



Legislation Text

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Transition Study for Alachua County Fire Station 19 (B)

This item requests that the Gainesville City Commission and Alachua County Board of County Commissioners jointly hear a presentation regarding the transition of fire and rescue services in the area currently served by Alachua County Fire Station 19.

ESTIMATED STAFF PRESENTATION TIME 20 MINUTES

Fire and rescue services to the City of Gainesville (City) and a portion of Alachua County (County) surrounding the City are provided by Gainesville Fire Rescue (GFR) and Alachua Fire Rescue (ACFR) under automatic aid guidelines established in the Fire Services Assistance Agreement (FSAA) entered into by the City and the County on October 10, 2006.

On June 1, 2009, the City annexed property from the County around SW 20th Avenue, which included ACFR Station 19. Since then, ACFR has continued to provide fire and rescue services with one fire engine at Station 19. Engine 19 provides fire and rescue services in the city limits of Gainesville; the area of Alachua County adjacent to Gainesville within the FSAA boundary; and inside the county boundary outside of the FSAA. The cost for services to the City is determined by the net amount of responses by each agency into each other's jurisdiction within the FSAA boundary as described in the FSAA method of payment. ACFR also operates one rescue transport unit out of Station 19. There is not an associated cost to the City for responses by this unit.

As a result of the annexation, the amount of calls for service provided by the County to the City has increased and the amount of calls for service from the City to the County has decreased. This has generated an increased cost to the City with the majority of County fire rescue services being provided to the City by Engine 19. In FY08, the net reimbursement to the City was \$289,759; in FY09 after the annexation, the net reimbursement to the City dropped to \$17,557. The payment to the City for each full fiscal year following the annexation has been: FY10 \$469,538; FY11 \$568,938; FY12 \$379,780; and FY13 \$387,460.

On October 3, 2013, the City Commission heard a presentation from GFR Fire Chief Gene Prince on proposals for the transition of fire and rescue services in the area currently served by Station 19. The Fire Chief's recommendation at that time was for the City to activate a second squad unit to provide services in the city limits portion of the Station 19 service area. City staff also recommended that the City Commission engage the County Commission in a discussion on the transition of services in the Station 19 area, including possible City acquisition of Station 19. After receiving the presentation, the City Commission directed staff to continue developing the plan to activate a squad unit in the service area, but to not implement the plan until a joint meeting between the two Commissions could be held.

Net cost or benefit to the City or County will be determined by the method of transition.

The City Commission: 1) receive a report from the City Manager and the Fire Chief for providing services in the SW 20th Avenue area; and 2) request that the County Commission provide direction to County staff to

finalize a plan for the transition of fire-rescue services with City staff by March 1, 2014.