

MINUTES  
SPECIAL CALLED PUBLIC MEETING  
BARTOW COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
OCTOBER 28, 2016 – 10:00 A.M.

Commissioner Taylor opened the special called public meeting to amend the Code of Bartow County relating to open burning and authorizing the Fire Chief to impose an immediate burn ban throughout all of Bartow County.

Assistant Fire Chief Dwayne Jamison informed the Commissioner and members of the audience that the Fire Department has received a Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory from the National Forestry Service notifying of the elevated fire danger due to the lack of rainfall and intensifying drought. According to the Forestry Service's report, some areas in the watch zone have received 50-60 percent less than normal rainfall over the past 6 months. The lack of normal rainfall coupled with the above average temperatures and below normal humidity has raised fire dangers across the area to historic levels. The fall leaf drop adds dead fuels to an already volatile environment.

According to Chief Jamison, the County Fire Department has worked to contain 128 grass/woods fires year to date, with half of these fires occurring in the last two months and resulting in 908 acres burned. Many of these fires were started by recreational fires such as camp fires, bon fires, fire pits, etc. Luckily there have been no residential structures affected by these fires, although some came very close.

Forest Ranger Mark Munn, Chief Ranger with the Georgia Forestry Commission, stated that the Service has assisted with 20 fires in Bartow County alone in a month and a number of other fires across the region. Ranger Munn added that the County has had nothing in place to control recreational fires. The Service is using a lot of resources that they don't typically have on hand to address these fires. They have increased from three tractors to five. In one incident, a tractor became trapped within the fire wall, endangering the life of the ranger operating it.

Chief Jamison added that the brush truck and unimog purchased by the county have been valuable tools in controlling these fires.

Commissioner Taylor authorized the amendment to Bartow County Code Chapter 34, Article V, Section 34-355 to adopt a new subsection (Section 34-355(d)) relating to banning open burning for safety reasons and authorized the Fire Chief to impose such bans as deemed necessary and appropriate.

There was no public comment. The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

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On File  
Kathy Gill  
County Clerk  
Bartow County

Approved:

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On File  
Steve Taylor  
Commissioner

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11/9/2016  
Date