WAKE FOREST FIRE DEPARTMENT
FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS
September, 2019
Who Is EnviroSafe?

- North Carolina management consulting firm headquartered in Burlington since 1996.
- Focused on crisis, risk and fire management services for both government and industry.
- Approximately twenty full time staff, over 100 adjunct staff.
- Priority placed on relationships.

- **UNC System provider since 2010 for all 17 UNC campuses; NCICU provider for all 36 campuses.**
- **NC League of Municipalities sole fire consulting services provider since December, 2018.**
EnviroSafe is a North Carolina Full Service Fire Consulting Provider

Illustrative professional fire management services from EnviroSafe include:

- Strategic Planning
- Service Delivery Needs Analysis
- Standards of Coverage Analysis
- Contract Development and Facilitation
- Fire District Transition
- Transition of Private, Non-Profit Fire Department to Municipal Fire Department
- Fire Station Placement
- Fire Chief Selection and Promotional Processes
- Human Resource Assistance
- Professional Development, Mentoring and Coaching
- Human Resource Based Causation Analysis
- Interim Chief Fire Officer Leadership
- Fire Apparatus Evaluation and Fire Station Facility Analysis
- Capital Improvement Plan Review and Analysis
- Emergency Operations Post Incident Analysis
EnviroSafe Fire Management Assistance to North Carolina Local Governments
Fire Management
Core Team Capability

David Bullins
Wes Greene
Mike Varnell
Fire Management Adjunct Subject Matter Expert Staff for the Wake Forest Project

- **Human Resources** – Kristi Kjeldsen (Charlotte), Andy Sannipoli (Durham), Dr. Josh Smith (Statesville)

- **Capital Resources** – Ken Newell (Gastonia), Tommy Millikan (Greensboro), Tammy Isaacs (Snow Camp), Erica Gibbert (Charlotte)

- **Operational Impacts** – Ian Toms (Raleigh), Todd Tuttle (Stokesdale), Baxter Miller (Salisbury), Robert McNally (Charlotte), Jay Howell (Nahunta), AC Daniels (Castalia)

- **Fiscal Feasibility** – Nelsie Birch, Ben Durant (Durham)

Also, we had great support from the professional staff of the Town of Wake Forest and the Wake Forest Fire Department.
This work is based on an important concept...
Strategic Analysis is Dynamic

“Change is the law of life. Those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”

—President John F. Kennedy
Data is Absolutely Essential
Process and Goals

**PROCESS:**
- Third-Party, Independent Analysis.
- Five Core Components:
  - Stakeholder, Human Resources, Capital, Operations, Financial
- Collaboration between Town and fire department.

**GOALS:**
- Observations and Recommendations.
- Identify essential steps for implementation.
Purpose:

- This **independent**, third party, comprehensive analysis of the Wake Forest Fire Department is designed to **empower** the Wake Forest Fire Department Board of Directors and the Town of Wake Forest elected officials with **information** to make **responsible, long-term decisions** that are in the best interest of **protecting and serving** the people of Wake Forest, North Carolina.
Key Stakeholder Input:

- Town of Wake Forest Board of Commissioners
- Wake Forest Fire Department Board of Directors
- Wake Forest Career Firefighters
- Wake Forest Volunteer Firefighters
Stakeholder Input – Governing Boards

**STRENGTHS:**
- High Service Level
- Professionalism
- Pride

**GAPS:**
- Lack of participation in NCLGERS
- High turnover
- Lack of support staff
- Low levels of diversity

**CONCERNS:**
- Costs of unification
Stakeholder Input - Firefighters

**STRENGTHS:**
- Quality of Personnel
- Family Culture
- Pride
- Commitment to Training
- Aggressive Firefighting Tactics
- Having Meaningful Input

**GAPS:**
- Lack of Ability to participate in NCLGERS
- Recruitment and Retention
- Apparatus Maintenance
- Internal Communication
- Voids of Organizational Structure

**CONCERNS:**
- Process
- Additional requirements and restrictions of municipality
Human Resources:

- **Step Pay Plan** – current and enhancement.
- **FLSA 7(k) Exemption** for Firefighters.
- Town’s **Compensation Study** slated for fall, 2019.
- Analysis and alignment of **benefits** and incentives.
- Special **Separation Allowance** for Firefighters.

- North Carolina Local Government Employee Retirement System (**NCLGERS**):
  - State requires a minimum of five years of credible service in the system.
  - Awareness level training provided for Wake Forest Firefighters as part of this initiative.
For effective transition, EnviroSafe created a comprehensive employee “Crosswalk” for each employee to assess compensation, benefits between WFFD and TOWF as well as to use in constructing fiscal projections.
Capital Resources:

• **FACILITIES:**
  - Specialized Architect, OSHA Specialist
  - Overall, well maintained.
  - Some modifications needed at Station 1.
  - Concerns with Station 5.

• **APPARATUS:**
  - Mechanical Specialist, Equipment Specialist
  - 30% in Excellent Condition
  - 39% in Good Condition
  - 8% in Fair Condition
  - 23% in Poor Condition
The Capital Improvement Plan would need to include:

- Replacing a ladder truck (currently in progress)
- Renovation/expansion to Fire Station 2 (in progress)
- At least three (3) replacement fire engines
- Replacement self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)
Operational Considerations:

• **Growth:**
  - Strong growth in the Town is bolstering the workload for the fire department – **38% increase** in call volume from FY 13/14 through FY 17/18.

• **Current Standard of Coverage:**
  - For **90%** of all typical residential structure fire incidents, the Wake Forest Fire Department is providing at least one apparatus with at least four (4) adequately trained firefighters arriving within eight (8) minutes total response time and is prepared to take immediate action in accordance with department protocols.
Operational Considerations:

- WFFD is confining the fire to the **room of origin** 60% of the time on structure fires. This is credible performance.

- **Staffing levels** need attention. A minimum of 17 firefighters is identified within national standards for a typical, single family, residential house fire.

  - Higher hazards, such as apartments identify a minimum of 27 firefighters.

- Recommend continuing to utilize **Station 5** as a volunteer station and re-deploying part-time personnel to other Wake Forest stations with concurrence from Wake County.
Fiscal Analysis:

- First, recognize that the realistic cost of **Firefighter turnover** is high.

- **Recruitment and retention** are real issues to address for successful sustainability of the fire department.

- Operating the fire department as a part of Town Government will be **more expensive**:
  
  - Firefighter pay scale and benefits
  
  - Apparatus maintenance and capital replacement
  
  - Support costs – estimated at $359,535 over two fiscal years
  
  - Net projected increase of $988,970 for FY 20-21

  ➢ Total impact on the Town budget would be approximately 3 cents on the Town tax rate.
Next Steps:

- **Recommendations for improvement** are provided in the report.

- The report is issued as a **final draft** to allow for review and minor clarification as necessary, with the final report issued before September 17, 2019.

- **Timing is of the essence** with only about nine (9) months until a FY 20-21 implementation.

- A joint, designated **transition team** will be important for the success of the initiative.
Next Steps:

- Presentation to both Boards – September 3, 2019 (tonight).
- Decision by the Fire Department Board of Directors.
- September 17 Follow Up with Town Board.
- If the decision is made to move forward – begin the transition team work in early October, 2019. Less than 9 months to implement many measures for a successful outcome.
Questions:

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Town of Wake Forest!
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