

Week of January 12, 2009:

- **The Nags Head property sale has closed.** The closing was completed this afternoon at 3:00 pm and the \$6,700,000 has been wired to the County's account. We will send the Hospital's share to them on Tuesday.
- We have completed our United Way Campaign and the total amount that was pledged was **\$8,385**. Thanks to all of the employees that contributed to this year's campaign.
- I have attended two meetings this week regarding Mental Health. The first meeting was at the Community Care Clinic with Dr. Hunter Thompson and Phil Donahue. The Community Care Clinic provides a lot of the drugs for indigent patients of Albemarle Mental Health. The second meeting was a Mental Health Board meeting in Edenton on Wednesday. I presented the proposal from the ten counties for a joint meeting with the Board, staff and State officials to discuss how Mental Health services will be provided in the future. The meeting has been confirmed for January 22nd at 6:00 pm in the cafeteria on the COA campus in Edenton.
- I attended the Emergency Management Exercise that was held at Corinth Baptist Church on Wednesday. Seven counties participated in the exercise and we split up into 3 groups. Each group was given a scenario to discuss as a group and then as a whole. Funding for the exercise was provided by Homeland Security. I would like to thank Christy Saunders and Rebecca Christenbury for helping to organize the exercise.
- I attended the DRS ribbon-cutting today at the new hangar. This new facility will not only generate additional tax base but also 100 new jobs which are especially needed in this economy. The CEO of DRS was on hand for the ceremony as well as Rep. Bill Owens. Congratulations to Jeff Berry and the local DRS team for a job well done.
- Attached is the most recent Medicaid report. We had a spike in Medicaid costs for December, but it appears that all counties had a similar spike so there could have been an additional check run for the month. We are still well below the budgeted amount for the year to date.
- The new lights for the old Middle School were installed this week. The Board approved the lights at Monday's meeting. The Maintenance and Parks & Recreation staffs have been working in the gym this week to identify issues that need to be corrected so that the gym can be opened to the public. We will schedule a meeting with the special committee that was formed to provide a full report.
- I received a notice today from Ramona Gilbert that the Homelessness Coalition has contacted the Sheriff's Department and the Police Department and let them know that they have made arrangements with a local motel to house any homeless person that they find out tonight due to the extreme cold that is expected.
- All county offices will be closed on Monday in observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. The convenience sites will be open for their normal schedule.

The following are reports from some of our other departments:

Clerk to the Board:

The December numbers for the NACo Prescription Drug Discount Card Program are almost 20% higher than November's numbers. A total of 268 individuals saved \$12,596.54 on 1,149 prescriptions, compared to a savings of \$10,524.14 on 963 prescriptions in November. The average price savings was \$10.96 per prescription. I suspect that part of the increase is due to some Medicare Part D recipients reaching their "donut hole" during the month of December and using the discount card when they have not needed to previously. Since we implemented the program on July 1, 2008 Pasquotank County residents who have used the prescription discount card have saved a total of \$56,868.48 off the retail price of their prescriptions.

Cooperative Extension:

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Steps to Health Program at Virginia Dare and Harriot Heights – 28 participants

Session at the Pregnancy Crisis Center for 33 participants – Three Basics to Money Management

Albemarle We Can Program at Mt. Lebanon for 8 participants

Albemarle ECA – 3 participants

Helped 4 seniors with Medicare Part D

20 participants took advantage of classes held at the Parents Resource Center

Held a class for ESMMWL at the School Administration office for 10 participants

11 classes were held at different day care centers for 124 youth on the ESMM initiative

Breastfeeding collaborated with Currituck and Pasquotank WIC offices for referrals

2 home visits, 1 office visit and 10 duration calls were made to participants in the Breastfeeding program

AGRICULTURE

2 Master Gardener Classes were held

We had the 2nd place state winner in soybean yields

Soybean posters were collected from the area elementary schools in preparation for the annual soybean festival

EFNEP made 5 home visits on Feeding Infants and Checking Food Labels

EFNEP collaborated with the Camden WIC office recruiting program participants and saw 11 clients.

4-H

Kids in the Garden was held at Sheep Harney and Pasquotank Elementary for 6 different classes

Taught 5 groups in the after school program at Sheep Harney and Weeksville Elementary

OTHER

The first livestock judging team meeting of the year was held with 20 members present, discussed upcoming events and fundraising ideas.

Attended a District Advisory Meeting with 2 county representatives where Dr. Ort, Director of Extension was present speaking on the economy and the state's budget.

Goat production meeting was held for participants in the surrounding counties.

Volunteer Fire Department Coordinator:

Annual Fire Report for 2008

These are a few of the highlights and activities that have occurred with the volunteer fire departments during the past year.

Nixonton had their front ramp repaired and resurfaced. Replacement of the 1984 pumper/tanker at Nixonton has to be delayed due to the economic situation. The truck committee had done all preparations but the economy has caused the bid process to be put off for now.

Weeksville received their new tanker truck and it was put into service. The mini-pumper that was supposed to be built by American LaFrance had to be changed to Alexis Fire Equipment after American LaFrance filed for bankruptcy. The new truck is still scheduled for delivery in April. A new lighted helipad was constructed behind the Weeksville Fire Station with \$5,000 grant money from AgCarolina. Unfortunately it has had to be used for emergencies on several occasions.

Providence received their new breathing air compressor purchased with money from a \$40,000 FEMA grant plus some county funding and department money. This compressor is available to service all county and neighboring county departments with breathing air for many years to come. The old compressor was not designed to fill the new air bottles at the higher pressures and had to be replaced.

Newland received \$3,780 from the Fish and Wildlife Grant. The money they received was used to purchase equipment needed for fighting woods fires. The state fire grant allowed them to purchase the pump and tank for a brush fire truck however they have not been able to make the purchase of a truck to carry it. Money was in short supply by the end of the year. The Newland Fire Station was enlarged during the year. An addition of one more truck bay was added on the back of the station to house the older tanker truck which must remain in service to handle brush fires for now.

Training in Blood Borne Pathogens and Hazardous Materials was made available to all departments during the year. There was also Incident Management training available through Homeland Security. Some 14 officers and personnel took the 18 hour course. The class should be offered again in 2009 for those who missed the first class.

Standard Operating Guidelines were established for department operations during hurricanes. The guidelines provide a uniform safety standard by which departments will respond to incidents during a hurricane and when response should be stopped due to personnel safety.

Two of the departments were inspected by the State Department of Insurance during the year. The inspection establishes the fire insurance rating for the department's response district. Both departments were down in points in such areas as training, not having enough equipment, inadequate personnel and equipment response. Both departments have been working on corrective measures and will be re-inspected in 2009. Hopefully the departments will meet all the requirements to maintain their current ratings when the re-inspection takes place.

Fortunately there was only one fire fighter injury and one civilian injury in fires during the year. That's an improvement over the 2007 five fire fighters and one civilian injury.

Here is a summary of fire and training reports for each department for December and for the year 2008.

Nixonton for December:

- 1 Vehicle accident
- 1 Call cancelled enroute
- 1 Vehicle accident with injuries
- 1 Smoke scare
- 2 Structure fires
- 31 man hours on incidents
- 67 man hours on training (there were 932 man hours of training for all 2008)

Nixonton incidents for the year 2008:

- 30 Fires of all types
- 18 Incidents involving injuries
- 15 Hazardous condition incidents
- 38 Good intent calls (such as smoke scares, etc)
- 6 False alarms
- 107 Total calls for 2008 (compared to 95 calls for 2007)

Weeksville for December:

2 Vehicle accidents
1 Controlled burn
1 Medical incident
1 Mobile home fire
1 Medical assist
1 Shed fire
1 Smoke scare
1 False alarm unintentional
86 man hours on incidents
40 man hours on training (1256 man hours of training in 2008)

Weeksville incidents for the year 2008:

37 Fires of all types
24 Incidents involving injuries
16 Hazardous condition incidents
9 Service calls
27 Good intent calls (such as smoke scares, etc.)
15 False alarms
123 Total Calls for 2008 (compared to 116 calls for 2007)

Providence for December:

1 Vehicle accident
1 Electrical call
3 Vehicle accidents with injuries
1 Brush fire
2 False alarms unintentional
114 man hours on incidents
153 man hours on training (2493 man hours of training for 2008)

Providence incidents for the year 2008:

28 Fires of all types
29 Incidents involving injuries
20 Hazardous condition incidents
3 Service calls
27 Good intent calls (such as smoke scares, etc.)
23 False alarms
2 Severe weather incidents
132 Total calls for 2008 (compared to 163 for 2007)

Newland for December:

3 Vehicle accidents
1 Call cancelled enroute
2 Electrical calls
1 EMS assist
1 Alarm system malfunction
1 False alarm
63 man hours on incidents
21 man hours on training (1103 man hours of training for 2008)

Newland incidents for the year 2008:

36 Fires of all types
27 Incidents involving injuries
29 Hazardous condition incidents
3 Service calls
37 Good intent calls (such as smoke scares, etc.)

11 False alarms

140 Total calls for 2008 (compared to 145 for 2007)

Looking ahead for 2009 and the next fiscal year, I have kept the chiefs informed of the situation with the budget and told them the next fiscal year they may have to tighten their belts. However there are important items that will be needed in the next budget. The departments will have to begin the change to the newer narrow band capable radios. Some of their current radios are compatible but not all. The complete changeover must be made by 2012. To avoid a large lump sum cost, I have encouraged the departments to purchase a few radios each year for the next 3 years. Motorola will need 2011 to make the changeover of all radios to the new frequency requirements. If they put them in the state fire grant, the cost will be half.

In addition to radios there is the cost to regularly test air packs and bottles as required. The departments must also regularly purchase such items as several sets of turnout gear on an annual basis to make sure older ones are rotated out of service. All turnout gear degrades when subjected to sunlight and repeated exposure to fire and other products. They need to be rotated out of service every 5 to 6 years depending on exposure. Departments are realizing they will need to begin purchasing some fire hose annually. Hose purchased back in the 80's when their department began is beginning to deteriorate and will not pass hose testing. A few purchased each year will avoid a one time large cost.

Lastly the economy has prevented the timely replacement of aging fire trucks. The planned 20 year replacement schedule of trucks was an excellent plan. However we are behind now with both the Nixonton 1984 and Weeksville 1985 trucks still in use and over 20 years old. If those two can be replaced all equipment will be under 20 years old until 2015. Unfortunately the next trucks will be even more expensive due to more safety requirements established by EPA and NFPA. I hope we can return to this plan as soon as our budget situation permits.

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