

Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department

Overview

11/1/16





Our Mission

*It shall be the mission of the Southern Shores Fire Department to provide the highest quality service to the communities we are entrusted to serve. **Preservation of life, property and incident stabilization** through courage and dedication shall be our greatest priority. Throughout any event our members will be caring and empathetic to all of our citizens. We will go above and beyond in every situation to bring about the best possible resolution.*



Ed Limbacher, Chief SSVFD



History

- The Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department incorporated in 1982, with the station located at 28 East Dogwood. This Station was originally part of the rural Colington fire district. It was given to Kitty Hawk when they broke away and finally became the Southern Shores East Station in 1982.
- In 1988 the Southern Shores South Station(across from KHES) was built on land donated by the Kitty Hawk Land Company. It was completed in 1989 and currently serves as the Department's headquarters for operations.
- The Department has consistently improved since its incorporation. As of 2015, our current ISO rating is a Protection Class 3.



Corporate Structure

- Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department is a not for profit 501C corporation that contracts directly with its customers to provide fire and emergency services.
 - Other than the contract, TOSS and Dare County have no direct authority over the corporation, operations, or members.
- Fire Services Real Estate is a second not for profit 501C corporation which is a subsidiary company that holds the major assets (land, buildings) of Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department.



Customer Relationships

- SSVFD has two primary customers:
 - The Town of Southern Shores
 - SSVFD has supported TOSS for 34 years since its inception in 1982.
 - Dare County – Martin’s Point
 - SSVFD has supported Dare County for 32 years since January 13, 1984.
- Mutual Aid: Across various counties
 - Provides for the return of mutual aid in the event of an emergency within the district.
 - Helps aid in the staffing challenges at times due to the volunteer nature of the business.



Finances

- SSVFD operates on an “open book” and transparent basis with its customers by providing yearly audits for their review.
- Long-term contracts allow the SSVFD to service debt, purchase high-value fixed assets, and train its members while maintaining consistency over extended periods of time.
- SSVFD is highly cost efficient versus. a paid Fire Department
 - Annual operating cost savings to TOSS and Martins Point tax payers is estimated at \$1 million per year.



Financial Snapshot

		Budget	
Income			
	REVENUE DARE COUNTY	103,315.00	17%
	REVENUE SOUTHERN SHORES	476,880.00	77%
	SPECIAL INCOME	1.00	
Total Income		620,196.00	
Expense			
	OPERATING SUPPLIES	38,850.00	
	UTILITIES	14,200.00	
	PEOPLE COSTS	218,000.00	
	COMMUNITY	9,500.00	
	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	41,185.00	
	FEES & SERVICE CHARGES	1,400.00	
	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	45,600.00	
	CAPITAL EQUIPMENT	70,269.00	
	DEBT SERVICE	141,192.00	
Total Expense		620,196.00	
Net Income		0.00	



Members

- The department has 42 active members which is enough to service the town
 - Full time Fire Chief – only paid firefighter
 - 2 part time administrative specialists
 - 26 males (62%) and 17 females (38%)
 - Average age of 48
- Recruiting for a volunteer system is becoming more challenging
 - Increased regulation by the government
 - More challenging training requirements
 - Economic reasons - two income households
 - Personal reasons - family commitments
 - Demographic changes in the community
 - Less retirees
 - Inability to respond due to employment commitments





Real Estate Assets

SSVFD currently operates two stations in Southern Shores

- Headquarters – 15 South Dogwood Trail
 - Main location where all operational activities take place
 - 30,000 sq. ft. lot
 - 2 large bays for equipment
 - 7,872 finished sq. ft. for equipment, office, training, etc
 - Tax values: Building and Land - \$719,900
- East Station – 28 East Dogwood Trail
 - Non operational / storage only for SSVFD and space provided for Dare EMS Station 4
 - 1 large equipment bay and 2 smaller bays
 - 27,000 sq. ft. lot
 - 4,091 finished sq. ft. (50% Dare EMS)
 - Tax values: Building and Land - \$636,100



Other Assets

Below is a list of equipment purchased or scheduled to be purchased(replaced) to ensure quality fire protection and maintain out current ISO protection class:

- (2) 2009 Peirce PUC Engines purchase in 2009 for \$1.1M/CV \$750K
- 2001 American LeFrance 65 ft. aerial ladder purchased in 2001 for \$375K/CV\$100K
 - Set to be replaced in 2018-19 budget
- 2005 KME Rescue Engine purchase in 2005 for \$285K/CV \$130K
- 2008 Chevy 4500 - Rehab vehicle purchased in 2008 for \$144K/CV \$80K
- Thermal imaging cameras \$55K. Budgeted for replacement (2017-18 Budget) TIC's that have reached their useful life.
- Self Contained Breathing Apparatus \$260K. Replacing(2017-18 Budget) SCBA's that are approaching the end of their usable life.
- Gas meters purchased in 2016 for \$7K. Replaced aging meters that reached the end of their usable life.
- In many cases in the past the Department has had to approach its customers to pay over and above for a particular expense (The 800 radios, apparatus).



Services Provided

- The SSVFD call volume has increased by 43% since 2007 with an increasing share of those calls for Emergency Services versus Fire Calls
 - 2015 - 628 (69% EMS) calls versus 2007 - 439(60% EMS)
 - Now averaging 12 calls per week
 - There have been very few fully involved structure fires in Southern Shores and Martins Point as the SSVFD has been able to get on scene and mitigate them
 - We are always prepared for the worst but hope for the best
- Our Department answers a wide range of calls
 - Structure fires, vehicle accidents, vehicle fires, brush fires, alarms, EMS calls, and service calls (anything and everything)
 - When people don't know what to do or who to call they call the fire department!
 - Unfortunately, or fortunately, with an aging population the service calls occur quite often



Key Challenges Facing the Department

1. Recruiting and maintaining a fully staffed, all-volunteer organization
2. Steadily rising call counts
3. Rising operational costs
4. Aging facilities that don't meet the needs of a modern fire department
5. Maintaining the ***highest level of safety*** for our volunteer members



Challenges SSVFD is Facing with Facilities

1. **Two buildings in two different locations drives inefficiency and cost.**

- Due to the size of TOSS, one location meets our requirements.
- 28 East Dogwood is primarily used for storage and housing Dare EMS.
- We need all equipment to be located in one station for regular use, care, and maintenance.
- One location lowers operating / maintenance costs and improve our efficiency.

2. **Both buildings are aging and require substantial investment to support major repairs.**

- Built in 1988, 15 South Dogwood does not meet local, state, and federal codes including American's with Disabilities Act Accessibility and the North Carolina Building Code.
- The roof is leaking and the structure floods, causing mold inside the building.
- The mechanical systems (heating, ventilation, plumbing and electrical) are original to the building and near the end of their useful life.

3. **Buildings are undersized and can't meet the needs of a modern fire department**

- Bays are too small and equipment can barely fit in them. All fire trucks must be backed in as we don't have dual sided bays.
- Space is not large enough to store our equipment indoors, reducing their usable life and our ability to service them.
- Need more parking space during emergency incidents and training events.
- There is no proper decontamination area for employees after Emergency Fire/Medical event.
- The current living conditions for the Dare EMS stationed at 28 East Dogwood are not acceptable.
- Need better training space for firefighters.
- Desire to become Disaster Preparedness Center.



Plan to Address Our Challenges

- Begin development of a long range plan to address our needs – Pat Regan to lead.
- Commissioned a “Needs Study” to be completed by Stewart-Cooper-Newell from Gastonia, NC to clarify operational and engineering needs and identify mitigating solutions.
- Work with Town/County officials and the citizens of Southern Shores and Martin's Point, Dare County to understand our needs and build consensus around the plan to address them.