

GARREN CREEK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 237
FAIRVIEW, N.C. 28730

April 3, 2017

Mr. Matt Evans
Budget Analyst
Budget & Management Services
Buncombe County Government
200 College Street, 4th Floor Reception
Asheville, NC 28801

Re: Fiscal 2018 Budget

Dear Matt:

At its February 9, 2017 meeting our Board voted to retain our Fire Tax Rate of \$0.15/\$100 for fiscal year 2018 A narrative supporting our reasons for this rate rather one that is revenue neutral is enclosed.

At that same meeting our Board approved the enclosed budget. It is based on our expense expectations for the coming year and revenues furnished by your office at the \$0.15 /\$100 rate.

We hope that this material is sufficient for your needs. Please let me know if you would like more information.

Sincerely,



Terry Simmonds
Treasurer

Enclosures

Garren Creek Volunteer Fire Dept.

2018 Budget

Justification of Tax Rate

We have recently taken three steps to improve our ability to protect our district. Each of them has involved a significant commitment of resources. In 2007 we began construction of a new station which would centralize our operations yielding a better distribution of resources throughout our district. The dedication of this station carried with it the necessity of adding a pumper/tanker to our fleet of vehicles. Our next capital item was the conversion of our radios to the countywide 700 system. Finally, as part of our quest for an improved response rating with the North Carolina Department of Insurance and to improve the supervision of our operations we found it necessary to ask our volunteer Chief to take on a full-time, paid position. Our response rating efforts were successful in that we are now a Class 6 Department, a significant financial benefit to the residents of our district. These efforts have been expensive and have forced us to run with minimum financial safety reserves.

We are now faced with the need to replace all our SCBA Apparatus over a short time frame. Our existing air packs are old models mostly at the end of their rated lifetime. In addition, they are not interoperable with the air packs in use at the other fire departments in the County who have already upgraded their SCBA equipment. Ideally, we would replace all of our SCBA equipment to keep our equipment within its rated April 3, 2017 lifetime and to be compatible with our neighboring departments. While this is not practical all at once, a significant replacement is required in the short term to ensure that we can provide all our firefighters with the new equipment when they are responding to an incident. This will require an outlay of upwards of \$180,000.

In addition, our first-out tanker at our substation dates from 1990. It is in significant need of either replacement or refurbishing. The actual action to be taken will be determined by which course will be the most economical. The financial impact of this effort could easily exceed \$200,000.

Finally, we are badly in need of a Brush Truck. Not having one, we have pressed our Squad Truck into use when the need has arisen. Being designed as a mini-pumper, it is not completely suited to the task. It lacks the crew carrying capacity and the overall agility that is required of such a piece of apparatus. In addition, we need such a truck to mobilize our UTV. Currently this is brought to the scene by our First Response Truck, a Ford Expedition. This is nearly beyond the towing capability of the truck which poses a safety risk and will shorten the life of the Expedition. This acquisition will also probably exceed \$150,000.

We intend to carry out these plans over a period of several years and make use of grant funds where possible. In fact, we have applied for a FEMA AFG Grant for the SCBA purchase but, because of our small size, we are not optimistic. Should we be successful, however, we will be able to move into the next steps of the program outlined above earlier.

Retaining our \$0.15/\$100 Fire Tax Rate will enable us to complete these projects more rapidly. At their completion, we would hope to reduce our tax rate to a lower level commensurate with our ongoing financial needs. A review of the pattern of our tax rate over the recent past will demonstrate that this has been our practice.

April 3, 2017

**GARREN CREEK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2018**

Revenue	2018 Budget
Ad Valorem Tax Rate	\$0.15
Ad Valorem Tax Yield @ 0.15 Rate	\$247,294.00
Bank Interest	\$45.00
Grant Funding & Ins Proc.	\$0.00
Credit Line Proceeds & Prin Payt (net)	\$0.00
Sales Tax	71,387.00
Sales & Motor Fuel Tax Reimbursement	8,900.00
Total Revenue	\$327,626.00
Expenses	
Capital	
Total Capital Projects	\$130,000.00
Total Capital	\$130,000.00
Operating	
Audit Expense	\$7,000.00
Bank Service Charge	\$325.00
Building Maintenance - Regular	\$3,500.00
Community Relations - External	\$750.00
Community Reations - Other	\$3,000.00
Dues	\$1,000.00
Equip. and Supplies - Fire & Rescue, T/O Gear	\$10,000.00
Equip. and Supplies - Forestry	\$0.00
Equip. and Supplies - Medical	\$4,500.00
Equip. and Supplies - Radio Purchases	\$5,000.00
Equipment Maintenance	\$4,500.00
Fire Prevention & Training	\$500.00
Firemen's Auto Expense & Inoculations	\$500.00
Credit Int Line Payments	\$150.00
Firemen's Response Reimbursement	\$3,500.00
Insurance - Vehicles, Bldg., Equipment	\$12,000.00
Insurance - Workers Comp. and A&S	\$10,000.00
Loan Payments Substation Const. Loans	\$75,527.69
Loan Payments Substation Truck and Equip	\$0.00
Office Supplies	\$2,000.00
Payroll Expense	\$64,000.00
Payroll Taxes - SS & SUTA	\$5,175.00
Retirement Program	\$1,000.00
Special Projects Fund	\$100.00
Uniforms	\$1,500.00
Utilities - Electric	\$7,000.00
Utilities - Heat	\$4,500.00
Utilities - Telephone	\$4,000.00
Vehicle Fuel	\$3,000.00
Vehicle Maintenance	\$7,500.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$241,527.69
Grand Total Expenses	\$371,527.69