

**March 23, 2021  
Regular Meeting**

**Pittsylvania County Fire and Rescue Commission  
Regular Meeting  
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**VIRGINIA:** The Regular Meeting of the Pittsylvania County Fire and Rescue Commission was held on March 23, 2021 in the Board Meeting Room, 39 Bank Street, SE, Chatham, Virginia. Chairman - Bryan Fox, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The following members were present:

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Arrived</b>
Chuck Angier	North West Quad - Citizen Rep	Present	
Tim Duffer	Southeast Quad - F&R Rep	Present	
Bryan Fox	Chairman – South West Quad - F&R Rep	Present	
Kermit King	Northwest Quad - F&R Rep	Present	
Bobby Lovelace	South West Quad - Citizen Rep	Present	
Ben Meeks	North East Quad - F&R Rep	Late	
Ronald S. Scarce	Board of Supervisors Rep	Present	
Keith Scruggs	Vice Chairman – North East Quad - Citizen Rep	Present	
Bert Sellers	Southeast Quad - Citizen Rep	Present	

**AGENDA ITEMS TO BE ADDED**

EMS Billing Rates

1. Motion to Add Agenda Items

EMS Billing Rates Review

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Keith Scruggs, Vice Chairman – North East Quad - Citizen Rep
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Bert Sellers, Southeast Quad - Citizen Rep
<b>AYES:</b>	Angier, Duffer, Fox, King, Lovelace, Meeks, Scarce, Scruggs, Sellers

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Motion to Approve Agenda

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Kermit King, Northwest Quad - F&R Rep
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Chuck Angier, North West Quad - Citizen Rep
<b>AYES:</b>	Angier, Duffer, Fox, King, Lovelace, Meeks, Scarce, Scruggs, Sellers

**MINUTES APPROVAL**

1. Minutes Approval

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Bobby Lovelace, South West Quad - Citizen Rep
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kermit King, Northwest Quad - F&R Rep
<b>AYES:</b>	Angier, Duffer, Fox, King, Lovelace, Meeks, Searce, Scruggs, Sellers

## **PRESENTATIONS**

9:29pm

1. Proposed FY22 County Budget Presentation (David M. Smitherman)

County Administrator David Smitherman presented the proposed FY2022 budget.

## **HEARING OF THE CITIZENS**

Matthew Wade - resident of Sutherlin, Assistant Chief at Laurel Grover VFD, addressed the Commission with the following: business conducted by Pittsylvania County in relation to the Fire and Rescue and Public Safety Department. He also stated that agencies need to know what the county's 5,10, and 15-year plan is so that agencies can better plan their vision and goals. He also mentioned volunteerism declining as finding volunteers has become a serious issue for many departments.

Mike Elliott - Mt. Cross VFD Chief stated that to better serve the citizens of the county they are requesting for the FY 2021-22, an F350 brush truck, that has a service body and is requesting \$70,000 CIP funding for purchase of the truck. It meets compliancy and has the specifications adopted by the Fire and Rescue Commission.

Matt Hunt - Assistant Chief, Cascade VFD - is checking on status of recommendation of Cascade's request for the purchase of their Tanker/Pumper. He also suggested to the Commission to set a date when funding requests are due, so agencies can better prepare for their requests.

Mike Neal - Chief, Ringgold VFD, addressed the proposed agencies' cuts. He also stated the agencies whose budgets are proposed to be cut, to just stay frozen where they are right now.

## **FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION REPORT**

Chief Fowler deferred to speak and requested to be moved under the Unfinished Business section under FY22 agency funding.

## **COUNTY STAFF REPORTS**

1. Public Safety Director's Report (Christopher C. Slemp)

Public Safety Director Slemp stated there are no updates on Cool Branch and the county is still in negotiations with Franklin County. Concerning Covid-19 vaccinations, we are working with VDH and VDM with providing a clinic in the north area of the county. Agencies are currently undergoing EMS licensing inspections this month and the feedback has been positive. Thanks to Danville Life Saving Crew for allowing us to be part of the Super CE Weekend, which was beamed to three locations in the county, thanks to Kasey Seay for help in organizing this event. We have

signed a memorandum of agreement with Dr. Kayla Long, to be an additional OMD for Pittsylvania County Public Safety.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### 1. FY22 Agency Funding-

Chief Fowler stated the proposal was brought back to the fire chiefs with concerns that some of the agencies that are taking cuts are running a substantial amount of mutual aid calls, which will put them in a different category. Most agencies who are proposed to be cut are asking that funding be frozen at this time.

Chris Slempp stated that mathematically, there is no way to increase funding to some agencies and leave the other agencies frozen. He said that the committee can go back again and review other options. Bert Sellers stated that the agencies losing money that maybe in the coming year if their call volume would possibly increase their revenue at the end of the year. Chris then stated there is a limited amount of money but reiterated they can go back and review options. Chuck Angier stated that possibly we need input from the agencies whose funding is being cut. Motion made by Ben Meeks, seconded by Kermit King to send back to committee for further discussion of funding. The motion passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### 1. Board of Supervisors' Communications (Supervisor Scarce)

#### 1. Board of Supervisors Communications (Supervisor R. Scarce)

At the Board of Supervisors' ("Board") March Business Meetings, the Board decided the following issues/items related to the County's Volunteer Fire and EMS Agencies:

- (a) Approved the MOA between the Public Safety Department and Dr. Long for OMD services.
- (b) Gave approval for Public Safety to submit a Rescue Squad Assistance Fund Grant for the purchase of a Lucas Chest Compression System to be used on the QRV serving the 640-response area.
- (c) Approved \$140,000 in CIP funding for Brosville Fire and Rescue to purchase fire apparatus. They have signed the CIP agreement. Said funding is contingent upon presentation of a copy of a corresponding sales contract to Public Safety.
- (d) The Board's Finance Committee received David M. Smitherman's (County Administrator) FY22 County Budget Presentation at its March Committee Meeting. During said presentation, Smitherman mentioned several recent FRC accomplishments. The Board greatly appreciated the FRC's work and recognizes the improvements made to the County's Fire and Rescue System as directed/influenced by the FRC.

### 2. Public Safety Code of Ethics and Conduct (Christopher C. Slempp) Slempp has compiled a Code of Ethics draft which was distributed to the Commission. The draft will be tweaked and edited for clarification.

### 3. EMS Billing Rates – BLS rates are the only proposed rate increase with being raised to \$600 (from \$550), per transport. Vote unanimous for this increase. Slempp clarified this will have to go to board for final approval and would not be effective until July 1, 2021 if approved.

Chairman Fox asked for clarification on what is next for the Cascade and Mt. Cross requests for trucks. The county attorney stated Commission needed to amend agenda and include these requests as new agenda items to give a formal recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for future discussion in the BOS and Finance meeting. Keith Scruggs made motion to amend agenda to get recommendation for Cascade truck to the board, seconded by Ben Meeks, unanimous vote. Bert Sellers made motion, seconded by Ben Meeks, unanimous by all, for a recommendation supporting Cascade Fire and Rescue's request for apparatus CIP in the FY22 budget be sent to the Board of Supervisors.

Question about Mt. Cross truck request funding, Chief Fowler stated there was no recommendation on the truck because there was no one there to represent the department and their truck request. Chris Slemph stated that the original request did not meet standards, and this was before standards were adopted, when it came back, there were no one there to represent. Since that time Mt. Cross has brought it in to meet specifications. Ben Meeks stated that has been some confusion, with what the process is for requests, but with the committee and funding rotation, it should be a clearer process. This will be on another agenda's item.

## **MATTERS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

Ben Meeks - addressed mutual aid and the grid system for dispatching. Chris Slemph explained the current grid system and that they cover a large area, and in the future, hopefully they can be downsized. Ben also stated on how good of a job the entire Public Safety team is doing. He reiterated the "One Service, One Team" motto. He also emphasized how valuable our volunteers are a valuable resource to the county.

Tim Duffer - thinks we need to look at how we do billing and look into more aggressive EMS billing methods.

Kermit King - stated this is his third meeting as a Commissioner and asked about the Cool Branch issue.

Keith Scruggs – no matters

Ron Scarce - no matters

Bert Sellers - stated even though there were controversial issues addressed this evening, that all handled with respect and civility and Pittsylvania County has been represented well.

Bobby Lovelace - no matters

Chuck Angier - concerning the fees, seems billing can be more consistent throughout the county, also concerning Cool Branch, that the issue needs to be resolved.

Chairman Fox - the DATC/PSPS Annual CE weekend was well-attended, hats off to the providers, attendees, and instructors. If you have a topic or want to be an instructor for next year's event, please let Tommy Barber at the training center in Danville know. Also, he addressed responses, and his concern for priority designation levels for each call. He proposed the response be amended to include staff ambulance to high priority calls. He also mentioned specific apparatus dispatch.

**CLOSED SESSION**

- 1. Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.
  - 1. Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.  
Motion to enter closed session by Keith Scruggs, seconded by Chuck Angier, unanimous vote.
- 2. Closed Session Certification (Gwen Tucker)

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AND CLOSED SESSION CERTIFICATION**

BE IT RESOLVED, that at the Meeting of the Pittsylvania County Fire and Rescue Commission ("Commission") on March 23, 2021, the Commission hereby certifies by a recorded vote that to the best of each Commissioner's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from the Open Meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act ("Act") and identified in the Motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the Closed Meeting, If any Commissioner believes that there was a departure from the requirements of the Act, he shall so state prior the vote indicating the substance of the departure. The Statement shall be recorded in the Commission's Minutes.

<u>Vote</u>	
Chuck Angier	yes
Tim Duffer	yes
Bryan Fox	yes
Kermit King	yes
Bobby Lovelace	yes
Ben Meeks	yes
Ron Scarce	yes
Keith Scruggs	yes
Bert Sellers	yes

**MATTERS FROM CLOSED SESSION**

Motion from Ron Scarce with a second from Ketih Scruggs that after months of deliberation the Fire and Rescue Commission makes a recommendation that the Board of Supervisors or appropriate county official suspend the operation of Keeling Volunteer Fire Department until further notice. The motion passed unanimously with Tim Duffer requesting to abstain from the vote due to a conflict.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

16. ADJOURNMENT: motion to adjourn by Bert Sellers, seconded by Ben Meeks. Meeting adjourned at 9:29pm by Chairman Fox.