

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LAKE LURE TOWN COUNCIL HELD
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2008, 7:00 P.M., AT THE LAKE LURE MUNICIPAL CENTER**

PRESENT: Mayor Jim Proctor
Commissioner Wayne Hyatt
Commissioner Russ Pitts
Commissioner Jeanine Noble
Commissioner Linda Turner

Steve Wheeler, Town Manager
Ron Morgan, Fire Coordinator

ABSENT: N/A

Call to Order

Mayor Proctor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Noble gave the invocation.

Approved the Agenda

After discussion, Commissioner Turner made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Pitts seconded the motion and the vote of approval was unanimous.

Discussion Regarding Fire Protection for Lake Lure

Town council members met with Chief Jim Howell of Bill's Creek Fire Department, Chief Buck Meliski of Chimney Rock Volunteer Fire Department, Chief Gary Wilson of Fairfield Mountains Fire Department, and Fire Coordinator Ron Morgan to discuss fire protection for Lake Lure. Richard Riedl, President of the Fairfield Mountains Volunteer Fire Department Board, notified town council by letter dated April 1, 2008 that Fairfield Mountains Fire Department will no longer be able to staff and operate Fire Station #2 located at Memorial Highway/Charlotte Drive and has given the town approximately 90 days notice to make arrangements. Mr. Riedl stated in his letter that for the last three years, their roster has been below the minimum of 28 members required by the state to operate two class A stations. Mr. Riedle informed town council that they recruited and solicited additional members through the Town Newsletter, The Breeze newspaper, various social organizations, word of mouth, appeals through fund raising letters and any other means possible, to no avail.

Chiefs Howell, Meliski, Wilson informed town council they had made numerous attempts in various means to recruit volunteer firefighters and it is becoming more difficult. It was mentioned that there is a need for structural firefighters and that often times they fall short on manpower for structural fires and other major emergencies requiring heavy duty labor resulting in the few firefighters responding pushing themselves way beyond physical limits. The chiefs expressed their concerns for safety. Fire Coordinator Morgan also expressed his concerns with regards to need for more volunteers and the need for paid firefighters.

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Mr. Morgan reviewed and distributed copies to town council a proposal for the Lake Lure Municipal Fire Department dated February 13, 2008. (Copy of proposal attached.) Council members also received additional handouts from Mr. Morgan relating to volunteer firefighter recruitment/retention and how to find volunteer fighters.

Council members agreed to use town means to recruit additional volunteer firefighters through a trained recruiter, town newsletter, the press, non-profit organizations and the like.

Commissioner Pitts suggested that the town sponsor an annual event to recognize volunteer firefighters and council members agreed.

Werner Maringer, a former firefighter informed council members that he was wrongly accused of consuming alcohol and reporting to a fire call. Chief Howell said the fire departments has a zero tolerance policy of firefighters responding to an emergency call after consuming alcohol. Chief Howell said there are liabilities issues to take into consideration.

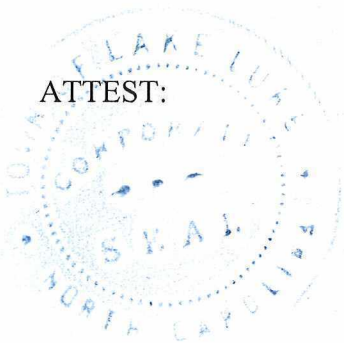
Mayor Proctor and Council members thanked Chiefs Howell, Meliski, and Wilson for all of their hard work.


Council members agreed to discuss the needs of the fire departments further at a budget workshop.

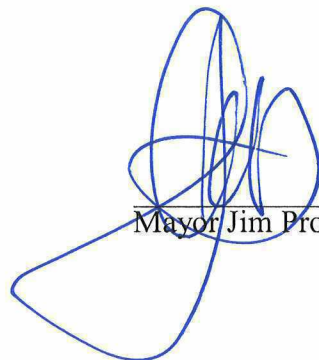
ADJOURN THE MEETING

With no further items of discussion, Commissioner Noble made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m. Commissioner Pitts seconded the motion and the vote of approval was unanimous.

ATTEST:




Mary A. Flack, MMC
Town Clerk


Mayor Jim Proctor