



Request From the Village

- Letter sent from Mayor Janet Hernandez to Chair Stacey Hetherington
- Formally requesting if Board of County Commissioners (Board) are willing to negotiate on the Village's Ad Valorem (taxes) contribution to the Fire Rescue Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU)
- Requesting a response by April 14, 2021
- Letter requests an agenda item be presented to the BOCC
 - To discuss and decide on willingness to negotiate
- Agenda Item prepared for April 13, 2021 BOCC regular meeting (first meeting in April)
 - Staff required time to gather pertinent information



Background on MSTUs

- Created to establish a funding mechanism for services being provided to the unincorporated area
 - Fire Rescue
 - Road Maintenance
 - Stormwater Maintenance
 - Parks & Recreation Maintenance
- Can include Municipality based upon the Municipality approving to do so via an ordinance
 - Town of Ocean Breeze and Village of Indiantown (Village) currently are included within the Fire Rescue MSTU taxable values



Background on MSTUs

- Martin County's MSTUs (other than Fire Rescue MSTU) are applicable to 87% of the County for the services as defined (Fire Rescue MSTU services 88% of residents)
- Establishes the County as the Taxing Authority to levy the necessary millage rate to generate revenues to fund the expenditures
- Millage rate (tax rate) is applied to taxable value and each MSTU has a different millage rate based upon the amount of ad valorem needed
 - Properties with higher values pay more taxes into the MSTUs



Background on Fire Rescue MSTU

- Funding for station operations, personnel and capital
 - Fire Rescue Administration
 - Including Indirect Costs to capture other departmental support
 - Legal, Payroll, Human Resources, Administration, etc.
 - Fire Rescue Operations
 - Fleet Maintenance
 - New Capital and Replacements
 - Stations and Apparatus
 - 11 Stations (Operations and Maintenance)
 - 325+ personnel, 3 shifts
 - Numerous ambulances, fire & ladder engines, tankers, pumpers, cardiac monitors, other related equipment for personnel



Background on Village Fire Rescue Services

- Has a dedicated Station (Station 24)
 - Higher level of service is provided to the residents in the area
- Station 24 has a larger compliment of personnel and equipment due to remote location and concerns over adequate fire flow (water pressure)
 - 7 staff every shift, plus floaters when necessary
 - Cover for vacations, sick, etc.
- Receives back up from ten other stations
 - 'Move Ups' occur when Station 24 is busy on a call
 - Industry standard for a structure fire is 2 fire engines, 1 ladder (quint) and 15 personnel



Background on Village Fire Rescue Services

- Station 24 has additional apparatus
 - 2 ambulances (rescues), 1 engine, 2 brush trucks and a tanker
 - Other station standards are one ambulance and one engine with 5 staff per shift
- Insurance Service Office (ISO) provides rating based upon travel distances
 - 5 miles or less
 - Minimum staffing of 4 personnel per shift
- Indiantown meets ISO requirements today if services remain as they have been
- Industry standard for structure fire is met by utilizing a quint from closest station as well as other engines and personnel depending upon the size of the event



Background on Fire Rescue MSTU

- Millage rate for the Fire Rescue MSTU is determined by how much ad valorem (taxes) are needed to fund the program
 - Ambulance transport and other fees (roughly \$6.8M annually) reduce the amount of ad valorem needed accordingly
 - Revenues generated from other entities and grants are utilized to offset ad valorem impacts
- The same Millage Rate is assessed to the taxable values for all entities that pay taxes to the Fire Rescue MSTU



Village Requesting to Negotiate

- Village has communicated to the County that they want a reduction made to what they pay into the Fire Rescue MSTU
 - FY21 Ad Valorem taxes from within the Village boundary for Fire Rescue MSTU was \$5,351,685 (at 95% calculation as required by law due to early payment reductions)
 - 95.4% of the taxable values within the Village boundary are Industrial and Commercial (equates to \$5.1M of the \$5.3M above) residential within the Village boundary contributed \$231,665 to Fire Rescue MSTU
- Staff has provided the Village with the applicable ordinance, Article 7 'Fire Rescue Municipal Service Taxing Unit'
 - Adopted in 1997 when Fire Rescue MSTU was created
 - Specific to how services are to be provided and paid for
 - Prohibits the ability to provide a reduction to those participating and shifting funding burden to others: equitable for those that are included in the Fire Rescue MSTU
 - Recognizes those that participate are receiving same level of service



Background on Village Having Their Own Fire Rescue Service

- Village had a special meeting on 2/27/21 to discuss fire rescue services
- Consultant provided Options
- FY21 budget and actual numbers were not used
- With accurate numbers reflected, the County's fire and rescue services prove to be less annually
- Numbers shown for estimated costs did not include the County having to provide any services
 - Moving Up when other transports are being made or other services are being provided
 - Requirement for apparatus and personnel for structure fire or major incident



Background on Village Having Their Own Fire Rescue Service

- Chose an option to proceed (Option 4)
 - Hybrid combination of contracted services and paid personnel
 - Cost reflected would be greater than the County
 - With a reduced level of service
 - Did not included any costs for necessary County support
- Discussed placing the County on notice next year
 - Village fire service would begin October 1, 2022
- County is currently analyzing call load for Station 24
- Location to better serve unincorporated area
- Village withdraws from Fire Rescue MSTU 10/1/22
 - Tax base would be less
 - Commitment to FP&L for Tangible Personal Property rebate would no longer be required from Fire Rescue MSTU



Additional Information

- Rural versus Urban
 - Village Manager communicated to County Administrator that the level of service the County provides is an urban level of service
 - Stated that the Village was rural and required only a rural level of service
 - The populated area of the Village is urban
 - Concentrated area, not spread out
 - Similar to other Cities
- Residents have been expressing concerns
 - Impact to response times if hybrid is in place
 - Cost
 - Consultant's options are all greater than what is currently being paid by the Village
 - Option 4 is reflecting first year cost of \$6.6M and \$4.8M for year 2
 - Martin County is roughly \$4.6M for current level of service to the Village
- County staff is concerned over a reduced level of service being provided to residents and businesses in the Village
- Draft of agenda item was provided to Village Manager on March 26, 2021
- Village had an item on their April 8, 2021 regular meeting for Fire/EMS services update
- Village has a special meeting planned for April 10, 2021
 - Agenda reflects the hybrid approach the Village is considering for fire rescue services will be discussed



Conclusion

- County is prepared should the Village 'place the County on notice of their intent'
 - Would absorb impact within Fire Rescue MSTU
 - No longer have responsibility for FP&L Tangible Personal Property rebate from the Fire Rescue MSTU (\$783K)
- County is required to adhere to the provisions of the ordinance
 - Could be modified, but needs a defensible premise to do so
 - Any reduction to the Village's portion of the Fire Rescue MSTU shifts responsibility to remaining residents, all receive same level of service
- County will continue to provide service to the unincorporated western area
- Agreements will have to be entered into to assure payment for services that will be provided by the County to the Village and ensure there are no delays in services being provided by the County



Staff Direction

- Staff looking for BOCC direction
 - Based upon information provided within the agenda item and PowerPoint presentation
- Follow-up in a formal letter
 - From Chair Stacey Hetherington to Mayor Janet Hernandez
 - Meet deadline of April 14, 2021