



Orj Iz Unj lwku

; 5 - 42 hkwknu#

Tampa Bay Times

Wzgd|v#Sdshu | HQhz vedshu



45-43#6P /#z hggthvgd|/P d|#54/#5347#

K R P H Q H Z V S R O L W L F V V S R U W V W K L Q J V 新 R 裕 R Y L G H R R S L Q I R Q I O R U I G L D Q # # P R U H



S l q h o o v | # r x q w | # I P V # s u r s r v d d # r x q g o | # j q r u h g # q |
e x g j h w # h t x h v w # #



D q q h # D q g e h u j / # O p h v # w d i i # u i k h u +

W b h v g d | / # P d | # 5 3 / # 3 4 7 # 7 - 4 7 s p #

3 #

A county proposal to slash spending and freeze payments to fire departments for emergency medical services has largely fallen flat: Most of the 18 departments ignored that approach and many instead asked for more money than the county says they are due when submitting budget requests for the coming year.

U H O D W H G Q H Z V D U F K I Y H #

Largo is ready to fight Pinellas to adequately fund EMS
5#P zqwkcv#Dj z#

Pinellas officials back off hard line on EMS plan
6#Z hlnrv#Dj z#

St. Petersburg may pull out of EMS system as cuts loom
5#P zqwkcv#Dj z#

One department wants almost three times more than it's currently receiving.

The request to up the funding for the Pinellas Suncoast Fire and Rescue District from its current \$660,815 to about \$1.9 million isn't as outrageous as it might sound, fire Chief Bert Polk said. Instead, he said, it's a result of two years of futile attempts to get the county to discuss district concerns. Those include a series of funding cuts to Suncoast that began in 2008 when Pinellas officials slashed \$427,152 from the Suncoast budget for EMS provided out of Fire Station 28 in the Oakhurst area. Station 28 has since been closed.

The next year, the county whacked the district's EMS budget by \$1.3 million and cut an additional \$484,750 from Suncoast's EMS budget in 2010. Pinellas officials said then they were eliminating overlapping services. As part of the cuts, coverage of the Redingtons was transferred from Suncoast to Seminole, a move that Polk says has hurt service by lengthening response times.

Suncoast, the chief said, has spent at least the past two years trying to talk with the county about the situation but "we've never received any feedback. ... We've never gotten anything from the county. ... I categorize it as being ignored."

So, Polk said, he decided his budget request should reflect not only those concerns but the misgivings over the county's proposal to freeze the budgets of all 18 departments that provide first response EMS service. Suncoast's budget request, he said, does not reflect the freeze but what the department actually needs to function in the coming year.

Bruce Moeller, the county's director of safety and emergency services, said he's aware of Suncoast's concerns. He disagreed with Polk's conclusion that the county is ignoring Suncoast. The county, he said,

has held many discussions over the issues. The county, Moeller said, simply doesn't agree with Suncoast.

Moeller said he was surprised to see that Polk had translated his department's concerns



P R V W # E R P P H Q W H G

824<247#
I i # r y # W f r w # W # E d q 0 g r # j x | / # z k | # j z h v g * W # i a n u l g d #
k d y h # P h g i f d g # h { s d q v i r q B #

8253247#
F u r v v i g j # j x d u g # h i a h g / # z z # s u b v E k r z d h u v # q m x u b g #
j q # P d h u z d h u # f u d v k #

824<247#
I n u p h u # E x f v # E k h u d d g h u # k l w # h d p # z l k # E o l p #
z u k # q s d g # z d j h v

824; 247#
G i d f r # f d v h # s u b v h q w # # a n u l g d # E d u # B q # q p v x d d #
f k d a h g j h #

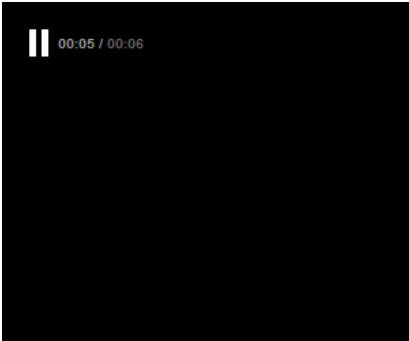
8253247#
W d p s d # E d | # d q m v # h f r g g 0 z n u w # t y d w i r g d a o | # g #
p h g h w u d g # g h d w k v #



F r q q h f w # z l k # c v #



YIGHR



into a budget request. But, he said he was not surprised that most departments (Seminole's budget complies with the county proposal) had asked for more than they are slated to get under a county proposal to cut the funding of six departments — St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Largo, Pinellas Park, Lealman and Seminole — and freeze funding for three years for all 18 departments that provide first response EMS service. For the subsequent seven years, the county would cap the amount of increase in the budgets.

The departments, he said, recognize that the county proposal has not been formally adopted by the County Commission. And, he said, it's normal for departments to make requests that are subject to negotiation before the commission gets the final EMS budget in late summer, early fall.

What's different this year, Moeller said, is that the county wants a long-term solution to EMS funding issues. So, while the budgets are set for one year, the county proposal would cover the next decade.

There's another twist to EMS budget negotiations this year. Largo, Pinellas Park, Lealman, Safety Harbor, Suncoast and other departments have instituted the conflict resolution process over the county proposal. Other departments are considering joining the fray. State law requires governing bodies to undergo that process before they sue each other. The first meeting is scheduled for 2 p.m. Tuesday at the Largo Public Library, 120 Central Park Drive. The meeting is open to the public.

Anne Lindberg can be reached at alindberg@tampabay.com or (727) 893-8450. Follow @alindbergtimes on Twitter.


EXGJHW#JHTXHVW#IRU#P V#RU#KCH#5347048# IIVFDO#H DU				
		UHTXHVW#G#		SHUFHQW
IIVH#EHS DUMP HQW	FXUHQW# EXGJHW	IXQGIQT	GIITHUHQPH	GIITHUHQPH
Belleair Bluffs*	\$487,400	\$489,900	\$2,500	0.51%
Clearwater	\$5,787,934	\$5,740,385	(\$47,549)	-0.82%
Dunedin	\$1,279,388	\$1,336,593	\$57,205	4.47%
East Lake	\$1,385,987	\$1,431,691	\$45,704	3.30%
Gulfport	\$400,007	\$413,586	\$13,579	3.39%
Largo	\$3,461,000	\$3,995,200	\$534,200	15.43%
Lealman	\$1,769,629	\$1,823,938	\$54,309	3.07%
Madeira Beach	\$363,043	\$381,169	\$18,126	4.99%
Oldsmar	\$430,035	\$439,131	\$9,096	2.12%
Palm Harbor	\$1,913,607	\$2,349,048	\$435,441	22.75%
Pinellas Park	\$2,328,686	\$2,375,687	\$47,001	2.02%
Pinellas Suncoast	\$660,815	\$1,945,600	\$1,284,785	194.42%
Safety Harbor	\$845,114	\$871,624	\$26,510	3.14%
Seminole	\$2,016,700	\$1,955,122	(\$61,578)	-3.05%
South Pasadena	\$771,767	\$810,767	\$39,000	5.05%
St. Pete Beach	\$1,322,362	\$1,345,952	\$23,590	1.78%
St. Petersburg	\$12,540,835	\$11,967,009	(\$573,826)	-4.58%
Tarpon Springs	\$958,106	\$1,382,721	\$424,615	44.32%
Tierra Verde*	\$394,858	\$411,285	\$16,427	4.16%
Treasure Island	\$370,920	\$409,623	\$38,703	10.43%
WRNDO	'6</1; ; A<6	'74/; :9B64	'5&; :/6;#	9B8(
*Belleair Bluffs and Tierra Verde do not have their own fire departments. Belleair Bluffs contracts with Largo for service. Tierra Verde contracts with Lealman.				
VRXUFH=Pinellas County Emergency Medical Services				

Slqhaov#Frxcw|#IP V#bursrvd#uxqgd|#j qruhg#q#exgjhw#htxhvw#B 8253247#Caw#p rgzihg#
Z hqqhvqd|/P d|/B4/B5347#4-6; qp #


© 2014 Tampa Bay Times

MRIQ#KH#IIVFXVVIRO=#FOIFN#R#THZ #FRP P HQWV/#DGG#RXUV#


Articles and offers from around the Web




Little Known Way To Pay Off Mortgage




New dystopian Obama law goes into effect in less than




Only 1 in 1,500 Americans know about this (legal)




If you owe less than \$625,000 on your home, use the




Let me call you right now and bet you \$117,500.6 that this



The "secret" money source of President Obama revealed -



Right Before a Heart Attack Your Body Will Give You



Eat This, Never Diet Again >> New 'fast acting' ingredient

ADVERTISEMENT