



# Brevard County Board of County Commissioners

2725 Judge Fran Jamieson  
Way  
Viera, FL 32940

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2754, **Version:** 1

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### **Subject:**

Public Hearing, Re: Approval of Fire Assessment Rate Adjustment of up to thirty-five percent (35%).

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Adjustment to the Fire Assessment rate resulting in up to \$8,770,650 in additional revenue annually.

### **Dept/Office:**

Fire Rescue

### **Requested Action:**

Request three actions for Board consideration:

- (1) Approval of an adjustment up to 35% in FY2021-22 to the Fire Assessment rate.

Options:

- (a) 35% increase - \$8.77M
- (b) 29% increase - \$7.27M
- (c) any other increase (less than 35%) approved by the Board

with a further annual adjustment to the rate equal to the change in Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 3%, whichever is lower, until such time that further action is considered by the Board.

- (2) The Board may wish to consider allocating general fund revenue replacement that becomes available through the American Rescue Plan Act funds to the Fire Assessment, estimated to be \$8.5M . This amount could be utilized by the Board to reduce the determined Fire Assessment rate in action (1) above by an adjustment (reduction of the proposed increase) of 4%.

These funds would be allocated and spent incrementally over a 7-year period to cover Fire Assessment requirements and would result in similar amounts of revenue being collected during the same 7-year period. If this item is approved, the Special Assessment resolution will be adjusted to reflect the updated Fire Assessment with the reduction caused by the increase in \$8.5M revenue being allocated from the general fund once the revenue replacement funds become available.

- (3) Authorize the Chair to sign the Rate Resolution subject to changes necessary to reflect the Board of County Commissioner's approval upon review by the County Attorney.

### **Summary Explanation and Background:**

The current Fire Assessment methodology was developed in 2008 and upon public hearing and Board approval was implemented for fiscal year 2009 at a rate 15% below that recommended by the consultant. Between 2009 and 2018 no adjustment was made to the Fire Assessment rate resulting in a 0% increase in the rate during this period. A 6% Fire Assessment rate adjustment with annual in change Consumer Price Index (CPI) was approved by the Board in 2018 and became effective 2019. For thirteen years, population and operational demand have increased while the Fire Assessment revenues were not sufficient to fund the Fire Operation expenses. This resulted in a depletion of reserves which were utilized to provide current service levels; creating a need for the proposed Fire Assessment rate adjustment.

On March 9, 2021, the Board approved the advertisement of a public hearing to consider up to a 35% Fire Assessment rate adjustment using the existing approved Fire Assessment methodology with annual adjustments equal to the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 3%, whichever is lower.

Proposed option (1) (a) would provide flexibility to accelerate the time frame for addressing the wage disparity between Brevard County and identified 2021 comparables of surrounding jurisdictions. Additionally, this adjustment will accomplish four things: 1) add floater pool positions to help resolve overtime issues, 2) meet mission critical standards for capital purchases, 3) invest in aging infrastructure, and 4) meet future capacity requirements due to community growth.

Proposed option (1) (b) would focus investment to entry level and high attrition Firefighter/EMT and Firefighter Paramedic positions with a salary in a range with identified 2021 comparables of surrounding jurisdictions within three years. This option also covers future capacity requirements due to growth and adds the positions needed in the floater pool to help resolve overtime issues.

For this public hearing, the Department has met all statutory requirements for public notifications. This agenda item and attached rate resolution has been coordinated with the County Attorney's Office.

### **Clerk to the Board Instructions:**

Based on the Board's approval, a Rate Resolution for signature will be provided by the Fire Rescue Department