



Weekly Legislative Action Report

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04/07/2009 - 04/24/2009

North County:

Jupiter: We met with Jupiter Town Manager Andy Lukasik about the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). He raised several good questions reference the Jupiter MSTU. Once these are cleared we should have clear sailing for a Resolution from the Town supporting our legislation.

Juno: We met with the Juno Beach City Manager and staff reference having the council pass a resolution supporting the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). On April 22nd the Town Council PASSED the Resolution. Thank you Juno Beach.

North Palm Beach: We have started communications with the Village Mgr and New Public Safety Director reference passing a resolution supporting about the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365).

Lake Park: Ordered new LOW JACK to Track down the council and city Manager. Communications with the city are slow coming.

Palm Beach Gardens: We have been making the rounds with the council reference setting the mileage, level of service, pension and advising them that we are looking at the Pros and Cons of a merger. PBGFR DVP Ed Morejon has been setting the meetings. In addition, the council members have been advised about the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). We are setting a meeting with the City Mgr reference passing a resolution. The council is favorable.

Riviera Beach: The 2009 contract opener is making it to the front page finally. RBFR DVP Maria Gonzalez, 1st EVP Lupo and 1st LVP Angelo have made the rounds with Councilwoman Dawn Pardo (Chair), Councilman Shelby Lowe, Councilwoman Judy Davis, Councilman Cedric Thomas, and Councilwoman

Billie Brooks. There were many questions about the finances of the City. We feel confident that we will have a deal for both 2009 and 2010 in the coming weeks. All council members support the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). 1st EVP Lupo and 1st LVP Angelo also met with the Deputy Fire Chief and Fire Chief reference the budget and passing a resolution supporting our legislative bills. The meeting went well and we believe a contract is forthcoming. The pension board has also brought forward adding a DROP Plan and individual 175 accounts. We are attempting to strike a deal for both along with the contract soon. More to come in the weeks ahead.

Central County:

Special KUDOS to DVP Pete Murphy for bringing in over 50 NEW FIREFIGHTER FACTPac signups. This will help with our war chest to pass the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act. Good Job Pete!

WPB: The West Palm Beach Fire Department Local 727 is supporting the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). Thanks WPBFR!

Cloud Lake: Met with Town Manager reference passing a resolution supporting our legislative bills. Should be on the May 14th agenda.

Glen Ridge: Councilman/PBCFR Captain Michael Jawdy has us set for the May 6th agenda before the Union meeting. Thanks Councilman!

Haverhill: Met with Town Manager about the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). A resolution is forth coming.

Lantana: Mayor Stewart helped us coordinate a meeting with City Manager Michael Bornstien (The Barefoot Mailman). A resolution supporting the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365) is slated for the next agenda.

Lake Worth: The PBC Board of County Commissioners approved a merger of Fire Rescue services with LWFR beginning October 2009. This is the largest merger ever to take place for PBCFR. Welcome aboard LWFR. In other news, the LW City Council has passed a resolution supporting the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). Thanks LW!

Unincorporated PBC Airport: The PB Post Reported that the Airport was looking at privatization of Emergency Medical Services. This should be an EYE Opener for most of our membership. AMR and Medics have been reportedly marketing their services as a COST CUTTING measure for governments within PBC. Fortunately, our commissioners are not for PRIVATIZATION of Emergency Services. We are confident that this will not happen and are currently talking with Mr. Pelly and his staff about ways to help the airport with lowering the cost without sacrificing quality of services.

Palm Beach: Setting up meeting with PB Civic Association just to get reacquainted.

West County:

Wellington: At 11:45pm with the help of Councilwoman Lizbeth Benequisto we were able to pass the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). After much debate, the council voted 4-0 in favor. Councilman Willhite had to recues himself from the vote due to a conflict of interest with his employment. Otherwise, we would have had a 5-0.

RPB: Awaiting the date for the resolution supporting our legislation to be placed on the agenda.

Loxahatchee Groves: With the support of Retired member and current Councilman Ron Jarriel the town passed a resolution supporting the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). The following week the LG Water District also supported our legislation with a resolution. And the LG Landowners Association also is sending letters of support. The Town Crier paper has written several articles reference our Legislative bills. In each case, there have been a few misquotes. This has become expected from the small hometown papers.

Belle Glade: Have called the Mayor at least a dozen times about the resolution. He is one busy man. Look forward to meeting him soon though.

Pahokee: After meeting with the Mayor and City Manager the Council passed a resolution the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). Thanks to Bob Eastberg for attending the meeting.

South Bay: Chief Arena help set up a meeting with the City Manager reference the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act (SB1000/HB365). At the next city council meeting the Council passed a resolution supporting our legislation. Thanks for Moses Abdelnour for attending the meeting and answering questions from the council.

South County:

West Delray: Met with the South County Democrats “Godfather” Murry Kalish. He has since written a few articles into the South County Dem’s newsletter asking for support from the residents.

STATE:

**Fire Rescue Funding Diversification Act
(1% Surtax)**

Week Seven of the Florida Legislative Session:

Week Seven started out with a bang and then stopped as fast as it had started. After clearing 2 committees on Monday (House and Senate Finance and Tax) it seemed that the momentum had begun. But that's where that ended.

The next stop, Senate Ways and Means proved to be a game of pin the tail on the donkey. There seemed to be someone "messaging" with the Bill. We all have our suspicions, and time is running out. We needed to make the agenda for the Senate in order to have time to make it to the Floor in the Senate and then be sent across to the House.

Additionally, we were trying to revive the House version and get it amended onto another related bill to be sent over to the Senate. This is the 'back up plan" the House leadership team has indicated that they will take up and pass the Senate version if we can get it over there.

Most of the legislatures and staff are in Tallahassee for the weekend, so we are staying in Tallahassee until it is over. Don't want to take a chance on having something go wrong while we are not here.

On another disturbing note, I just witnessed the 1.35% cap on property tax pass the House. Hopefully, it does not make it through the Senate. This change would cripple the Fire Service as we know it today.

Last stop – Week 8

Thanks to everyone for their continued support. The phone calls, emails and letters have done an excellent job.