

**TOWN OF WEDDINGTON  
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL AND  
SPECIAL PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2010 – 7:30 P.M.  
MINUTES**

The Town Council and the Public Safety Advisory Committee of the Town of Weddington, North Carolina, met in a Special Joint Session in the Town Hall Council Chambers, 1924 Weddington Road, Weddington, NC 28104 on November 30, 2010 at 7:30 p.m., with Mayor Nancy D. Anderson and Chairman Walker Davidson presiding.

Present: Mayor Nancy D. Anderson, Mayor Pro Tem Daniel Barry, Councilmembers Werner Thomisser, Jerry McKee and Chairman Walker Davidson, Michael Carver, Lorri Elliott, John Houston, Mary Ann DeSimone, Town Attorney Anthony Fox and Town Administrator/Clerk Amy S. McCollum

Absent: Councilmember Robert Gilmartin

Visitors: Butch Plyler, Bill Price, Scott Robinson, Daryl Matthews, Steven R. Carow, Steve Cloutier, Jack Parks, Brian Carlton, Wesley Chapel Mayor Brad Horvath, Village of Wesley Chapel Councilwoman Kim Ormiston, County Commissioner Tracy Kuehler and Jeff Perryman

**Item No. 1. Open the Meeting.** Chairman Walker Davidson called the November 30, 2010 Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. Mayor Nancy D. Anderson called the November 30, 2010 Special Town Council Meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

**Item No. 2. Determination of Quorum.** There was a quorum of both boards.

**Item No. 3. Deletions to the Agenda.** Chairman Davidson asked that the following item be deleted from the agenda:

- Consideration of Approval of November 16, 2010 Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Minutes

**Item No. 4. Consideration of Approval of November 16, 2010 Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Minutes.** This item was removed from the agenda.

**Item No. 5. Discussion of Union County Fire Study Recommendation of Merger of Providence Volunteer Fire Department and Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department.** Chairman Davidson reviewed the following slide discussing the current situation with the fire department:

- Fire Fee to be eliminated by NC?
- Volunteer staffs moving to paid staffs
- PVFD 2010 estimated cash flow = (\$99,694)
- PVFD Total Current Assets = \$592,228
- Union County Fire Study Recommendation for Merger of PVFD and WCVFD

Chairman Davidson also reviewed the following information that was presented by Former Homeland Security Director Pat Beekman at the January 8, 2007 Town Council Meeting:

- Do Nothing
- Fund PVFD through a fire tax
- Create a Weddington municipal fire department
- Do not renew contract with PVFD
- PVFD and WCFD merge into one FD
- Expand PVFD Fire District Boundaries (Was not on original list recommended by Beekman)

Chairman Davidson – I would like to ask Wesley Chapel if they would be willing to move the district line and let Providence have more area so that they would be more financially viable.

Mr. Butch Plyler – How would we pay for that difference? If the money is taken from Wesley Chapel that would be a problem. We do not know how much it would take to offset the need. You would have to charge the people in the Wesley Chapel Fire District to offset that. We would be open to that provided there would be a way to get that money without having to put a tax burden on the people. Even with a merger you are not going to be able to save a lot of money. It is still going to take money to operate the Providence fire station.

Mr. Scott Robinson – What is the objective – better fire service or to save money? I want the service level maintained or improved.

Mr. Jack Parks discussed that a merger or redrawing of lines would help to accomplish better response times especially for medical services.

Mayor Anderson – The Town is interested in providing excellent service. We want to see the units work together and we believe that a merger of the two makes the most sense. I am not sure that redrawing the lines is where we need to spend our time. The Town of Weddington wants to pursue the merger.

Chairman Davidson – Does anyone want to start with a scenario of what a merger would look like? How the service would improve? What are the hurdles?

Attorney Anthony Fox disclosed that he is serving tonight in his capacity as Counsel to the Public Safety Committee but that he has represented the Wesley Chapel VFD in their Conditional Use Permit process when the new fire station was approved. He stated, “It would be best to have each of the departments tell how they would envision a merger to look like because they are the ones that are familiar with territory and will know what can be accomplished through the merger. The areas that these two departments is made up of is Wesley Chapel, Weddington, unincorporated Union County, Stallings, Marvin, and Indian Trail. There are a number of players that are impacted by a merger.”

Mr. Plyler – It probably would help increase the response times in certain areas by a merger. That would be an asset of the merger by the proximity of the stations.

Mr. Steve Cloutier – What does the Town want for fire protection? We want to continue to maintain and enhance the level of service to the community. What is the funding model? We have a budget shortfall. If we continue as we are today, we are going through these funds in the next four years and we will be out of money. We are currently underutilized as a department. We could cut expenses with doing bulk purchases. What is the expectation from the Town? We could share personnel. We want representation on their board. I am confident that we can work through the issues. Our board is committed to making this happen if both departments determine that it is the right thing to do. We also recognize if it is the right thing to do it is not going to happen by next June.

Councilmember McKee – I feel the next step would be for the two fire departments to form committees exploring the process and they could give updates to the Committee and Council periodically.

Mayor Pro Tem Barry – We have a \$300,000 hole no matter how we draw this line. Forget about what you have today. If we ask you go build us a VFD to service this area, what would it look like?

Mayor Anderson – Let the fire departments try to figure this out. Let's give them some parameters. I would like to see paid staff. We also need to build into this system some type of compensation for the chief. The regulations have gotten so complicated. The level of service needs to be defined. What does the Town of Wesley Chapel want? What is the funding model going to look like? How is the board going to be structured? Everyone will want to be represented. Our fire boards and chiefs are quite capable of figuring this out.

County Commissioner Tracey Kuehler – The fire study addressed collaboration among certain departments as well as all departments on many different levels.

Mayor Pro Tem Barry advised that he was not completely in favor of paying for full-time staff. He stated, "Take the federal standards and build a fire department given the three locations we have today and the diverse community and how much it will cost. The volunteer needs to tell us what the reasonable response should be."

Wesley Chapel Mayor Brad Horvath – We do not want the insurance rating to change. We do not want to see our taxpayers get hit with an overall funding issue that is not at least spread across the entire area because we do not have that issue today. The rate we have now is a reasonable rate for the service that we get. We are willing to listen.

Council agreed to allow the Town's Attorney to work with the committee to answer any questions that they may need assistance with.

Mr. John Houston discussed earmarks and stimulus money and whether that could be investigated.

Both fire departments will go to their Boards and appoint a Steering Committee and set a meeting date and give an update to the Town Council on December 13.

**Item No. 6. Discussion of Transportation and Safety Concerns within the Town of Weddington.**

Councilmember McKee advised that Deputy Ron Honeycutt has requested traffic information for the last five years for the intersection of Antioch Church Road and Beulah Church Road. He advised that as soon as that information is received then Deputy Honeycutt, Mike Carver, and Jordan Cook would meet to develop a game plan for that intersection whether it be a speed bump or flashing lights. He stated, "Our main goal would be to get a stop light."

Chairman Davidson questioned whether the Town had the right to put up warning signs. It was advised that the roads are state maintained and NCDOT would have to take that action.

**Item No. 7. Adjournment.** Mayor Pro Tem Barry moved to adjourn the November 30, 2010 Special Town Council Meeting. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES:	Councilmembers Thomisser, McKee and Mayor Pro Tem Barry
NAYS:	None

Mr. McKee moved to adjourn the November 30, 2010 Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Carver, Elliott, Thomisser, Houston, DeSimone, Vice-Chairman McKee and  
Chairman Davidson

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

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Nancy D. Anderson, Mayor

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Walker Davidson, Chairman

Attest:

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Amy S. McCollum, Town Clerk