



**SOUTHERN SHORES
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

February 14, 2017

Dear Members of the Town Council,

Approximately one year ago, I began discussions with the Town staff about the Fire Department's need for an updated facility and what options we could explore to make it happen. Possible financing and site location options were all discussed with Town staff several times. Over the following months, I presented the content of those discussions at several committee meetings for further discussion with your members. I subsequently began to brief you, as a Council, last summer and informed you that the Fire Department had funded a facility needs assessment to be conducted by a reputable architectural firm experienced in designing institutional buildings, especially for municipal fire departments in eastern North Carolina. Based on that completed study, it is evident the Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department needs a modernized and up to date facility if it is going to keep meeting the fire protection needs of the Town of Southern Shores. A modern facility would aid in maintaining the volunteer staff and is needed to protect the safety of our membership. As I have stated many times before, safety is my number one priority as Chief. I take our members health and safety very personally and consider them as part of my own family. The volunteer system is, without a doubt, the most cost effective way to provide emergency services for the town. It is my belief that we, as leaders in the community, must do everything in our power to preserve and cultivate an environment that will perpetuate the volunteer system. As Chief, it is my responsibility to provide the Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department Board of Directors and our customers with the information necessary make sure the department is prepared to provide the best service possible for our community 10, 20, 30 years in to the future. If for any reason we were unable to continue with the volunteers and had to hire a staff, the station must be able to accommodate that staff. Currently, we would be unable to do this. I understand this is a decision that should not be taken lightly, however, I believe in my heart this is absolutely the right thing to do for the Town of Southern Shores and its residents.

The Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department has now made a formal request to you as a Town Council to consider committing financial support for a modern fire station, serving the Town's fire protection needs. Site location, layouts, and basic size options have been investigated and presented to you. In order to proceed, the Fire Department needs a commitment from the Town Council to support this initiative financially. The next step is for the architect to complete the Schematic Design

Phase which takes the project through rendering drawings. The public will be included in this process in order to select an acceptable and appropriate design for a modern building. The Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department has already funded the first portion of the Schematic Design Phase in the amount of \$17,000 for the complete facility assessment and needs study. Approximately \$40,000 more is needed to complete the Schematic Design Phase. In order to commence the remainder of that phase, the architect would need to know the cost and size the Town Council is willing to build.

There is no higher calling than serving the public, be it as Fire Chief, Police Chief or in your role as members of Council. Ensuring the safety and security of our citizens is a job that we must take very seriously; it must be our highest priority. Public safety has always been my passion; I hold myself and our crew to the highest standard possible and would not be asking you to consider this request unless I truly believed it was absolutely necessary. As you as individuals consider this prior to you March 7th meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time to discuss any aspect of the Fire Department's request to the Council.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Limbacher, Chief
Southern Shores Fire Department