



Waynesboro City Council Agenda Briefing

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| Meeting Date: | June 14, 2021 | Staff/Council Member(s): D. James Shaw II, Deputy City Manager/George Fitzgerald IV, Deputy Fire Chief |
| Agenda Item # | 7 | |
| Ordinance# | | |
| Department: | Fire Department/City Manager's Office | |
| Subject: | Proposed additions and revisions to City Code Chapter 34 <i>Fire Prevention and Protection</i> | |

Background: City staff and legal counsel are proposing amendments and additions to City Code Chapter 34 *Fire Prevention and Protection*. Revisions to Chapter 34 are intended to remove antiquated code language, ensure regulatory consistency with the Code of Virginia and relevant building and fire codes and to implement a fee schedule for fire permits and inspections.

Chapter 34 consists of three articles: 1) Article I *Fire Department* establishes the Waynesboro Fire Department and describes the status of key personnel of the department including the Fire Chief and the office of the Fire Marshal; 2) Article II *Fire Protection* primarily prescribes standards for the installation and operation of fire detection and alarm systems; and, 3) Article III *Fire Prevention* establishes regulatory authority for the enforcement of fire prevention codes, sets standards for open burning, fireworks and blasting and establishes fees for permits and inspections.

Key Code Amendments:

The City Code currently describes the Waynesboro Fire Department as consisting of both the Volunteer Fire Department and paid professional organization of the City. In order to maintain consistency with the Code of Virginia and eliminate a variety of potential conflicts, the amended ordinance would separate the two entities.

Code language describes the required installation and maintenance of fire alarms in specified facility types. The revised Code expands allowed open burning under specified circumstances and conditions. Perhaps most significantly, the revisions to Chapter 34 establishes a fee structure for fire permits and inspections.

Many, if not most, local fire department's charge fees for various types of permits, inspections and fire services. (The fees would not apply to fire response.) Much like building permits, the fees are meant to recoup at least a portion of the costs associated with providing services to individual businesses, property owners and entities. Broadly categorized, fees would be charged for 1) required fire inspections and re-inspections; 2) one-time events such as blasting, open burning and pyrotechnics displays; 3) the storage of specified hazardous and/or flammable materials; and, 4) certain types of operations such as lumber yards and wood-working plants.

Staff Recommendation: City Code Chapter 34 Fire Prevention and Protection is in certain need of modernizing. Sections of Chapter 34 are outdated and conflict with state and other relevant codes. The City lags behind many localities by not charging fees for fire services. Staff recommends adopting revisions to Chapter 34 as presented.

Suggested Motion(s): If it is the City Council's desire, an ordinance should be introduced revising and amending City Code Chapter 34 Fire Prevention and Protection.

Attachments: Ordinance