

# CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

## OVERALL

### **JM: How have mergers worked in other cities?**

This is a difficult question to answer in a non-biased manner. The answer often depends on who you ask and often depends on when in the process you ask the question. Many mergers have been successful; and some may not have been as successful over time.

There have been Cities that were large enough to consolidate with a County to form a regional service district. The City of Jacksonville, Florida was a large City within an otherwise rural County. The City and the County decided to consolidate back in 1968 and form a countywide regional fire and EMS service district. Today, the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department services an area of 840 square miles, with a population of more than 850,000 (coj.net).

Counties in Florida usually have bigger fire departments than do the Cities. Miami Dade County merged together 27 different City departments and consolidated 11 fire districts into what is now known as the Miami Dade Fire Rescue Department (Snook, et al 1997).

There are many examples of full or partial consolidations in Florida: Seminole County, DeSoto County, Orange County, Hillsborough County, Pasco County, and Charlotte County, to name a few. There are continued talks in counties around Florida concerning consolidation. Collier County, Florida just this year merged three fire districts (East Naples, Golden Gate and Isle of Capri) for fire and emergency medical services. The City of Deerfield merged with Broward County in 2011. Deerfield was a 7 station, 160 member department, with an ISO class 2 and deep community ties.

The cases mentioned in this section all share some combination of the following concerns to make consolidation work for them: make use of qualified personnel, make use of existing facilities, achieve economies of scale, eliminate service duplication, organize services in the most logical way rather than have them constrained by jurisdictional or area limits, take politics out of service delivery, and meet citizen demands.

## COST

### **JM: If the County gives the City a price, for how long would it be valid? If the agreement doesn't work out for either party, what would happen to any equipment the City may have given up?**

The price would remain the same pending changes in operational expenses that happen from time to time. These are the types of changes that have fiscal impacts regardless of whether the City or the County is providing the service. Pay increases, retirement changes, fuel costs, insurance costs are all items that will fluctuate over time. Having said that, we could propose to lock in the cost to the City for a period of 3-5 years to provide some assurance to the City. This would not be a profit center for the County and, although some costs will naturally increase over time, proportionally the savings would remain for the City.

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

ORDINANCES AND PROCESSES

**MS: Numbers and costs related to County Fire Services rather than City Services to re-write ordinances staff /legal/meetings/signage, notifications, etc.**

Most of these costs would be relatively minor in nature and will be one-time transition costs.

CITY/COUNTY RELATIONSHIP

**MS: When we have a situation or problem, do we then need to present to County Commission?**

Most items would be handled between the managers or directly from the Flagler Beach City Manager to the County Fire Chief. Unresolved matters or those larger in scope could be raised between the two Commissions, as necessary. There are many interlocal agreements for services between different public entities within the County that allow for day-to-day operational components to be handled by staff.

**KC: Merger:**

**1. It seems the County is very eager to accommodate consolidation? Why?**

I would not say the County is eager, other than eager to help the City of Flagler Beach, merger or no merger. The more professional the fire rescue unit, the better the emergency services will be for the citizens and the less pressure on County emergency resources. Ultimately, we believe may be the right thing to do as the County can provide a higher quality of service at a better price.

**2. What does the County stand to gain by merging with Flagler Beach Fire Department?**

The only thing the residents and visitors of this County will stand to gain by a merger is a more organized fire rescue department with better training and coordination while saving money.

**3. The County is currently facing a \$7M to \$10M budget shortfall and looking for answers. I'm baffled as to why they are interested in expanding their fire department. Perhaps it is related to the per-capita income of Flagler Beach residents?**

The County is not facing a \$7 to \$10 million budget shortfall, but it is facing budgetary challenges and financial investment/service choices. The County is facing these challenges because it aggressively lowered taxes and utilized reserves to minimize the downturn impacts on taxpayers. The County did this when Countywide we lost approximately 50% of taxable value. You must also remember from a scalable standpoint the County's operations are much larger, with a general fund of over \$60 million and an overall budget of \$125-\$160 million so the dollars involved in a merger would be somewhat relative. In addition, any services the County provides would be paid for by the City so there would be no budgetary impacts to the County.

**4. Wasn't it just a year ago that the news broke of gross financial mismanagement by the County and Fire Department administration related to Medical Transport revenues and budget planning? The budget was based on billings instead**

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**of receipts for YEARS?! This apparently was an honest mistake that just happened to inflate the financial efficiency of the County department.**

There was no gross financial mismanagement by the County and/or Fire Department Administration. During the budget process billed revenues were shown instead of actual revenues, which lead to some difference in actual revenues. Another issue was that ambulance collections initially dropped when this function was transferred from a private vendor to the Flagler County Tax Collector. This is now back on track to meet or exceed previous revenue levels.

**5. If we are being double taxed - why not eliminate the contradiction in a rationale way?**

This is often said by people who may not fully understand what Flagler Beach is paying for in terms of fire services. Flagler Beach is not being double taxed. By funding its fire department, the City is paying for a higher level of service for a dedicated unit that provides an EMT level first response for medical, when the County ambulance is not available, and fire call first response for fire. The City could chose not to fund the department tomorrow and the County would provide the same level of service it currently provides countywide with a non-dedicated ambulance in Flagler Beach for medical and an areawide fire response from either Station 92 at the Airport or Station 42 in the Hammock. However, this would be a lower level of service as the City of Flagler Beach, through its City taxes, pays for a dedicated unit, which is a higher level of service.

**6. Flagler Beach has a fire department... why are you willing to pay the County for this? There is no reason that medical transport and fire protection have to be discussed or thought of unilaterally.**

The last statement is correct in that you do not have to think of these services unilaterally. The only reason to pay the County for this service is if the City desired to provide a higher service level, with an ALS certified first responder, than it currently provides and wishes to save funds by doing so.

**7. How much money does the City pay the County for assistance for each of our structure fires? How much money does the County pay for assistance from Flagler Beach?**

Nothing either way. To our knowledge, none of the departments in our region reciprocate financially, with each other, for any exchange of services, with any jurisdiction inside or outside the County. Although this is not the case everywhere in the Country, this is typical of most fire/EMS services throughout the State of Florida. All the Cities and Counties operate under a unified dispatch system and automatic aid. For purposes of insurance, we are treated somewhat as a single unit and for a response of any size; everyone utilizes additional assistance from other departments. This also avoids each department overbuilding to independently handle each larger or abnormal emergency.

**8. Should Flagler Beach residents have to pay the County for a service that we don't need? Does the amount you're paying for fire protection to the County today (excluding transport) make sense? There are alternatives to this that are also used widely. Transport and Fire Protection do not have to be discussed as a single entity, though the county certainly prefers that it is!**

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

Ambulance transport is performed by the fire rescue department employing cross-trained dual-certified firefighter paramedics. This policy allows the engine and the ambulance crews to provide multiple services to the residents at a lower cost. The County's unit is needed to make the City's fire service function properly. The County unit can act as a first response unit and transport unit. In addition, the City has specifically asked that the County provide only dual-certified firefighter paramedics at their station in order to meet the "two-in two-out" rule when responding to a fire. The countywide emergency response system is based on a two tier system. This is a system of first response units that stay dedicated to an area as a first tier, followed by a second tier that transports and changes location as needed to respond to various emergencies/areas. What this means is that as first response units go to a call, the patients are handed off to a County transport unit so the first response unit can be back in service to promptly respond to the next call. Also, most fires throughout the County are multi-company fire responses to properly fight the fire and comply with NFPA.

**9. Why is the County so interested in taking over our department? What do they stand to gain? Why are they willing to do this? It amazes me how motivated they are to seeing this materialize.**

We would not say the County is eager other than eager to help the City of Flagler Beach, merger or no merger. The more professional the fire rescue unit, the better the emergency services will be for the citizens and the less pressure is on County resources. Ultimately, we believe it may be the right thing to do as the County can provide a higher quality of service at a more affordable price. In either case, we must work together and help each other in many ways.

**10. At our Fire Station open house the County had a Captain as well as the President of their Union handing out business cards encouraging residents to contact them. Why? Why are they interested in adding another station to their portfolio?**

We operate out of the station and believe we have participated at previous open houses. The Capitan, hopefully, was there in that capacity as we work closely together on a daily basis and should operate as a unit. As far as the president of the Union being at the open house, he was not representing the County. We might have asked him to leave, especially if he was representing himself in a union capacity as acting on behalf of the County. If he represented himself as acting on behalf of Flagler County at any future function, we would ask the City to call County Administration as that would be inappropriate.

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**11. Do our citizens believe this statement: “like it or not, a Fire Department and a Police Department are the most fundamental representations of autonomy for any local government. They are the icons, they are the symbols of a community, and they are the physical embodiment - a tangible one - that distinguishes a town, city, or county from one another”? If they do believe the statement, why? At what cost should this statement be burdened to the Flagler Beach residents?**

We are not sure you could get a consensus from the citizens if polled on the statement. They are correct, however, in that Fire and Police Departments often do represent a jurisdiction along with many other facets, much of which depends on the size of the jurisdiction and service situations. With regard to representing autonomy, they can also represent parochialism and turfs. Palm Coast is no less a City without a Police Department and the City of Flagler Beach was no less of a City when it did not have a full time Fire Department prior to 2004 or when it privately contracted out their Parks and Recreation Department.

**12. Do you want County apparatus in your parades to represent our community to the masses, to define us? Will they even do it? They are the only department in the County that does not participate despite being invited.**

The County participates in the Flagler Beach Fourth of July Parade and the Flagler Beach Christmas Parade, as well as parades in Palm Coast. We also provide support for special events, display at the School’s Home Show, County Air Show and many other events. We speak in schools, we train kids and adults on fire extinguishers, we do fundraisers for MDA, and we train the community on CPR and automatic defibrillator training and install free fire detectors throughout the County. We really do participate in many, many things, but much of it quietly and often in a lesser role than in a parade situation.

**13. What will we do next year if we consolidate or even the year after?**

We do not understand the nature of this question.

**14. What recourse do we have if the county changes our service level or rates?**

The interlocal agreement would establish various staffing levels and other parameters dealing with service levels. . The yearly rate would be negotiated to include safeguards along with some direct cost increases. For example, if the City increased its retirement contributions this would indirectly lead to increased operational costs that would have been borne by the City whether as part of an interlocal agreement or not. The County would not financially benefit from reducing or changing the service level, nor would it make sense for the County to take on the service just to do it poorly, reduce service, have it purposely cost more, or undergo some other scenario that would be detrimental to Flagler Beach. The ultimate remedy would be to cancel the interlocal and have the service return to the City. This kind of service change is difficult and trust becomes a huge factor. At a minimum during the first period, we would suggest that the City retain all the major pieces of equipment and the building/property.

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**15. If faced with the fixed costs of re-establishing a fire department of our own, the county will have incalculable leverage over our City and our tax base. What will we do then? Do you think that this fact is lost on any of them for a second? Do you think this is why they are so eager to "help"?**

The cost of re-establishing a fire department is not insurmountable, depending on how the interlocal agreement is structured. We do not feel the County has anything to gain by leveraging anything. The goal of the County would be to provide the City quality service for which they would be pleased. The City would have the right to cancel any contract, making any feared or perceived leverage useless. The City has contracted other services with the County in the past where this was not a concern.

**16. Would Flagler County be open to negotiating an agreement to provide/merge/oversee operations of the Flagler Beach Fire Department?**

Yes, we think there are several routes that could occur.

**17. What recommendations does the Flagler County Fire Chief have regarding training budget for a department the size of Flagler Beach (36 including volunteers)? Are there training guidelines we need to follow? Where can they be found?**

A dedicated fire training officer is needed to develop, deliver and document all of the required training firefighters are mandated to complete. Without a dedicated training officer, the City would need to budget for outside instructors for the training. Having no state certified instructors providing the training is not recommended. In fact, the State Fire Marshal's Office will not recognize the training in the automated training file FC Dice. All Flagler County Fire Rescue Lieutenants are fire instructor 1 certified. The training officer, fire marshal and operations chief are instructor 3 certified.

Flagler County Fire Rescue has developed a 20-page training manual to lay out the requirements of several agencies setting out the rules governing Fire and EMS delivery systems. In addition to NFPA and OSHA, the State Fire Marshal's Office adopts and develops training standards and requirements for firefighters.

Career members are required to complete the firefighter 2 course (380 hours), paramedic certification (1700 hours), complete the wildland firefighter courses S130, S190 and L180 (40 hours) and complete the required NIMS training I 100, I 200, I 700, I 800 (25 hours). Additional training includes Emergency Vehicle Operators Course, structural collapse awareness, confined space awareness, water rescue awareness and hazardous material operations (50 hours). Lieutenants are required to take and complete the required training to obtain Fire Officer 1 and fire inspector, along with department sponsored management training. Captains and above are required to take and complete the required training to obtain Fire Officer 2 and fire inspector, along with department sponsored management training. Higher levels of NIMS training is required for Lieutenants I 300 and position specific training (Engine Boss S-215, Strike Team Leader S-330). Captains are required to take I 300, I 400 and positions specific training such as Division Supervisor, safety officer and strike team leader. Chief Officers are required to have fire officer 2, fire

# CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS

## JULY 2013

inspector, fire instructor 3, NIMS I 300, I 400, Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief and Incident Commander training.

Volunteers are required to complete the firefighter 1 course (160 hours), first responder or EMT, complete the wildland firefighter courses S130, S190 and L180 (40 hours) and complete the required NIMS training I 100, I 200, I 700, I 800 (25 hours). Additional training includes structural collapse awareness, confined space awareness, water rescue awareness and hazardous material operations (50 hours).

In addition, each firefighter is required to perform yearly refresher training in all disciplines.

NFPA 1001, Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, 2013 Edition outlines the requirements for Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2

NFPA 1002, Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver Operator Professional Qualifications, 2009 Edition

NFPA 1006, Standard for Technical Rescuer Professional Qualifications, 2013 Edition

NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2009 Edition

NFPA 1026, Standard for Incident Management Personnel Professional Qualifications, 2009 Edition

NFPA 1041, Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications, 2012 Edition

NFPA 1051, Standard for Wildland Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, 2012 Edition

NFPA 1403, Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, 2012 Edition

NFPA 1404, Standard for Fire Service Respiratory Protection Training, 2013 Edition

NFPA 1407, Standard for Training Fire Service Rapid Intervention Crews, 2010 Edition

NFPA 1410, Standard on Training for Initial Emergency Scene Operations, 2010 Edition

NFPA 1451, Standard for a Fire and Emergency Service Vehicle Operations Training Program, 2013 Edition

NFPA 1670, Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents, 2009 Edition

NFPA 472, Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents.

OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120 - Hazardous waste operations and emergency response, Personal protective equipment test methods, Compliance guidelines and Training Curriculum Guidelines

OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134 - Respiratory Protection.

- 1910.134 App A - Fit Testing Procedures (Mandatory).
- 1910.134 App B-1 - User Seal Check Procedures (Mandatory).
- 1910.134 App B-2 - Respirator Cleaning Procedures (Mandatory).
- 1910.134 App C - OSHA Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire (Mandatory).

# CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS

## JULY 2013

### **Florida Administrative Code 69A-62 requirements for training:**

- 1) "Firefighter employee" means a firefighter employee as defined in Section 633.802, F.S. 2003, and includes a volunteer firefighter as referred to in Section 633.820, F.S. 2003.
- 2) "IDLH" or "IDLH atmosphere" means an atmosphere which is immediately dangerous to life and health.
- 3) "Trained commensurate to duty" means that the person must have documented training in the specific task assigned or combination of skills required to accomplish any series of tasks which may be assigned to that individual given a set of conditions or circumstances which that individual may undertake. Anticipated special circumstances such as hazardous materials operations, technical rescue, and similar conditions or circumstances require additional training.

### **Insurance Service Office Requirement for Training:**

- 1) Each Firefighter should receive 20 hours of training per month in structure fire related subjects
- 2) Each officer should receive 2 days of leadership, management, supervisory and incident management system training per year as outlined in NFPA 1021
- 3) Each driver and operator should receive 4 half day sessions of driver/operator training per year in accordance with NFPA 1002 and NFPA 1451
- 4) Each Firefighter should receive one half day of training for incidents involving hazardous materials in accordance with NFPA 472
- 5) Each firefighter shall participate in 8 half day single company drills
- 6) Each firefighter shall participate in 4 half day multi company drills
- 7) Each firefighter shall participate in 2 three hour night drills

### **18. Is there an option to take over operations including personnel and apparatus leaving only the building upkeep/maintenance and insurance to the City of Flagler Beach?**

Yes, a variety of options could be worked on to address this issue, to ensure the comfort level of the City and the County. The primary savings from any consolidation is from the salaries of a chief and assistant chief for such a small department, as well as gains with economies of scale in acquiring supplies, equipment, training, grants, etc. For example, with regard to the bunker gear the City recently purchased, we believe the City could have saved \$500 per set (\$1,500 vs. \$2,000 City price) if purchased in conjunction with the County. Also, we would have recommended a more typical Florida color (yellow vs. hot black - New York) to avoid heat exhaustion challenges.

### **19. If a consolidation occurs can the agreement be made to hire the current paid firefighters? Can the current volunteers and Fire Police stay in Flagler Beach?**

The basic plan would be to take on all City firefighters, maintain the volunteers and fire police. The County would transition all existing City fire rescue employees to County employment and put them on a two year path to become paramedics (for those not already at that level). The transition will present these transitioned employees with better pay, retirement system and better benefits. The transitioned employees will also receive



## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

additional training from the County not offered by the City. Also, upward mobility via promotions and more variety of positions with the different divisions in a larger organization brings more employee satisfaction.

### **Pension**

Every county employee is enrolled in the Florida Retirement System (FRS). The employee has the option of entering the defined benefit program or the savings account program. Each employee is required by State law to contribute 3% to their retirement account. The County would provide pension options to all transitioned employees. Each transitioned employee would have an option as to whether to be part of the defined benefit program or the savings account program under the Florida Retirement System (FRS).

### **Pay**

Transitioned employees would be entitled to the County's standard compensation and benefits package for employees performing similar services, in accordance with the County policies. The County would agree that all employees identified by the City will be employed by the County.

All transitioned employees would be given the same opportunities for advancement, education, shifts, vacations, compensation and all other benefits as are made available to any other similarly ranked County employee with a similar seniority status and qualifications.

### **Accrued and Unpaid Leave.**

Transitioned employees would retain City accrued personal leave hours that are at or less than the maximum amount of personal leave allowed by the County Collective Bargaining Agreement and County Personnel Manual.

### **Health Insurance**

Transitioned employees and their covered dependents, if any, shall be deemed enrolled in and immediately covered by the health insurance afforded to uniformed employees covered by the County Collective Bargaining Agreement, without regard to any pre-existing condition(s), effective as of the first day of employment by the County.

In conclusion, the County is not trying to forcefully "take over" the City's fire services. The County is providing options for the City to consider in the event budgetary constraints and/or circumstances find it necessary to consider the assistance of the County.

The City volunteers would be required to maintain State and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) minimum training standards at recommended levels in order to continue their service. The Fire Police component of the City volunteers may continue to function under the direction of the County Fire Rescue Department

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**20. Why would a municipality want to end an agreement for consolidation?**

There could be many different reasons to terminate such an agreement, ranging from politics (without cause), to costs, to quality of service (for cause), etc. These types of provisions would generally be placed in such an interlocal agreement. Separation provisions would also be included in an agreement in the event things did not work out, for whatever reason.

**21. Would Flagler Beach residents receive a higher level of qualified care (i.e. ALS) on both the fire trucks and ambulance if Flagler County Fire and Rescue took over operations of the Flagler Beach Fire Dept?**

Yes, Flagler Beach could essentially have a dedicated ALS response (vs. BLS response) with better training (ocean rescue, confined space, fire officer) and better equipment than presently available.

In the event the City would decide to merge its Fire Department with the County Fire Department, the City would not be losing the hometown Fire Rescue Department. The County would improve the department while lowering the costs. There are two daily County firefighter paramedics assigned to the Flagler Beach Fire Station already (Six+ with three shifts and relief). The two County employees respond side by side with City firefighters to fire calls and EMS calls. Under such an agreement, the personnel on the fire truck would be able to perform paramedic work (ALS), thus improving the service. Additional services such as marine rescue, technical rescue, fire prevention, public education and specialty services will be enjoyed by the City at no additional costs. There were 780 calls for service in the City last year; of those 702 or approximately 90% of those calls were for EMS services versus fire calls.

**22. What would the financial impact be to the County to take over operations? Capital & personnel?**

The financial costs to the County would vary depending on the services, facilities and equipment the City desired to retain. With all the options we are discussing, the City is anticipated to save \$100,000-\$200,000. The financial impact to the County would generally be neutral except for the overall merger.

**23. Could that financial impact be absorbed into the County budget since Flagler Beach taxpayers are paying County taxes that includes Fire and Rescue?**

Yes, but only for a lower level of service. However, if the City's current level of service is desired (a dedicated unit) the citizens will pay additionally for this higher level of service. It would be unfair for all County taxpayers to pay for a unit that is specific to only one jurisdiction.

**24. Is Flagler County receptive to consolidating departments?**

The County is interested in providing quality service countywide. Consolidating departments will provide a higher level of service while lowering costs for the City. It will

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

also provide better coordination and make use of qualified personnel, make use of existing facilities, achieve economies of scale, eliminate service duplication, organize services in the most logical way, rather than have them constrained by jurisdictional or area limits, take politics out of service delivery and meet citizen demands. Various members of the Board of County Commissioners have expressed such an interest from time to time. The devil is always in the details and, regardless of any consideration, the Commission would want to ensure it does not add any significant new financial burdens to the County.

**25. Can a 25 year agreement be made with the county for fire services and at what cost per year vs. Flagler Beach implementing their current costs?**

Again, this would depend on the level of service Flagler Beach desires. The short answer is we believe long-term we can save money operationally with fewer positions and, also, from a capital standpoint include equipment purchases, ISO rating, in-house training and provide more efficient vehicle maintenance.

**26. Can an agreement be made to keep a department in the Flagler Beach City limits indefinitely (The Sheriffs Dept must stay in the Bunnell city limits for instance)?**

Yes, please see options and previous answers.

**27. Would the county subsidize Flagler Beach Fire Department by providing financial assistance, training, administrative and managerial oversight while allowing FBFD to stay under city control and would there be shared cost savings by both departments?**

The County would be willing to do all that except for the financial assistance aspect, if the City's Fire Department were open to that option. The County could provide that service to the City at no real cost. We could provide better training, save the City money on SCBA's, bunker gear, equipment, help with ISO rating, advice on equipment, etc.

**28. Does the Fire Department compute the cost per structure fire response at the end of each fiscal year? How does this cost compare by city/county?**

The County does not compute the cost for each structure fire response. There are simply too many variables involved that would keep this data from being relevant.

### EQUIPMENT & STRUCTURES

**MS: Who would pay for new (necessary) equipment if not City Fire Department?**

Flagler Beach would pay for the equipment to be in compliance with the standards. If the City chose to merge for a longer initial term with the County other options could be evaluated.

**KC: Ladder truck questions**

**1. Is the ladder truck certified?**

# CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

## **2. If it is not when will it be certified and by whom?**

The Flagler Beach ladder truck would likely meet a pump test standard, but that is not certification. We would ask for a copy of the certification as part of the transfer of equipment. We are aware of these issues because the County deals with the same companies and certification issues. Ladder trucks must meet the general criteria of NFPA 1901, Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus in order to be recognized by ISO. The current ladder truck is a 1986 Grumman, which makes it 27 years old. NFPA 1901 Annex D states that apparatus 25 years or older must be removed from service due to the fact it would no longer meet any of the safety features of newer apparatus. The apparatus meets 1986 standards but this is nowhere close to meeting today's current standards; which could create safety and legal liabilities for the City if something related to not meeting the standard contributed to an incident.

## **3. How much will certification cost?**

Pump testing and ladder certification costs \$1,375.00 because an independent third party company must perform the tests.

## **4. How long is certification good for?**

The certification is good for one year.

## **5. If the ladder truck cannot be certified what action should the City take to minimize its liability in case of an incident involving the truck?**

See #6 below.

## **6. Is a ladder truck needed in Flagler Beach? If it is NOT needed why?**

Technically a ladder truck is not needed in Flagler Beach because Flagler County and Palm Coast both have certified ladder trucks, which are considered as part of the ISO evaluation for the City of Flagler Beach. An ISO analysis looks at the following:

The FSRs also reviews Automatic Aid. Automatic Aid is considered in the response assistance dispatched automatically by contractual agreement between two communities or fire districts. This differs from mutual aid or assistance arranged case by case. ISO will recognize an Automatic Aid plan under the following conditions:

It must be pre-arranged for first alarm response according to a definite plan. It is preferable to have a written agreement, but ISO may recognize demonstrated performance;

The aid must be dispatched to report structure fires on the initial alarm;

The aid must be provided 24 hours a day, 365 days a year;

The aid must offset a need in the community ISO surveying. For example, if a community needs a ladder company and the fire department does not have one, but a neighboring fire department ladder company responds by automatic aid agreement, credit may be available; and

A ladder truck is needed if there are 5 buildings that are 3 stories or more or 35 feet in height, or have 5 buildings that have a needed fire flow greater than 3,500 GPM.

# CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS

## JULY 2013

Although the City likely trips this threshold, because there is a countywide automatic aid agreement Flagler Beach would not be required to have a ladder truck.

**7. If it is needed, what is a reasonable amount of money to budget to replace it and when should that purchase be made?**

See #6 above.

**8. If it is not replaced, how will the ISO rating be affected?**

See #6 above.

**9. What is the County's protocol for maintenance/inspection of their ladder truck? What is their replacement policy/budget?**

Flagler County Fire Rescue has a third party company certify the ladder and the pump in compliance with NFPA 1901, Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2009 Edition, NFPA 1911, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2012 Edition, NFPA 1932, Standard on Use, Maintenance, and Service Testing of In-Service Fire Department Ground Ladders, 2010 Edition

### **KC: Apparatus/Equipment**

**1. Is there routine maintenance performed via documented records on ALL apparatus required to have maintenance by ANY agency? IF not, why? IF yes, who does the maintenance?**

NFPA 1901, Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2009 Edition, NFPA 1911, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2012 Edition, NFPA 1932, Standard on Use, Maintenance, and Service Testing of In-Service Fire Department Ground Ladders, 2010 Edition

**2. Is it being done by certified maintenance personnel or 3<sup>rd</sup> party? Do you have emergency vehicle technicians (EVT)?**

Flagler County Fire Rescue through the Fleet Services Division of The General Services Department maintains its apparatus to the NFPA 1911, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus. Fleet Services employs certified ASE and Emergency Vehicle Technicians that attend routine courses to maintain certification. Warranty work and large repairs are contracted out to certified dealers approved by the manufacturer.

**3. What is the effect of not doing maintenance on vehicles?**

NFPA standards are national consensus standards that are used in lawsuits every day. Once a problem arises whether injury or death occurs, NFPA is used to determine the culprit. NFPA is there to lower the liability municipalities incur when providing emergency services.

**4. Should the budget reflect a higher level of service for aging equipment in 2013/2014?** The City will answer these questions.

**5. Does the NFPA or OSHA have guidelines/recommendations for documentation of maintenance/service for Fire apparatus?**

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

NFPA 1901, Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2009 Edition, NFPA 1911, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2012 Edition, NFPA 1932, Standard on Use, Maintenance, and Service Testing of In-Service Fire Department Ground Ladders, 2010 Edition

**6. Is our Fire Department using the recommended procedure? If yes, please provide the reports for the past 3 years. If not why?** The City will answer these questions.

**7. Is the bunker gear numbered to show what date it is placed into service? Is there a capitol budget established to replace as per standards or end of life?** The City will answer these questions.

**8. How much bunker gear does the City have? How old is it?**  
The City will answer these questions.

**9. Have we ever surveyed the County or Palm Coast to see what size fire hose they have so when Flagler Beach Fire Department is called to assist we know we are compatible with their equipment?**

The City will answer these questions. The County is concerned about the recent order of SCBA equipment, as described in later questions.

**10. Is our inventory of fire hoses documented as to when they were placed in service?**

NFPA 1962, Standard for the Care, Use, Inspection, Service Testing, and Replacement of Fire Hose, Couplings, Nozzles, and Fire Hose Appliances, 2013 Edition outlines how to mark, log, test and store each piece of hose. Flagler County Fire RescueR complies with the requirements of the NFPA standard.

**11. Do we know the age of our hoses? Do we test the hoses yearly and are there records?**

NFPA 1962, Standard for the Care, Use, Inspection, Service Testing, and Replacement of Fire Hose, Couplings, Nozzles, and Fire Hose Appliances, 2013 Edition outlines how to mark, log, test and store each piece of hose. Flagler County Fire Rescue complies with the requirements of the NFPA standard.

**12. Do we have a replacement schedule for the fire hoses?**

Flagler County Fire Rescue replaces hoses as needed when it fails service testing or is damaged during operations. In addition, each hose is evaluated and taken out of service after a ten year period.

**13. Why do we need 30 each 800 MHz radios? In the budget there are 60?**

The City must answer this question. The County can provide any assistance with this issue if desired by the City. The County is dealing with obsolete radio issues as well and will begin our replacement program in 2014.

**CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013**

**14. Have all of the latest safety and operating upgrades been performed on ALL apparatus per the NFPA 1901 Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus?**

Flagler County Fire Rescue complies with NFPA 1901, Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2009 Edition, NFPA 1911, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus, 2012 Edition, NFPA 1932, Standard on Use, Maintenance, and Service Testing of In-Service Fire Department Ground Ladders, 2010 Edition NFPA 1901 annex D states that apparatus over 25 years old shall be removed from service due to the lack of safety compliance with the standard.

**15. If not, what is the cost to bring them all into compliance?**

NFPA 1901 annex D states that apparatus over 25 years old shall be removed from service due to the lack of safety compliance with the standard. Ladder 11 also needs to be retired for this same reason. E-111 is 17 years old and, as a commercial cab pumper, also needs to be replaced. E11 is 8 years old. These vehicles can be used as trade-in value to purchase a 75 foot squirt. Trade-in value is approximately \$400,000.00 and purchase value for the squirt is \$600,000.00.

**16. If they are not going to have upgrades when will they be replaced? and at what cost?**

As noted above, the trade-in value is approximately \$400,000.00 with the purchase value for the squirt being \$600,000.00. This replacement can happen pretty quickly, i.e., within 6 months to 9 months.

**KC: Budget and the status of current equipment**

**1. What is the current level of all equipment required to run the fire department?**

The City will answer this question.

**2. How old are the items on the list? When were they put into service?** The City will answer this question.

**3. What is the current cost to replace them?** The City will answer this question.

**4. What is the standard or “expected life” of each item?** The City will answer this question.

**What does a reasonable “replacement” timeline look like?** The City will answer this question

**5. The goal of giving the volunteers a pension instead of paying per call was to lower costs. Is that true of this pension plan expenses since it was changed?** The City will answer this question.

**6. With the new standards for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus would the City have saved money with the purchase of this equipment in 2013 versus waiting for the new fiscal year? How much equipment is being taken out of service because of the new standard, quantify? How is the number of needed SCBA determined?**

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

The City staff has indicated there are going to lease new SCBA ensembles from a company that sells SCOTT SCBA units. If approved in the budget, the City will receive 12 SCBA harnesses, 24 bottles and 24 face pieces at a cost of \$6,800.00 per year to include repair, fit testing and flow testing. Using City staff numbers, they will finance the units for 12 years.

Flagler County Fire/Rescue has MSA SCBA ensembles and certified technicians and equipment to fit test, repair and flow test each unit in-house at a tremendous cost savings. Flagler Beach currently is using MSA and plans to change manufacturers creating both an operational and safety issue with Flagler County.

The City, by purchasing SCOTT SCBA units, will no longer be able to perform lifesaving functions such as buddy or rescue breathing when working an emergency scene with the County. As a County, we will no longer be able to fill the City's bottles and can no longer exchange bottles, which we have done in the past free of charge. To make this change and have different equipment than departments within the same county, let alone surrounding counties, is not wise. Flagler, Volusia, St. Johns and Putnam counties all use MSA SCBA ensembles. Flagler Beach Fire Rescue will no longer be able to cooperatively operate with any of the surrounding jurisdictions with the exception of the City of Palm Coast. The County also provides fit testing, flow testing and repair on the MSA units.

6-29-01: Purchase 2-3000 PSI complete MSA-SCBA (Paid \$5,769.80)

6-30-04: Purchase 2-4500 PSI Complete SCBA and 2-Spare Cylinders (Paid \$7,000.00)  
6-years life remaining on these 4-cylinders and units meet NFPA 2002 Standards.

8-31-04: Purchased 6-facepieces with HUDS (Paid \$1,764.00). Facepieces meet NFPA 2007 standards.

10-30-04: Purchase 2-Complete MSA-SCBA and 2-spare cylinders (Paid \$8,000.00)  
6-years life remaining on these 4-cylinders and the units meet NFPA 2002 standards.

10-30-04: Ten-8 did an annual flow test on all Flagler Beaches SCBA for a total of 6.

10-30-04: Flagler Beach purchased 4-4500 psi cylinders (Paid \$3,918.00)  
6-years life remaining on the cylinders.

4-29-06: Flagler Beach purchase 2-3000 PSI MSA-SCBA complete (Paid \$6,700.00).

1-24-09: Flagler Beach purchase a MSA-2009 Demo unit complete for \$3,000.00. This unit is NFPA 2002 compliant and life remaining on the cylinders 10 years.

9-24-12: Customer purchased 6-4500 psi cylinders (Paid \$5,280.00). Cylinder has 14 years life remaining.

After looking at the history above, this customer should have a least 19 -4500 psi 45 minute cylinders with a minimum life of 5-6 years remaining. Please note, the list price on the units is \$1,605.00 each. It would be huge money saving to slowly replace these cylinders over a 6-year period, similar to what Flagler, Volusia, Putnam and St. Johns Counties have done; not to mention Jacksonville.

All the units they have purchased meet the NFPA 2002 standard with the exception of the first line item where they purchased the (2) 3000 psi units in 2001.



## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

The County's recommendation to keep the price down would be to replace the 12 SCBA units, less cylinders, and purchase 5-additional cylinders to meet the requirements of 12 SCBA units and 24 cylinders; and purchase 12 additional facepieces to meet the request of 24 facepieces. Please remember, 12 facepieces come with the SCBA and the additional 12 will make the total of 24. For full disclosure their a universal adapted for rapid intervention that allow firefighters share air in fire, but it is cost prohibitive at \$4,000 per adapter. Also, the above unit includes the new internal Heads Up Display or (HUD).

### **7. What is the cost for outright purchase? What is the cost for financing? When is the last time the standards changed?**

If Flagler Beach wishes to, they could save some money by piggybacking on the consortium order with St. Johns County. This would include a purchase of over 250 units and allow the City to recognize a considerable savings, much like the savings realized by the County by joining the St. Johns purchasing consortium.

To purchase the above-mented 12 SCBA would cost \$3,467.00 each for a total of \$41,604.00. The additional 12 facepieces (for a total of 24) are \$422.35 each for a total of \$5,068.00.

The total to purchase all the needed equipment would be \$46,672.00.

### **8. What ocean rescue equipment does the City have and what is its age/condition?**

The City will have to answer the question regarding the condition of the City's equipment. –It is our understanding that the City currently has a 1992 Rescue Boat and a 2008 Rescue Boat, 2005 Jet Ski.

The County has a 2011 Jet Ski, plus trailer, and various types of Portable Ocean Rescue Equipment. In the next 12 months, the County is building two new facilities to house two new jet skis at the beach for quicker deployment. The County has 23 ocean certified individuals capable of swimming miles in the ocean and performing many different types of emergency ocean rescue operations. All fire/rescue staff are required to undergo some level of training in ocean rescue. More department members will continue to be certified over time.

### **KC: The Fire House**

- 1. How old is the current Fire House?**
- 2. What major improvements need to be made to meet current or near future improvements determined by standards or age related? What improvements have been made to the fire house since it's construction?**

The City will have to answer these questions.

### **JM: Equipment/Building (the City has invested large sums in these – would it all go to waste)? Would Flagler Beach retain ownership of the current fire house?**

The City made an investment in a higher level of service for the dedicated City fire/first response unit. In addition, that investment allows the County Rescue/Transport to be physically located at the station in Flagler Beach vs. a County facility elsewhere providing

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

a slower response. Again, this provides a higher level of service to Flagler Beach residents. Whether the service stayed with the City or went with the County this investment would not go to waste. This County would propose the City retain ownership of this facility.

Flagler County Fire Rescue would continue to staff the apparatus and use the facilities to carry out operations as they are handled presently. The City would maintain full ownership and control of the facilities. Fire Stations serve much more than fire and emergency medical operations. Fire Stations are used as polling places, community centers, meeting places and for a variety of other functions. The County is in agreement with the City continuing to utilize the facility for any functions they desire.

**a) If so, would the County rent it from the City? For how much?**

The County would not propose to pay rent to the City for use of the fire house in Flagler Beach. The City would have to maintain this facility for the City purposes to provide the higher level of service for Flagler Beach residents, whether the City or the County provided the actual service. The facility and its maintenance are essentially a neutral, captured cost that would be part of the financial evaluation.

**b) Who would pay for the utilities related to the fire house?**

See the answer in (a) above as the same logic applies. The facility utilities are essentially a neutral, captured cost that would be part of any financial evaluation.

**c) What would happen to the computer equipment and recently installed lines connecting the fire house with City Hall?**

The computer equipment could be utilized elsewhere by the City. The County would provide this equipment and internet/data and phone services necessary to be part of the County system.

**d) Would County firefighters take as much pride in the house as does the current staff and maintain it as well, considering that it's possible that members might move from station to station?**

The County would not imagine a change in this mind set and would suggest this is a non-issue. City and County firefighters alike take pride in their service, station, etc. Also, keep in mind the County fire rescue members live throughout our community. Several members live in Flagler Beach and we have recruited several County members from the Flagler Beach Fire Department. If the County took over the City's service, the County would take on the City's existing members who would care just as much as if they served in the City. Lastly, the County fire rescue staff are stationed in many communities and, to our knowledge, this has not been a problem. We are aware that the City has fire rescue members who commute from other Counties. We are sure they take just as much as pride in the City's station regardless of where they live.

**CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013**

**JM: Would Flagler Beach retain ownership of the equipment? Trucks:**

- a) Despite the fact that some of the trucks may be old according to the calendar, they have low mileage on them and have been repaired at low cost to the City.**
- b) The current staff has agreed to a preventative maintenance program.**
- c) The Commission has agreed to budget monies each year to begin a replacement program as is done in other departments.**

The County is not proposing to purchase any of the facilities, apparatus or assets from the City. The City would agree to allow the County Y to use all facilities, apparatus and assets used for the provision of Fire Protection Services within the City boundaries. The County will be able to purchase vehicles, equipment and other resources at a much lower cost due to size and quantity. In the event the County purchases new equipment, such equipment will remain the property of the County. The County would consult with the City Manager to discuss upgrading or adding new apparatus and or equipment. The County will follow the City's equipment disposal policy when doing so.

**JM: Would Flagler Beach retain ownership of the equipment? Uniforms?**

The County is not proposing to purchase any of the facilities, apparatus or assets from the City. The City would agree to allow the County to use all facilities, apparatus and assets used for the provision of Fire Protection Services within the city boundaries. The County will be able to purchase vehicles, equipment and other resources at a much lower cost due to size and quantity. In the event the County purchases new equipment, such equipment will remain the property of the County. The County shall consult with the city manager to discuss upgrading or adding new apparatus and or equipment. The County will follow the City's equipment disposal policy when doing so.

**JM: Would Flagler Beach retain ownership of the equipment? Bunker gear, especially that which the City just obtained through a grant from Firehouse Subs**

The County is not proposing to purchase any of the facilities, apparatus or assets from the City. The City would agree to allow the County to use all facilities, apparatus and assets used for the provision of Fire Protection Services within the city boundaries. The County will be able to purchase vehicles, equipment and other resources at a much lower cost due to size and quantity. In the event the County purchases new equipment, such equipment will remain the property of the County. The County shall consult with the city manager to discuss upgrading or adding new apparatus and or equipment. The County will follow the City's equipment disposal policy when doing so.

**JM: Would Flagler Beach retain ownership of the equipment? Equipment/tools on the trucks?**

The County is not proposing to purchase any of the facilities, apparatus or assets from the City. The City would agree to allow the County to use all facilities, apparatus and assets used for the provision of Fire Protection Services within the city boundaries. The County will be able to purchase vehicles, equipment and other resources at a much lower cost due to size and quantity. In the event the County purchases new equipment, such equipment will remain the property of the County. The County shall consult with the city manager to discuss upgrading or adding new apparatus and or equipment. The County will follow the City's equipment disposal policy when doing so.

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**JM: Would Flagler Beach retain ownership of the equipment? If it's true, which is a question unto itself, as stated by Commissioner Carney, that all communications equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus must be replaced at the costs she listed in her presentation (another question); do we know that the County can afford these costs without raising taxes on all County residents?**

The County has in its possession enough equipment to outfit one additional fire station, including radios, SCBA units, fire trucks, bunker gear, hoses and nozzles. The County would replace the County's spares over time through the fees the City would pay to the County. We would ultimately need to work through these issues with the City.

ISO RATING

**KC: ISO Rating**

**1. Flagler Beach's ISO rating is a 5. What will it take to be a 3? How much money is needed to get there?**

The County would need to see the report for the City in order to respond to this question. Some ISO ratings are more than short-term corrections and require you to achieve a degree of proficiency over longer periods of time (up to 5 years). The County can assist the City in lowering this ISO rating over time in areas such as training, personnel, equipments, and records, if underlining items such as water availability otherwise meets ISO standards.

**2. When an ISO survey is performed does the Fire Company receiving the survey get a report from the ISO? Do we have a copy of the most recent survey?**

City Staff will have this report.

**3. When was our last survey performed?** City Staff will have this report.

**4. Are there any recommendations from ISO on how the rating can be improved?**

The final report from ISO always provides points for improvement. The City scored very low on two portions of their last ISO survey – personnel and training. Flagler County scored much higher in these two categories due to our much larger size and the training we require. The County can assist the City with this aspect should they wish.

**5. Is there a plan in place to help improve the ISO rating for the City of Flagler Beach? Is it funded?**

The County would be willing to assist the City in any way possible.

**6. Does the County have a program to help increase their ISO rating? Is it funded?**

The County does not have a written plan in place to improve our ISO rating. The County identifies ways to improve the rating on a yearly basis and tend to continue to work on the rating on ongoing basis versus just near or after the review period. For example, we are currently concentrating on lowering the rating on the west side of the County in areas that do not have fire hydrants. To do this we must overcome this water obstacle. We now provide a tender shuttle which will deliver 30,000 gallons of water within 30 minutes to the

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

west side of the County, which may help us overcome this deficient category of the overall rating.

### **7. Why Beverly Beach is's rating 3 and Flagler Beach's is 5 – they are adjacent to each other.**

Beverly Beach is considered part of the unincorporated County when ISO performs its evaluation. Beverly Beach is rated a 3 because of the many improvements made to the County Fire Rescue Department. Also, the new fire water system and new hydrants allowed the Town to drop its 9 rating. If Beverly Beach was provided service by Flagler Beach, they would be served a rating of 5 just like Flagler Beach.

### **8. Does the ISO rating make a difference on insurance cost for a business as opposed to the insurance cost for a residence?**

ISO's public protection classification program (PPC) plays an important role in the underwriting process for many insurance companies. In fact, most US insurers use PPC information as part of their decision making when deciding what business to write, coverage to offer, or prices to charge for personal or commercial property insurance. The level of an ISO rating can have a major impact on both residential and commercial rates. For residential, an ISO rating of below a 6 separates preferred customers, and then once you get to a 4 or below differences premiums are very slight. For commercial every drop in a better ISO rating usually means a fairly significant insurance savings to the business.

JM: ISO Rating

### **1) The City has already improved by signing on with Dr. Coleman.**

Having a medical director has no effect on an ISO Rating. However, the City should be commended for obtaining the BLS (EMT) level of medical treatment for its staff. The new medical certificate from the County and Dr. Coleman as the City's Medical Director will help provide a much better medical first response than the City previously had.

### **2) Might not the ISO rating of the County change by absorbing the City department, causing higher insurance rates for all County residents?**

The City's ISO rating would likely improve to a 3 because they would now fall under the County Fire Rescue Department service, similar to the Town of Beverly Beach. The City of Flagler Beach would get credit for the County's maintenance, training, personnel, and equipment systems which could immediately help them lower the City's ISO rating.

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**3) In her presentation, Commissioner Carney speaks to the ISO rating being determined, in part, by the department's training efforts. See Bobby Pace's report regarding this. How would merging the City's department with the County's improve the City's ISO rating? She stated that it will take money for the City to comply. Currently, the City's firefighters use the volunteer association's funds, scholarships, the GI Bill, etc.**

It is the County understands, the City firefighters use association money, scholarships and GI funds to attend college level training. Earlier in the answers, it was explained the many requirements for training each firefighter must attend by certified trainers. Training is very expensive. The County has a dedicated training officer and budgets \$15,000.00 a year for training, which does not include the County college reimbursement fund which provides additional financial training resources. The County would absorb the City employees, quickly provide training for them to the standard of a County employee and document the training appropriately for reporting agencies. Additionally, the County teaches and sponsors many classes and is able to obtain free slots for many different types of fire, rescue, and medical classes..

**4) How would a merger with the County improve the water supply mentioned by Commissioner Carney? Would the County bring in water from other areas? Or, would the County's ISO rating be downgraded?**

Any joined services with the County would have no effect on the water supply. The County ISO rating would not be impacted whatsoever related to the water supply in Flagler Beach.

**JM: Affect on response time -- Would trucks always be available to answer calls from the current fire house or would the citizens have to rely more often on what would have to be a slower response from the Hammock, the airport, or elsewhere?**

The County Fire Rescue will staff apparatus and use the facilities to carry out operations as they are handled presently. As long as the engine from that station is not busy on another call, it will be available to respond to any emergency. Today, the Flagler Beach Fire Rescue engine responds out of the city on numerous occasions removing itself from the barrier island due to the automatic aid agreement in place, that states that the closest appropriate unit will respond to the emergency automatically.

**STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

**KC: Volunteers**

**1. Are there guidelines or recommendations on the number of volunteers a fire house should have?**

There are no guidelines on the number of volunteers at a fire house. The larger the pool of qualified firefighters the better, as it provides a force multiplier and a pool of potential full time firefighters. Unqualified volunteers can serve in other capacities, but should not necessarily be responding to emergencies for safety and liability reasons.

**2. Is the philosophy of the Flagler Beach volunteer program "the more the better"? or the "most qualified the better"? The City will answer this question.**

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**3. What requirements are needed to be a volunteer firefighter in Flagler Beach? In the County?**

In the County, candidates for volunteer firefighter must have a high school diploma or GED, must be 18 years old, have a valid driver's license, take and pass a medical exam, and a background check. Once accepted, volunteers are required to complete the firefighter 1 course (160 hours), first responder or EMT, complete the wildland firefighter courses S130, S190 and L180 (40 hours) and complete the required NIMS training I 100, I 200, I 700, I 800 (25 hours). Additional training includes structural collapse awareness, confined space awareness, water rescue awareness and hazardous material operations (50 hours). Many departments do not require firefighters to meet the minimum standards per State law, sometimes delaying mandating the training until a serious incident occurs.

**4. When do they become "eligible" for the pension?**

The City will have to answer this question.

**5. Who oversees the firefighter pension plan?**

The City will have to answer this question.

**6. Are there checks and balances of the reporting and accuracy of the volunteer pension plan? Do we have sign in and out sheets? Is there a check off system to verify accuracy?** The City will answer this question.

**7. What role does the Fire Department Volunteers play in our community?**

The City will have to answer this question.

**8. What is the cost for our Volunteer firefighter pension? Annually? Does the county volunteer organization have a pension why or why not?**

County volunteers do not receive pension benefits from the County. Florida State Statute Chapter 175 provides the ability for cities, towns and special districts to receive excess funds provided by the State to use for funding the pension. Counties are strictly forbidden from participating in the program. Most County volunteers provide their time to serve the community in addition to any primary job/financial support and retirement and typically do not expect any type of retirement from their community service.

County volunteers are reimbursed \$10.00 per call that the volunteer responds to when a call for assistance is placed. The volunteers must attend 50 percent of the scheduled training events and 50 percent of the calls that are assigned to their station in order to receive payment. County volunteers respond side-by-side with the career firefighters for fire and medical calls.

**9. What is the cost/volunteer in Flagler Beach?**

The City will have to answer this question.

**10. What is the cost/volunteer in the County?**

The County Fire Rescue Department budgets \$16,000.00 annually for travel expenses to reimburse the volunteers for response and for travel to training events. There is also an expense to the County for worker compensation insurance for each volunteer.

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

**11. Does each volunteer receive equipment supplied by the City? What equipment do they receive and what is the cost?** The City will have to answer this question on their behalf. The County provides structural and wildland protective equipment to its volunteers at a cost of approximately \$2,000.00 per volunteer.

**12. Is there written documentation as to what equipment each volunteer has?**  
The County maintains a policy standard for its volunteers.

**13. How often does a volunteer sign up to be a volunteer and never or rarely ever assist our department?** The City will have to answer this question.

**14. What system do we use to get a volunteer off the roster?**  
The County requires volunteers to respond to 50 percent of the calls and 50 percent of the training sessions that come to their stations. They must also maintain the required certifications to participate. Those not meeting the requirements are removed from the system.

**15. Why isn't the volunteer firefighter association more involved in the community?** The City will have to answer this question.

**16. When a fire department is 100% volunteer, what requirements are needed?**  
The City will have to answer this question.

**17. Would the Flagler Beach Fire Department ISO rating be affected with a 100% volunteer program? Why or why not?**

Whether the ISO rating would be affected by a 100% volunteer fire department would depend on the number of volunteers and the activity of those responding. ISO calculates a volunteer with the same qualifications as one-third of a career firefighter so you would need triple the number of volunteers to maintain the same rating.

**18. How many volunteers on the current roster are retired? How many have addition "jobs"?** The City will have to answer this question

**19. Firefighters pension is for paid and volunteer firefighters, who is in the current plan, by name? When did the Fire Police get added? What is the payout for this fund?** The City will have to answer this question.

**20. Has the Medical Director approved the volunteer firefighters and/or fire police becoming certified in BLS?** The City will have to answer this question.

**21. Per the protocol set by the Medical Director what can the volunteers do?**  
Those certified as EMTs can perform basic life support functions. Others not certified are typically restricted to normal citizen assistance (ex: CPR).

**22. Is there a difference between assignments for one volunteer as compared to another, and what constitutes the reasons?**



# CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

The City will have to answer this question.

## **KC: Leadership**

**1. Why doesn't the Commission receive a Monthly Staff Report for the Fire Dept in our meeting packet like we do for the Police Department?**

The City will have to answer this question.

**2. What requirements/qualifications are needed to be a Fire Chief?**

Career members are required to complete the firefighter 2 course (380 hours), paramedic certification (1700 hours), complete the wildland firefighter courses S130, S190 and L180 (40 hours) and complete the required NIMS training I 100, I 200, I 300, 400, I 700, I 800 and position-specific training such as Division Supervisor, safety officer, Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief and Incident Commander.

Most Cities/Counties require a bachelor's degree, a Chief Fire Officer Designation and/or the executive fire officer program completion.

**3. What are the qualifications of Palm Coast Fire Chief and Flagler County Fire Chief?**

See job description attached.

**4. What is the usual ratio between a Fire Chief position and the number of people under their supervision?**

The span of control for Fire Officers typically ranges from 3 to 7 with 5 being optimal.

## **KC: Training/Certification**

**1. How much longer will it take for all FBFF to be BLS trained?**

Each member must take and pass BLS instruction up to the EMT level. The training requirements are outlined by the State Department of Health per DOT guidelines. EMT courses are generally 3 to 4 months long with a State exam, while a paramedic training session lasts about one year with a state exam.

**2. Is Ocean Rescue one of the certifications our Fire Fighters are eligible to receive? Do we have any Ocean Rescue certified fire fighters? If not why? Does the county have certified ocean rescue personnel and how many?**

To the County's knowledge, the City does not have any certified marine rescue operators. The County has 23 certified marine rescue operators. Of those, 2 are master trainers who are capable of training other members up to the certification level per NFPA 1670 standards. While we understand the City has hired some strong swimming former lifeguards, the County is taking on 24 hour shift coverage, making a minimum training level departmental wide, and expanding to three rescue vehicles stationed at the beach.

**3. Per the Medical Director's protocol are Flagler Beach Fire Department volunteers able to be BLS/ALS trained?**

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

### **4. What are the training standards for BLS (basic life support) and ALS (advanced life support)? Is one better than the other if you are having a heart attack, for instance?**

ALS means Advance Life Support and BLS means Basic life Support. ALS and BLS are both life supporting mechanism but one is just basic and the other one is advanced.

Both the BLS and ALS are designed for pre-hospital life support and transportation of a patient to the hospital. A BLS unit will have two emergency medical technicians on board. On the other hand, an ALS unit will have two paramedics on Board.

One of the main differences between Advance Life Support and Basic life Support is that the latter is non-invasive. This means that a BLS cannot use needles and other devices that make cuts in the skin. The BLS providers cannot administer medicines. On the other hand, an ALS provider can give injections and even administer medication to a patient to include time critical emergency medication to a heart attack victim or pain medication or blood clotting medication to severe trauma victims.

Unlike the BLS unit, an ALS unit will be equipped with airway equipment, cardiac life support, cardiac monitors and glucose testing device. A person with an ALS unit has to undergo more training than a person in the BLS unit.

Basic life Support can be called as the first step of treatment. A person who has taken BLS lessons knows how to give assistance to a patient. Every person can take BLS lessons, which does not last for many months. The Advance Life Support lessons are generally preferred by doctors, nurses and the paramedic staff.

When comparing ALS and BLS, the former provides more treatment options. ALS seems to improve survival in patients with myocardial infarction and BLS seems to be the proper level of care for patients without penetrating injuries. Some studies indicate a beneficial effect of ALS among patients with blunt head injuries or multiple injuries. There is also some evidence in favor of ALS among patients with epileptic seizures as well as those with a respiratory distress.

### **JM: Pensions**

#### **B. The County and the City firemen belong to different pension systems. What would happen to the current members' pensions?**

Per Florida Law, when such a merger occurs the members who are on the City pension system have the option of staying on the City system indefinitely or migrating to the County (State) system. The migration to the County system can occur immediately or at a later date. Hypothetically, a person with many years at the City could continue on the City system until they reach a retirement date they are comfortable with and then come onto the County system to start a new retirement. Every County employee is enrolled in the Florida Retirement System (FRS). The employee has the option of entering the defined benefit program or the savings account program. Each employee is required by State law to contribute 3% to their retirement account.

**CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013**

**C. Current members of the Flagler Beach pension and the City have some control over how their monies are invested because they sit on the Pension Board, along with citizen and City representatives. How would this change?**

This is not proposed to change. However, whatever pension changes the Pension Board makes would affect the costs of operating the department and its members as it would if this were shifted to County.

**D. Would the amounts the City has to contribute to a pension system effectuate a cost savings? The current pension system has greatly improved over the last couple of years; therefore, the costs to the City are much less and probably don't need to be seen as an impediment.**

Retirement rates fluctuate from time to time often depending on withdrawals from the system and the success of investments. The Florida Retirement System (FRS) has been up and down over the years as far as costs to the County and the retirement system participants.

**JM: Staffing**

**A. How would the fire house be staffed – with current staff or would there be transfers all over the county? Would these be continually rotated?**

**i. What would be the affect of having a staff unfamiliar with the City, its layout, and its residents?**

Currently, there are two County firefighter paramedics assigned to the Flagler Beach Fire Station. The two County employees respond side by side with the City firefighters to fire calls and EMS calls. The Flagler County Fire Rescue Department has a policy to rotate all personnel to every station in the County in order to familiarize them with the entire County. County personnel are well versed with the City and are equipped with map books, GPS and electronic mapping. Many of our firefighters live in Flagler Beach or have served in the City's station. Therefore, the staff at the City fire house would be fully trained and knowledgeable about the City. Staffing ultimately would depend on what type of service the City desired.

**ii. There is great value to the feeling of brotherhood among the current firefighters – not so much for the department members, but for the safety of the residents. What would be the loss to our city if there are different firefighters present each day or week?**

Flagler County Fire Rescue employees take great pride in their work and consider all visitors and residents in this County their customers. Flagler County Fire Rescue responds to all calls that occur in Flagler Beach now so the feeling would not change because the City joined the County service. In fact, the additional training that the City firefighters would receive, along with the higher level of service the City would receive, would benefit everyone.

**B. Affect on volunteers? The current volunteers belong to an association which has donated vast sums of money for programs and equipment at a cost saving to the citizens. What would happen to the association and all that they have accomplished?**

## CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS JULY 2013

The County could merge the existing City of Flagler Beach volunteer organization into the current Flagler County volunteer group to form a combined County Fire Department volunteer group or it could remain separate as it is now.

### **FUNDING**

**JM: Obtaining Grants -- The individual members of the current department have applied for and received several grants for equipment/gear over the years. Would the County continue such a practice?**

The short answer is yes, the County would continue this practice of applying for grants. The County as a subset entity of the State generally has access to more grants, training and similar type items than cities, but that is not to say cities can't or don't get grants. If the City were to contract with the County for this service, the City would be part of our service and benefit from any County grants received. The County is often considered a regional provider, which also opens grant opportunities not available to municipalities.

Recently, Flagler County Fire Rescue received \$1.2 million in grants in 2011– 2012 which was used to replace capital equipment. Radios, expensive medical equipment, protective ensembles and thermal image cameras were purchased using grant funds, freeing up property tax dollars to assist in other areas. Other grants were received for training opportunities for the members (\$135,000.00). We also sponsor paramedic, EMT, and firefighter training, for which the County gets compensation or free training slots for its members at various educational institutions. The County is also the American Heart Association training facility for 13 counties, providing additional free training and grant opportunities.

In addition to these cash grants, the County received a variety of equipment and apparatus from the Division of Forestry.

Generally grants are not received for fire trucks, ambulance and other larger dollar apparatus, which are some of the issues facing the City today.

### **SERVICES**

**JM: Duplications of Services -- I question the statistics offered by Commissioner Carney in this section of her report. While there is a County ambulance housed at the firehouse, it is often called out to other parts of the County. Does that mean that the City's department answers no medical calls while the ambulance is out?**

Please refer to earlier answers where a two-tier system is discussed. The Flagler Beach unit provides an EMT medical first response level when the Flagler County is paramedic/ ambulance is not immediately available. This is very important when considering that between 80%-90% of the calls in any given year are medical. The Flagler Beach unit provides a higher level of service than the base service offered by the County by providing a dedicated unit in the City for this first response.

**CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013**

**JM: Kinds of personal services our department provides to the citizens that may not be so obvious – part of being a small town.**

**A. The current department provides many small, sometimes intangible, services to the mostly elderly, infirm residents. How would this be affected?**

**B. Would the department continue to participate in City events and provide voluntary services such as:**

**1. blood-pressure tests at First Fridays and within local businesses**

**1. free smoke-detector installation**

**2. free CPR classes for residents**

**3. checking of fire extinguishers**

**C. See Bobby Pace’s report for other support systems the current staff has supplied for the residents. Would the County continue these?**

Flagler County Fire Rescue provides both direct and indirect services to all citizens of the County. In 2012, Flagler County Fire Rescue trained 550 citizens in CPR as an indirect service. Flagler County Fire Rescue also provides the following indirect services Countywide:

- Free smoke detector installs Countywide
- Free smoke detector battery replacements Countywide
- School appearances
- EOC tours
- Fire brigade training for SEARAY
- Haz mat for the Hospital
- Propane emergency response for the gas companies and all fire departments
- Fire safety for Assisted Living Facilities
- Weekly blood pressures and blood glucose tests
- Stroke prevention programs
- Training for Public Works Employee (Haz Mat and Fire)
- Training for elected officials (CPR and Fire extinguishers)
- Cardiac health programs
- CPR for entire communities
- AED program 53 AEDs
- Friendly fire safety inspections in the home

\* \* \* \* \*

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH FIRE RESCUE QUESTIONS  
JULY 2013

QUESTIONS UNRELATED TO FIRE SERVICES

Commissioner Shupe:

Rebid contracts for IT/ Engineering.

Increase Stormwater fee to \$4.25

Assess Police Detective and Administrative Assistant positions regarding productivity vs. costs; \$77,285 plus benefits \$55,000 VOCA

Get rid of motorcycles or hire officers to use them \$7,100

Is Overtime: High plus other (incentive pay)?

Are we then at the end of the line regarding County involvement? Inspections, permits, etc.

Commissioner Settle:

Regarding instructions for the contract negotiations with our Police Union, I have no other suggestions than those that I brought-up at the recent "shade" meeting, or those that were included on your own list of items that were discussed and agreed upon. As our designated representative at these negotiations, I have every faith that you will shepherd staff and our City Attorney towards these ends. If there are serious questions or problems, please feel free to suggest another "shade" meeting where we can discuss our strategy in confidence.

It has always been my understanding that, as part of our budget process, you, as our City Manager, would offer-up a number of options to reach a goal (balanced budget). The only questions I would have you ask, regarding the possibility of a consolidation of our City's fire services with the County are, accordingly, those that will enable you to provide this budget report meeting your usual degree of excellence.