



FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

Provision and Funding Methods Presentation

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES PRESENTATION

Objectives

- Summarize the Current of Method of Providing Fire and Rescue Services
- Summarize the Current Funding Method of Fire and Rescue Services
- Clarify that no change to the Method of Providing Fire and Rescue Services is being considered (County is not considering a County Fire Department) or change to fire department response district currently.
- Discuss Funding Options available under State law
- Answer questions and take written comments/input from citizens

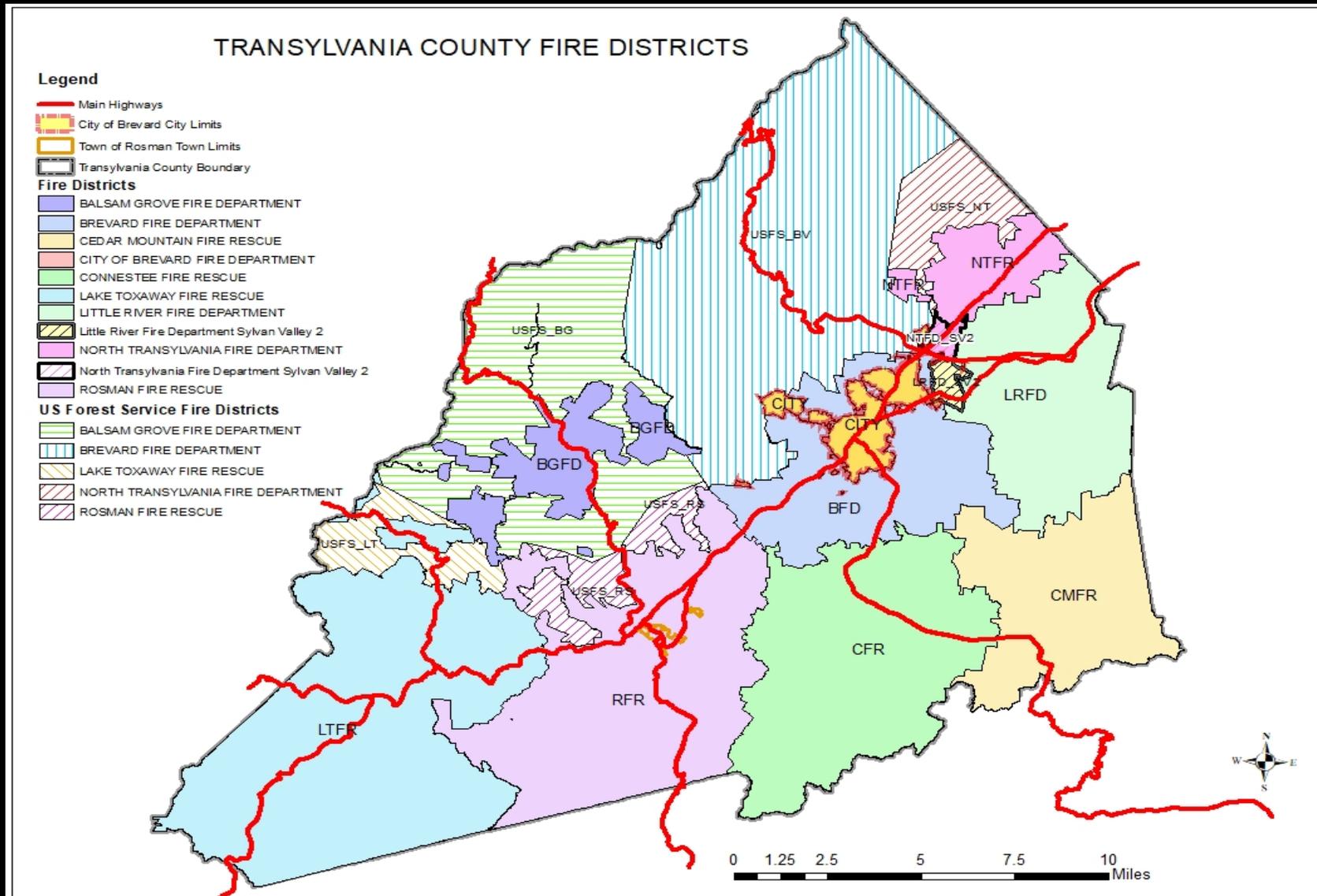
WE WANT YOUR INPUT

- County staff distributed 2 different color cards: One card is for questions, the other for comments.
- As County staff presents, please feel free to write down any questions or comments. At completion of presentation, County staff will read the question and provide an answer to citizens in attendance.
- All questions and answers will be documented and shared at subsequent presentations as well as shared with the BOC and available to the public.
- All comments will be documented and shared with BOC and available to the public
- You are welcome to include your name and address in the question or comment but it is not required. Staff will not read name when addressing the question but will share name with BOC in the documentation

CURRENT METHOD OF PROVIDING FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

- A Service District is essentially a special tax district for providing funding for a specified service (in this case fire protection services).
- County contracts with independent private non-profit fire departments to provide fire protection and specified rescue services within response districts. For the most part, response districts are contiguous with service district lines. However, in the Sylvan Valley 2 district, the County contracts with 3 fire departments that cover response districts inside the service district lines.
- 8 Fire Service Districts established under G.S. 153A for fire protection in Transylvania County: Established by Resolution by the BOC: In most cases, the service tax district also serves as the response district.
- Each Volunteer Fire Department is a separate non-profit organization
- Some fire departments have other funding sources in addition to the service district tax.

CURRENT DISTRICTS (NO CHANGE PLANNED TO RESPONSE DISTRICTS AT THIS TIME)



CURRENT METHOD OF PROVIDING FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES -CONTINUED

- The contract between the County and Fire Department outlines minimum standards
- Fire departments respond to request for service dispatched by Transylvania County Organized Central Dispatch using pre-determined dispatch protocols
- These include automatic mutual-aid from adjacent and other fire departments (meaning: each fire department is dependent on other fire departments for responses; this includes personnel needs, equipment needs and requirements to meet insurance rating standards).
- While they are independent, they cannot operate autonomously

CURRENT METHOD OF PROVIDING FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES -CONTINUED

- The fire department insurance ratings and operational capabilities are dependent on automatic mutual aid agreements
- In addition to fire protection, fire departments provide medical first response and rescue services. The level of rescue services and medical first aid differs between departments
- The Transylvania County Rescue Squad, Brevard Unit serves to provide support to fire departments as well as primary provider of medical first response in the City of Brevard and Brevard Fire Department Sylvan Valley 2 District. The Squad also serves as primary rescue provider in Sylvan Valley 2 District
- All but one fire department currently has some form of paid staffing. Number of paid staff and paid staff hours differs between departments

CURRENT FUNDING METHOD OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

- Fire Departments, through their department board of directors, submit a budget request annually to the Board of Commissioners through the County staff
- Fire Department budget requests are reviewed by County staff, then meetings between County staff and fire department boards/chiefs to discuss budget requests are scheduled
- Staff puts together an annual budget request package for each fire department and submits it to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.
- The Board of Commissioners review budget requests, ask questions as necessary, and approves a final budget necessary for department to meet contract (in some cases this is not the full department budget).

CURRENT FUNDING METHOD OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – CONTINUED

- Once fire department budgets are approved, the Board of Commissioners determine the funding method including setting a fire tax rate in each district and/or utilization of other revenues to fund fire protection (During the 2020 fiscal year budget, the BOC set all fire tax rates at 5.5 cents/100 valuation and funded remaining balance of approved fire department budgets from County fund balance) Next two slides demonstrates FY2018 through FY2020 fire district tax rate.
- The responsibility for determining appropriate fire department funding and method used to fund lies with the County Board of Commissioners
- In recent years there has been a significant disparity in the fire tax rate across the county

FIRE TAX RATE COMPARISON FY18 & FY19

FY2018 Fire Budget Data

District	Budget	Tax rate
Sylvan 2	\$476,000	5.50 cents
Rosman	\$524,904	11.59 cents
Little River	\$451,994	9.11 cents
Connestee	\$707,212	7.67 cents
Cedar Mtn.	\$194,000	13.78 cents
Lake Toxaway	\$780,343	4.79 cents
Balsam Grove	\$97,277	10.98 cents
North Trans.	\$157,200	12.79 cents

FY2019 Fire Budget Data

District	Budget	Tax Rate
Sylvan 2	\$480,000	5.50 cents
Rosman	\$554,125	12.09 cents
Little River	\$457,230	9.06 cents
Connestee	\$782,258	8.33 cents
Cedar Mtn.	\$193,100	13.76 cents
Lake Toxaway	\$892,786	5.44 cents
Balsam Grove	\$100,207	11.18 cents
North Trans.	\$174,543	14.00 cents

Notice Budget Amount v/s Tax Rate.
Tax bill on average \$200,000 home in one district nearly 4x higher than another district.
Rate does not include the Grant from the General Fund to NT of \$102,112 without grant fire tax rate would have been 23.39cents

FY2020 FIRE BUDGET DATA

District	Budget	Tax Rate	Rate Change	Revenue from Fire Tax	\$Fund Balance	Rate W/O FB Grant
Sylvan 2	\$488,730	5.5cents	0.00cent	\$488,730	\$0.0	5.5cents
Rosman	\$664,925	5.5cents	8.81cents	\$255,566	\$409,359	14.31cents
Little River	\$532,110	5.5cents	4.56cents	\$282,666	\$249,444	10.06cents
Connestee	\$796,350	5.5cents	2.82cents	\$526,181	\$270,169	8.32cents
Cedar Mtn.	\$193,100	5.5cents	8.22cents	\$77,381	\$115,719	13.72cents
Lake Tox.	\$892,609	5.5cents	0.12cent	\$892,609	\$0.0	5.38cents
Balsam Gr.	\$100,207	5.5cents	5.70cents	\$49,554	\$50,653	11.12cents
North Trans.	\$271,151	5.5cents	15.89cents	\$69,714	\$201,437	21.39cents

Not Sustainable Grant funds from savings.

FIRE TAX RATE COMPARISON

District A

Fire tax rate = 21.39 cents/\$100*



Valuation = \$200,000

Fire tax bill = \$427.80

District B

Fire tax rate = 5.38 cents/\$100*



Valuation = \$200,000

Fire tax bill = \$107.60

***Based on 2020 valuation, budgets, and collection rate**

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES PRESENTATION

Fire Funding Options

The Board of Commissioners are authorized to fund fire protection utilizing:

General Property Tax Revenues

Special Property Tax Districts (i.e. Rural Fire Protection District under G.S. Chapter 69; or Fire and/or Rescue Service District under G.S. 153A)

Combination of these funding options

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES PRESENTATION

Service District (Countywide)

- Special Tax District for Fire and Rescue Services
- Established under G.S. 153A-301 and 153A-302
- Identify proposed district (working with City of Brevard and Town of Rosman)
- Estimated Fire Tax Rate in proposed district using FY2020 valuation, FY2020 budget request and service districts area would have been 8.14 cents. (The rate is dependent on property valuation in service district, total approved budgets and collections rate)
- Abolish current Service Tax Districts
- Utilize current Service Tax Districts as fire department response districts

FIRE TAX RATE COMPARISON

District A

Fire tax rate = 8.14 cents/\$100*



Valuation = \$200,000

Fire tax bill = \$162.80

District B

Fire tax rate = 8.14 cents/\$100*



Valuation = \$200,000

Fire tax bill = \$162.80

***Estimate based on 2020 valuation, budgets, and collection rate**

THANK YOU

If you have any additional questions or comments after tonight, you can contact us using one of the methods below.

- fireinput@tconc.org
- 828.884.3108 Ext. 301