

**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MARY GORDON ELLIS EXECUTIVE BUILDING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MARCH 30, 2009
10:00 A.M.**

MINUTES

OFFICIALS PRESENT:

LERROY BLACKSHEAR, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
HENRY ETHERIDGE, COMMITTEE MEMBER

STAFF PRESENT:

ANDREW FULGHUM, ADMINISTRATOR
WILBUR DALEY, DEP. ADM. EMERGENCY SERVICES
RONNIE MALPHRUS, DEP. ADM. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
JUDITH FRANK, CLERK TO COUNCIL

OTHERS PRESENT:

DAN MORGAN, JEFF SLOCUM – HARDEEVILLE FIRE
JOHN MINGLEDORF, JASON TAYLOR – RIDGELAND FIRE
DOUG GRAHAM, NELVIN GRAHAM – LEVY FIRE

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

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

CALL TO ORDER:

CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 10:05 A.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION:

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE GAVE THE INVOCATION.

EMERGENCY SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT:

MR. FULGHUM ASKED TO DELAY THIS UNTIL LATER IN THE MEETING WHEN MR. DALEY ARRIVES.

FIRE SERVICE CONTRACT BETWEEN JASPER COUNTY AND TOWN OF RIDGELAND:

MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT HE IS TO GET TOGETHER AND NEGOTIATE THE FIRE SERVICE CONTRACTS. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE CONTRACT WITH

RIDGELAND DOES NOT EXPIRE ONLY JUNE 30, 2010. MR FUGLHUM SAID THAT THE CONTRACT FOR FIRE SERVICE FOR THE FIVE MILE RADIUS AROUND RIDGELAND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$195,000.00. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THE COUNTY ALSO PAYS FOR THREE ADDITIONAL FIREMEN AND PAYS THE LEASE PAYMENT FOR A TANKER FOR THE TOWN OF RIDGELAND. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THEY WANTED TO PROVIDE THE COMMITTEE WITH THE INFORMATION AHEAD OF TIME, BUT THEY WERE NOT GOING TO NEGOTIATE ANY OF THE CONTRACTS TODAY. JOHN MINGLEDORF, RIDGELAND CHIEF, ASKED IF THEY HAD ANY QUESTIONS. CHIEF MINGLEDORF EXPLAINED THAT RIDGELAND RUNS THE CALLS FOR THE 5 MILE RADIUS AROUND RIDGELAND, AND IN ONE AREA OFF OF WAGON BRANCH LOOP, THE AREA EXTENDS A LITTLE FURTHER THAN 5 MILES BECAUSE THEY FELT THEY SHOULD COVER THE ENTIRE STREET AND NOT STOP IN THE MIDDLE BECAUSE IT WAS 5 MILES. CHIEF MINGLEDORF INFORMED THE COMMITTEE THAT RIDGELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT PASSED THE WATER SHUTTLE CRITERIA AND ANYONE LOCATED WITHIN THE 5 MILE RADIUS NOW HAVE AN ISO RATING OF 4 AND ANYONE BEYOND THE FIVE MILE RADIUS HAS AN ISO RATING OF 10. CHIEF MINGLEDORF DISCUSSED HIS STAFF (5 PAID PEOPLE PER DAY) AND VOLUNTEERS (19 VOLUNTEERS). CHIEF MINGLEDORF DISCUSSED THE CADET PROGRAM AND THE PROGRAM HE IS WORKING WITH RIDGELAND HIGH SCHOOL AND THOMAS HEYWARD ACADEMY. CHIEF MINGLEDORF ANNOUNCED THAT THE HONEY HILL COMMUNITY HAS RECEIVED THE DESIGNATION OF A "FIRE WISE COMMUNITY."

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THE PEOPLE BEYOND THE 5 MILE LIMIT OF WAGON BRANCH LOOP ALSO GOT THE 4 ISO RATING. CHIEF MINGLEDORF RESPONDED THAT ANYTHING OUT OF THE 5 MILE RADIUS FROM ANY FIRE STATION WOULD HAVE A 10 ISO RATING.

CHIEF MINGLEDORF EXPLAINED THAT HIS STATION MAINTAINS ALL THE DRY HYDRANTS, THEY DO THE INSPECTIONS AND ANY OTHER ISO RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES.

CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED IF THEY WERE PLANNING ON REQUESTING AN INCREASE. CHIEF MINGLEDORF RESPONDED THAT HE HAS NOT REQUESTED AN INCREASE FOR HIS DEPARTMENT AND HE WAS CONCENTRATING ON WORKING ON THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AND TRYING TO BUILD ON WHAT THEY ALREADY HAVE IN PLACE. CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR OF THE SUCCESS OF THE CADET PROGRAM. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED HOW MANY ARE CERTIFIED AND CHIEF MINGLEDORF SAID HE HAS ABOUT 20 CERTIFIED FIREMEN (INCLUDING HIS PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS).

MR. FULGHUM ASKED CHIEF MINGLEDORF WHAT WAS THE TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE RIDGELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT. CHIEF MINGLEDORF TOLD MR. FULGHUM HIS TOTAL BUDGET WAS ABOUT \$800,000.00. CHIEF MINGLEDORF SAID THEY TAKE ONE CALL AT A TIME AND THEY RUN DIFFERENT TRUCKS TO DIFFERENT AREAS BASED ON THE CALL. MR. FULGHUM ASKED IF THE TANKER HAS BEEN MAINTAINED AND CHIEF

MINGLEDORF RESPONDED THAT THEY ARE VERY HAPPY WITH THE TANKER AND HE FELT IT WAS A VERY GOOD TRUCK.

EMERGENCY SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT:

DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR DALEY PRESENTED THE COUNCIL WITH THE MONTHLY REPORTS FROM FEBRUARY AND MARCH, 2009. MR. DALEY EXPLAINED THAT THE FIGURES IN THE MARCH REPORT WERE NOT COMPLETE BECAUSE SOME OF THE NUMBERS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR TWO WEEKS AFTER THE END OF THE MONTH. MR. DALEY INFORMED THE COMMITTEE THAT THE EMERGENCY SERVICES AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS ARE FULLY STAFFED. MR. DALEY DISCUSSED A CHANGE OF POSITION IN DISPATCH AND THAT ONE POSITION IS CURRENTLY BEING ADVERTISED. MR. DALEY SAID THAT AN INTERIM DIRECTOR IS WORKING UNTIL A NEW PERSON IS HIRED. MR. DALEY EXPLAINED THAT THE BUSINESS OFFICE'S COLLECTION VARIES FROM THE CHARGES AS THEY ARE NOT ALWAYS PAID THE SAME MONTH THEY ARE BILLED. CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED ABOUT THE NUMBER OF CALLS THAT ARE STRUCTURE FIRES AND MR. DALEY SAID THE STRUCTURE FIRES ARE LISTED ON THE REPORT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE COMMENTED ON THE DECLINE IN STOLEN ROAD SIGNS.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE EMPLOYEES ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE AND MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT IS DUE TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

MR. FULGHUM PROVIDED THE COMMITTEE WITH A BUDGET SUMMARY FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND ASKED IF THE COUNCIL HAD ANY QUESTIONS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE WOULD REVIEW THE REPORT AND WILL HAVE QUESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE FIGURES FOR MARCH DO NOT REFLECT THE ACTUAL TOTALS BECAUSE THERE WAS ONE ADDITIONAL PAYROLL THAT WAS NOT INCLUDED WHEN THE REPORT WAS RUN. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THIS REPORT WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE ENTIRE COUNCIL.

FIRE SERVICE CONTRACT BETWEEN JASPER COUNTY AND THE CITY OF HARDEEVILLE:

MR. FULGHUM INFORMED THE COUNCIL THAT THE HARDEEVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTRACT WILL EXPIRE IN 2010 AND IT IS DIFFERENT FROM RIDGELAND'S CONTRACT AS THE COUNTY WAS TO PURCHASE A FIRE TRUCK JOINTLY WITH HARDEEVILLE AND THE COUNTY WOULD PAY UP TO \$300,000.00 FOR THE TRUCK. MR. MALPHRUS INTERJECTED THAT THE LAST PAYMENT FOR THE TRUCK WOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE NEW BUDGET. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT HARDEEVILLE ALSO TOOK OVER THE CHERRY POINT FIRE DISTRICT AND THE COUNTY PAYS HARDEEVILLE THE SPECIAL FIRE DISTRICT TAX. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE FIRE DISTRICT TAX COLLECTED IS ABOUT \$350,000.00.

CHIEF MORGAN SAID THAT PRIOR TO THE CONTRACT, THE CITY OF HARDEEVILLE WAS PROVIDING FIRE SERVICE TO THE RURAL

HARDEEVILLE AREA AT NO EXPENSE TO THE COUNTY. CHIEF MORGAN SAID THE CONTRACT CAME ABOUT DUE TO A WORKERS COMPENSATION CLAIM FOR A CITY EMPLOYEE WHO WAS PAID BY THE CITY FROM CITY TAXES AND WORKING OUTSIDE THE CITY. CHIEF MORGAN SAID THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT WAS DONE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE EMPLOYEES WERE COVERED. CHIEF MORGAN SAID EVERYTHING IS GOING WELL; HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN SOME PERSONALITY CONFLICTS THAT THEY HAVE HAD TO RESOLVE. CHIEF MORGAN SAID HE HAS 5 PEOPLE ON DUTY AND HE RECEIVED A GRANT THAT HAS ENABLED HIM TO HIRE 6 NEW FIREMEN. CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED IF HARDEEVILLE HAS THE CADET PROGRAM AND CHIEF MORGAN RESPONDED THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE IT AT THIS TIME, BUT HE PLANS ON STARTING A CADET PROGRAM IN JUNE OR JULY. COUNCILMEN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE 28 ALARM CALLS AND CHIEF MORGAN ANSWERED THAT THEY WERE FIRE ALARMS GOING OFF.

MR. FULGHUM ASKED HOW MANY PAID FIREMEN AND HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS DID HE HAVE. CHIEF MORGAN RESPONDED THAT HE HAS 16 PAID FIREMEN AND 16 VOLUNTEERS. MR. FULGHUM ASKED WHAT THE TOTAL BUDGET WAS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND CHIEF MORGAN RESPONDED THAT HIS BUDGET IS \$1,300,000.00 FOR HARDEEVILLE AND CHERRY POINT. MR. FULGHUM ASKED ABOUT THE LADDER TRUCK AND CHIEF MORGAN SAID THEY HAVE NOT HAD ANY PROBLEMS. CHIEF MORGAN SAID THE LADDER TRUCK IS AVAILABLE WHEREVER IT IS NEEDED.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF CHERRY POINT WAS INCLUDED IN THE \$1,300,000.00 AND CHIEF MORGAN SAID THAT IT WAS INCLUDED. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE COUNTY GIVES HARDEEVILLE THE TAXES COLLECTED FOR THE CHERRY POINT SPECIAL FIRE DISTRICT. CHIEF MORGAN SAID THAT HARDEEVILLE GETS \$195,000.00 PLUS ABOUT \$350,000.00 FROM THE COUNTY.

FIRE SERVICE CONTRACT BETWEEN JASPER COUNTY AND THE LEVY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT:

MR. FULGHUM INFORMED THE COMMITTEE THAT THE FIRE SERVICE CONTRACT WITH THE LEVY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT EXPIRES JUNE 30, 2009. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT LEVY HAS TWO PAID FIREMEN AND THE COUNTY LEASES MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT TO LEVY FOR \$1.00 AND THAT LEVY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT A COUNTY OWNED COMPUTER IS AT THE LEVY STATION. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE COUNTY CURRENTLY HAS A SERVICE CONTRACT WITH LEVY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT IS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$330,000.00.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED HOW LARGE WAS THE LEVY FIRE DISTRICT AND CHIEF GRAHAM SAID THE LEVY FIRE DISTRICT WAS FROM NEW RIVER, PURRYSBURG ROAD AND LIMEHOUSE ROAD TO THE GEORGIA LINE. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE POPULATION IN THAT AREA AND MR. MALPHRUS SAID HE DID NOT HAVE THAT INFORMATION,

BUT HE COULD GET A COUNT OF RESIDENCES AND BUSINESSES. CHIEF GRAHAM SAID THAT THERE ARE 1,523 STRUCTURES IN THE LEVY FIRE DISTRICT ACCORDING TO LAST YEAR'S COUNT. MR. DALEY PRESENTED A MAP OUTLINING THE DIFFERENT FIRE DISTRICTS AND WHERE THE STATIONS WERE LOCATED. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED HOW MANY STRUCTURES WERE IN THE FIVE MILE RADIUS OF HARDEEVILLE AND MR. FULGHUM SAID HE FELT IT WOULD BE PRETTY CLOSE; HOWEVER, MORE AREAS ARE BEING ANNEXED. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT HARDEEVILLE HAS ANNEXED A LOT OF VACANT LAND. MR. FULGHUM SAID HE WOULD PROVIDE THE COMMITTEE WITH THE NUMBER OF STRUCTURES. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID IT WAS TIME TO START TO RENEGOTIATE THE CONTRACT WITH LEVY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND TO WHOM DO THEY GIVE THEIR NUMBERS. MR. DALEY SAID LAST YEAR CHIEF GRAHAM GAVE HIM THE NUMBERS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THEY NEEDED TO GET THE NUMBERS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT HE HAS NOT SEEN ANY FIGURES FROM THE LEVY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. CHIEF GRAHAM SAID HE WOULD HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER FOR THE BUDGET WORKSHOP. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT THEY NEEDED TO START ON THE CONTRACT AND MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT LEVY NEEDS TO REQUEST A CONTRACT.

JASPER COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICTS:

MR. FULGHUM EXPLAINED TO THE COMMITTEE THAT THE CHERRY POINT FIRE DISTRICT ALLOWS THE COUNTY TO ACCESS MILLAGE FOR FIRE PROTECTION. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE COUNTY HAS ESTABLISHED A FIRE DISTRICT IN LEVY, BUT NO MILLAGE HAS BEEN ASSESSED. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE REST OF THE COUNTY MAKES UP THE 3RD FIRE DISTRICT. MR. FULGHUM ASKED THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER CREATING A FIRE DISTRICT IN HARDEEVILLE AND RIDGELAND. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THERE HAVE BEEN QUESTIONS FROM THE CITIZENS IN THE RURAL AREAS ABOUT OTHER AREAS RECEIVING MORE THAN THEY DO AND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS WOULD BE A WAY TO PROVIDE THE SAME SERVICE TO EVERYONE.

MR. FULGHUM ASKED THE COMMITTEE TO MEET IN A CLOSED SESSION MEETING TO DISCUSS THE FIRE SERVICE CONTRACTS. THE COMMITTEE SCHEDULED THE CLOSED SESSION MEETING FOR APRIL 9, 2009 AT 10:00 A.M.

CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID THAT THE PEOPLE FROM ROBERTVILLE AND PINELAND ACCUSED THE COUNCIL OF NEGLECTING THEM AND CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED IF A SPECIAL FIRE DISTRICT COULD BE CREATED IN THOSE AREAS.

MR. DALEY UPDATED THE COMMITTEE ON THE ROBERTVILLE STATION AND HE SAID THAT THEIR SERVICE HAS BEEN UPGRADED.

MR. FULGHUM RESPONDED TO CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR'S QUESTION ABOUT ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL FIRE DISTRICT STATING THAT THE COUNCIL CAN ESTABLISH ONE IN THAT AREA OR ANY OTHER AREA.

CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED THE ADMINISTRATOR TO COME UP WITH THE NUMBERS FOR THAT AREA.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE TOLD THE CITIZENS IN THAT AREA THEY COULD HAVE WHATEVER SERVICES THEY WANTED, BUT A SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT WOULD NEED TO BE ESTABLISHED TO PAY FOR THEM. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THE CITIZENS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN CREATING A SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT IN THEIR AREA.

MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO MAKE SURE THEY CAN PROVIDE THE BASE SERVICES TO EVERYONE AND IF THE PEOPLE WANT MORE THAN THE BASE SERVICES, A SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT NEEDS TO BE CREATED.

ADJOURN:

CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 11:00 A.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

JUDITH M. FRANK, ccc
CLERK TO COUNCIL

GEORGE M. HOOD
CHAIRMAN