

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
ROWAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
NOVEMBER 15, 1999 – 7:00 P.M.
CENTENARY FIRE STATION**

PRESENT: J. Newton Cohen, Chairman
Frank Tadlock, Vice-Chairman
Steve Blount, Member
Arnold Chamberlain, Member
Dave Rowland, Member

The County Manager, Clerk to the Board, and the County Attorney were also present.

Chairman Cohen reconvened the Board at 7:00 p.m. at the Centenary Fire Station.

**PUBLIC HEARING: MERGE CENTENARY AND MT. ULLA SERVICE
DISTRICTS:**

Randall Faggart, Rowan County Fire Marshall, gave an overview of the reasons leading to the request to combine the Centenary and Mt. Ulla-Bear Poplar Service Districts to provide fire protection for these proposed areas. Mr. Faggart explained to the Board the manpower problems which exist. Centenary could not keep a sufficient number of volunteers to meet the state requirements, but as a substation of a larger department, it would be able to satisfy these requirements. Mr. Faggart indicated the tax for the new district will likely be 5 cents per \$100 valuation, the rate for Mount Ulla, Centenary's rate is currently 7 cents. Commissioners will set the rate during the budget process.

Chairman Cohen opened the public hearing.

There were three present who chose to speak:

- 1) Sam Allred, a member of the Centenary Board of Directors and a property owner, addressed the board expressing that although this is a tough change to make, the merger will provide the best way to give people the proper service, which is what they deserve. As a property owner he mentioned that there would be a tax break of 5 cents versus the 7 cents which is the current rate for the Centenary district. He expressed the pride he has in the ownership in this merger and that a new name for the Department would be a step in the right direction.
- 2) Tim Wilhelm, Board of Directors with the Cleveland Fire Department, addressed the board informing them that on November 4, 1999 their Board of Directors voted unanimously to retain the name of West Rowan Fire District on the official insurance papers.

Responding to Chairman Cohen's question concerning the name of the district, Mr. Faggart explained that it is up to the Corporation to actually name the insurance district and the action taken by the Cleveland Fire Department would not prevent Mt. Ulla and Centenary from naming the new department West Rowan Volunteer Fire Department.

- 3) Kenneth Goforth, Chairman of the Board for Mt. Ulla Fire Department, addressed the board that they were going to do what the word “volunteer” means and serve the people. He stated that there is no opposition to the merger from the volunteers and that there is no reason not to go ahead with the merger. He asked the Commissioners to consider this merger faithfully in that this is the right thing to do.

There being no further comments, Chairman Cohen declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Rowland made a motion to approve combining the Centenary and Mt Ulla-Bear Poplar Service Districts. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Cohen adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rita K. Foil,
Clerk to the Board