

Santa Rosa County
Emergency Services Advisory Committee
November 19, 2003
2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members present:

Joe Diamond
Gerry Goldstein
Lew Oliver

John E. Reble
Chris Rucker
Tony Simmons

Member absent:

Don Vanderryt

Staff present:

Sheryl Bracewell
Deb Grinde

Dave Ling

Agenda approved as submitted for this meeting.

Minutes for meeting held October 22, 2003 accepted and approved as submitted.

Persons to Appear

Chief James Crisco was scheduled to appear; however, he was unable to attend.

Fire Chief Jim Wirth, Navarre Beach VFD, Utility Drive, Navarre Beach, FL, appeared to discuss some of the needs of the fire departments in the south end, which he discussed previously with Sheryl Bracewell, Paula Davis and Chris Rucker. Specifically, he appeared to request the assistance of the ESAC members in supporting the department's request for the county to match a State EMS grant. It is a 75%/25% grant and is in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) total. The grant would be used to purchase supplies sufficient to manage a mass casualty incident (MCI) with approximately fifty (50) casualties. The application for the grant would require the Medical Director's signature. This request for grant is being made on behalf of the south end fire departments and is for equipment, including backboards, "C" collars, etc. The equipment would be stored in the south end of the county. Chris Rucker explained the use of MCI equipment and the need for such equipment.

Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of the equipment. The members also discussed the grant in and of itself.

Chief Reble suggested that the north and central areas submit duplicate grants simultaneously in order to have the equipment available in other areas of the county.

J. Goldstein made a motion that the county pursue two (2) separate grants of which at least one (1) be designated to cover areas of the south end of the county and that the committee propose that the BOCC make the funds available to match the grant(s).

S. Bracewell advised that the grant must be in Tallahassee by December 12, 2003. Consequently, the information must be provided to P. Davis no later than December 1, 2003, in order for Ms. Davis to have the documentation ready to be presented to the BOCC at Committee meeting to be held on December 8, 2003. Ms. Bracewell also indicated to Chief Reble that if all of the information were provided in a timely manner it would be O.K. to pursue the grants.

The motion was carried with one (1) dissenting vote (L. Oliver).

Mr. Goldstein added that if only one grant was issued, it be earmarked for the south end of the county in presentation only.

J. Goldstein also requested that the South End Chiefs be prepared to submit a plan and method of transporting the equipment to an MCI site to the BOCC.

Review of Reports and Statistics

Members reviewed hand out of October statistics.

Chief Reble indicated that the response times are more accurate and continue to improve. The target for fire response times is six (6) minutes plus two (2) minutes for a total of eight (8) minute responses. The total for medical calls is six (6) minute responses.

Correspondence and Additional Information

An illustration of the county's radio system was distributed in order to provide the members with a visual concept of how communication occurs between all of the agencies.

Chief S. Rowell submitted an editorial titled "The Toughest Job in the Entire Fire Service?" in order to provide a greater insight into a volunteer fire chief's job. Please take some time to read this article!

Old Business

Fire Department MSBU and other funding

H. Walker, County Administrator, appeared and provided a short summation of the funding system and addressed the question of a time line for changes to the funding. There are no referendums regarding MSBU funds. The BOCC takes a vote of their own accord. The county acts as a service provider and re-distributes the funds. The MSBU is attached to private real property.

J. Goldstein questioned the procedure regarding the fact that private industry operates on state property and consequently does not compensate the fire departments for their services, e.g. Horse Stables

Discussion ensued among all members regarding the lack of funding and/or minimal funding for the fire districts, the aging of the ordinances including the fact that there have been no changes since 1999. Mention was also made of the opportunity for a ten (10) year ad-valorem tax break in the industrial parks.

Chief Reble suggested that a committee be formed to look at commercial developments, private businesses, etc in order to address these types of issues and provide direction to the BOCC no later than April, 2004

H. Walker suggested that all rate structures be anticipated for the future growth expected to occur in Santa Rosa County during these sessions.

Chief Reble suggested that a separate brainstorming session take place regarding the funding, the potential impact fees, etc.

H. Walker committed his assistance to supply any information, staff support or any other resource that the committee will require in order to make decisions regarding these issues.

J. Goldstein expressed his concern regarding the reasons Champion or TR Miller pays little or no fire tax. H. Walker will supply information regarding these entities to S. Bracewell for distribution to committee members. J. Goldstein would like to address this issue at the next meeting as an agenda item.

Noted that budget sheets distributed to committee members this date will be useful for discussion at the previously mentioned funding meeting.

Made note that there will be no field trip in December, as the Pace Fire Chief did not appear as scheduled today.

Insurance

DeVann Cook, Risk Management, appeared to provide a re-cap of insurance needs and coverage.

The county purchases Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance for all Volunteer Fire Departments on an annual basis. That insurance includes those types that are statutorily required. This is the only insurance provided to them by the county.

The county is self-insured for workmen's compensation and liability insurance coverage. Consequently, it would not be a viable option for the fire departments to be included.

However, there should be some advantages for the departments to act as a group. They will have to come together, share gathered information and act as one group in order to save money. D. Cook suggests that the Santa Rosa Firefighter's Association (SRFFA) provides that opportunity and that the SRFFA should take it upon themselves to organize a group to attempt to purchase insurance together.

Chief Reble advised that he would attempt to hold an informational meeting during an SRFFA meeting in order to lower insurance rates. D. Cook will attempt to contact some insurance agents to attend a meeting to help answer any questions.

Chief Reble suggested that the Committee might consider hosting an insurance salesperson in order to learn what the requirements would be for a group to purchase insurance.

Discussion by committee members ensued regarding the effect of pooling the "safe" departments along with the less "safe" departments. Would some of the rates increase? How would it affect the loss ratio? Noted that these issues will need to be considered through the process.

Questionnaires

Have received questionnaires from Skyline VFD and Holley-Navarre FD. Skyline VFD also submitted their Fuel Survey.

Fire Districts

Committee members reviewed maps of the fire districts that included the fire zones and sub-zones.

New Business

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Chief Reble suggested again that it would be good to find a mechanism to see how the community perceives the county's Emergency Services. He suggested that it would also be good to provide the public with the opportunity to let us know what their expectations are.

J. Goldstein suggested that this might be too much of a luxury for us to attempt to do at this time.

L. Oliver suggested that in order for a survey to be objective it may be necessary to hire a professional organization to complete the task.

Motion made by J. Goldstein to table this project until another time. Motion carried.

Multiple Story Dwellings

J. Goldstein noted that a high-rise structure is planned for construction in the Holley-Navarre area. Mr. Goldstein expressed his concern regarding provisions for the same in Santa Rosa County. Discussion followed regarding such issues as training, equipment and new building in the area for high-rise buildings.

Public Forum

None

Next meeting is December 17, 2003 at 2:00 p.m.

C. Rucker suggested that we invite two (2) fire districts for the December meeting. Committee members agreed. Navarre Beach VFD is already scheduled for December and Chief Crisco will be invited from the Pace VFD.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Submitted by: D. A. Grinde