

Item Title: Memorandum of Understanding between the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs and Wake County for Participation in the Volunteer Workforce Solutions Technical Assistance Program

Specific Action Requested:
That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Accepts the 2020 Volunteer Workforce Solutions Technical Assistance grant; and**
- 2. Authorizes the Chair and County Manager to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs and Wake County for participation in the Volunteer Workforce Solutions Technical Assistance program subject to terms and conditions acceptable to the County Attorney.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: The purpose of this item is to request authorization for Wake County Fire Services to participate in a technical assistance program to improve volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention within the county.

Background: The North Carolina Fire Chiefs Association (NCAFC) has offered a technical assistance grant opportunity for fire departments throughout North Carolina to participate in a volunteer recruitment and retention program, Volunteer Workforce Solutions. The fire service in unincorporated Wake County is heavily volunteer based, with approximately 443 current volunteers answering emergency calls for service. By volunteering their time, these individuals provide an invaluable cost-savings to the community.

Although Wake County has improved the retaining and recruiting of volunteers, many fire departments are still struggling in these areas. This opportunity will provide Wake County fire departments with tools to identify how to improve volunteer recruitment rates, as well as, develop strategies to increase volunteer retention. Wake County Fire Services participated in a similar program in 2018.

The requested authorization shall apply only to the award of service technical assistance for 2020.

Board Goal: This request directly supports the Board's Public Safety initiative, PS4.1: Implement best practices for volunteer recruiting, retention, and utilization in emergency services

Fiscal Impact: This is a no cost, service only grant. Wake County will not receive any monetary funding, and there are no marching requirements.

Additional Information:

This technical assistance program is being supported by a FEMA SAFER grant to the NCAFC and has a two-year period of performance. If the Volunteer Workforce Solutions program is accepted, Wake County volunteer fire departments will receive assistance, through the NCAFC, in developing volunteer recruitment and retention strategies, a GIS Tapestry report, which will identify the demographic areas to target for volunteer recruitment efforts, customizable recruitment materials and multimedia support. These efforts will be directed and supported by the Wake County Fire Commission's Volunteer Recruitment and Retention subcommittee.

Attachments:

1. Memorandum of Understanding, North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs
2. North Carolina Volunteer Workforce Solutions Fact Sheet