

Heather Finnell

From: Carlton Pittman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 3:22 PM
To: Alan Holden; Commissioner Dyer; Keith Smith; Tom Myers; Sylvia Pate
Cc: Steve Barger; Tim Evans; Heather Finnell; Bryan Chadwick; Christy Ferguson
Subject: Re: Public Comment - Budget Meeting May 1 2026

Timing is everything.

There is a front page article in the printed version of the *Brunswick Beacon* we just delivered today, noting increases in fire fees requested by the county fire chiefs to the county board, who approved it.

25% cap for 2026-2027, and 50% for 2027-2028 if I read it correctly.

We need to move forward with the island fire station please.

Carlton

On 4/29/2026 2:22 PM, Carlton Pittman wrote:

2026/2027 Budget

Fire Station

In September 2025, the board passed a motion to add new fire station to the Capital Improvement Plan for the 2027/2028 budget. As it is now budget time, it is time to task staff to look for funding for a new fire station, as well as seek architectural design and engineering work for a new fire station on the island.

There is no greater obligation for elected officials than public safety.

It is time for the board to address public safety as a TOP PRIORITY ASAP.

This should be THE NUMBER ONE priority for the town now that the renovation of sewer lift station 2 is complete.

It has been two plus years since the Tri-County Fire Chief approached the town asking for the fire station on the island to either be renovated or replaced so that it could be staffed year-round. Chief Todd noted that he would be responsible for hiring firefighters to man the building, not the Town of Holden Beach.

Fire Chief Todd's update and Q & A from the April 12, 2024 board meeting from about 5 minutes until about 42 minutes. Please watch/listen - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fmNkP8M2mM>

Highlights –

- • Island fire station manned from roughly May 1st until September 30 from 7am-7pm. Per the town's contract with Tri-Beach, staff CANNOT be in the building after 10pm.
- • This includes the water rescue boat which is otherwise located at the fire station on Sabbath Home
- • 2010 calls to island - 73
- • 2023 numbers from Chief Todd – 218 calls to the island; 145 overlapping calls, and over 1000 calls in their coverage area.
- • Saturday and Sunday - busiest days for island calls
- • Busiest times – 8am-8pm
- • Contract with Tri-Beach was last updated in 2003.
- • 32 minute mark – **historically most island structure fires are at night**
- ○ When crews arrive, the fires are already **BEYOND CONTAINMENT**.

Since this April 2024 board meeting, there have been at least:

- **6** agenda items in board meetings for a new pavilion for summer concerts;
- **18** agenda items in board meetings for Block Q;
- over **20** agenda items in board meetings for the pier;
- **ONE** agenda item for the fire station in board meetings in over two years.

The **lone** agenda item in a board meeting for the fire station in the 2 years is the presentation by Tim Evans on at the August 19, 2025 board meeting - <https://www.youtube.com/live/2njy28ZGbio>

Tim's presentation runs from about the 2:08 minute mark until 2:46 mark.

PLEASE watch Tim's presentation again.

The slides for Tim's presentation start about page 38 in the meeting agenda - <https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/33823a15-c1dd-4855-8231-e746e7f3f203/downloads/9003f494-607f-4d12-b0ba-650bd9d27e8b/BOCAug25.pdf?ver=1777338998230>

Both Building Inspector Evans and Fire Chief Todd have given compelling comments to move forward ASAP with a new fire station on island. The County has not yet moved forward with a new fire funding paradigm. The Town cannot wait for the County, to proceed with fire protection and a new fire station on Holden Beach.

I asked Director Evans after a recent meeting, how many new homes are on the island on average, year over year the last several years. Tim stated at most all times, there are 25 new houses being constructed. One is completed, another new build begins. Tim guessed that we have 50-60 new houses on the island every year recently. (Please feel free to verify with Tim.)

The town has been through two different engineering firms, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in engineering work and consultation for the pier. **It is time to re-prioritize public safety over amenities.**

The pier is an AMENITY. Block Q development is an AMENITY. Nothing more. We NEED a new fire station. We don't NEED a pier to continue to be a successful thriving town.

Please move forward with all speed to replace the fire station on the island.

If you made it this far again, thank you for your time.

Carlton Pittman

144 Tarpon Drive