

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION
HELD ON March 9 2009
AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
121 SW FLAGLER AVENUE
STUART, FLORIDA 34994**

Roll call was answered by:

**Mayor James A. Christie
Vice Mayor Michael Mortell (ABSENT)
Commissioner Carol S. Waxler
Commissioner Jeffrey A. Krauskopf
Commissioner Mary Hutchinson**

Also present were:

**City Manager: Dan Hudson
City Attorney: Paul J. Nicoletti
City Clerk: Cherie White
Fire Chief Lori Sunderman**

Mayor Christie began the Pledge of Allegiance led by the Commission.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

Discussion of the future direction of the Stuart Fire Rescue Department.

City Manager Hudson gave a brief overview regarding the future direction of the Stuart Fire Rescue Department. He suggested fully staffing Station #2, within 30 days. He also suggested the following:

Addressing Sewall's Point Fire Rescue Services within 30-60 days.

Further discussions, over the next 3-6 months, regarding Fire Rescue Services North of the Bridge.

Discussion regarding Stuart Fire Rescue Dispatch services.

He stated the theme of today's meeting is; "What is best for Stuart".

He stated the City should separate this decision from those financial decisions that the City is involved in, because of the downward turn of the economy, and maybe continuing cutbacks we would have to consider. City Manager Hudson went thru the questions raised regarding the future of the Department.

Commissioner Hutchinson requested the City take the lead on future discussions with Martin County.

Commissioner Krauskopf stated he was looking at not increasing ad valorem but, looking at a way to pay for this with some kind of savings. He asked about cost saving measures by using 3 people on an ambulance instead of using the large costly engine.

Chief Sunderman explained that doing that would be a gamble, and the current protocol was the best way we knew to run it. I think there is always ways to look for other options.

City Manager Hudson placed a map on the wall depicting the various areas in the City serviced by the City and the County. He explained what areas are served by the City and what areas are served by Martin County Fire Rescue.

Commissioner Krauskopf stated he was interested in looking at a call map.

A correction was made to item #8 in the text that there were 3671 calls, not 3100.

City Manager Hudson explained the ongoing discussion with Sewall's Point, and Jupiter Island regarding their Fire Rescue Services. He suggested actively pursuing negotiations, and discussing further, a possible Municipal Fire Rescue Alliance, among the three municipalities.

Commissioner Hutchinson expressed concern that if the City does reach an agreement with Sewall's Point along with the Interlocal with Martin County she did not want to create issues in the City, while on a call in Sewall's Point, in that Martin County would have to come into the City to take a City call. She also stated she found it interesting that Martin County controls the dispatch that the calls are increasing more rapidly in the City then the prior years. She stated it will be interesting to see while they control the cash register how that changes by the end of the year.

Commissioner Waxler suggested the City look at a formula for our own view. We need to look at how the calls are calculated, by address, per capita, ad valorem It is important for us because it relates to going forward and what it is going to take to put the Fire Station in.

City Manager Hudson noted the Commission has received a copy of the Special Assistance Agreement and its 10 year history.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked about certain payments that were to be made to the City.

City Manager Hudson stated that section of the agreement was deducted out in an amendment in 1996. He further added that he has never received one complaint about the Stuart Fire Rescue Service.

The Commission discussed the large Fire Truck was seen at Publix and the Post Office and expressed concern over the public perception of its use.

Mayor Christie stated that no matter what direction we take there is going to be a cost associated with it.

Commissioner Waxler stated she thinks it is important to staff Station #2, immediately for safety concerns.

City Manager Hudson is going to look at dispatch services, as an initial beginning.

Commissioner Hutchinson suggested looking at CRA funding to help with offsetting the cost.

City Manager Hudson said he would come back with an analysis on station #2 and also we would be moving forward with, Sewall's Point, Dispatch service, and the comment relevant to the CRA.

ADJOURNMENT:10:49 AM

Cheryl White, CMC, City Clerk

James A. Christie, Mayor

Minutes approved at the Regular Commission
Meeting this 13th Day April 2009