

Riverwood Farm Community – HOA Meeting

August 18, 2014, 6:00 pm

Present:

Ted Higginbotham, Matt Cardone, Tim Griggs, Linda McCaleb

The HOA was grateful to host the following members from the Greer Police Department and the Greer Fire Department:

- Chief Dan Reynolds – (10 yrs with Greer PD). Served 30+ yrs in Savannah PD.
- Sgt. Richardson – (15 yrs with Greer PD). Local
- Roman Wilson – (7 yrs with Greer PD). Night shift patrol supervisor.
- Dale Hall – Volunteer Member of the Citizens Police Academy. Offers free classes in the spring and fall.
- Captain Matt Hamby – (21 yrs with Greer PD).
- Deputy Marshall Howell – (10 yrs with Greer FD)

Fire Department:

The following questions were asked by residents of the neighborhood and were answered by Deputy Marshall Howell from the Greer Fire Department.

- **Which fire departments are first responders?**
 - Pelham (Hwy 14)/Batesville and Boiling Springs are dispatched in addition to Greer FD on Pointsett. On the day of the fire, all of the Greer equipment was participating in a training exercise nearby. The initial truck arrived to RWF within 6 minutes. On the way over, Pelham / Batesville was dispatched. The fire was originally classified as a grass fire. The smoke on Dillard Rd. made the circumstances difficult to see where the fire actually was. After setting up for the structure fire on Brightmore, it was noticed that the house behind the townhouse was also on fire. At that time, it was noticed that 3 structures on Calmwater were also in danger. 3 additional engines responded to fight the fires on Calmwater. It was a perfect storm with low humidity, 25/30 mph winds, pine straw and dry Bermuda grass.
 - Worst fire damage (\$1.5 million) in the history of Greer FD district.
- **Could the ignition source (cigarette butt) be used to find and prosecute the person who threw the butt?**
 - The evidence is not clear enough to determine for sure that that particular butt was the ignition source. Also, there is a small chance that the correct DNA would be able to be extracted from the butt.
- **Has the Greer FD changed its procedures since this incident?**
 - They are working to refine some of their dispatch policies, in order to maximize response time.
 - The FD was 6 minutes into the response before they got word that there were any structures in danger of catching fire.
 - It was not a Red Flag status at the time of the fire. The SC Fire District had not issued the Red Flag status.

- **The incorporated areas (City of Greer) have a “No Burn” policy. Do the unincorporated areas have a “No Burn” policy?**
 - The county has a different Burn policy. In the county, you are aloud to burn landscaping debris only.
- **Speak to the response time of the Fire Department.**
 - At 2:35, a neighbor had not seen any fire at all.
 - At 2:38, the first neighbor called and said the fire was at the Townhomes.
- **Did the first engine have trouble getting in the gate?**
 - No. The trucks did not have any trouble getting in the gate.
- **One neighbor called dispatch and was sent to Greenville County 911, then was directed to Greer 911. There is an expectation that 911 should know where you’re calling from.**
 - A land line local phone will go directly to Greer. If it’s a cell phone, it’ll go to the closest tower and could go to the County if the closest tower is not in the city of Greer, but in the county.
 - All 911 dispatchers will ask for your address and if you are using your cell phone, the Phase 2 system can be tracked to find your long/lat coordinates.
- **Could you develop a curriculum for schools to teach kids how to talk to a 911 dispatcher?**
 - Yes.
- **Is there anything the landscapers can do to deter fire, by applying a fire retardant?**
 - Mulch would have not have burned as quickly as pine straw.
 - The pine straw is currently being replaced with mulch.
- **Do all local FD’s have access to the gates?**
 - Yes. The gates should open from the siren of the fire engine or emergency vehicle, but also the departments all have the emergency code. The gates all have an SOS device that opens automatically.
- **Regarding dispatching, who dispatches?**
 - The police/911 dispatches the fire departments.
- **Are the other local departments on contract to help cover this area?**
 - Yes.
- **If a similar situation were to happen again, how would the FD’s respond?**
 - If the call came in as a brush fire, Greer FD on Pointsett St. would respond.
 - If the call came in as a structures fire, Pelham/14 FD would respond.
- **The newspaper said that there were communication issues with one of the other stations.**
 - There were issues with communicating
 - Boiling Springs is ISO2
 - Greer is ISO2
- **Why did the fires start in the roofs of the townhouse?**
 - The fire went up the vinyl siding and the wooden privacy dividers.

Police Department:

The following questions were asked by residents of the neighborhood and were answered by members of the Greer Police Department.

- **Having private roads and a gated community, traffic violations cannot be enforced. What can we expect from the police department as far as patrolling?**
 - Depending on how busy the department is will dictate the response time of the PD. The average response time to RWF is 11 minutes.
 - The PD cannot enforce traffic within the gated community. We can hire an off duty police officer, but he/she cannot issue citations for traffic violations. However, the HOA can create laws for the neighborhood to enforce violations. The officer would not be able to write a citation, but he could and should write a warning ticket and could provide that to the HOA which could in turn be used to send a letter and/or fine to the resident.
 - The city of Greer can provide workers comp for a charge of \$6 / hr for the off duty officer.
- **Are there any gated communities in Greer that have off duty police officers?**
 - Greenville city has some neighborhoods, but none in Greer.
- **With the new neighborhoods being built nearby, does that mean we will have additional officers hired?**
 - Yes. Additional officers have and are being hired in order to account for the growing population.
- **With shady characters late at night, what should we tell the dispatcher?**
 - Give the dispatcher a proper description of the suspect and tell what they are doing.
- **Is the city going to acquire a drone?**
 - It is in the budget for the FD to purchase a drone to help with firefighting.
- **What is the effectiveness of security cameras that are installed at community gates?**
 - They can be helpful in determining who committed a crime, but not as helpful in preventing a crime.
- **Why was there no police/fire presence the night of the fire in order to protect the belongings in the homes?**
 - The PD put it on their list to patrol the area that night. However, there was not an officer stationed there for the entire night.
 - The PD will make plans to have a patrol on the scene overnight.
- **Regarding RWF being a gated community, is inside the gate part of the local grid for patrolling?**
 - Yes it is. However, RWF is not a high-crime area. So the patrol is not as frequent as more densely populated areas.

Other Community Business:

- Outlawing fireworks in the dormant season? Petition
- Tennis courts are being resurfaced for the next 2 weeks.
- The insurance coverage was increased for all of the neighborhood properties, including landscaping, monuments, clubhouse and pool.
- The townhouse foundation is being started this week.
- The blog on the website has a request for the original plans/drawings for the estate house.
- Pool repairs to be done after the pool closes in September.
- \$8,598 was raised for the fire fund.
- The street light at the Townes gate does not work. EMAIL JENNIFER
- The key pad at the Estates gate is not working. EMAIL JENNIFER

Adjourn:

With no other matters to discuss before the Board, meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.
Minutes taken by: Tim Griggs