

**WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON JANUARY 8, 2013 AT 1:00 PM
IN THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING ROOM
ROOM 103, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
ARCADIA, FLORIDA**

The Board of County Commissioners held a Workshop on January 8, 2013 with the following persons present:

Commissioner, Buddy Mansfield, Dist#1
Chairman, Jim Selph, Dist#2
Commissioner, Gabriel Quave, Dist#3
Commissioner, Elton Langford, Dist#4
Commissioner Bob Miller, Dist#5
County Administrator, Guy Maxcy
County Attorney, Don Conn
H.R. Manager, Don Kesterson
Transportation Director, Shawn Edwards

Capt. Dan Collins
Fire Chief, Glenn Prescott
Office Manager, Lauri Jones
Transcribing Secretary, Jill Thompson
Purchasing Manager, Cindy Talamantez
Admin. Services Director, Linda Nipper
Facilities Director, Richard Metzger
County Engineer, Mike Giardullo

CALL TO ORDER

1:00 PM

Guy Maxcy stated Public Safety is one of the priorities of the Board. The matter to be discussed is regarding the need of a new fire station and the property to be purchased from the City of Arcadia. County employees met with the City and the City Attorney. It was determined that while the City does not want the County to build an elaborate fire station, they would like to see a fire station built. Mr. Maxcy stated the County could either argue the contract with the City or move forward with what the City suggests building. A decision is required to be made by the year 2016. Mr. Maxcy also stated that the Board ordered a study on Fire Station 1. The results of that study concludes that Fire Station 1 is non repairable. Due to compliance issues, a decision needs to be made.

Chief Glenn Prescott discussed the issues regarding Fire Station 1.

Issues:

- Merger Agreement- Original Agreement was for \$114,828.13. To date the County has paid \$78,809.19. Leaving a balance of \$36,017.97. There is a Reverter Clause in the Agreement that states if the County did not use the property by 2016 for a fire department, it would revert back to the City.
- Main station employee housing conditions- Employees are being housed and are operating out of a modular brought in as a result of indoor air quality issues. In March of 2010 the modular was delivered and to date the County has paid \$21,235.00 in rental fees plus utilities (averaging \$1,100 per month) for the modular and existing building.
- Operations/Living Quarters are less than ideal in the existing conditions.
- The Carlstrom modular does not meet current national fire codes. Code requires a full sprinkler system and monitoring smoke alarm system. The modular also does not meet ADA.
- Insufficient square footage per person at the modular used to house Station 1 employees. It is required to have 200 square foot per person.
- Special exception was made for property setbacks for placement.

Options:

- Constructing a new main station at either the Hwy 17 site (Coke Property), or Carlstrom Field site.

Cost Estimates:

- Station 1 – 92’x142’ Approximately 13,064 SF
Block Construction - \$1,300,000.00
- Future consideration: Administration – 62’x84 approx. 5,208 SF
Block Construction - \$500,000.00

Chief Prescott stated that if he could build a hub that everyone responds out of, that hub should be downtown. It would be central in the County and therefore respond times would be the best. The Board appointed a Fire Committee and the options regarding concrete verses steel buildings.

Building on Coke Property:

Pro’s

- Land already secured
- Reduces site preparation expenses
- Sale of Carlstrom property can help with expense
- Sewer and water already exist
- Combines two stations into one
- Centrally located within City/County
- Meets today’s response time needs
- Will fulfill City/County Merger Agreement
- Decrease response time in the City
- Savings on electric, rent and internet services

Con’s

- Increase to response times to East side
- Contains overhead power lines
- Will involve addtl. Traffic light delays
- Alley splits the property
- Development/growth to east
- Need Phase 1 & 2 environmental study

Chief Prescott spoke briefly on the amount of personnel. He provided a graph on last year’s calls. There were 181 assists from Stations 2(Kings Hwy) & 4(Hwy 72) to Arcadia in 2012. Chairman Selph questioned if building a new facility would solve this problem. Chief Prescott responded that it would not solve the problem. Mr. Maxcy requested direction from the Board. Commissioner Langford commented on possibly discussing a trade with the City property and the old property by the water tower. Chief Prescott stated the City is willing to work with County but doesn’t think the City has property that would be beneficial for a new station. Commissioner Langford feels that one of the existing fire stations could be utilized until a new station is built then possibly Station 1 could be demolished. Chief Prescott stated that Carlstrom Field station could certainly be rebuilt but downtown is more ideal. Further discussion was had regarding what would be the best location for a new station as well as response time. Chairman Selph stated he would like to see a long range plan that says over a period of time, we would have a particular location for the main station and also sub-stations and where they might be. Commissioner Selph feels a decision needs to be made in the near future. Commissioner Miller commented that our needs are severe and immediate and a long range plan of action is necessary at this time. Commissioner Quave stated that we need to bring some sort of conclusion to the property and determine if it is contaminated. Further discussion was had regarding the cost of soil testing. Mr. Maxcy stated the course of action should be that the property should be checked out by DEP. He also stated that once Mandy Hines has a response from DEP as to what is required; the information will be brought to the Board along with the costs. Further discussion was had regarding the Coke property. Commissioner Selph stated that once a decision is

made he would like to see the alley across from the Coke property vacated. Mr. Maxcy commented that we should hold government to the same standards as we do our business owners. He also stated that Code & Fire will cite us for the Station 1 property not being up to code and we need to have an action plan. Commissioner Mansfield suggested charging our utilities rent for the pipe in the ground. He feels that is the only way DeSoto County can get money from utilities to use for County needs. Commissioner Quave commented that a central hub seems logical but doesn't know where. Chairman Selph commented that we need to move forward and simultaneously look at information on the old fire station and if the City would consider anything. The Chairman suggested doing simulated runs from different locations for response times. He also suggested a long term plan and decide where we want to be in 15 years. Mr. Maxcy commented that we are prepared to talk about funding options. Further discussion was had regarding on-call worker and volunteers. Chairman Selph asked that the Board consider a follow up workshop in 2-3 months. It was the consensus of the Board to hold a workshop the first Tuesday in March. Commissioner Miller questioned, that if the modular at Station 1 are not acceptable, would that location suffice if it was the least expensive to make new living quarters at that location and continue to have the trucks under the current shelter. It was Chief Prescott's opinion that would not be an option. Don Conn commented that workshops are the only opportunity that the Board has to talk with staff, interact and ask questions. Mr. Conn recommended that we reserve public comment for Board meetings. Commissioner Langford disagreed with Mr. Conn and commented that he wants public comment at the workshops, within reason. Commissioners Miller and Selph agreed with Commissioner Langford. Chairman Selph commented he felt public comment should be held until the end of the workshop. Mr. Maurice Brown commented that he is concerned that the Board is not considering sites other than what has been mentioned. Mr. Brown agrees with having a hub in the city and suggested looking at buying an entirely different piece of property. Ed Johnson commented that the soil around the Coke property has been tested and is on record. Mr. Johnson spoke with the former City Administrator when the merger took place and he did not recall any Phase 1 or 2 environmental studies conducted on that property. Further discussion was had regarding contaminates. Mr. Johnson questioned if the fire codes were followed when the modulars were placed at Station 1. Mr. Johnson suggested notifying the City of the potential contamination and urged the Board to proceed with caution.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Selph adjourned the meeting at 2:24 PM.

ATTEST:

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSION
DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA**



C. GUY MAXCY
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR



JAMES F. SELPH
CHAIRMAN