

AT A FIRE SERVICES WORKSHOP OF
THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON
OCTOBER 26, 2023 AT 4:00 PM, THE
FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD,
VIZ:

Present: Kimblin NeSmith, Chair, District 3
Eric Hinson, Vice-Chair, District 1
Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2
Brenda Holt, District 4
Ronterious "Ron" Green, District 5
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator
Sean Pittman, County Attorney
Adriana Quijada, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair NeSmith started the workshop at 4:04 pm. Commissioner Green provided invocation and Chair NeSmith led into the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD (3-Minute Limit)

The Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners welcomes and encourages public participation at all meetings of the Board. Citizens are free to speak for up to three (3) minutes on non-agenda items. Public comments and participation are also encouraged for items on the agenda. Additionally, if you are unable to attend a meeting in person, comments from the Public can also be submitted via email to CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov until noon on the date of the meeting. Comments submitted after the deadline, but prior to the meeting, will be added to the official record, but the County cannot guarantee that Commissioners and staff will have adequate time to review comments prior to the meeting. Citizens are further encouraged to participate via Zoom using the credentials on the County's website. The Board's meetings are also broadcast live on the Board's Facebook page.

Chair NeSmith read aloud the above statement.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Welcome

Chair NeSmith thanked everyone for attending.

2. Introductions and Background of Fire Services

Mr. Dixon thanked everyone.

Mr. Dixon stated they were going through contracts, just an understanding of where they are going. It is an open and honest discussion on how to move forward.

Mr. Dixon stated they will start with Unincorporated Volunteer Fire Departments. Rosters will receive \$20.00 per fire response. Grant Pool will be created by County to use when only a reimbursable grant match is required. The County will create a policy that allow all BOCC employees who are active on an Unincorporated Volunteer Fire Department to utilize administrative leave in the event of a fire response should it affect normal day to day employment. The County will provide monthly trainings to fire departments and the County will provide a uniform, assertive campaign to recruit.

They will require both Unincorporated Volunteer Fire Departments and Municipal Volunteer Fire Departments to host community engagements and/or outreach programs in the unincorporated coverage area represented by them 2 times per year.

Mr. Dixon went on to the City of Quincy Fire Department. Mr. Dixon stated they were planning on having contracts within the next few weeks. Any feedback would be appreciated.

3. Introductions and Background of Fire Services

Chair NeSmith stated this was a working document and they need input from them. It is about unity. This is only a recommendation and a start to this.

Commissioner Green stated he would like to hear from other departments like the Chief before giving input. He has been advocating for volunteers.

Commissioner Holt stated she looks at the funding source. How much can they pull from the state/federal government. Commissioner Holt also mentioned inventory.

Danny Hunt, Fire Chief Gretna, hoped to collaborate. He stated the Cities have been working together and they had presented a plan to the Board in July.

Chief Baker, City of Quincy Fire, stated there is details needed to be worked out.

Town Manager gave a brief statement. Commissioner Holt asked if they have insurance now. Town Manager said yes.

Mr. Nixon stated a lot of details need to be worked out. He recommended to deal with the timelier issues now. He had concerns regarding liability.

Dr. Grant thanked the Administrator for putting this together. He looked forward to working with them. He also mentioned that the increased funding for Midway looks great.

Fire Chief of Gretna provided a quick presentation. He mentioned how they would pay for it and they were potentially looking at a special fire assessment.

Chief Hunt stated the ISO is more of a report card of ability to deliver services.

Chief Hood asked which cities are part of this plan. Without the fire assessment, how do they plan on funding the plan presented?

They were leaving funding up to elected officials.

4. Board Direction

ADJOURNMENT

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR NESMITH DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 5:44 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

KIMBLIN NESMITH, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk