



Clarke County Fire & EMS Commission
101 Chalmers Court, Suite B
Berryville, Virginia 22611
(540) 955-5132

MINUTES

October 11th, 2018 6:30pm

Clarke County Government Center – Meeting Room AB

Attendees: Matt Hoff, Chairman
 Tony Roper
 Jacob White
 Diane Harrison
 Van Armacost
 Bryan Conrad
 Andrew Nicholson

Absent: Dave Weiss

Staff: Brian Lichty
 Pam Hess
 Melanie Radford
 Dave Ash-arrived at 7:11pm

Chairman Hoff called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

1. Mr. Nicholson made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion passed with all in favor.

2. Public Comment – Mr. Jay Arnold, resident of Berryville, just wanted to comment on the Association issue that was brought to the Commission’s attention last month. The Association started in 1980, going on 40 years, they are recognized by BOS and have entrusted the Association with various funding to make purchases to enhance fire and rescue in the county as well as having an agreement with the fire companies that were setup through the Association remaining in effect today. He is hoping that is not the intention of this Commission or the BOS to dissolve the Association. He would encourage the Commission and the BOS to encourage Boyce to work out their differences with the Association. Nothing has really been pointed out as to what the issues are. Each company has 3 representatives and the President of the Association for the last 2 years has been a Boyce member. He thinks it is important that the volunteers continue to be unity so they can assist the county and the Commission and continue with the progress in the community. There are a lot of things that the Association handles that the Commission doesn’t need to be in the weeds with, if the Association is dissolved this will no longer happen. He stated that you need to salvage procedures in the Commission and the county and shouldn’t be changed because 1 company drops out. Last year the budget was a mess and everyone understood that. This year the budget process changed again but last month it’s being changed again due to Boyce dropping out. He feels this was a knee jerk reaction to act on at the same meeting of being notified. He feels that it should have continued on with what was in place for this year and then make the change for next year. Previously the county always wanted unity from the companies and this should continue. He would encourage and stated that it’s important to work out the differences with Boyce. They have dropped out previously for a year and came back thankfully. He reiterated that the letter from Boyce

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states “at this time” and should not be something that is given up on, and he hopes that changes are not made in a big hurry; let’s see if they can work it out.

3. Mr. White noted a spelling error to the July 12th, 2018 minutes, on page 5, top paragraph should say PSAP not PCAP. Ms. Harrison made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed with all in favor. Mr. Nicholson made a motion to approve the August 9th, 2018 minutes. The motion passed with all in favor. Ms. Harrison made a motion to approve the September 13th, 2018 minutes. The motion passed with all in favor.
4. Committee Reports –
 - Standards – (see attached) No comments
 - Technology – Mr. Roper stated that they did not meet this past month but he did report that they are still on track for finishing the radio project and looking forward to the evaluations of the changes put in place and that they are coming in under the proposed budget.
 - Budget/Preparation – Update-Mr. Lichty has met with all three departments and will be presenting his countywide recommendations to the budget sub-committee next Tuesday, October 16th 2018 at 6:30pm location to be determined. He will present 2 portions; the companies and his.
5. Unfinished Business
 - Blue Ridge Staffing Request– Update – Mr. Lichty stated that the second month of staffing report has been completed for September. Mr. Roper asked why there was 5 days that they were unable to staff. Mr. Lichty explained that due to part time employee’s schedules, they were unable to fill some of the Blue Ridge slots. The middle of this month, October, he is filling positions with another full time and part time employee and this should lesson some of the struggles. Mr. Roper asked that with all the statistics/reporting, are we performing up to where we need to and is this program something that needs to be addressed for a long term purpose. Mr. Lichty definitely thinks this is helping and he has included it into his planning. Looking at the total of hours that Blue Ridge is putting in has made a difference. You can see the impacts this has at each station due to career staffing.
6. Report from the Fire and Rescue Association –
 - Notes from last meeting-(see attached) Mr. Lichty reviewed –Mr. White and Mr. Armacost stated there was a comment/discussion about the makeup of this Commission with having 2 members from Boyce and whether Mr. Conrad is living inside or outside the county and unsure how the Association is going to handle the officer positions. Mr. White commented that the Association is looking for an answer from the BOS on the makeup of the Commission, first having 2 representatives from one company, is that acceptable; secondly is the BOS going to allow if Mr. Conrad is a non-resident to stay seated on the Commission. Mr. Lichty stated that he will find out and report back. No other comments or questions.

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- Fire Programs and 4-for-life funds FY 2019 recommendations-Mr. Lichty reviewed the process previous to Boyce removing themselves from the Association. He asked if there is a recommendation to proceed in the same manner or in a different manner. Ms. Harrison asked if there is a specific reason or legality that it goes to the Association specifically or requirements. Mr. Lichty did verify with Tom Judge that there isn't a county fiscal policy stating it has to be done this way just that it has always been sent to the Association because it represented all 3 companies and was the easiest way of doing it. Mr. Roper asked how quickly do they companies need this money. It appears that it would be an easy thing for the county to just dull out the money this time and to move the process along, however it would appear just as easy if there is some consideration from Boyce to come back to the Association to just wait for a period of time. What is the need of the companies? Mr. Lichty explained that the companies normally have the funds by now but he was asked by Mr. Judge if this still goes to the Association or not. Mr. Roper clarified that he is looking for a recommendation from the Commission as to the distribution of the funds to the 3 companies. The Association was given the full amount and distributed to the 3 companies equally. Ms. Harrison clarified again that there is no reason that the funding has to be given to the Association and Mr. Lichty confirmed. Mr. Armacost stated that he feels changes are being made to fast and Mr. White agreed stating there may be potential issues that they may not be seeing right now. Mr. Roper made a motion to allow the County to divide the funds of this grant equally to each of the three companies individually. Voting made by show of hands. Aye-Mr. Roper, Nay-Mr. Conrad, Mr. White, Ms. Harrison, Mr. Armacost, Mr. Nicholson. Motion defeated 1 to 5. Mr. Armacost made a motion for 2/3rds of the funding going to Association for distribution and 1/3rd going to Boyce directly, specifying the funds of 4 for life & fire programs. Voting made by show of hands. Aye-Mr. Armacost, Mr. Conrad, Ms. Harrison, Mr. White, Mr. Nicholson. Nay-Mr. Roper. Motion passed 5 to 1.
- Organization in Fire-Rescue system
 - i. Role of Association-Mr. Lichty stated that due to the current situation, we need to identify where the Association fits within the structure of the system. A decision needs to be made on how does the Commission recognize that group, what role do they play and how do we define that. Are there any actions or anything the Commission should be doing or should be recommending to the BOS in this matter or not? Mr. Armacost doesn't know if there has ever been any kind of a written core statement. Mr. Lichty asked does this matter need to be addressed by this Commission or the BOS. They are an organization that is not regulated and its own entity. They play a role in the fire and rescue system but how is that role defined in the system as a whole. Ms. Harrison feels the Association is a key part like glue that holds all the departments together and having it disrupted is going to cause some problems. Mr. Armacost stated that the Association needs to be given a chance to get their ducks in row and are a viable avenue to keep. Mr. White stated that the Association has completed a lot of countywide projects that has taken coordination from all 3 stations. If you do away with the Association the Commission is going to start getting into roots of operational stuff which the Association

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has always handled and taken care of. He thinks the Association is important and needs to stay. If Boyce wants to rejoin that's good, but he also doesn't feel that this Commission doesn't have a say over the Association. Mr. Lichty explained that this is why there needs to be clarification. Words are being mixed, saying the Commission has no say over the Association, but are making decisions that directly affect some of the operations of the Association. It's a unique situation. Mr. Lichty is just trying to figure out of the Association piece fits into the whole picture. The BOS is asking how the Commission feels the Association falls in this with one department pulled out. Mr. Roper suggested that Mr. Lichty goes back to the BOS and ask them to more clearly define what questions they are asking of him. Ms. Harrison stated that they need to identify exactly what participation they have in the past and figure out how to deal with those specific items. Mr. Hoff commented that the BOS is a governing body here and if they have no authority over the Association, the Commission is an extension of that governing body which is appointed by them, then he would say that if they have no authority then the Commission doesn't either. Ms. Harrison stated that we just have to change our business practices and all that we can do and won't necessarily know them until they come up. Mr. White commented why doesn't the Commission ask the Association what role they want to play.

- ii. Need for agenda item –Due to questions still unanswered this will be kept on the agenda for now.

7. Report from the Director of Fire and EMS – (see attached) Mr. Lichty noted a correction on page 18; the month should state September not August. –No other comments or questions.
8. New Business
 - Blue Ridge VFD request for matching funds on 2018 RSAF Grant – Powercot system -on page 25 of this packet. Mr. Roper made a motion that the Commission support in a presentation to the BOS Finance Committee the request to reimburse the funds in the amount of \$8410.05 to Blue Ridge. The motion passed with all in favor.
9. Summary of required action (New addition to agenda)-Mr. Lichty reviewed his list of actions needed prior to the next meeting.
 1. Present the vote for the fund for 4 for life and fire programs
 2. Ask the Association regarding their role in the system and vice versa to the BOS to get clarification what they expect from this Commission on questions over the Association
 3. Present to the Finance Committee support for the powercot reimbursement to Blue Ridge
 4. Mr. Roper asked Mr. Lichty to be prepared as much as possible to report on the new dispatch protocol and how that is affecting our response times.
 5. Continue on with the stats of the temporary staffing at Blue Ridge. Mr. White made a motion to continue the part time staffing at Blue Ridge for the next month. Mr. Roper clarified that there is an amount of money that will carry this through to the end of this fiscal year, but will need to be addressed in the new budget. Mr. Lichty stated that it is addressed in his budget presentation. The motion passed with all in favor.

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10. Mr. Roper made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed with all in favor at 7:27pm.

All meeting documents will be distributed at meeting. Next meeting is on November 8th, 2018 at 6:30pm in the Clarke County Government Center – Meeting Room AB

Minutes Recorded and Transcribed by Melanie Radford

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