

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 3:26 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** citymgr  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Protection Fee - Why the highest for churches?

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**From:** Poe, Lauren B.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 3:19 PM  
**To:** 'Larry Reimer'  
**Cc:** Andrew, Devonia L.; Northcutt, William K.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee - Why the highest for churches?

Mr. Reimer,

I would like to thank you for contacting me regarding the proposed fire assessment. I assure you that I do not approach this issue lightly and I will strongly consider all input before making my final decision. I will weigh several alternatives to keeping our fire department fully funded, including making drastic budget cuts, raising the millage rate on property owners, and assessing a fire fee for service (so long as it is minimal and includes a sunset clause). I take none of these options lightly, as they all will have serious consequences on all or part of our community.

As for the rate structure, the various rates were determined by utilizing an exhaustive scientific analysis of GFR responses over the course of one year. The study looked at all responses, and eliminated any that did not directly relate to fire services (i.e. no EMT or car accident responses were included). This was used to determine the overall cost of providing fire services to the city (\$7,3342,466). The study then looked at various types of properties and what portion of fire services each property classification utilized. This is how we arrived at the \$99 per residential unit, \$.18/sq. foot for institutional, etc. It is all based on the proportional share of calls GFR answered and dedicated fire services to over the entire year. Churches fall under the institutional category; therefore they would be assessed at a rate of \$.05/sq. foot if the assessment is passed at a 25% rate. I am not sure if I did an adequate job of explaining the methodology of the rate structure, so if you want additional information, I suggest you contact Chief Northcutt ([northcutwk@ci.gainesville.fl.us](mailto:northcutwk@ci.gainesville.fl.us)), who is much better at articulating the science behind the process.

Thank you for all that you do for our community. As a former chair of the CACCD, I have seen first-hand the direct impact you and your members make on our city.

Best,  
Lauren

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**From:** Larry Reimer [<mailto:larryr@ucgainesville.org>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 2:52 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** Cindy and Tim Martin  
**Subject:** Fire Protection Fee - Why the highest for churches?

Dear Commissioners,

If the commission must enact the fire protection fee on non-profits, it is excessive to enact a fee on churches three times that of industrial sites and 50% more than commercial buildings. I understand that this fee scale is based on a national assessment of fire response frequency. But it's not at all clear that this reflects the

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reality for churches in Gainesville. Neither does it reflect the in kind services religious organizations supply the community. We are called to do more and more as public funds dwindle in terms of housing the homeless through IHN, offering space in our buildings for community groups, and supporting the work of groups like St. Francis House and Gainesville Community Ministries.

I know the city is pressed for money, but so are the churches. I am willing to support a fair share, equal to the fee charged commercial buildings.

I hope someone on the commission will stand up to amend the proposed rate structure. Members of my church and I will be at the meeting on July 16 to argue for this change.

Thank you.

Larry Reimer  
United Church of Gainesville  
1624 NW 5 Ave.,  
Gainesville, FL 32603  
352-378-3500  
[www.ucgainesville.org](http://www.ucgainesville.org)

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 3:26 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** citymgr  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Assessment Objection

-----Original Message-----

From: Poe, Lauren B.  
Sent: Wednesday, July 09, 2008 2:37 PM  
To: 'Frank Green'  
Cc: Andrew, Devonia L.  
Subject: RE: Fire Assessment Objection

Mr. Green,

I would like to thank you for contacting me regarding the proposed fire assessment. I assure you that I do not approach this issue lightly and I will strongly consider all input before making my final decision. I will weigh several alternatives to keeping our fire department fully funded, including making drastic budget cuts, raising the millage rate on property owners, and assessing a fire fee for service (so long as it is minimal and includes a sunset clause). I take none of these options lightly, as they all will have serious consequences on all or part of our community.

As for the university's use of our fire services, I am aggressively working to find a resolution to this inequity. All government is immune to any government fees (as opposed to exempt, which is granted by special privilege by state statute to organizations such as non-profits). Finally, the fee rates were calculated using only fire services responses. Therefore, the rates do not include accident responses, EMT services or the like. I hope this information is helpful.

Best,  
Lauren

-----Original Message-----

From: Frank Green [mailto:msg2frank@gmail.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, July 09, 2008 2:27 PM  
To: citycomm  
Subject: Fire Assessment Objection

I would like to file an objection with the City Commission to the proposed assessment for fire services.

Primarily I object to charging a fee for the basic governmental services of police and fire protection that should be provided for from the property and sales taxes.

I also object because it is unfairly assessed. The city web page states that "All owners of improved property in the City would be subject to the special assessment with the exception of government-owned properties. Non-profit organizations owning improved property would be subject to the assessment."

One source stated 23 % of the calls for fire department responses were from the University of Florida?

The Fire Department will respond to fires in government owned buildings and continue to respond to automobile accidents.

It appears that each property that benefits will not pay its proportionate share of the costs of providing fire services

--  
Frank Green

423 NW 21st Street  
Gainesville, Florida 32603  
msg2frank@gmail.com

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Larry Reimer [larryr@ucgainesville.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 2:52 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** Cindy and Tim Martin  
**Subject:** Fire Protection Fee - Why the highest for churches?

Dear Commissioners,

If the commission must enact the fire protection fee on non-profits, it is excessive to enact a fee on churches three times that of industrial sites and 50% more than commercial buildings. I understand that this fee scale is based on a national assessment of fire response frequency. But it's not at all clear that this reflects the reality for churches in Gainesville. Neither does it reflect the in kind services religious organizations supply the community. We are called to do more and more as public funds dwindle in terms of housing the homeless through IHN, offering space in our buildings for community groups, and supporting the work of groups like St. Francis House and Gainesville Community Ministries.

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Thank you.

Larry Reimer  
United Church of Gainesville  
1624 NW 5 Ave.,  
Gainesville, FL 32603  
352-378-3500  
[www.ucgainesville.org](http://www.ucgainesville.org)

7/16/2008

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** daniel daniel [daniel@aldantrading.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 2:32 PM  
**To:** Poe, Lauren B.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Ass Fee

This is what I understood but I would not be able to make it at that date and I would like to be able to know what the results were. Or maybe to be able to speak my voice over the phone during the hearing, if it would be possible.

Thanks  
Daniel Daniel

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Poe, Lauren B. [mailto:poel@cityofgainesville.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 2:29 PM  
**To:** daniel daniel  
**Cc:** Andrew, Devonia L.; Lannon, Kurt M.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Ass Fee

Mr. Daniel

I believe that we will have second reading of the ordinance on July 16<sup>th</sup>. You can check with Kurt Lannon, the clerk of the commission, to verify this.

LP

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**From:** daniel daniel [mailto:daniel@aldantrading.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 1:40 PM  
**To:** Poe, Lauren B.; citycomm  
**Cc:** 'isaac Daniel'; moshe@aldantrading.com  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Ass Fee

Dear Lauren

First I thank you for replying back.

I am Glad that you do not approach this issue in a lightly manner. However I hope that you can understand the sensitive position property owners are in during this economic situation in the US (I try not to use the word recession but it is the right description of the US market).

I am also aware that the municipal are in bad shape, and that they are hurt from the economy, I see it in other cities in the US as well. But additional fees such as this fire ass fee would only make things more difficult since the city already raised prices to other services that they provide to property owners (such as eviction rates etc...).

Eventually property owners would not be able to bare these increases in prices and additional fees and taxes, and when it will happen it would not help the municipals.

PS

When will you reach a conclusion on this matter?

Best Regards  
Daniel Daniel

7/16/2008

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Poe, Lauren B. [mailto:poel@cityofgainesville.org]

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 1:09 PM

**To:** daniel daniel

**Subject:** RE: Fire Ass Fee

Mr. Daniel,

I would like to thank you for contacting me regarding the proposed fire assessment. I assure you that I do not approach this issue lightly and I will strongly consider all input before making my final decision. I will weigh several alternatives to keeping our fire department fully funded, including making drastic budget cuts, raising the millage rate on property owners, and assessing a fire fee for service (so long as it is minimal and includes a sunset clause). I take none of these options lightly, as they all will have serious consequences on all or part of our community.

Best,  
Lauren

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**From:** daniel daniel [mailto:daniel@aldantrading.com]

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 12:38 PM

**To:** citycomm

**Cc:** 'isaac Daniel'; moshe@aldantrading.com

**Subject:** Fire Ass Fee

Dear City Commissioners

Ref: Fire Ass Fee; Parcel 06778-000-000 & 06776-000-000

I have Recently Received a letter in the mail regarding a Fire Assessment Fee for my Property. From what I understood there will be a public hearing about this matter on July 16 2008 unfortunately I would not be able to attend this meeting and I would like to speak my voice regarding this matter.

I definitely think that the city of Gainesville and any other city in the U.S should keep a well Maintained Fire Department which should give the best service possible to the city residents.

However in the current real estate market in Florida and slow rental community it is a great burden on Property owners. Noor Group has a 94 Unit complex which mean we will have to pay approximately \$3,000.00, something that we can not offered to pay, with the constant increase in overhead and decrease in Income.

Noor Group has no choice but to object this fee.

PS

Please reply to this e-mail so I will know that it reached the appropriate personal that deals with this matter. And let me know if there is anything else I should do if there is a need to further impose my objection to this fee.

Best Regards  
Daniel Daniel

Noor Group LLC  
T: 305-624-6623  
F: 305-624-7333  
E-mail: daniel@aldantrading.com

## Young, Shaneka

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**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 2:27 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Subject:** Fire Assessment Objection

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I also object because it is unfairly assessed. The city web page states that "All owners of improved property in the City would be subject to the special assessment with the exception of government-owned properties. Non-profit organizations owning improved property would be subject to the assessment."

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Frank Green  
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Gainesville, Florida 32603  
msg2frank@gmail.com





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Eventually property owners would not be able to bare these increases in prices and additional fees and taxes, and when it will happen it would not help the municipals.

PS  
When will you reach a conclusion on this matter?

Best Regards  
Daniel Daniel

-----Original Message-----

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Best,  
Lauren

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**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 12:38 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** 'isaac Daniel'; moshe@aldantrading.com  
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Ref: Fire Ass Fee; Parcel 06778-000-000 & 06776-000-000

7/16/2008

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I definitely think that the city of Gainesville and any other city in the U.S should keep a well Maintained Fire Department which should give the best service possible to the city residents.

However in the current real estate market in Florida and slow rental community it is a great burden on Property owners. Noor Group has a 94 Unit complex which mean we will have to pay approximately \$3,000.00, something that we can not offered to pay, with the constant increase in overhead and decrease in Income.

Noor Group has no choice but to object this fee.

PS

Please reply to this e-mail so I will know that it reached the appropriate personal that deals with this matter. And let me know if there is anything else I should do if there is a need to further impose my objection to this fee.

Best Regards  
Daniel Daniel

Noor Group LLC  
T: 305-624-6623  
F: 305-624-7333  
E-mail: [daniel@aldantrading.com](mailto:daniel@aldantrading.com)

**Young, Shaneka**

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Best Regards  
Daniel Daniel

Noor Group LLC  
T: 305-624-6623  
F: 305-624-7333  
E-mail: daniel@aldantrading.com

7/16/2008

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Northcutt, William K.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 10:28 AM  
**To:** Hawkins, Jr., Thomas  
**Cc:** Andrew, Devonia L.; 'dmscro@bellsouth.net'; Driggers, Kathlene S.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee

We will take care of that, thanks

Bill Northcutt  
Fire Chief  
Gainesville Fire Rescue  
352-334-5078  
[northcutwk@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:northcutwk@cityofgainesville.org)  
[www.gfr.org](http://www.gfr.org)  
Life's most persistent and Urgent Question is:  
*What are you doing for others?*  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

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**From:** Hawkins, Jr., Thomas  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:44 AM  
**To:** Northcutt, William K.  
**Cc:** Andrew, Devonia L.; 'dmscro@bellsouth.net'  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Protection Fee

Bill,

Ms. Crosby comments below that her duplex received a fire assessment notice incorrectly identifying it as including three units. Please check to see that her property, parcel number 09270-038-000, is described correctly in our records.

Thomas

Thomas Hawkins, Commissioner-At-Large  
City of Gainesville, Office of the City Commission  
200 East University Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32602-0490  
Phone: (352) 334-5015  
Fax: (352) 334-2036  
[commth@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:commth@cityofgainesville.org)

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**From:** [dmscro@bellsouth.net](mailto:dmscro@bellsouth.net) [<mailto:dmscro@bellsouth.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 10:17 PM  
**To:** Hawkins, Jr., Thomas  
**Cc:** Mastrodicasa, Jeanna  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee

7/16/2008

RE: the fire protection fee: **NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!** I live at 705 N.W. 19th Ave, and own my duplex. I STRONGLY object to the fire department asking for more money because they have neglected to plan for the increases in fuel costs, etc. EVERY time I see an ambulance picking up someone, (WHEN NO FIRE IS INVOLVED!!!!) there is a LARGE, gas-eating (how many miles to the gallon do they get, two? three?) ladder fire truck along. When I called the line to OBJECT to the notice of possible assessment (they charged me for three units when there are actually two in my duplex), the EMT I spoke to informed me that the reason the fire truck goes to the scene of each and every ambulance call (even though there is no fire) is that the EMTs can't ride in the ambulance. I have NEVER lived in a town before (been here three years, and have lived in many cities over the years - of course, I'm retired) where a LARGE ladder truck accompanied EVERY ambulance call where EMTs might be needed!!! When I told the young lady that, she said that gas had not been up for very long, .....etc.,,,,,,!! My opinion is that the practice of accompanying LARGE ladder trucks SHOULD have been stopped when gasoline went over \$2.50 a gallon! AT THE VERY LEAST, the fire department could have planned ahead to buy electric-powered or hybrid trucks (which the city of Memphis, TN has had for TEN years!!!!) to carry their EMT personnel on calls when they can't fit in an ambulance, or when the ambulances aren't housed where the EMT's are posted during duty hours (whatever the reason they can't ride on ambulances - THAT was never explained to me at all - I can just guess the two above reasons). At any rate, I would hope that you will be reasonable and REQUIRE the fire department to cut their EXTREMELY HIGH proportion of administrative personnel and to CUT OUT THEIR USE OF LARGE LADDER TRUCKS THAT ACCOMPANY AMBULANCES ON EVERY CALL rather than taxing (?????) your poor citizens to death. Our city property taxes are just the same as they were on the same price house as the last city I lived in, but the personnel (service deliverer level) are paid much less, and the services (garbage pick up, crime per capita), arts and parks events and facilities), and infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, etc) are absolutely inferior to that city I moved from. I love the fact both my children live here and the climate, but I, for one, just don't understand why retirees without my family connections and Florida background would want to live here, considering the high taxes we pay for the poor services and infrastructure! Please think about your constituents! We will be thinking about your vote when we vote.

Respectfully,  
Dianna Crosby

7/16/2008

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Andrew, Devonian L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 10:16 AM  
**To:** 'covelle@bellsouth.net'  
**Cc:** citycomm; citymgr  
**Subject:** RE: [QUARANTINE BYPASSED] Approval of assessment of fire protection service.

Good Morning Ms. Covell,

Your e-mail has been received by the Mayor and members of the Commission and it is being shared with the City Manager.

Thank you for taking the time to voice your support.

Devonian L. Andrew  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor

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**From:** covelle@bellsouth.net [mailto:covelle@bellsouth.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 10:12 AM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** covelle@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** [QUARANTINE BYPASSED] Approval of assessment of fire protection service.

Dear Commissioners:

I strongly support the proposed assessment for fire protections services. I think it is fair to all. Fire protections services are invaluable to this community.

Sincerely yours,  
Elizabeth B. Covell

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** covelle@bellsouth.net

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 10:12 AM

**To:** citycomm

**Cc:** covelle@bellsouth.net

**Subject:** [QUARANTINE BYPASSED] Approval of assessment of fire protection service.

Dear Commissioners:

I strongly support the proposed assessment for fire protections services. I think it is fair to all. Fire protections services are invaluable to this community.

Sincerely yours,  
Elizabeth B. Covell

7/16/2008



**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** covelle@bellsouth.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 10:07 AM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** covelle@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** APPROVAL OF ASSESSMENT FOR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE.

Dear Commissioners:

I am **in favor** of the proposed assessment for fire protection services for both Gainesville and Alachua County. I think it is **fair** to all. No property should be exempt from the assessment for fire protection service. It's importance to this community is invaluable.

Sincerely yours,  
Elizabeth B. Covell

Young, Shaneka

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**From:** dmscro@bellsouth.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 10:25 PM  
**To:** Hanrahan, Pegeen  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee

RE: the fire protection fee: **NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!**

I don't know if you will be called upon to vote on this issue, but IF YOU ARE.....PLEASE VOTE NO!!!

I live at 705 N.W. 19th Ave, and own my duplex. I STRONGLY object to the fire department asking for more money because they have neglected to plan for the increases in fuel costs, etc. EVERY time I see an ambulance picking up someone, (WHEN NO FIRE IS INVOLVED!!!!) there is a LARGE, gas-eating (how many miles to the gallon do they get, two? three?) ladder fire truck along. When I called the line to OBJECT to the notice of possible assessment (they charged me for three units when there are actually two in my duplex), the EMT I spoke to informed me that the reason the fire truck goes to the scene of each and every ambulance call (even though there is no fire) is that the EMTs can't ride in the ambulance. I have NEVER lived in a town before (been here three years, and have lived in many cities over the years - of course, I'm retired) where a LARGE ladder truck accompanied EVERY ambulance call where EMTs might be needed!!! When I told the young lady that, she said that gas had not been up for very long, .....etc.,,,,,,!! My opinion is that the practice of accompanying LARGE ladder trucks SHOULD have been stopped when gasoline went over \$2.50 a gallon! AT THE VERY LEAST, the fire department could have planned ahead to buy electric-powered or hybrid trucks (which the city of Memphis, TN has had for TEN years!!!!) to carry their EMT personnel on calls when they can't fit in an ambulance, or when the ambulances aren't housed where the EMT's are posted during duty hours (whatever the reason they can't ride on ambulances - THAT was never explained to me at all - I can just guess the two above reasons). At any rate, I would hope that you will be reasonable and REQUIRE the fire department to cut their EXTREMELY HIGH proportion of administrative personnel and to CUT OUT THEIR USE OF LARGE LADDER TRUCKS THAT ACCOMPANY AMBULANCES ON EVERY CALL rather than taxing (?????) your poor citizens to death. Our city property taxes are just the same as they were on the same price house as the last city I lived in, but the personnel (service deliverer level) are paid much less, and the services (garbage pick up, crime per capita), arts and parks events and facilities), and infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, etc) are absolutely inferior to that city I moved from. I love the fact both my children live here and the climate, but I, for one, just don't understand why retirees without my family connections and Florida background would want to live here, considering the high taxes we pay for the poor services and infrastructure! Please think about your constituents! We will be thinking about your vote when we vote.

Respectfully,  
Dianna Crosby

7/16/2008

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:29 AM  
**To:** 'ojganesh@ufl.edu'  
**Cc:** citycomm; citymgr  
**Subject:** RE: concern over special assessment for fire services

Good Morning Dr. Ganesh,

Your e-mail has been received by C/Poe and the Mayor and it is being shared with the other members of the Commission as well as the City Manager.

Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns.

Devonia L. Andrew  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor

-----Original Message-----

From: ojganesh@ufl.edu [mailto:ojganesh@ufl.edu]  
Sent: Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:15 AM  
To: Poe, Lauren B.  
Cc: Hanrahan, Pegeen  
Subject: concern over special assessment for fire services

Hello,

My name is Dr. Omjoy Ganesh. I am a homeowner and a resident of Gainesville for over 20 years. I wanted to let you know of my unhappiness over the proposed special assessment for fire services. I understand the benefit that fire services provide. My concern is with another fee being passed onto local residents. For some time now local residents have been rather quietly swallowing new fees and higher rates. The slow nickel-and-diming is taking its toll. From increased GRU rates (every year), to changes in property tax assessments (indeed, my property taxes nearly doubled from last year to this year), this proposed special assessment for fire services feels like throwing a log on an already burning fire.

Public services are necessary, and services in Gainesville are top notch. However, something is wrong. Homeowners and residents paying more in taxes than ever before, yet we are still hearing that social services, police, fire, and public schools are hurting. Broad statements like: "...at the end of the day, ultimately, it means providing services critical to health and human safety. (Pegeen Hanrahan)" are correct, but they imply that without this special assessment for fire services we would not be able to provide these services; this is incorrect. I strongly feel that residents should no longer pay special taxes and extra fees. I do not feel that this special assessment for fire services should be levied onto homeowners and residents. If it does pass, it should be the last special tax or tax increase forced onto the good people of Gainesville for a long time.

Thank you for your time,  
Dr. Ganesh  
4346 NW 34th Terr.  
Gainesville, FL 32605

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Northcutt, William K.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:14 AM  
**To:** Waratuke, Elizabeth A.; 'howard@hkwbuilders.com'  
**Cc:** Poe, Lauren B.; Radson, Marion J.; Driggers, Kathlene S.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire special assessment

Thanks Liz,

We spoke with Mr Wallace yesterday and will correct our database.

Bill Northcutt  
Fire Chief  
Gainesville Fire Rescue  
352-334-5078  
[northcutwk@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:northcutwk@cityofgainesville.org)  
[www.qfr.org](http://www.qfr.org)

Life's most persistent and Urgent Question is:  
*What are you doing for others?*  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

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**From:** Waratuke, Elizabeth A.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 8:58 AM  
**To:** 'howard@hkwbuilders.com'  
**Cc:** Poe, Lauren B.; Radson, Marion J.; Northcutt, William K.  
**Subject:** Fire special assessment

Dear Mr. Wallace,

I have been asked to respond to your inquiry on the proposed assessment at "Villas at 39th". I do not currently have a copy of your attachment, but wanted to get back to you on what appears to be a question as to whether vacant lots should be assessed. The consultant who set up the assessment determined that, because of the urbanized nature of the City, vacant lots should not be assessed as the benefit is primarily to the adjacent developed property, that fires are fought on vacant property primarily to keep the fire from spreading to structures. Therefore if the property is vacant, it is my understanding that it is not assessed a fire fee.

The fire department is investigating properties that may have been improperly charged. By copy of this email to Chief Northcutt, I am asking that he direct your inquiry to the appropriate party for further follow-up. I will follow up with Devonian to see if I can get the original attachment. Let me know if we may be of further assistance, Mr. Wallace.

Liz Waratuke  
Litigation Attorney  
City of Gainesville  
(352) 334-5011

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** ojganesh@ufl.edu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:15 AM  
**To:** Poe, Lauren B.  
**Cc:** Hanrahan, Pegeen  
**Subject:** concern over special assessment for fire services

Hello,

My name is Dr. Omjoy Ganesh. I am a homeowner and a resident of Gainesville for over 20 years. I wanted to let you know of my unhappiness over the proposed special assessment for fire services. I understand the benefit that fire services provide. My concern is with another fee being passed onto local residents. For some time now local residents have been rather quietly swallowing new fees and higher rates. The slow nickel-and-diming is taking its toll. From increased GRU rates (every year), to changes in property tax assessments (indeed, my property taxes nearly doubled from last year to this year), this proposed special assessment for fire services feels like throwing a log on an already burning fire.

Public services are necessary, and services in Gainesville are top notch. However, something is wrong. Homeowners and residents paying more in taxes than ever before, yet we are still hearing that social services, police, fire, and public schools are hurting. Broad statements like: "...at the end of the day, ultimately, it means providing services critical to health and human safety. (Pegeen Hanrahan)" are correct, but they imply that without this special assessment for fire services we would not be able to provide these services; this is incorrect. I strongly feel that residents should no longer pay special taxes and extra fees. I do not feel that this special assessment for fire services should be levied onto homeowners and residents. If it does pass, it should be the last special tax or tax increase forced onto the good people of Gainesville for a long time.

Thank you for your time,  
Dr. Ganesh  
4346 NW 34th Terr.  
Gainesville, FL 32605

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Waratuke, Elizabeth A.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:07 AM  
**To:** Northcutt, William K.  
**Cc:** Poe, Lauren B.; Radson, Marion J.; Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment  
**Attachments:** Villas Fire Assessment.doc

Thank you Devonia.

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:02 AM  
**To:** Waratuke, Elizabeth A.  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 3:25 PM  
**To:** 'howard@hkwblders.com'  
**Cc:** citycomm; citymgr; Harris, Helen J.  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment

Good Afternoon Mr. Wallace,

Your e-mail correspondence has been received by the Mayor and members of the City Commission and it is being shared with the City Manager. Thank you for your time in this matter.

Devonia L. Andrew  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor

---

**From:** Howard Wallace [mailto:howard@hkwblders.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 2:51 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** 'Anne Wallace'  
**Subject:** Fire Services Assesment

Attached please find my respectful objection to the proposed assessment at Villas at 39<sup>th</sup>. Howard Wallace

**Villas at 39<sup>th</sup> LLC**  
**4707 NW 53 Ave, Suite A**  
**Gainesville, Florida 32653**  
**352-377-2240**

July 8, 2008

Gainesville City Commission  
200 E. University Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32601

Re: Fire Services Non-Ad Valorem Assessments - Tax Parcel # 08247-000-000

Dear Commissioners:

Currently there are three structures (manufactured homes) in various stages of construction, none currently occupied on this parcel. In the past there were potentially 156 lots for rent for mobile homes. Now there are 100 land units (99 currently for sale and one sold) for the placement of manufactured housing to be owner-occupied.

It would seem reasonable to have a fire-services assessment to be on structures, not vacant land. Therefore I respectfully object to the proposed assessment.

Sincerely,

Howard K. Wallace, Jr.  
Managing Partner

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 9:01 AM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Subject:** FW: Fire special assessment

FYI

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**From:** Waratuke, Elizabeth A.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 8:58 AM  
**To:** 'howard@hkwbuiders.com'  
**Cc:** Poe, Lauren B.; Radson, Marion J.; Northcutt, William K.  
**Subject:** Fire special assessment

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The fire department is investigating properties that may have been improperly charged. By copy of this email to Chief Northcutt, I am asking that he direct your inquiry to the appropriate party for further follow-up. I will follow up with Devonia to see if I can get the original attachment. Let me know if we may be of further assistance, Mr. Wallace.

Liz Waratuke  
Litigation Attorney  
City of Gainesville  
(352) 334-5011



## Young, Shaneka

---

**From:** Waratuke, Elizabeth A.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 8:58 AM  
**To:** 'howard@hkwbuilders.com'  
**Cc:** Poe, Lauren B.; Radson, Marion J.; Northcutt, William K.  
**Subject:** Fire special assessment

Dear Mr. Wallace,

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The fire department is investigating properties that may have been improperly charged. By copy of this email to Chief Northcutt, I am asking that he direct your inquiry to the appropriate party for further follow-up. I will follow up with Devonia to see if I can get the original attachment. Let me know if we may be of further assistance, Mr. Wallace.

Liz Waratuke  
Litigation Attorney  
City of Gainesville  
(352) 334-5011

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 09, 2008 8:29 AM  
**To:** 'dmscro@bellsouth.net'  
**Cc:** citycomm; citymgr  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee

Good Morning Ms. Crosby,

Your e-mail has been received by Commissioners Hawkins, Lowe and Mastrodicasa and it is being shared with the Mayor and other members of the Commission as well as the City Manager.

Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns in this matter.

Devonia L. Andrew  
 Executive Assistant to the Mayor

---

**From:** dmscro@bellsouth.net [mailto:dmscro@bellsouth.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 10:22 PM  
**To:** Hawkins, Jr., Thomas  
**Cc:** Mastrodicasa, Jeanna  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee

RE: the fire protection fee: **NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!** I live at 705 N.W. 19th Ave, and own my duplex. I STRONGLY object to the fire department asking for more money because they have neglected to plan for the increases in fuel costs, etc. EVERY time I see an ambulance picking up someone, (WHEN NO FIRE IS INVOLVED!!!!) there is a LARGE, gas-eating (how many miles to the gallon do they get, two? three?) ladder fire truck along. When I called the line to OBJECT to the notice of possible assessment (they charged me for three units when there are actually two in my duplex), the EMT I spoke to informed me that the reason the fire truck goes to the scene of each and every ambulance call (even though there is no fire) is that the EMTs can't ride in the ambulance. I have NEVER lived in a town before (been here three years, and have lived in many cities over the years - of course, I'm retired) where a LARGE ladder truck accompanied EVERY ambulance call where EMTs might be needed!!! When I told the young lady that, she said that gas had not been up for very long, .....etc.,,,,,,!! My opinion is that the practice of accompanying LARGE ladder trucks SHOULD have been stopped when gasoline went over \$2.50 a gallon! AT THE VERY LEAST, the fire department could have planned ahead to buy electric-powered or hybrid trucks (which the city of Memphis, TN has had for TEN years!!!!) to carry their EMT personnel on calls when they can't fit in an ambulance, or when the ambulances aren't housed where the EMT's are posted during duty hours (whatever the reason they can't ride on ambulances - THAT was never explained to me at all - I can just guess the two above reasons). At any rate, I would hope that you will be reasonable and REQUIRE the fire department to cut their EXTREMELY HIGH proportion of administrative personnel and to CUT OUT THEIR USE OF LARGE LADDER TRUCKS THAT ACCOMPANY AMBULANCES ON EVERY CALL rather than taxing (?????) your poor citizens to death. Our city property taxes are just the same as they were on the same price house as the last city I lived in, but the personnel (service deliverer level) are paid much less, and the services (garbage pick up, crime per capita), arts and parks events and facilities), and infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, etc) are absolutely inferior to that city I moved from. I love the fact both my children live here and the climate, but I, for one, just don't understand why retirees without my family connections and Florida background would want to live here, considering the high taxes we pay for the poor services and infrastructure! Please think about your constituents! We will be thinking about your vote when we vote.

Respectfully,  
 Dianna Crosby

7/16/2008

**Young, Shaneka**

---

**From:** dmscro@bellsouth.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 10:22 PM  
**To:** Hawkins, Jr., Thomas  
**Cc:** Mastrodicasa, Jeanna  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee

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Respectfully,  
Dianna Crosby

7/16/2008

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** dmscro@bellsouth.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 10:21 PM  
**To:** Lowe, Craig  
**Subject:** [QUARANTINE BYPASSED] RE: Fire Protection Fee

RE: the fire protection fee: **NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!**

I live at 705 N.W. 19th Ave, and own my duplex. I STRONGLY object to the fire department asking for more money because they have neglected to plan for the increases in fuel costs, etc. EVERY time I see an ambulance picking up someone, (WHEN NO FIRE IS INVOLVED!!!!) there is a LARGE, gas-eating (how many miles to the gallon do they get, two? three?) ladder fire truck along. When I called the line to OBJECT to the notice of possible assessment (they charged me for three units when there are actually two in my duplex), the EMT I spoke to informed me that the reason the fire truck goes to the scene of each and every ambulance call (even though there is no fire) is that the EMTs can't ride in the ambulance. I have NEVER lived in a town before (been here three years, and have lived in many cities over the years - of course, I'm retired) where a LARGE ladder truck accompanied EVERY ambulance call where EMTs might be needed!!! When I told the young lady that, she said that gas had not been up for very long, .....etc.,,,,,,!! My opinion is that the practice of accompanying LARGE ladder trucks SHOULD have been stopped when gasoline went over \$2.50 a gallon! AT THE VERY LEAST, the fire department could have planned ahead to buy electric-powered or hybrid trucks (which the city of Memphis, TN, has had for TEN years!!!!) to carry their EMT personnel on calls when they can't fit in an ambulance, or when the ambulances aren't housed where the EMT's are posted during duty hours (whatever the reason they can't ride on ambulances - THAT was never explained to me at all - I can just guess the two above reasons). At any rate, I would hope that you will be reasonable and REQUIRE the fire department to cut their EXTREMELY HIGH proportion of administrative personnel and to CUT OUT THEIR USE OF LARGE LADDER TRUCKS THAT ACCOMPANY AMBULANCES ON EVERY CALL rather than taxing (?????) your poor citizens to death. Our city property taxes are just the same as they were on the same price house as the last city I lived in, but the personnel (service deliverer level) are paid much less, and the services (garbage pick up, crime per capita), arts and parks events and facilities), and infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, etc) are absolutely inferior to that city I moved from. I love the fact both my children live here and the climate, but I, for one, just don't understand why retirees without my family connections and Florida background would want to live here, considering the high taxes we pay for the poor services and infrastructure! Please think about your constituents! We will be thinking about your vote when we vote.

Respectfully,  
Dianna Crosby

7/16/2008

Young, Shaneka

---

**From:** dmscro@bellsouth.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 10:17 PM  
**To:** Hawkins, Jr., Thomas  
**Cc:** Mastrodicasa, Jeanna  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Protection Fee

RE: the fire protection fee: **NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!** I live at 705 N.W. 19th Ave, and own my duplex. I STRONGLY object to the fire department asking for more money because they have neglected to plan for the increases in fuel costs, etc. EVERY time I see an ambulance picking up someone, (WHEN NO FIRE IS INVOLVED!!!!) there is a LARGE, gas-eating (how many miles to the gallon do they get, two? three?) ladder fire truck along. When I called the line to OBJECT to the notice of possible assessment (they charged me for three units when there are actually two in my duplex), the EMT I spoke to informed me that the reason the fire truck goes to the scene of each and every ambulance call (even though there is no fire) is that the EMTs can't ride in the ambulance. I have NEVER lived in a town before (been here three years, and have lived in many cities over the years - of course, I'm retired) where a LARGE ladder truck accompanied EVERY ambulance call where EMTs might be needed!!! When I told the young lady that, she said that gas had not been up for very long, .....etc.,,,,,,!! My opinion is that the practice of accompanying LARGE ladder trucks SHOULD have been stopped when gasoline went over \$2.50 a gallon! AT THE VERY LEAST, the fire department could have planned ahead to buy electric-powered or hybrid trucks (which the city of Memphis, TN has had for TEN years!!!!) to carry their EMT personnel on calls when they can't fit in an ambulance, or when the ambulances aren't housed where the EMT's are posted during duty hours (whatever the reason they can't ride on ambulances - THAT was never explained to me at all - I can just guess the two above reasons). At any rate, I would hope that you will be reasonable and REQUIRE the fire department to cut their EXTREMELY HIGH proportion of administrative personnel and to CUT OUT THEIR USE OF LARGE LADDER TRUCKS THAT ACCOMPANY AMBULANCES ON EVERY CALL rather than taxing (?????) your poor citizens to death. Our city property taxes are just the same as they were on the same price house as the last city I lived in, but the personnel (service deliverer level) are paid much less, and the services (garbage pick up, crime per capita), arts and parks events and facilities), and infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, etc) are absolutely inferior to that city I moved from. I love the fact both my children live here and the climate, but I, for one, just don't understand why retirees without my family connections and Florida background would want to live here, considering the high taxes we pay for the poor services and infrastructure! Please think about your constituents! We will be thinking about your vote when we vote.

Respectfully,  
Dianna Crosby

7/16/2008

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 5:12 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment

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**From:** Skell, Rosemary A.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 4:52 PM  
**To:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment

Devonia:

FYI - Please see Chief Northcutt's e-mail below. Thank you.

Have a nice evening,  
Rose

---

**From:** Northcutt, William K.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 4:25 PM  
**To:** Skell, Rosemary A.; Folkers, Paul E.; Rountree, Becky L.  
**Cc:** Driggers, Kathlene S.; Trotman, George E.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Services Assesment

Mr Wallace contacted us via the phone bank line and we will be correcting his count.

Bill Northcutt  
Fire Chief  
Gainesville Fire Rescue  
352-334-5078  
[northcutwk@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:northcutwk@cityofgainesville.org)  
[www.gfr.org](http://www.gfr.org)  
Life's most persistent and Urgent Question is:  
*What are you doing for others?*  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

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**From:** Skell, Rosemary A.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 3:59 PM  
**To:** Folkers, Paul E.; Northcutt, William K.; Rountree, Becky L.  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment

FYI

---

**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 3:25 PM  
**To:** 'howard@hkwbuilders.com'

7/16/2008

**Cc:** citycomm; citymgr; Harris, Helen J.

**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment

Good Afternoon Mr. Wallace,

Your e-mail correspondence has been received by the Mayor and members of the City Commission and it is being shared with the City Manager. Thank you for your time in this matter.

Devonia L. Andrew

Executive Assistant to the Mayor

---

**From:** Howard Wallace [mailto:howard@hkwbuiders.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 2:51 PM

**To:** citycomm

**Cc:** 'Anne Wallace'

**Subject:** Fire Services Assesment

Attached please find my respectful objection to the proposed assessment at Villas at 39<sup>th</sup>. Howard Wallace

## Young, Shaneka

---

**From:** Howard Wallace [howard@hkwbuilders.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 4:24 PM  
**To:** Poe, Lauren B.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Services Assesment

Thanks for the prompt response! Pleasant supprise indeed. H

---

**From:** Poe, Lauren B. [mailto:poel@cityofgainesville.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 3:57 PM  
**To:** Howard Wallace  
**Cc:** Andrew, Devonia L.; Radson, Marion J.  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Services Assesment

Mr. Wallace,  
According to Florida case law, fire assessments are only allowed to be levied to improved properties (those with structures). Therefore, only those lots with homes should be assessed. I will check with the city attorney and ask him to get back to you. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.

Best,  
Lauren

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**From:** Howard Wallace [mailto:howard@hkwbuilders.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 2:51 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** 'Anne Wallace'  
**Subject:** Fire Services Assesment

Attached please find my respectful objection to the proposed assessment at Villas at 39<sup>th</sup>. Howard Wallace

No virus found in this incoming message.  
Checked by AVG - <http://www.avg.com>  
Version: 8.0.138 / Virus Database: 270.4.6/1540 - Release Date: 7/8/2008 6:33 AM



## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 3:25 PM  
**To:** 'couch@ufl.edu'  
**Cc:** citycomm; citymgr; Harris, Helen J.  
**Subject:** RE: Letter to the C of G Commissioners

Good Afternoon Mr. Couch,

Your e-mail correspondence has been received by the Mayor and members of the City Commission and it is being shared with the City Manager. Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns in this matter.

Devonia L. Andrew  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor

---

**From:** couch@ufl.edu [mailto:couch@ufl.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 1:50 PM  
**To:** GNV City Commission from  
**Subject:** Letter to the C of G Commissioners

Dear Commissioner, City of Gainesville,

Please **see the attachment** for a formal letter that is sent to you from the Board of Trustees of the First United Methodist Church of Gainesville.

Thank you for reading it.

Warm regards,  
Leon Couch, Chair, FUMC Trustees

P.S. In case you can't reproduce the attachment, the letter is also reproduced below.

Subject: Fire Assessment Fees

Dear Mayor Hanrahan and the City of Gainesville Commissioners,

The inclusion of non-profit organizations, including religious institutions in the proposed fire assessment fees is of great concern for several reasons.

First, it violates the long established principle of tax exemption based on the separation of church and state.

It also seems to ignore the severe impact of a mandatory fee on an institution that derives its funding from voluntary donations. A non-profit institution – especially churches that exist solely to provide spiritual support to all and material aid to all it can – cannot “pass on” this added expense to its “customers” as businesses can do. You are exempting governmental units (appropriately in our opinion) even though they can pass on the costs by charging their customers user fees and taxes.

7/16/2008

For Non-profits, including churches, this added cost will come out of already shrinking budgets. Church donations are based on expendable giving. As the cost of living, including taxes, increases our collections are among the first to decline. The churches also provide many services to the community that would otherwise go un-provided or done so at additional cost to the community. As an example; First United Methodist Church hosts a weekly free clinic, "Helping Hands", to the homeless and semi-homeless. We provide special "Family Dinners" for the homeless at holidays and even a Super Bowl Party. We donate hundreds of food boxes to community food programs. We have programs for youth. We host and support Boy and Girl Scout Troops. We provide food and social programs for the elderly. We regularly host homeless families providing housing, meals and supportive services through the Interfaith Hospitality Network. We provide space for several non-religious community organizations. We provide financial and supportive services to many individuals who come to our door. Again, all of this from free-will donations at no cost to the community. Those are the services which are most likely to be cut and handed to the City government to support or let die.

There is also the question of fairness. You are already charging each of our member families \$30 through the residential fee. Then you charge us an additional fee because we are church members.

Assistant City Manager Paul Folkers said it is appropriate for these institutions (non-profit) to pay the assessment because the fee is based on the number of services provided and there is a high demand for service calls at institutions. As the proposed fee is for fire services, we question the accuracy of that statement. Most calls for "services" relate to police calls for trespassing, breaking in/false entry, vandalism, etc. Calls for Fire Service are rare, as are EMS calls. As the Gainesville Sun points out, "The city of Miami recently lost a settlement of \$15.5 million regarding the legality of using an assessment to fund the Emergency Medical Services unit of the fire department." Justifying the fee base on non-fire protection services seems litigation-risky.

Finally, Chief William Northcutt has stated that the potential shortfall in the Departments budget would be about \$650,000. The Gainesville Sun article states that the fees could provide \$2,200,000 next year. We are not mathematicians nor government budget experts, but doesn't that seem to be gross overkill?

We urgently request that you reconsider imposing the proposed fire service fee as currently planned. We believe it to be ill planned, unbalanced according to need and not in the best interests of the community.

Warm regards,  
Leon Couch, Chair, FUMC Trustees  
on behalf of the FUMC Board of Trustees

## Young, Shaneka

---

**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 3:25 PM  
**To:** 'howard@hkwbuilders.com'  
**Cc:** citycomm; citymgr; Harris, Helen J.  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Services Assesment  
**Attachments:** Villas Fire Assessment.doc

Good Afternoon Mr. Wallace,

Your e-mail correspondence has been received by the Mayor and members of the City Commission and it is being shared with the City Manager. Thank you for your time in this matter.

Devonia L. Andrew  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor

---

**From:** Howard Wallace [mailto:howard@hkwbuilders.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 2:51 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** 'Anne Wallace'  
**Subject:** Fire Services Assesment

Attached please find my respectful objection to the proposed assessment at Villas at 39<sup>th</sup>. Howard Wallace

**Villas at 39<sup>th</sup> LLC**  
**4707 NW 53 Ave, Suite A**  
**Gainesville, Florida 32653**  
**352-377-2240**

July 8, 2008

Gainesville City Commission  
200 E. University Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32601

Re: Fire Services Non-Ad Valorem Assessments - Tax Parcel # 08247-000-000

Dear Commissioners:

Currently there are three structures (manufactured homes) in various stages of construction, none currently occupied on this parcel. In the past there were potentially 156 lots for rent for mobile homes. Now there are 100 land units (99 currently for sale and one sold) for the placement of manufactured housing to be owner-occupied.

It would seem reasonable to have a fire-services assessment to be on structures, not vacant land. Therefore I respectfully object to the proposed assessment.

Sincerely,

Howard K. Wallace, Jr.  
Managing Partner

**Young, Shaneka**

---

**From:** Howard Wallace [howard@hkwbuilders.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 2:51 PM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** 'Anne Wallace'  
**Subject:** Fire Services Assesment  
**Attachments:** Villas Fire Assessment.doc

Attached please find my respectful objection to the proposed assessment at Villas at 39<sup>th</sup>. Howard Wallace

7/16/2008

**Villas at 39<sup>th</sup> LLC**  
**4707 NW 53 Ave, Suite A**  
**Gainesville, Florida 32653**  
**352-377-2240**

July 8, 2008

Gainesville City Commission  
200 E. University Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32601

Re: Fire Services Non-Ad Valorem Assessments - Tax Parcel # 08247-000-000

Dear Commissioners:

Currently there are three structures (manufactured homes) in various stages of construction, none currently occupied on this parcel. In the past there were potentially 156 lots for rent for mobile homes. Now there are 100 land units (99 currently for sale and one sold) for the placement of manufactured housing to be owner-occupied.

It would seem reasonable to have a fire-services assessment to be on structures, not vacant land. Therefore I respectfully object to the proposed assessment.

Sincerely,

Howard K. Wallace, Jr.  
Managing Partner

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** couch@ufl.edu  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 1:50 PM  
**To:** GNV City Commission from  
**Subject:** Letter to the C of G Commissioneers  
**Attachments:** Attachment information.; Letter - to CofG 07-08-08.pdf

Dear Commissioner, City of Gainesville,

Please **see the attachment** for a formal letter that is sent to you from the Board of Trustees of the First United Methodist Church of Gainesville.

Thank you for reading it.

Warm regards,  
Leon Couch, Chair, FUMC Trustees

P.S. In case you can't reproduce the attachment, the letter is also reproduced below.

Subject: Fire Assessment Fees

Dear Mayor Hanrahan and the City of Gainesville Commissioners,

The inclusion of non-profit organizations, including religious institutions in the proposed fire assessment fees is of great concern for several reasons.

First, it violates the long established principle of tax exemption based on the separation of church and state.

It also seems to ignore the severe impact of a mandatory fee on an institution that derives its funding from voluntary donations. A non-profit institution – especially churches that exist solely to provide spiritual support to all and material aid to all it can – cannot “pass on” this added expense to its “customers” as businesses can do. You are exempting governmental units (appropriately in our opinion) even though they can pass on the costs by charging their customers user fees and taxes.

For Non-profits, including churches, this added cost will come out of already shrinking budgets. Church donations are based on expendable giving. As the cost of living, including taxes, increases our collections are among the first to decline. The churches also provide many services to the community that would otherwise go un-provided or done so at additional cost to the community. As an example; First United Methodist Church hosts a weekly free clinic, “Helping Hands”, to the homeless and semi-homeless. We provide special “Family Dinners” for the homeless at holidays and even a Super Bowl Party. We donate hundreds of food boxes to community food programs. We have programs for youth. We host and support Boy and Girl Scout Troops. We provide food and social programs for the elderly. We regularly host homeless families providing housing, meals and supportive services through the Interfaith Hospitality Network. We provide space for several non-religious community organizations. We provide financial and supportive services to many individuals who come to our door. Again, all of this from free-will donations at no cost to the community. Those are the services which are most likely to be cut and handed to the City government to support or let die.

7/16/2008

There is also the question of fairness. You are already charging each of our member families \$30 through the residential fee. Then you charge us an additional fee because we are church members.

Assistant City Manager Paul Folkers said it is appropriate for these institutions (non-profit) to pay the assessment because the fee is based on the number of services provided and there is a high demand for service calls at institutions. As the proposed fee is for fire services, we question the accuracy of that statement. Most calls for "services" relate to police calls for trespassing, breaking in/false entry, vandalism, etc. Calls for Fire Service are rare, as are EMS calls. As the Gainesville Sun points out, "The city of Miami recently lost a settlement of \$15.5 million regarding the legality of using an assessment to fund the Emergency Medical Services unit of the fire department." Justifying the fee base on non-fire protection services seems litigation-risky.

Finally, Chief William Northcutt has stated that the potential shortfall in the Departments budget would be about \$650,000. The Gainesville Sun article states that the fees could provide \$2,200,000 next year. We are not mathematicians nor government budget experts, but doesn't that seem to be gross overkill?

We urgently request that you reconsider imposing the proposed fire service fee as currently planned. We believe it to be ill planned, unbalanced according to need and not in the best interests of the community.

Warm regards,  
Leon Couch, Chair, FUMC Trustees  
on behalf of the FUMC Board of Trustees

7/16/2008





## First United Methodist Church

419 NE First Street, Gainesville FL 32601  
352-372-8523 <http://fumcgv.org>

*As members, we promise to be loyal to the Church  
and uphold it with our prayers, our gifts, and our service.*

July 8, 2008

Subject: Fire Assessment Fees

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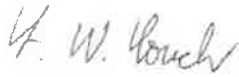
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We urgently request that you reconsider imposing the proposed fire service fee as currently planned. We believe it to be ill planned, unbalanced according to need and not in the best interests of the community.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "L. W. Couch".

Leon Couch, Chair, FUMC Trustees  
on behalf of the FUMC Board of Trustees

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 8:24 AM  
**To:** 'robert jerome'  
**Cc:** citycomm  
**Subject:** RE: To all commissioners

Good Morning Mr. Jerome,

Your e-mail correspondence has been received by the Mayor and members of the City Commission. Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns.

Devonia L. Andrew  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor

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**From:** robert jerome [mailto:jerome\_202@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 7:41 AM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Subject:** To all commissioners

There must be a language problem in City Hall because it seems no one hears us saying NO NEW TAXES be it Fire Fees or that ugly backdoor tax from raised GRU rates!!!!!! You have a list of things that can be cut out if you have an income shortfall and not one thing on that list is so valuable that it cannot be cut, so cut away and STOP raising our taxes with fees and GRU rate increases. We are being taxed to death in this City and you must bite the bullet and start cutting things that are not needed and that includes raises to yourselves and fellow City employees! How can you, in good faith, give yourselves a one time bonus in view of decreased revenue? Those of us on fixed incomes don't have that luxury of being able to increase our income but still have to shell out for services that are not needed via ingenious ways, contrived by you folks to pick our pockets! STOP SPENDING OUR MONEY ON ANYTHING THAT IS NON ESSENTIAL! R. Jerome

**Young, Shaneka**

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**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2008 7:41 AM  
**To:** citycomm  
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7/16/2008

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Susan McGee [mcgeeslm@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 11:17 PM  
**To:** Mastrodicasa, Jeanna  
**Subject:** fire TAX

Along with many other church members, I am strongly opposed to the new fire assessment "fee" that is merely another three letter word for TAX. It's one thing to assess (isn't that what a tax is--an assessment) homeowners, but to assess (TAX) churches is constitutionally not allowed. The church I attend is constantly providing housing and food for homeless families, allowing it's facilities to be used by many groups for conferences, meetings and social events, and through its members provides volunteers throughout the community, and we all pay taxes. PLEASE, please reconsider this unfortunate decision. This is just not the way to make up lost funds. I would even think this could be the basis for a class action lawsuit--it's nothing more than a TAX and all of you on the commission know it!

Susan M. McGee

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Driggers, Kathlene S. on behalf of Northcutt, William K.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 11:09 AM  
**To:** Donovan, John F. - Commissioner  
**Subject:** Accepted: Updated: CANCELED-Proposed Fire Assessment

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Driggers, Kathlene S.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 11:09 AM  
**To:** Donovan, John F. - Commissioner  
**Subject:** Accepted: Updated: CANCELED-Proposed Fire Assessment

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Williams, Constance N. on behalf of Rountree, Becky L.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 9:42 AM  
**To:** Donovan, John F. - Commissioner  
**Subject:** Accepted: Updated: CANCELED-Proposed Fire Assessment



**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Harris, Helen J. on behalf of Folkers, Paul E.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 9:38 AM  
**To:** Donovan, John F. - Commissioner  
**Subject:** Accepted: Updated: CANCELED-Proposed Fire Assessment

**Young, Shaneka**

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**From:** Harris, Helen J.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 9:38 AM  
**To:** Donovan, John F. - Commissioner  
**Subject:** Accepted: Updated: CANCELED-Proposed Fire Assessment

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 9:29 AM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Subject:** FW: Fire Assessment

FYI

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**From:** Young, Shaneka  
**Sent:** Monday, July 07, 2008 9:13 AM  
**To:** Andrew, Devonia L.; Brown, Neomia B.  
**Subject:** Fire Assessment

Good Morning Ladies,

A citizen called, Jean Fox, 377-7934, she wanted the Mayor and the Commissioners to know that she is in favor of the fire assessment tax. She thinks that everyone should pay their share. Please contact her.

Thank You,

*Shaneka R. Young*

**Shaneka R. Young**  
**Executive Assistant Senior**  
**Office of the Clerk of the Commission**  
**352-334-5015 phone**  
**352-334-2036 fax**

## Young, Shaneka

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**From:** Andrew, Devonia L.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 03, 2008 9:55 AM  
**To:** citycomm  
**Cc:** citymgr; Folkers, Paul E.; Harris, Helen J.  
**Subject:** Mayor letter to President Machen re: fire services

**Attachments:** 22139.pdf



22139.pdf (6 MB)

-----Original Message-----

From: service2@ci.gainesville.fl.us [mailto:service2@ci.gainesville.fl.us]  
Sent: Thursday, July 03, 2008 10:47 AM  
To: Andrew, Devonia L.  
Subject: Attached image data.

This is image data from the scanner.



# City of Gainesville

Pegeen Hanrahan, Mayor

June 30, 2008

President J. Bernard Machen  
University of Florida  
Post Office Box 113150  
Gainesville, FL 32611

Dear President Machen:

*Bernie*

On June 23, 2008, the Gainesville City Commission received an update on the status of the City's negotiations with the University of Florida seeking compensation for the continuing provision of fire services. A copy of the agenda item and back-up material is attached.

The City Commission has adopted an enabling ordinance and proposed a special assessment for fire services on improved property in the City to provide dedicated funding for this core City service. A special assessment would insulate fire services from substantial budget reductions and allow the City to maintain and selectively enhance fire services to address community needs. A special assessment must provide a benefit to property and be fairly and reasonably apportioned among the properties receiving benefit. The fire assessment would be imposed on property owned by tax exempt non-profit entities such as places of religious assembly.

The City Commission and I seek your assistance in resolving a community problem. The City has provided fire services to the University for many years without compensation. The City could not in good conscience impose a special assessment on our residents, businesses and non-profit organizations without pursuing reimbursement from the University as one of the largest beneficiaries of the City's fire services. As you know, there are other public universities in our state that do pay such fees.

We propose entering into an agreement with the University providing for an annual fire fee that would compensate the City for the value of fire services provided. This value has been determined by the City's consultant using the same data and methodology used to develop the fire assessment rates for the City. The total value of fire services provided to the University was identified as \$2,911,255. The City Commission requested that I send you the attached proposal as the basis of an agreement for a fire fee. The proposal provides for a phase-in of the fee over a period of four years in acknowledgment of the financial challenges facing the University.

I can assure you that the City Commission and I are very concerned about current budget reductions at the University. These reductions negatively impact the University and the City in many ways. Although the timing could be better, this issue does require immediate attention. We believe a reasonable agreement can be reached if the University concurs that reimbursing the City for the fire services it receives is a fair and appropriate course of action. We are eager to work jointly with you to make the case to key decision makers at the state level that there is a need for the University to make efforts to address this critical need.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Pegeen Hanrahan  
Mayor