

Board of County Commissioners Leon County, Florida

Policy No. 01-03

Title: Volunteer Fire Department Annual Budget Allocation

Date Adopted: May 14, 2024

Effective Date: October 1, 2024

Reference: N/A

Policy Superseded: Policy No. 01-03 adopted on February 27, 2001; revised September 22, 2009; revised December 13, 2016

It shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners of Leon County, Florida, that Policy No. 01-03 “Volunteer Fire Department Annual Budget Allocation”, amended by the Board of County Commissioners on December 13, 2016, is hereby further amended and a new revised policy adopted in its place, to wit:

Given the Board’s adoption of a Fire Services Fee as a part of the FY 2009/10 Annual Budget for purposes of funding fire services in the unincorporated County, and in light of the fact that the fee may have an impact on the fundraising ability of the County’s Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs), the Board establishes an annual VFD budget allocation and apparatus maintenance allocation to be funded through the fee.

1. Board Intent

- a. The VFD annual budget allocation is intended to supplement, not replace, the operational budgets of the VFDs. Each qualifying VFD is eligible for an annual budget allocation and an apparatus maintenance allocation from the County.
- b. The disposition of the Board will be to not approve additional funding requests on the part of the VFD’s made outside the normal budget process.
- c. If the County Administrator or his designee determines that the procedures herein are not being followed by a VFD, funding shall not be remitted to the VFD until the VFD complies with the requirements of the County.

2. Procedures

- a. Each VFD shall submit an annual budget request to the County no later than March 31. This budget-request shall be for the fiscal year, commencing the following October 1.
- b. The annual budget request shall be in the format approved by the County Administrator or his designee: and shall include a list of total VFD anticipated expenditures and revenues by category for the subsequent fiscal year (October 1 to September 30).

- c. The disbursement of the VFDs budget allocation shall occur annually upon the receipt of a payment request from the VFD to the County. Funds will not be disbursed without a formal request being processed.
- d. Each VFD shall be required to submit an annual report to the County by October 31 for the preceding fiscal year's activity. The report shall be in the format approved by the County Administrator or his designee: and shall include an itemized list of total VFD actual expenditures and revenues by category for the prior fiscal year (October 1 to September 30)
- e. The annual report will be reviewed to determine unspent balances. If, over a period of time, a determination is made the VFD is accumulating unbudgeted large balances, subsequent year funding may be reduced to draw down these funds.

3. Criteria

- a. Each VFD shall be in good standing, with a valid County Volunteer Fire Services Agreement and required Mutual Aid Agreement(s) to be eligible for County funding. The following existing six County VFD's shall be eligible for the annual county budget allocation provided that they remain in good standing with active mutual aid agreements with the Tallahassee Fire Department: Chaires-Capitola VFD, Bradfordville VFD, Lake Jackson VFD, Lake Talquin VFD, Miccosukee VFD, and Woodville VFD.
- b. All funds shall be expended in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida.
- c. The VFD annual budget allocations shall be based on a formula, which has been developed and updated annually by the VFD Chiefs and approved by the County Administrator, or his designee, which considers relevant fire services criteria. The budget allocation shall be established at a base of \$112,401 and shall be adjusted annually according to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers All Items on April 1st, or three percent (3%), whichever is lower, but shall not decrease below the established base.
- d. The apparatus-maintenance allocation shall be provided for each apparatus that the VFD operates in the normal course of fire suppression, to a maximum of five total apparatus per VFD. Eligible apparatus must meet criteria established by the County Administrator, or his designee, that shall consider fire protection standards. The apparatus-maintenance allocation for the primary engine/tanker stationed at a recognized VFD station and which meets the Insurance Service Office (ISO) standards is \$7,825. The apparatus-maintenance allocation amount for all other apparatus shall be established at a base of \$5,065. The apparatus-maintenance allocations shall be adjusted annually according to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs on April 1st or three percent (3%), whichever is lower, but shall not decrease below the established base.