

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER
EMERGENCY MEETING
ST. JAMES-LANARK VILLAGE VFD
MARCH 22, 2002**

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE: Eddie Creamer, Chairman; Jimmy Mosconis, Cheryl Sanders, and Clarence Williams, Commissioners; Kendall Wade, Clerk; Connie McKinley, Deputy Clerk; Alfred Shuler, County Attorney.

ABSENT: Bevin Putnal, Commissioner

9:00 A.M. Chairman Creamer called the meeting to order.

(Tape 1-113) Chairman Creamer said this meeting was called to address the situation at the St. James-Lanark Village VFD. He stated they have sent notices to most of the property owners around the St. James-Lanark Village area notifying citizens they would be closing the doors of the Fire Department on April 8, 2002 due to the lack of funds. Mr. Pierce, Director of Administrative Services, said Franklin County certainly works and supports with the Volunteer Fire Departments through implementation of the M.S.B.U. He stated this is the only source of funds the County provides the local volunteer fire departments. He said most of the VFD's conduct fundraisers, etc. to raise additional funds for insurance, new equipment, etc. He stated he understood there is a shortfall of funds at the St. James-Lanark Village VFD. He said the County does want to help solve the problem, but cannot help with the financial obligations the VFD has gotten itself into. He stated he understands some of the other VFD's are going to contribute to this fund. He said he called the Apalachicola State Bank President, Barry Brynjolfsson, to ask him to attend this meeting. He stated Mr. Brynjolfsson has the ability to loan the St. James-Lanark Village VFD the funds it needs to stay open. He explained he had asked the Bank to loan the VFD \$10,000.00 since the insurance premium was over \$7,000.00. He said Mr. Brynjolfsson was present this morning to offer his assistance. Commissioner Mosconis said then the short-term problem is solved until the new M.S.B.U. funds begin again next tax year. Bud Evans, Chief, St. James-Lanark Village VFD, asked who was going to guarantee the loan. Commissioner Mosconis said the M.S.B.U. funds being generated would be used to pay the bank. Mr. Evans said he didn't know how that could be done since there were so fewer homes in St. James-Lanark Village and the M.S.B.U. is assessed to each home. Commissioner Mosconis said there is more and more building going on in this area. He stated next year would be even better. Chairman Creamer said he knew there were a lot of people in this area on a fixed income and probably couldn't pay their assessments. He said then they are exempted and they do not have to pay it. Commissioner Sanders said she had received quite a few comments about the letter the St. James-Lanark Village VFD had sent to the residents in their area about closing the department down on April 8, 2002. She said, it seemed like to her, the letter sounded like the County Commission sent it out. She stated several people have called her and really given her the "blues" about this matter. After reviewing the statement submitted by the St. James-Lanark Village VFD Commissioner Mosconis said he would make a **motion directing the County Attorney to prepare an agreement**

FCBCC MINUTES-MARCH 22, 2002 EMERGENCY MEETING

between Franklin County and the St. James-Lanark Village Volunteer Fire Department to use M.S.B.U. funds to secure a short-term loan from Apalachicola State Bank for \$10,000.00. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion. All for.

MOTION CARRIED. Commissioner Mosconis asked Mr. Evans to please notify the Commissioners before the St. James-Lanark Village VFD is on the verge of closing its doors. He said it sent panic throughout the residents over in that area. Mr. Evans said he had already told the Board of the dire situation the VFD was in.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.

Eddie Creamer

EDDIE CREAMER, CHAIRMAN

Kendall Wade

KENDALL WADE, CLERK