

**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL  
FIRE COMMITTEE  
MARY GORDON ELLIS EXECUTIVE BUILDING  
CONFERENCE ROOM  
JULY 12, 2007  
10:00 A.M.**

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

CHAIRMAN TUTEN, COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR, TOM WATSON- DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES, JUDITH FRANK – CLERK TO COUNCIL

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT THE ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA WERE NOTIFIED.

DURING PERIODS OF DISCUSSION AND/OR PRESENTATIONS THE MINUTES ARE TYPICALLY CONDENSED AND PARAPHRASED

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION:**

CHAIRMAN TUTEN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AND COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR GAVE THE INVOCATION.

**MONTHLY REPORTS:**

MR. WATSON REVIEWED THE MONTHLY REPORTS WHICH ARE ATTACHED AND MADE PART OF THE MINUTES.

MR. WATSON ALSO REPORTED THAT 3 OF THE AMBULANCES WERE BACK IN THE SHOP AND THAT HE HAS SPOKEN WITH ATTORNEY JONES ABOUT LEGAL ACTION AGAINST FORD. MR. WATSON SAID HE HEARD A CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT MAY BE UNDERWAY AND HE PLANNED ON BEING PART OF IT. MR. WATSON SAID HE WAS LOOKING INTO LEASING HIS ENTIRE FLEET LIKE PUBLIC WORKS DID THIS YEAR. MR. WATSON SAID HE WOULD LOOK AT A 5 YEAR LEASE ON THE AMBULANCE AND A 10 YEAR LEASE ON THE FIRE TRUCKS AND PUMPERS.

CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED ABOUT HOW MANY MILES PER YEAR GO ON AN AMBULANCE AND MR. WATSON SAID ABOUT 70,000 MILES PER YEAR.

CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF MR. WATSON CHECKED INTO WHO WAS DRIVING THE VEHICLES AND IF ANY PATTERN WAS ESTABLISHED. MR. WATSON SAID THAT THEY LOOKED FOR A PATTERN AND IT IS NOT THE DRIVERS, IT WAS JUST A BAD YEAR FOR THAT YEAR OF FORD.

MR. WATSON INTRODUCED A PROPERTY MANAGEMENT CONTRACT AND SAID BY SPLITTING THE CONTRACT IT WOULD COST THE COUNTY ABOUT \$40,000.00 MORE THAN HAVING JOHNSON FIRE AND SAFETY DO IT ALL. MR. WATSON SAID HE KNOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF USING LOCAL VENDORS, BUT HE FELT THE

ADDITIONAL COST OUTWEIGHED THAT. MR. WATSON SAID THE JOHNSON FIRE AND SAFETY COMES TO JASPER COUNTY AND DOES THE ENTIRE FLEET. MR. WATSON SAID THE FIRE VEHICLES ARE DONE TWO TIMES A YEAR AND THE AMBULANCES NEED OIL CHANGES MORE OFTEN, BUT THOSE OIL CHANGES ARE DONE AT THE COUNTY SHOP. MR. WATSON SAID THE JOHNSON FIRE AND SAFETY PROVIDES HIM WITH A DETAILED REPORT OF ALL THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE TO EACH VEHICLE. MR. WATSON SAID THE MECHANICS ARE ALL TRAINED AND THEY DO NOT CHARGE MILEAGE TO COME TO JASPER COUNTY FOR THE SCHEDULED MAINTENANCE. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED ABOUT REPAIRS THAT ARE CALLED IN AND MR. WATSON SAID IF IT IS A CALL BACK FOR A REPAIR OTHER THAN A ROUTINE MATTERS THEY DO CHARGE MILEAGE. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED IF THEY ARE CALLED BACK TO FIX A PROBLEM THAT THEY FIXED BEFORE DO THEY CHARGE MILEAGE. MR. WATSON SAID HE WOULD CHECK AND GET BACK TO THE COMMITTEE. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED MR. WATSON TO REVIEW THE ENTIRE CONTRACT AND REPORT BACK TO THE COMMITTEE. MR. WATSON SAID THE CONTRACT WAS A BUDGETED ITEM AND ASKED TO MOVE FORWARD. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED THAT THIS MATTER BE PRESENTED TO THE ENTIRE COUNCIL. MR. WATSON SAID HE WOULD NOT BE AT THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING AND CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE COULD HAVE STEVEN MALPHRUS PRESENT IT.

**LEVY:**

MR. WATSON SAID HE WAS NOT REALLY SURE WHERE THEY WERE WITH LEVY. MR. WATSON SAID A CONTRACT WAS OFFERED, BUT HE SAID NO DECISION HAD BEEN MADE. MR. WATSON SAID THAT LEVY WAS REMOVED FROM THE ORDINANCE FOR A COUNTY WIDE FIRE DISTRICT BECAUSE OF THE CURRENT RESOLUTION AND CONTRACTED AREAS. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED WHAT THE CAUSE OF THE HOLD WAS UP AND MR. WATSON SAID HE DID NOT KNOW BECAUSE NO ONE HAS CONTACTED HIM. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED THAT MR. MALPHRUS COME TO THE MEETING. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED MR. MALPHRUS FOR AN UPDATE ON LEVY. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT MR. DOUG GRAHAM CALLED AND SOUNDED LIKE HE WAS READY TO GO FORWARD, BUT MR. GRAHAM'S DISCUSSIONS HAVE ALL BEEN WITH MR. FULGHUM. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED MR. WATSON TO GET THE ANSWERS FOR THIS SITUATION AND CONTACT COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR AND COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR WILL FORWARD THE INFORMATION TO HIM.

**CHERRY POINT FIRE STATION:**

MR WATSON SAID THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE CONTINUING AND HOPES THAT THE CONTRACT WILL BE READY IN AUGUST. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED HOW MUCH LAND WAS INVOLVED AND MR. WATSON SAID THE SURVEY WAS BEING DONE. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF ALL THE EQUIPMENT AT

CHERRY POINT WOULD BE MOVED AND MR. WATSON SAID ALL THE EQUIPMENT WILL BE MOVED. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID THERE WOULD BE A MEETING IN PINELAND ON JULY 21, 2007 AND COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID HE WOULD BE ATTENDING THE MEETING IN ROBERTVILLE SINCE HE IS ONE OF THE SPEAKERS. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE WOULD ATTEND THAT MEETING SINCE IT WAS IN COUNCILMAN TYLER'S DISTRICT AND COUNCILMAN TYLER WOULD BE ATTENDING.

***IT SITUATION:***

MR. WATSON SAID THAT THE COUNTY TOOK A LIGHTNING HIT OVER THE WEEKEND AND THAT THINGS WERE TRYING TO BE RESOLVED. MR. WATSON SAID NO COMPANIES IN THE AREA PROVIDE THIS TYPE OF SERVICE SO STEVE MALPHRUS HAS BEEN HELPING YASEMIN AKAR GET THINGS UP AND RUNNING AGAIN. MR. WATSON SAID STEVEN HAS HAD TO SPEND A LOT OF TIME DOING THIS AND HIM, (MR. WATSON) REALLY NEEDS MR. MALPHRUS BACK AT EMERGENCY SERVICES. MR. WATSON SAID THAT IN NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET HE IS GOING TO REQUEST ANOTHER *IT* PERSON. MR. WATSON SAID THAT CLAY LUCAS IS AN EXPERT REGARDING SOFTWARE; HOWEVER, HE IS WORKING AS A SUPERVISOR SINCE BEAU SMITH LEFT.

***EMS BILLING:***

MR. WATSON SAID THAT HE WAS GOING TO INCREASE THE MILEAGE RATE, AS THEY BASE THE RATE ON WHAT INSURANCE AND MEDICARE WILL PAY. MR. WATSON SAID THEY ARE CURRENTLY CHARGING \$7.50 A LOADED MILE AND HE WILL INCREASE IT TO \$8.50 A LOADED MILE. MR. WATSON SAID THAT MEDICARE WILL PAY UP TO \$9.17. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE DID NOT FEEL A PERSON'S CREDIT REPORT SHOULD BE AFFECTED IF THEY CANNOT PAY. MR. WATSON SAID THEY ACCEPT WHAT MEDICARE PAYS AND THE REST IS WRITTEN OFF. MR. WATSON SAID IF THEY HAVE A CO-PAY THEY TRY TO ARRANGE PAYMENTS, BUT THEY ONLY TURN THE ONES OVER TO COLLECTION AGENCIES THAT THEY KNOW CAN PAY, BUT DON'T. MR. WATSON SAID THEY CAN ALSO USE THE SET OFF DEBT COLLECTION WHERE THEY ATTACHES TAX REFUNDS. MR. WATSON SAID THEY DO NOT GO AFTER PEOPLE THEY KNOW CANNOT AFFORD TO PAY FOR THE SERVICE. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE DID NOT WANT PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT AFFORD TO PAY HARASSED. MR. WATSON SAID HE THOUGHT BEING ABLE TO TAKE CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS WILL HELP COLLECTIONS WITH PEOPLE WHO LIVE OUTSIDE OF JASPER COUNTY WHO HAVE ASKED IF THE COUNTY ACCEPTED CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED HOW MANY AMBULANCES WERE RUNNING AND MR. WATSON SAID 3 WERE RUNNING AND 2 WERE IN THE SHOP. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED THAT IF THERE IS NO CLASS ACTION SUIT AGAINST FORD WAS MR. WATSON STILL GOING TO PURSUE IT AND MR. WATSON

SAID THAT HE WAS NOT SURE; HE WOULD PREFER TO DOVETAIL OFF OF SOMEONE ELSE.

MR. WATSON SAID THE NEW AMBULANCE SHOULD ARRIVE BY THE END OF AUGUST OR THE EARLY PART OF SEPTEMBER AND AN ADDITIONAL ONE HAS BEEN ORDERED.

CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF MR. WATSON WAS HAVING ANY TROUBLE WITH THE SHOP AND MR. WATSON RESPONDED THAT HE HAS HAD NO PROBLEMS.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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JUDITH M. FRANK, CCC  
CLERK TO COUNCIL

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FRED TUTEN  
CHAIRMAN OF FIRE COMMITTEE