

**RESOLUTION NO. 20-09-04**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE LEHIGH ACRES FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE DISTRICT, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ANNOUNCING AN INTITAL BLUEPRINT OR PLAN TO IMPLEMENT AND CULTIVATE FURTHER THE TRUST PROVIDED BY DISTRICT PROPERTY OWNERS AND ELECTORS ON AUGUST 18, 2020; PROVIDING FOR POLICY DIRECTION; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR LIBERAL CONSTRUCTION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of the Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District ("District") has determined to responsibly and transparently accept the trust provided by District property owners as electors on August 18, 2020; and herby takes and directs prompt, prudent and deliberate actions to further cultivate and earn such trust and goodwill by example; and,

**WHEREAS**, this Resolution provides for immediate and elemental steps, action, direction and authorization to be better, and better serve.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEHIGH ACRES FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, THAT:**

**SECTION 1. INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; FINDINGS**

1. The recitals and determinations set forth above and herein have been ascertained, determined and declared by the Board and form a part of this Resolution.

2. This Resolution is consistent with the determinations and findings contained in Resolution 20-04-01 calling for the August 18, 2020 Referendum, Resolution 20-04-02 addressing the Short and Long Term Financial Sustainability of the District, in Resolution 20-06-02 Addressing Community-Oriented Exemptions, in Resolution 20-08-01 Announcing and Providing for Better Assessment Procedures, and

in Resolution 20-09-01 providing for the Initial Annual Imposition of the Simplified Non-Ad Valorem Assessment Approach for the upcoming Fiscal Year.

3. The Board of Commissioners continues to learn every day in this process borne of necessity to serve with inadequate resources, and expresses gratitude to the community and property owners in the District for patience, the goodwill and good-natured trust in this transformation. The blueprint or plan attached shares and reflects a common understanding of 5 essential stewardship points or steps that are appropriate to take the best advantage of an opportunity for a new beginning – now with adequate resources for the District and the Lehigh Acres community.

## **SECTION 2. BLUEPRINT 2020**

1. Organizations tend to perform better when they articulate a plan and work a plan. This is merely an elemental and transparent initial stewardship directive or plan designed to give direction and authorization from a governing body to the administrators and those who carry out the mission of an organization. Of course, this blueprint or plan will likely evolve and change, as all learn and encounter facts and circumstances that merit further review. Attached is a first-year 5 point new beginning; it initially involves several common-sense steps or elements and sub parts to immediately share a sense of stewardship focus to this organization and to be better conscious of the overall community, county and state in which the District serves and must be aware -- both short term and long term. To start with 5 elements, all to be addressed promptly:

- Act (keep working diligently with focus)
- Plan (for the future)
- Communicate (we are not an island)

- Introspection (we can do better; let's learn about ourselves)
- Education (let's make sure we inform and share what we are and what we are doing)

2. Attached as EXHIBIT 1 is an initial stewardship plan outlined with further explanation and subparts. The initial plan is incorporated herein by reference. It is intended as a guide from this Board for all in the District to follow toward positive implementation of a transition to a new beginning, and better relations, accountability, and service. The District as local governments go, is a small special purpose local government which has been underfunded for several years -- with a big service mission covering a very big unincorporated area. The expected changes will not materialize overnight. But this plan is a good natured, positive beginning, that starts immediately with direction from this Board.

### **SECTION 3. AUTHORITY**

The Board of Commissioners is authorized to adopt this Resolution by Florida law.

### **SECTION 4. SCRIVENER'S ERRORS**

The Board intends that all sections of this Resolution which contain typographical errors which do not affect the intent of this Resolution can be administratively corrected by the authorization of the Fire Chief, or such person's designee, without the requirement of having a corrected Resolution adopted by the Board.

### **SECTION 5. CONFLICT**

Any provision of any District Resolution which is in conflict with the provisions of this Resolution is repealed prospectively to the extent of such conflict.

**SECTION 6. LIBERAL CONSTRUCTION**

The terms and provisions of this Resolution shall be liberally construed to affect the purpose for which it is adopted.

**SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY.**

If any portion of this Resolution is for any reason held or declared to be unconstitutional, invalid or void, such holding shall not affect the remaining portions of this Resolution. If this Resolution shall be held to be inapplicable to any person or circumstances, such holding shall not affect the applicability of this Resolution to any other person or circumstances.

**SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Resolution shall take effect upon the adoption of this Resolution by the Board of Commissioners of the Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District.

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Commissioner Carter, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett, and being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Commissioner Catherine (Cathy) Kruse	_____	aye
Commissioner Debra Cunningham	_____	aye
Commissioner Linda Carter	_____	aye
Commissioner Robert Bennett	_____	aye
Commissioner Lucia Sherman		Not Present

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED on the 29th day of September, 2020.

(Seal)

**LEHIGH ACRES FIRE CONTROL  
AND RESCUE DISTRICT**

ATTEST:



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Catherine (Cathy) Kruse, Chair

  
Lucia Sherman, Treasurer/Secretary

**EXHIBIT 1  
BLUEPRINT 2020 - AN INITIAL STEWARDSHIP PLAN**

Five (5) elements or action steps, all to be addressed promptly:

- **Act (keep working diligently with focus)**
  - **Plan (for the future)**
  - **Communicate (we are not an island)**
  - **Introspection (we can do better; let's learn about ourselves)**
  - **Education (let's make sure we inform and share what we are and what we are doing)**
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STEP 1 - Act. (Keep working like crazy to serve) Implement a new budget, refine it as needed; and immediately focus on getting station 106 online, equipped and staffed in location ASAP THIS FALL!

STEP 2 - Plan. (The goal is to assess, evaluate, build, equip and staff 4-6 fire stations over the next decade -- plan for the future - NOW!). Develop, update and refine a master plan for the next 7-10 years, within the next 6-9 months.

STEP 3 - Communicate. (We are not an island) Take the initiative; communicate and work to actively let our stakeholders know we want to engage, listen, evaluate, and then respond and interact for the better — our District has been underfunded for some time, and this is a new beginning. Our stakeholders Include, in no order of importance:

- Our local Legislative Delegation
- Our County Manager and BOCCs

- Our County Sheriff
- Our local hospitals and elder care providers
- Our local School Board, principals, teachers and parents
- Our labor force
- FEMA
- Our local infrastructure district (LAMSID), and water utility (FGUA)
- And always, our community and property owners and community leaders (including, but not limited to, our Churches and faith-based groups, chamber of commerce/business and service organizations; community groups; leaders in the development, building and land/lot investors groups, and local media outlets).

STEP 4 - Introspection. (We can do better - and must reflect and learn about ourselves) We only need to figuratively take a deep breath; our core is sound, but has been diminished for several years. But this District must get right back to work on the 'big' picture on October 1) Again, take the initiative immediately, to evaluate how to best honor the community's trust to employ a better simplified funding approach. Over the next 4-6 months we will start with:

- Seeking focused independent financial and performance audit advice and input on how to be and

become a better provider and special purpose local government, and further encourage excellence.

- Looking at cultivating and leveraging fiscal, physical, and human assets; look for smart savings opportunities to do more with less in order to address deficiencies that have built up over the years; and, consider how to better leverage and invest in these assets as well.
- Incentivizing and investing in existing and new employees to become residents of our community.
- Working to create a stronger organizational consciousness in the conduct District affairs; and look for methods and means to better cooperate and encourage smart growth and better service in our community.

STEP 5 - Education. (Let's make sure we share and inform who we are, why and how we serve, and that we always stand ready to respond.)

- As a District, we must continue to always be ready to serve with fire protection and emergency rescue and medical services — but the job does not end there. Going forward, we have learned we must be better at educating and informing our community about what their fire district does and does not do, what it really



takes to perform with excellence, and how that fits into the fabric of Lehigh Acres. Simply stated, we are at a new horizon and must educate better.

- This District must now allocate and employ resources to better, more frequently and continually educate and inform residents, businesses and property owners and tenants about the positive value of quality fire control and emergency rescue medical services availability.