Chief Kennie Mcfee in honor of his retirement & service to Avery County- but it had not arrived. He went on to explain that Kennie joined the Green Valley Fire department in 1976 and became Chief in 1979 - serving in that position for 35 years. He also served as President of the Fire Association for 8 years. Kennie's family was recognized. Mike Laws spoke on Kennie's behalf. Kennie recognized Cody Laws as the new Chief and thanked members for their help and efforts over the years.

The minutes were approved as presented. Beech Mtn, Crossnore, Fall Creek, Green Valley, Linville, Linville Central, Seven Devils, the Fire Department Coordinator & Assistant, and May land Tech were represented.

It was noted that Rick Carpenter's house was without heat - the reason for him not attending the meeting but he wanted to pass on that the Forest Service would be hiring an 11 month smoke chaser and assistant county ranger.

Bobby Powell announced that there would not be any training until January.

Fire Commission report: Elk Park Station was finally progressing. William Costner wanted to let departments develop their own specs as long as they meet NFPA standards. Brian Ledford reported that he had filled out two FEMA grant requests for departments that had suffered damage to their water points. He announced that Green Valley had secured property for a new station and that they would be next on the priority list. There was no progress on the County training site land.

Mike Richardson reported that Wimlinco County, Maryland raised \$ 4,000 for the Avery Fire Association. He asked for ideas to make good use of the money.

NEW BUSINESS:

Last year the Firefighter Appreciation dinner was at the AG Center in January. Members agreed to hold the dinner on the February meeting date.

Members discussed the treasurer's position. Stephen McClellan agreed to serve in the position. A motion was made to elect him to the position and that the association president be the second signature on all checks.

Karen Laws addressed the Association. She noted that she was being blamed for not delivering the fire marshal's request to evacuate campgrounds on the river. She explained that dispatch had double checked and they were never asked to transmit a request to do so. She would be submitting a letter to the county commissioners.

Mark Taylor reported that there had not been a quarterly meeting between the Fire Commission and the County Commissioners in quite some time. Cody Laws moved that the Association request a meeting. The motion passed. Cody also noted that the County Fire Marshal's office let the fire departments down during the storm and this should be brought up.

Mark Taylor also announced that Will Treen was writing a Federal grant for the Linville department and that the county should look at doing a Federal Regional grant for the county. He agreed to get Will to the next meeting.

Cody Laws led a discussion of the radio problems in Green Valley noting the dangers of a MayDay call with no mobiles that would work.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.