



REPORT ON THE CREATION OF THE COROLLA FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE DISTRICT

April 23, 2018

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Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §153A-301(a) the board of commissioners of a county may define a service district in order to finance, provide, or maintain fire protection in addition to or to a greater extent than financed, provided or maintained for the entire county. In order to enhance public safety and welfare through enhanced fire protection it is proposed that a service district be formed for fire protection in the Corolla area of Poplar Branch Township.

Identified Need for Service District

Corolla is an unincorporated community within the Poplar Branch Township area of the county. Bordered on the east by the Atlantic Ocean and on the west by the Currituck Sound, Corolla is accessible by two lane North Carolina Highway 12 or by boat. The area contains approximately 5,040 residential and commercial properties and is a highly attractive and popular tourist destination.

Since July 1, 1983 Corolla Fire and Rescue Squad, Inc., a non-profit volunteer organization funded under a contract with Currituck County, has provided fire protection and response services within the proposed service district. The volunteer department is comprised of 44 volunteer members, 36 of whom are over the age of 60 years of age, 16 of whom are 70 years of age or older and two of whom are 80 years of age or older. In 2016 the volunteer department developed a comprehensive strategic plan. The strategic plan concluded that due to geographic and economic challenges for a younger population locating to Corolla it is unlikely that younger firefighters can be recruited to join the volunteer department. Recently, representatives of the volunteer department requested fire suppression staffing from the county because the volunteer department cannot meet daily operational demands and fire suppression requirements within the proposed service district area. Although a county is not required by statute to provide fire protection, it is critical to maintain fire protection and suppression service in the proposed service district area for the protection of property and the comfort, life safety and peace of mind of residents and tourists whose visitation is vital for the county's economic wellbeing and prosperity.

Resident Population and Population Density

The resident population of the proposed service district area according to the 2010 United States Census is approximately 450 persons. Seasonal population within the proposed service district is estimated to be approximately 60,000 persons per week during the height of the tourist season.

Appraisal Value of Property Subject to Taxation in the Proposed Service District

The estimated appraised value of property subject to taxation in the proposed service district is \$2,850,634,999. The current county wide tax rate, which includes the proposed service district area, is 48 cents (\$0.48) per one hundred dollars of valuation. It is anticipated that a tax in the amount of 5 cents (\$0.05) per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation will be assessed in the proposed service district area which will be in addition to the following taxes assessed for Special Districts located within the proposed fire tax district:

Ocean Sands North and Crown Point Watershed Improvement District.....	\$0.06
Ocean Sands Water and Sewer District.....	\$0.11
Whalehead Watershed Improvement District.....	\$0.155
Whalehead Beach Solid Waste Collection And Disposal Service District.....	\$0.02

Plan for Providing Services Within the Proposed Service District

The county is hiring 19 firefighters that will be assigned in shifts to the two Corolla Fire and Rescue Squad, Inc. stations. The county firefighters will respond with Corolla Fire and Rescue Squad, Inc. equipment to calls with cross trained county ambulance crews to provide eight firefighters at emergency scenes. It is expected that volunteer firefighters will continue to be an important resource and force for emergency response and fire suppression activity.

The county has received a federal SAFER grant in the approximate amount of \$1,500,000 that will, with proposed fire protection service district taxes and other county funds, pay for the cost of fire protection services within the district

Map of Proposed Service District Area

A map of the proposed service district area is attached to this report.

