

COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 09-09

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT CONCERNING the adoption of a new Article I of Chapter 21 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Queen Anne’s County (2004 Ed.) to be entitled “Volunteer Fire Companies”;

FOR THE PURPOSE of formally establishing and defining roles and responsibilities of the Queen Anne’s County Fire & EMS Commission and the ten independent volunteer fire and ambulance departments; providing that the County Commissioners should provide funding for the volunteer fire and ambulance departments; providing for certain responsibilities of the Fire & EMS Commission; providing for distribution of State funding for the volunteer fire and ambulance departments; and providing for a length of service awards program.

BY REPEALING Article I and Article II and enacting a new Article 1 of Chapter 21 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Queen Anne’s County (2004);

SECTION I

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF QUEEN ANNE’S COUNTY, MARYLAND that Sections 21-1 through 21-9 of Chapter 21 of the Code of Public Local Laws be and are hereby repealed and new Sections 21 -1 through 21-6 are hereby adopted to read as follows:

CHAPTER 21

PUBLIC SAFETY

ARTICLE I

VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES

21-1 Definitions

(a) As used in this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated:

“County Commissioners” means the County Commissioners of Queen Anne’s County;

“Commission” means the Queen Anne’s County Fire & EMS Commission;

“Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Department” means one of the ten independent volunteer fire companies or ambulance departments providing fire suppression, prevention, and/or emergency medical services;

21-2 Fire & EMS Commission Authorized

There shall be a Fire & EMS Commission in Queen Anne’s County. The Commission shall consist of the duly elected Fire Chief and the duly elected EMS Director or Captain of each volunteer fire and ambulance department in the County. Each Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Department shall have one (1) vote on the Commission.

(a) Membership. The Commission shall consist of representatives from:

- (1) Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.**
- (2) Grasonville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.**
- (3) Queenstown Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.**
- (4) Goodwill Fire Company, Inc. (Centreville)**
- (5) Church Hill Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.**
- (6) Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.**
- (7) Crumpton Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.**
- (8) Queen Anne-Hillsboro Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.**
- (9) United Communities Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.**
- (10) Grasonville Volunteer Ambulance Department, Inc.**

(b) General Powers and Duties. The Commission shall:

- (1) Coordinate the activities of the Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Departments within Queen Anne’s County;**
- (2) Advise the County Commissioners on matters regarding the provision of fire suppression, fire prevention, rescue and volunteer emergency medical service (“EMS”) activities within Queen Anne’s County;**
- (3) Develop, implement and enforce Countywide procedures, policies, standards, standard operating guidelines, protocols, and personnel education and training requirements for Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Departments.**

- (4) Submit to the County an annual budget for the Commission and the volunteer fire and ambulance departments within the County.**
- (5) Require the Fire and Ambulance Departments to provide such reports as may be required by the Fire & EMS Commission or the County Commissioners, including inventories and financial audits.**
- (6) Perform inspections of Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Departments and equipment.**
- (7) Recommend to the County Commissioners the withholding of future funding to Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Departments who fail to comply with policies, procedures, or standards established by the Commission.**
- (8) Adopt By-laws and other rules and regulations for the conduct of its business.**
- (9) Article III of this Chapter 21 vests responsibility for emergency services in Queen Anne's County in the Queen Anne's County Department of Emergency Service. The Commission's powers and duties with respect to volunteer emergency services hereunder shall be advisory in nature and shall be undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Emergency Services subject to established Federal, State and local regulatory authority.**

21-3 Fire Department – Formation

- (a) No new volunteer fire department or ambulance department may be organized in the County without the approval of the Commission and the County Commissioners of Queen Anne's County.**

21-4 Budget

- (a) Queen Anne's County shall provide in each annual budget, sums of money necessary to assist with the funding of the volunteer fire and ambulance departments and such programs for fire suppression and prevention, rescue, emergency medical services, training and any other emergency related services as the County Commissioners may deem appropriate.**

(b) Budget submissions shall be consistent with the Queen Anne's County Finance Office's policies and guidelines.

21-5 Length of Service Awards Program

(a) The County shall by Resolution establish and fund a length of service awards program for qualified active volunteer members of the Queen Anne's County volunteer fire and ambulance departments.

(b) The program shall be administered by the Commission. Payment shall be made directly to the volunteer entitled to such benefits.

21-6 Distribution of State Funding from the William Amoss Fire, Rescue and Ambulance Fund (508 Funds)

State funds allocated to Queen Anne's County through the William Amoss Fire Rescue and Ambulance Fund will be distributed quarterly by the Finance Office to the County's fire and ambulance departments as follows:

Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.	12%
Grasonville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.	8%
Grasonville Volunteer Ambulance Dept. Inc.	4%
Queenstown Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.	12%
Goodwill Fire Company, Inc. (Centreville)	12%
Church Hill Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.	12%
Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.	12%
Crumpton Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.	12%
United Communities Volunteer Fire Dept., Inc.	12%
Queen Anne-Hillsboro Volunteer Fire Co., Inc.	4%

The County may withhold or delay the distribution of funds hereunder to any department which has not complied with the requirements of the Public Safety Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, Title 8, Subtitle 1.

21-7, 21-8, 21-9 Reserved.

**ARTICLE II
Reserved**

SECTION II

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Bill shall be effect on the forty-sixth (46th) day following its enactment.

INTRODUCED BY: Commissioner Fordonski

DATE: April 14, 2009

PUBLIC HEARING HELD: July 28, 2009 @ 7:10 p.m.

VOTE: 5 Yea 0 Nay

DATE OF ADOPTION: July 28, 2009

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 12, 2009