

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

July 21, 2014

CRFPD Headquarters

Task Force Attendees: Chuck Torinus, Connie Hendrix, Davis Farrar, Jason Sewell, John Haines, Ken Harrington, Lance Luckett, Mo Shalabi, Ray Sauvey, Richard Fuller, Tom Flynn, Joanne Teeple, Michael Hassig

Others present: Hilary Fletcher, Tom Baker, Jenny Cutright, Ron Leach, Rob Goodwin, Will Grandbois, Mark Chain, Hank van Berlo, Jeff Wadley.

Hilary opened the meeting and welcomed everyone back. She thanked Tom Baker for stepping in while she was unable to attend. She said that the desired outcome for the meeting was to have the CAC develop 2 or 3 viable options to present to the Board of Directors. She added that a special meeting with the Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday, August 4, 2014 at 6 pm.

Hilary reviewed some of the District information for the CAC including reserve balance, mill levies and assessed valuations. Discussion regarding the format of the recommendations followed.

Tom Baker discussed the process that would be used to consider potential options and based on earlier feedback from the CAC, each option should attempt to address the following categories:

1. Mill Levy
2. Reserve Fund
3. Expenditures
4. Other Revenues
5. Policy

General discussion followed and CAC members identified the following options:

Option 1 – Stabilize. No immediate increase in 2014, look at a 3 month reserve balance instead of a six month for the short term, continue the existing cuts and look for other opportunities to cut expenses, increase use of volunteers instead of paying staff, charge for services such as inspections and plan reviews, have the Board of Directors participate in outreach including a survey and/or community meetings, look at our of state fire assignments.

Further discussion regarding establishing the level of services as it related to paid staff followed.

Option 2 – 2014 Bridge. It was questioned if the CAC wanted to make specific recommendations on position cuts and answered no. Suggestions made were 2 year bridge to get across the void until the new assessments are out. Discussion regarding fund raising in the community and the reserve fund followed. Other suggestions were build credibility with the public, have a zero based budget, revisit the

master plan, cut to salaries and benefits, having an organized, efficient public relations plan and having the Board of Directors participate in the public education, use reserves until they are \$1.3 million to help fund, fund what was lost at the 2013 election . Further discussion regarding the sustainability of the fire department, consolidating and a master plan occurred. Significant discussion ensued regarding the elements of the option including time and cost elements for such things as a coordinated public outreach, development of a master plan, etc.

Two other options were discussed and briefly evaluated. Both were eliminated as not being viable solutions. They included:

Option 3 – raise the mill levy to fund everything.

Option 4 – make cuts to balance the budget.

General discussion ensued regarding the specifics of Options 1 & 2. They were finalized as:

Option 1, Phase 1:

- Mill Levy: No immediate increase in 2014
- Reserve Fund: 3 months of reserves
- Expenditures: Current expenditure cuts continued and look for additional cuts including adjustment in wages/benefits
- Other Revenue Sources: Review charges for services
- Policy: public education & outreach, look at mutual aid/out of state assignments, level of service (using paid staff or volunteers), and public relations with citizen oriented stories

Option 1, Phase 2:

- Mill Levy: In 1-2 years go to the voters considering the assessed valuation for a bridge
- Reserve Fund: Evaluate reserve policy - 3-6 months' worth of reserves
- Expenditures: managing expenditures, a zero based budget, each department needs to rationalize what it does
- Other Revenue Sources: set up a nonprofit for fund raising and public visibility
- Policy: Review and evaluate the business model, update master plan, public outreach with a survey

Option 1, Phase 3:

- Mill Levy: Sustainable Revenue (voter question)
- Reserve Fund: same as above
- Expenditures: Level of service with the expenditures defined by the vote and laws
- Other Revenue Sources: same as above
- Policy: Master plan updated with significant community involvement

Further discussion regarding the options followed. It was noted that Option 1, Phase 2 is optional and could be deleted and go straight to Option 1, Phase 3

Option 1, Phase 3:

- Mill Levy: 2014 bridge of less than \$775,000 with a 2 year sunset
- Reserve Fund: 6 months' worth of reserves
- Expenditures: Keep expenditures lean, manage them
- Other Revenue Sources:
- Policy: Rapid concise public education program driven by the Board of Directors, Plan B for Option 2 is Option 1, Phase 1

A straw poll of participants was taken on which Option they prefer.

Votes – Option 1= 11, Option 2 = 2

The CAC also discussed conditions that need to be addressed for Option 1:

- Timing of Phase 2 depends on having an informed questions based on a master plan
- A comprehensive public outreach program must be in place
- The Board must be directly involved with the public outreach
- Consider all expenses and revenues – looking at cuts and revenue increases – in a meaningful way

It was decided to hold a joint meeting with the Board of Directors on August 4 at 6 p.m. to discuss the CAC's recommendations.

Further discussion regarding presenting this information to the Board of Directors followed. The CAC agreed they would like Hilary Fletcher and Tom Baker to present the data and the CAC will attend to answer any questions or clarify specifics.

The CAC meeting ended with Ron Leach thanking the CAC for their involvement and time helping the fire district work through these issues for the past 5 months.