



## **GLASSY MOUNTAIN FIRE SERVICE AREA**

2015 Highway 11  
Landrum, South Carolina 29356  
Business (864) 895-4306 Fax (864) 895-4748  
Website: [www.gmfd.net](http://www.gmfd.net)

**Robert J. Staples, Fire Chief**

**Bryan S. Bailey, Assistant Chief**

Greenville County Council  
301 University Ridge, Suite 2400  
Greenville, SC 29601

April 15, 2015

### **RE: GLASSY MOUNTAIN FIRE SERVICE AREA**

Honorable Chairman Taylor, Vice-Chairman Kirven, and Greenville County Council:

The Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area (the "GMFSA") is a special tax district created by Greenville County (the "County") and established in 1988 pursuant to Ordinance No. 1786 to provide fire suppression and other fire protection related services to county residents residing in the FSA. Operating from five stations, the GMFSA has been successfully operating for approximately 26 years. Today, the GMFSA is comprised of a full-time Chief, a part-time Assistant Chief, a part-time Administrative Coordinator and nine full-time firefighters. Additionally, the GMFSA has over 40 volunteer firefighters. The GMFSA personnel include five paramedics, five basic EMTs, two advanced EMTs and three intermediate EMTs.

The GMFSA operates out of belief that our constituents place a high value on the fire protection and medical first responder services that we provide. This belief drives us to seek continuous improvement in employee performance through recruitment, training, and certification of both career and volunteer employees. Our equipment and facilities are also maintained to meet customer expectations and regulatory requirements. We received an updated Public Protection Classification of 4 in February of 2014. We believe that this is quite an achievement for a mostly volunteer department responsible for fifty-two square miles of rugged terrain. The primary benefactors are our constituents who now enjoy better fire protection and more favorable fire insurance rates.

The GMFSA continues to seek out the most cost effective solutions to meet increased operational costs. This year, we have applied for an Assistance to Firefighter's Grant (AFG) for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant for additional personnel to staff our Oak Grove Station. Still, our operational expenses continue to increase driven largely by employee related costs. These costs are expected to continue their rise over the planning period as both certification requirements and employee benefit costs increase.

The Board of Commissioners have anticipated that our district's property base would once again begin to grow and thus provide the funding necessary to meet operating expenses.

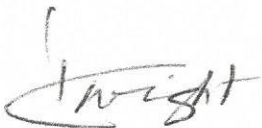
Unfortunately, that has not happened. Our tax revenues have been relatively flat since 2010 and declining since 2012. More problematic, there is no evidence suggesting that growth will occur in the immediate future (2-3 years). The GMFSA's reserve position is currently funding shortfalls in the annual operating revenue.

The Board and I are requesting a 15.4% operational millage increase (maximum CPI and population), or 2.77 mills in order to continue providing the level of service our customers deserve and have come to expect. A customer owning a house with a taxable market value of \$100,000 would pay an additional \$11.10 annually as a result of this millage increase.

The Board also requests approval to refund our current General Obligation Bonds to take advantage of current favorable interest rates. With the savings, we expect to fund our upcoming capital needs (as shown in the Financial Model) without any debt service millage increase for FY2016.

Please review the attached information which includes the ten year revenue and expenditure projections and the Resolution previously adopted by the GMFSA in support of the Capital Improvement Plan, and let us know if you have any questions. Thank you very much for your continued support and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dwight", with a stylized flourish underneath.

Dwight Hammack, Chairman

Attachments



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### RESOLUTION

#### A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND ADOPT A TEN-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR THE GLASSY MOUNTAIN FIRE SERVICE AREA, GREENVILLE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

**Whereas**, the Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area (GMFSA) is a special taxing district within Greenville County (the "County") established to provide fire suppression and other fire protection related services to Greenville County residents residing in the GMFSA; and

**Whereas**, in order to provide the required services and to meet the fire protection needs to the residents of the GMFSA certain capital improvements must be undertaken; and

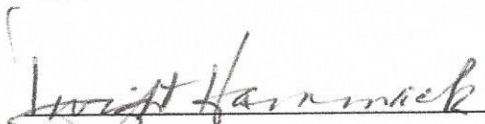
**Whereas**, proper planning and management for the provision of fire services in the GMFSA requires a long range, ten-year plan (Capital Improvement Plan or CIP) to keep up with and adequately respond to the growth and demand for service in the GMFSA; and

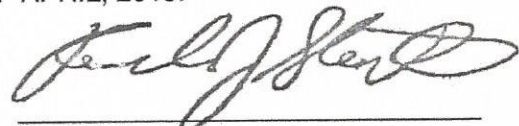
**Whereas**, it is the finding of the GMFSA Commission and Fire Chief that not only is the CIP necessary to adequately serve the needs of the residents of the GMFSA, but if implemented, will continue to enhance the level of those services; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the GMFSA Commission hereby approves the CIP for the GMFSA that is attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference.

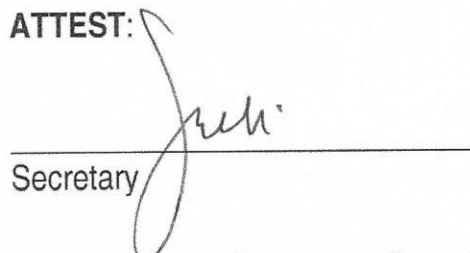
**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Commission and Fire Chief design and carry forward a plan to implement the CIP and to seek adequate financing from Greenville County to fund the program.

**DONE IN REGULAR MEETING THIS 16TH DAY OF APRIL, 2015.**

  
Chairman

  
Fire Chief

**ATTEST:**

  
Secretary

*Preserving Our Heritage - Protecting Our Future*



## Fire District Millage Request Application

### Contact Information

District Name: Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area State FDID Number: 23119  
Fire Chief's Name Robert J. Staples Email: RStaples@GMFD.net  
Mailing Address 2015 Highway 11 City, State, Zip Landrum, SC 29356  
Contact Person's Name: Kelley Murphy Email: KMurphy@GMFD.net  
Address: 2015 Highway 11 City, State, Zip Landrum, SC 29356  
Phone: (864) 895-4306 Fax: (864) 895-4748

### Financial Operations

**Please Check One of the Following Options:**

- Our district is seeking to maintain our current millage rate  
 Our district is seeking a millage rate increase  
 Our district is seeking bond approval

FD Annual Budget \$1,043,496 Value of One Mill \$45,701  
FD Current Millage Rate 18.0/Operating 5.6/GO Millage Value of Total Millage \$822,613  
Taxes collected last fiscal year (July 1-June 30) \$872,054  
Supplemental non-tax income last fiscal year (grants, fundraisers, etc.) \$107,913  
Number of Paid Firefighters 11 Number of Volunteer Fire Fighters 44

*For the following financial measurements, please provide a dollar amount.  
(Any additional pertinent information can be detailed in an attached sheet.)*

Debt Service \$268,910  
(Include annual amount of any/all payments on stations, apparatus, and equipment)

Operating Expenses \$1,043,496  
(Include all normal operating expenses, including operational overhead and salary expenses)

Reserve/Savings \$464,000  
(Include any/all reserve and/or savings currently on hand for breakdowns, purchases or replacements)

When did your district last request a millage increase? 2008

Was your request granted? YES

If so, please detail your accomplishments with the additional revenue? (You may attach a separate sheet if necessary.)

*The Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area was granted a millage increase in 2008. The additional revenue generated from this increase was used to assume the cost of personnel secured via a Homeland Security Administration, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant which started at 90% funding decreasing annually until the FSA assumed 100% cost of the newly-acquired personnel. Continued funding at the approved millage rate also offset the ever-increasing cost of providing services including fuel, utility, vehicle maintenance, and personnel services related costs such as health insurance, physicals and minimal increases in wages corresponding to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and area competitive salaries.*

**Performance Data**

ISO Rating   4  

Year Rating Received   2/2014  

Population Served (daytime)   3,444  

Population Served (nighttime)   3,444  

Number of Households   1,482  

Number of Businesses   19  

Total Number of Calls Last Year (fiscal year?)   421  

Number of Structure Fires   10  

Number of MVA's   28  

Number of Medical Calls   238  

Number of Brush Fires   14  

Number of Vehicle Fires   7  

Number of Mutual Aid Calls   24  

*For the following questions, please circle or highlight "Y" for Yes or "N" for No.  
(Any additional pertinent information may be provided in a separate sheet.)*

- Is your district registered with the State Firefighter Mobilization? **YES**
- Does your district participate in the South Carolina Fire Incident Reporting System? **YES**
- Is your district in compliance with the SC Firefighter Registration Act? **YES**
- Does your district meet requirements of OSHA Standard 1910.30 for Infectious Disease Control? **YES**
- Does your district perform annual SCBA fit testing on all active personnel? **YES**
- Do your district's firefighters meet minimum OSHA training requirements? **YES**
- Does your district perform annual testing on all ground and aerial ladders to meet NFPA standard? **YES**
- Does your district meet all NIMS requirements? **YES**
- Does your district have a fire prevention program? **YES**
- Does your district have a Fire Safety inspection program? **YES**
- Does your district have a pre-fire plan program? **YES**
- Does your district meet minimum hose testing requirements? **YES**
- Does your district meet minimum pump testing requirements? **YES**
- Does your department meet minimum apparatus requirements? **YES**
- Does your district meet minimum equipment on apparatus requirements? **YES**
- Does your district have a preventive maintenance program for your apparatus? **YES**
- Does your district provide physicals to all members? **YES**
- Do all of your members meet the minimum training requirements for their specific job titles? **YES**
- Does your district meet minimum communication requirements? **YES**
- Does your district meet Narrow Band Requirements? **YES**
- Does your district house an EMS vehicle? **NO**

*For the following questions, please provide the more detailed information necessary to understand the complexities for your district. You may attach separate sheets as necessary to fully answer the questions.*

1. Please describe any businesses or structures which require special equipment or represent potentially dangerous calls.

*Due to the terrain of our service area, there are many structures, both commercial and residential, that are difficult to reach utilizing traditional firefighting methods. This is extremely dangerous to our personnel. Additionally, with the high volume of heavily wooded and mountainous terrain in our district, wild land fires can be especially difficult to effectively combat and searching for lost or wounded/ill hikers is extremely challenging.*

2. Please list any mutual aid agreements or operational or resource sharing agreements your district participates in with other fire districts.

*The Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area currently enjoys Automatic Aid Agreements with Lake Cunningham, Slater-Marietta, River Falls, Tigerville and the Green River, NC Fire Departments. These agreements provide for immediate dispatch and response of an Engine Company and/or Tanker to structural fires within the agreed-to border areas of each department's district. The GMFSA also participates in the Greenville County Fire Chiefs' Association and State of South Carolina Mutual Aid Agreements and provides aid as requested by any neighboring department.*

3. Please describe how, if at all, the requested millage increase will impact your district's ISO ratings.

*Although the Glassy Mountain Fire Service area enjoys a Public Protection Classification of 4, factors that are used to determine the department's ISO rating include in part, personnel/staffing, training and operating equipment. The GMFD has a well-maintain fleet of apparatus, well-trained and certified personnel including a robust corps of volunteers, however, revenue has not kept up with expenses. Of our Operating Expenses, approximately 70% of our budget is dedicated to Personnel Service including Volunteer Recruitment and Retention. Although we have only 9 full-time shift-based firefighters, a full-time chief and part-time assistant chief, we can assemble between 17 and 20 personnel on scene of a structural or wild land fire the majority of the time. Without our career staff and well-trained group of volunteers, we would have a difficult time providing the personnel resources needed to combat these fires and that could put our ISO rating in jeopardy.*

4. Please describe the tax-exempt properties in your district and the services you provide to these entities.

**The Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area has the following Tax-Exempt properties in our district that require fire protection, annual inspections and Emergency Medical Services responses throughout the year:**

*Boy Scouts of America, Camp Old Indian*  
*Chestnut Ridge Heritage Preserve and Wildlife Conservation Area*  
*Les Mullinax Park*  
*Lookup Lodge*  
*Poinsett Bridge Heritage Preserve*

**Churches:**

*Blue Ridge Church*  
*Cherry Hill Church*  
*God's House of Prayer*  
*Glassy Mountain Church*  
*Hopewell Baptist Church*  
*Life of Jesus Revival Center*  
*Lima Baptist Church*  
*Lima Church of God*  
*North Greenville Church*  
*Oak Grove Baptist Church*  
*Mountain Hill Baptist Church*  
*Mount Pleasant Baptist Church*  
*Scenic Hill Baptist Church*  
*Terry Creek Pent Holiness Church*

**Additionally, we provide outside fire protection and assistance to the Greenville Water Shed. Although not in our service area per se, we do assist with mitigation of these fires as requested without compensation.**

Please assign a priority rating to your millage increase request from the following options: PRIORITY 1

**Priority 1:** Without the increase, we cannot continue to provide the level of service that we are giving currently. Our ISO ratings could be affected negatively. The need is dire.

**Priority 2:** Without the increase, we cannot purchase needed equipment to improve the level of service we are currently giving. ISO ratings may or may not be improved. This priority level also allows for needed specialty equipment to be acquired.

**Priority 3:** Without the increase, we can continue to provide excellent service to our district, but the increase will allow us to improve our operation in an exemplary way. ISO ratings may potentially be improved.

Opportunity for Council person(s) statement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, County Council representative to this fire district, **Support / Do Not Support** this request.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, County Council representative to this fire district, **Support / Do Not Support** this request.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, County Council representative to this fire district, **Support / Do Not Support** this request.

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**Please include with your application the following documents:**

- A formal letter from the Commission stating the intentions to either maintain or increase millage;
- Last year's financial audit;
- A five-year plan (spreadsheet) showing projected revenues as well as operating and capital expenditures;
- Any background information necessary to justify the need of a millage increase; and
- A signed resolution from the governing body approving the operating/capital plan and millage increase.

All applications should be mailed or emailed to:  
 Greenville County Finance Committee  
 Attn: John Hansley, Deputy County Administrator  
 301 University Ridge, Suite 2400  
 Greenville, SC 29601  
 or  
[jhansley@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:jhansley@greenvillecounty.org)