

- May 24, 2017: The FEMS Board addressed and approved a series of proposals regarding which annual operating expenses could be considered for annual donation funds. The FEMS Board also expressed concerns with CIP funding, particularly with regard to procurement rules, legal issues and oversight and management of projects. Given the concerns, the FEMS Board asked that it be provided all of FY 18 to investigate possible solutions for inclusion in the FY 21 budget process.
- August 23, 2017: After the July 12, 2017 meeting, ACFR staff informed FEMS of the direction to create a proposed policy. FEMS members raised concerns regarding ownership of assets over time as well as interaction with FES on Capital Maintenance and Improvement projects. (Attach FEMS Board August minutes) ACFR staff used this feedback while working with FES and OMB staff to outline a Capital Maintenance and Improvement policy.

What are the express concerns regarding utilization of county funds for large-scale maintenance (items over \$20,000 AND with a 5+ year life cycle) and improvement?

- Does County funding come with requirements? What are the implications of working these requirements through Volunteer Board and membership approval process to manage project.
- The bureaucracy and timeliness of working with County government
- General fund revenue should be placed in a separate Volunteer Fire Rescue fund, available only to the Volunteer Stations through a separate volunteer CIP process managed by FEMS.
- County ownership of building. County's interest is in protecting asset – ensuring it is properly maintained etc. Are those agreements acceptable to FEMS?
- Is there somewhere in between the County writing a blank check and the County owning the building that makes people comfortable?
- What don't we know? What's it going to cost us? Who is the mediator of whether or not the "strings attached" are reasonable – i.e. does the agency have to absorb the cost of resealing a parking lot replaced by the County as often as the County determines?

What role would the FEMS board like to see from the county Facility and Environmental Services Department? *This is the department that manages all other county building projects.*

- Management can be a headache and it would be nice for the County to take that over, assuming it's timely and expectations are in black and white. Nice to be able to control timing once the money is available
- Reasonable expectation that projects would be funded
- Want all the requirements and expectations in black and white so everyone knows what is expected. The money would be nice, but we want to know what it is going to cost us
- If an agency wants to pay for their own building costs, they should be willing to do that. But if they seek funding from the County, there is an expectation that going through the County managing the project – procurement process, FES management, etc. Written documentation of what to expect when you deal with FES.
- Who has the say-so of what goes in the building? Does FES control the brand, the gauge of the roof, etc.

- Is there freedom for stations to upgrade with their own funds similar to apparatus replacement?
- Desire for FEMS board to have an active role in establishing minimum specs/parameters established by FEMS. Can we get a mediator to work with FEMS and FES to work out differences of opinion on what can and can't be accomplished with the project.

What role does the financial stability (and assets) of your organization have in gaining access to CIP funds?

- Should liquid assets be considered in the CIP process or should everyone be treated equally?
- We would need to define tipping point and what tips? Liquid assets? Near-liquid assets? % of operating budget?
- Hardship process – any agency could apply for no-interest loan but they had to submit paperwork to determine hardship. How do members feel about cash on hand and assets being considered?
- If you look at cash on hand/assets, you'd have to also look at planned spending down the road – restricted assets/restricted accounts.
- It's understandable for the County to want financial information, but we would need to define what exactly the County is looking at what exactly the tipping points would be?
- Fund drives become harder if people think their tax dollars are paying for – liquid assets are primarily donated funds. What are you raising money for if maintenance for buildings are covered?
- Summary: there should be understood parameters around it, but it is reasonable that the County should look at some documentation on financial standing of organization – audits, cash on hand, assets, planned spending, etc. Agencies should have opportunity to provide editorial comment to let County know if money is restricted/obligated.
- Middle requests/maintenance (page 2?) County should consider reasonably for volunteer agencies without regard to balance sheets/financial health of organization, similar to operating budget.

What does all of this mean for CARS? Do they get partial funding? Do we work with City?

Pilot project:

- Crozet parking lot
 - At any point can people back out? Contracts/expectations/strings will be worked out before we go too far down the path to stop.
- December 13, 2017: A work session was held with the FEMS Board pm December 13, 2017 to outline the concepts of the proposed policy change. FEMS Board members expressed concerns with autonomy on projects as well as their ability to turn down funding. Members are raised questions as to a volunteer organization's ability to add funds to a project to provide for upgrades in materials or equipment. Further amendments and clarifications were made to the proposed policy based on this commentary.

- January 24, 2018: The FEMS Board's input was sought on what was the final outline of the policy. FEMS Board members continued to express concerns with the possible increase in County involvement and oversight in projects. Members were asked to identify their opinions on the proposal in writing. There was a general consensus among FEMS members that a continuation of building assessments, along with an annual donation of funds to address items in the assessment was an acceptable change to the policy. The following are specific concerns:
 - Charlottesville Albemarle Rescue Squad –
 - My only concern is that the assessments should reflect whether the facility remains suitable for its purpose. The previous facility assessment only looked at repairing existing systems. If, for example, the bay doors are too low to fit a county standard ambulance inside the bay, the assessment needs to highlight these deficiencies.
 - East Rivanna Volunteer Fire Company–
 - *They indicated support with no written comment.*
 - North Garden Volunteer Fire Company–
 - I have a major concern with FES taking lead/control/managing CIP funds.
 - I need to fully understand the role of FES vs. the volunteer stations.
 - Earlysville Volunteer Fire Company –
 - Concerns with FES taking the lead determining scope and budget. Feel that it may be better to look outside for possible cheaper/better alternatives. OK with them being involved concerning oversight with current county procurement policies.
 - Crozet Volunteer Fire Department –
 - My concern with the process is that FES will not take into account our thoughts of our needs. And that they will go with the lowest bid. My second concern is follow up with issues during and after the project is complete.
 - Western Albemarle Rescue Squad –
 - Stations should maintain sovereign oversight of all projects. No FES on any level.
 - Accountability needed for annual operating maintenance donations, especially for critical items.
 - Scottsville Volunteer Rescue Squad –
 - Questions or concerns about how much or how little FES is involved with large projects. Large projects if FES is involved the process of station involvement and how much decision making abilities will be left to the station and not left solely to FES. If passes I would support the plan as long as FES works with the chief or designated person representing the chief on any decisions affecting station fixtures, building or property.
 - Scottsville Volunteer Fire Company
 - Do not wish to participate in the CIP Process and FES involvement. I think the building inspection every 4 years is a good idea. And the annual operations maintenance donation could help with fixing issues found during these inspections. Do not wish to be forced to fix an issue found during the inspections down the road.
 - Seminole Trail Volunteer Fire Company –
 - Don't want FES involved in building issues, county code mandated items should be covered by FES or County i.e. sprinklers, elevators.