

Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District

Budget Workshop

August 18, 2011

The budget workshop of the Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District was held at the Microtel Inn and Suites, 1320 Business Way, Lehigh Acres, FL. The workshop was opened at 1:23pm by Chairman Berndt. Present were: Commissioners Adams, Becker, Berndt, and Shea; Chief Don Adams, Assistant Chief Bennett, Captain's Ketron and McDowell, Finance Manager Ben VanKlingeren and Adm. Ass't. Platas.

Chief stated at the last meeting we went through the budget line by line. Chief stated Commissioner Carter asked that Commissioners cut \$2,000,000 out of the 2011/2012 budget, but with no suggestions of where or how.

Unemployment – we currently pay per claim. We would potentially have the option to get into the state to pay a premium. You pay 2.7% of wages up to \$7,000 for each employee.

Land tax - The only tax we pay is the East County Water assessment.

Legal Fees – The amount in the line item was a concern. Commissioner Shea finds these attorney fees excessive. Commissioner Berndt states we can shrink it down to nothing and pay the bill later...or we can leave the number in there and probably come in under budget. Money is set aside for what it can potentially cost us for labor relations. Commissioner Shea doesn't believe general council should be involved in negotiations.

Commissioner Shea recommends would be to enter in to a legal services agreement with the labor attorney for 100 hours of services and set aside and if you need more time, come back to the Board for more time. Commissioner Shea stated we are not going to be spending legal fees on the Fire Assessment Fee, therefore, he feels Commissioners can strike the portion of legal fees off that line. Commissioner Adams stated this issue is on tonight's Agenda.

Group Insurance – came in higher than anticipated. A \$15,000 adjustment needs to be made.

Capital – Commissioner Shea doesn't understand why the reserves that are unspecified are not going into the general fund.

Commissioner Adams questioned 3319. It was determined to place \$5000 in 3319 and \$5000 in 3321.

3495 – Commissioner Adams questioned why such a drop. Chief stated it used to include CERT items, but now the grant covers that.

3394 – Chief stated this line was in case the Board went forth with the Fire Assessment Fee.

3491 – Chief stated that due to the economy, we cut out items. It's been reduced down to the essentials.

Commissioner Shea questioned what the cost is for the turnover for SAFER employees.

Consensus:

3450 – General Insurance increasing \$15000, because we received a renewal estimate

3312 – Legal – eliminating \$40,000 potentially based tonight's meeting. This is a caveat

3319 –Miscellaneous - increase by \$5000

3321 – Professional Service Fees - increase by \$2000

3494 – caveat \$160,000 depending on tonight's meeting.

Check into the Unemployment Fee issue.