

The Board of: Riceville Volunteer Fire Department
Met at: 6:30PM
On: Monday, August 17, 2026
For: Regular Board Meeting
Moderator: Dan Little (Chairperson)
Members Present: Lee Barrett, Merel Johnson, Butch Laughter,
Lisa McCallister, Carla McLendon, Mark Siler and
Steve Wickham
Not Present: Kent Creasman (Family Obligation)
Guest(s):

1. **Call the Meeting to Order:** Dan Little called the meeting to order at 6:32PM.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer:** Dan Little opened the meeting in prayer and then asked everyone to stand if able and join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Draft minutes for the July 20 Regular and Executive Session meetings were emailed to the Board on August 6. Lee Barrett made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written. Mark Siler seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** Financial reports for the month ending July 2026 were emailed to the Board on August 14. Katie Payne explained Sales Tax (Line Item 4101) is received from the County three months after it is collected. The Sales Tax for April was received in July, and we should receive the last of these payments for May and June in August and September, respectively. Katie relayed end-of-year reconciliation by the County showed they collected more in Sales Tax than projected, so the Department received an additional payment in the amount of \$37,000 today.

As Katie Payne relayed last month, the Department received its first Flat Tax payment from the County on July 15 (Line Item 4100). The amount received did equal 1/12 of the total amount the County said the Department would receive annually.

Katie Payne explained Line Item 4219, FEMA Income, is for waterproofing some of the doors.

Merel Johnson made a motion to accept the July financials. Lee Barrett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

5. **Fire Chief's Report:** The Fire Chief's and Training Reports were emailed to the Board on August 14.

Assistant Chief McEntire gave an overview of the Training Report, which included 1757.50 total training hours for January 1 through August 8, 2026. All medical certified members are compliant with the online portion of the required 2026 Protocol Update and continue to work on the hands-on portion, which must be completed by August 31, 2026. There are potential changes coming to EMS CE due to requirements to provide monthly rather than quarterly training opportunities. The Training House Burn has been

set for Saturday, October 17. The Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) and Volunteer Firefighters' Insurance Services (VFIS) are working on changes to the Driver Program due to the number of accidents state-wide.

Chief Kelly relayed there was nothing to report in regard to FLSE and then provided an overview of his report, noting Total Calls were up slightly (139 in July; 118 in June) and Overlapping Calls were down (21/19% in July; 28/23% in June). At 86%, the Department is above the County average for IVs. The average fire response time was 11:06 minutes; EMS was 10:52 minutes. Two grants are in process, one for personnel and one for equipment.

6. Old Business:

A. Administrative Policies Review Committee – No update at this time.

B. Building Repairs Update (Door Replacements) – Chief Kelly relayed the engineering company initially contacted about this project has responded this is not something they do. He has contacted both NC Emergency Management (NCEM) and FEMA to see if they can provide a list of recommended vendors.

Lisa McCallister noted there was a story on the news about the Waynesville Fire Department and their remediation efforts. Chief Kelly said he has spoken with the Chief and Deputy Chief and their needs (change in door elevation) seem to differ from ours. Lisa recommended reaching out to the person who was in the news story, who was with the Facilities Department for the City or County of Waynesville. She also recommended contacting someone regarding the flood remediation efforts put in place at the building across from Wendy's in Biltmore.

In response to a question, Chief Kelly relayed it is possible the funding received from FEMA would have to be returned if the project is not addressed. The completion date set by NCEM and FEMA is March 2027. Chief Kelly has directions on how to request an extension through the associated portal.

C. Engine 11-3 Purchase – Katie Payne relayed there is no update at this time. In response to a question, Dan Little relayed this truck would be a 4WD to replace the 4WD pumper and would be designed for urban interface.

D. TAC 11 Repairs – Dan Little continued to try and contact the person he had been told was proficient in electrical work. He has not received a call back from that person, even though he has called him no less than 20 times over the past month. To replace the wiring harness in the vehicle would be very expensive. Dan relayed if he does not hear back from the person he has been trying to contact by next month's meeting, he will most like recommend disposing of the vehicle "as is" and moving on.

E. UTV/ATV Policy – Katie Payne relayed there is no feedback from Management Solutions for Emergency Services (MSFES) to report at this time regarding combining this policy with Department Policy A-20, Apparatus and Privately-Owned Vehicle (POV) Operation.

F. New TAC Truck Purchase – Assistant Chief McEntire relayed the order was placed on July 21; a truck was secured on July 22; all other components were ordered within a week; and the truck was at the dealership (Brooks Public Safety) last week. An invitation has been extended for Department personnel to come on site and see the truck now, with the finished product expected in about six weeks. The specifications (color, et al) are in keeping with that recommended by the Committee, and the cost came in less than the amount approved by the Board last month.

7. New Business:

Board Member Application – Election of Board Members will take place at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for Monday, October 12, 2026. Three members are slated to rotate off the Board (Butch Laughter, Dan Little and Steve Wickham). Butch and Steve are eligible to serve another term if interested and elected. In accordance with Department Bylaws Section 3.3, Terms of the Members of the Board of Directors, Dan is not eligible to serve unless no one is nominated to fill his seat.

Department Bylaws Section 3.4, Election of Board of Directors, outlines the process for submitting an application, which will be accepted from August 28 through September 12, 2026. Chief Kelly was asked to post this information on the Department's website no later than Monday, August 24. Carla McLendon will email him the wording recommended for use last year.

8. Announcements: The next Regular Meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, September 21, 2026 at 6:30PM.

9. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

10. Executive Session: Merel Johnson made a motion to move to Executive Session for legal and personnel matters at 7:15PM. Mark Siler seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:25PM.

11. Adjournment: Lee Barrett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25PM. Merel Johnson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.