

Key Largo Fire-Rescue and EMS District Strategic Planning Session

**Saturday, Nov. 23, 2013
Key Largo Library**

Facilitator: Jackie Harder



Agenda
Strategic Planning Session
Nov. 23, 2013
Key Largo Library

NOTE: ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE
Breaks will be called when appropriate

- 9-9:45 a.m. **Intro:** Review of survey and mission statement

- 9:45-10:30 a.m. **Core purpose:** Outcomes we want

- 10:30 a.m.-noon **Core values and guiding principles:** What really matters

- Noon-1:30 p.m. **Lunch**

- 1:30-2:15 p.m. **Key focus areas:** Top three long-term priorities

- 2:15-3:45 p.m. **Goals and strategies:** Where we want to be; how it will be accomplished

- 3:45-4:15 p.m. **Review mission statement, make assignments**

- 4:15 p.m. **Adjourn**

Rules of Engagement

The Basic Principles

1. Focus on the situation, issue or behavior, not on the person.
2. Maintain the self-confidence and self-esteem of others.
3. Maintain constructive relationships with your employees, peers and managers.
4. Take initiative to make things better.
5. Lead by example.
6. Confine your discussion to the topic.
7. Appreciate the other person's point of view.
8. Listen attentively.

Fix the problem, not the blame.

Summary of Key Largo Fire-EMS and Rescue District Strategic Planning Survey

What are the district's greatest strengths?

63% We have easy access to the people who govern the district.

58% We get to elect the people we want to office.

53% The district looks for grant money to supplement tax dollars.


42% Tied at fourth – “having a district allows Key Largo voters to have more control over providing emergency services” and “The district board listens to our concerns.”


Additional comments:

- I feel the district doesn't have any strengths. The district only cares about saving money and not about the citizens of Key Largo.
- They are increasing costs, not reducing expenses.

What are the top 3 goals you feel are important to the district?

 **Most important: “Maintain a high level of service.”** (19 of 19)

 **Neutral:** Of 18 respondents, 2 said, “Keep taxes low.”

 **Least important:** Of 14 respondents, most (12) said “Keep taxes low.” Only 1 person said it was the most important.

Additional comments:

- Reduce expenses

What are the district's weaknesses?

75% The district gets too involved operationally in the provision of emergency services.

50% There is too much politics involved.

35% Commissioners don't need to be familiar with emergency services.

Additional comments:

- The old fire department needs to return all donated money.
- Too much micromanagement.
- There doesn't seem to be any weaknesses within the district.

How satisfied are you with the Fire District?

32% Very satisfied

32% Dissatisfied

35% Satisfied

- **Note:** 7 identified themselves as paid employees

What opportunities should the district pursue?

87% Pursue more grants

68% Get fair share of revenue sharing dollars

26% Participate with other fire districts

Additional comments:

- Reduce expenses
- Restart the Explorer program – we need new, younger recruits

What projects should be completed in the next 3-5 years?

65% Ensure the needs of the community are met

50% Improve community education programs

35% Provide a training facility for the fire department

Additional comments:

- Fire hydrants
- Stop micromanaging fire and EMS
- Add a second story to station 24
- Have more paid personnel to man the fire station
- Combine fire and EMS under one budget

Should the district board have more or less control over daily operations of the fire department and ambulance corps?

55% Less

40% Just right

0% More

Additional comments:

- Merge fire department and ambulance corps into the district and eliminate the departments

Should the district have a paid administrator?

55% No

40% Yes

5% Unsure

Additional comments:

- Unnecessary; if it ain't broke, don't fix it
- Don't need another level of bureaucracy (2); make the chief answerable
- The district is not an operational body
- Waste of money and resources; unnecessary; funding that could be put toward direct life-saving operations
- Did not work before
- Adds more isolation between the board and the departments
- With an effective chief in place, no administrator is needed
- Someone needs to be in constant contact between the fire and EMS departments to ensure the level of service is being upheld. The paid administrator should have a specific job description that will ensure work is getting done.

Would you support full paid emergency services (fire and ambulance)?

50% Yes, and I'm willing to pay additional taxes to make that happen

35% I like the combination of paid and volunteer

10% No

Additional comments:

- The days of volunteers is ending; plan for paid fire and EMS

Should the district continue to pay for training and education for hazardous materials, search and rescue and recertification?

79% Yes (average)

Additional comments:

- Only for Key Largo resident members
- Training for new equipment and techniques is extremely important
- Whatever they need

Should the district provide more public education courses in any of the following?

89% Fire prevention

79% CPR and basic first aid

63% Hazard mitigation

Additional comments:

- No. The district's responsibility is oversight of the fire department and EMS.

Do you feel the level of service provided by the fire department is sufficient?

47% Yes

37% No

16% Unsure

Additional comments:

- The department needs to continue to find solutions to ensure the appropriate staffing levels
- We need to make sure the department is fully staffed for all shifts

Do you feel the level of service provided by the ambulance corps is sufficient?

50% Yes

45% No

5% Unsure

Does the district do a good job of communicating with the public about the district, what it does and its goals and objectives?

44% No

28% Yes

28% Unsure

Additional comments:

- That's why we're doing this survey and planning
- I don't believe their understand their own responsibilities as oversight
- I believe the district should distribute press releases to the media regarding goals/objectives/new equipment and vehicles. During the budget season, it was apparent the residents were not aware of the \$1.5 million of vehicles purchased by the district to better protect our residents.
- The only way to stay informed is to go to the meetings
- There is no communication. If the newspapers didn't show up, none of us would know anything about it.
- I feel uninformed about what is going on.
- Josh Gore (Free Press) is the only communicator.
- The public is kept in the dark. Most of the citizens of Key Largo don't even know that the fire and EMS are separate.

Is the district adequately funded?

58% Yes

26% No

16% Unsure

Additional comments:

- Poor funding
- They seem to be struggling for money to provide services. Not sure if this is because they don't handle the dollars they have very well or if they need more.
- Not receiving impact fees (2)
- Should be a fully paid department

Would you be willing to pay higher taxes to improve the level of services?

63% Yes

32% No

5% Unsure

Additional comments:

- The district doesn't provide services; the departments do
- I would like to see the volunteer system maintained
- I like the combination of paid and volunteer
- How about a vigorous volunteer recruitment program; start in the schools

Is the district a good steward of tax dollars?

47% Yes

37% No

16% Unsure

Additional comments:

- Getting better now that they are not deficit spending
- Too much in-fighting that costs \$
- The previous commissioners should have achieved rollback rather than going below rollback, which created the situation where the district depleted its reserve fund balance
- Money not well spent
- Misspent funds
- Funds not spent where they need to be
- Misallocated funds
- The two departments should be merged

Are you satisfied with contracting fire and ambulance services?

50% Yes

45% No

5% Unsure

Additional comments:

- The departments should be absorbed into the district
- Yes, by having the district contract with the local 501C organizations, it is a sense of pride for the district, the organizations providing the services and the residents.
- I think it was wrong of the district to go at it the way they did. There were other avenues to go down and the community had no idea until it was too late.

Has the district fulfilled its mission: to provide exceptional fire protection and emergency medical services efficiently and cost-effectively without compromising the health and safety of residents or personnel.

50% No

40% Yes

10% Unsure

Additional comments:

- I guess; if the people aren't going to meetings to complain, they're happy with the way the district operates. Don't offer people reasons to be upset.
- This is NOT their mission

What changes, if any, need to be made with the structure of the district on the legislative level?

Essay:

- None
- Higher millage cap rate
- Greater responsibility with taxpayer dollars
- Work on the issues with the fire department
- Let the departments operate themselves under the proposed budget and stop getting involved with every little thing
- Have more people understand what is needed for the life safety of our kids
- Too many bosses. The district should have a paid chief, who reports to the district.

Please give additional input that hasn't been covered:

- We have a body with three heads; we need to undo the nonprofits and have a district with one head
- Some of the survey questions are asking you to pick the less negative answer.
- Having a paid department will keep us as residents in a better state of mind knowing that the highest quality of service is being provided.
- The community is ready for a fully paid fire/EMS department. If the two departments were joined together, there is enough money to support fully paid firefighter and EMTs. The level of service has gone down and it's starting to show in the community.
- Reading the newspaper on a regular basis. The district is not supportive of having paid staff. I would have my taxes increased in order to have better service in my need of an emergency.

Please tell us about yourself:

- 2 firefighters
- 2 EMT/paramedics
- 17 Key Largo residents
- 18 Key Largo taxpayers
- 13 voters registered in Key Largo
- 5 Key Largo property owners who reside elsewhere
- 1 district board member (Bob Thomas)
- 0 fire department or ambulance corps board members
- Retired police officer

- Retired firefighter from Palm Beach; had combination departments in my day and they still have volunteers. Fire departments run more smoothly with structure and discipline.
- Retired firefighter/paramedic

How many district meetings have you attended in the last year?

42% 1-5

32% None

16% 6-10

11% 11 or more

Tell us why you attended meetings.

69% I want to see what's going on

53% It's important for me to see how my tax dollars are being spent

39% There was something important on the agenda.

Tell us why you didn't attend meetings.

83% Work schedule conflicts

33% Family commitments

17% Community commitments conflicts

Additional comments:

- I'm satisfied with the way things are going.
- Like all other political bodies in Monroe County, they have all the answers so why bother?
- We elect and trust the commissioners to do what they need to do.

Do you have in your home or business any of the following:

- 100% fire extinguisher
- 84% smoke detector

Would you be interested in taking the following training:

- 71% Emergency planning in case of a house fire
- 65% CPR
- 59% First aid

- 41% Hurricane preparedness

Additional comments:

- Rope rescue
- There courses are available elsewhere; why spend money on duplication?
- No

Do you discuss fire and emergency medical safety with your children, family or employees?

- 93% Yes
- 7% No

Does your home or business have a fire evacuation plan?

- 94% Yes
- 6% No

Do you use the district's website?

- 67% Yes
- 33% No

Additional comments:

- No time
- Not kept up to date
- I ask board members my questions
- I don't like it
- Not maintained and NOW dangerous
- I went on there to do this survey and it looks like it was built by a person who had no idea what they were doing. The site doesn't work at first until you force your way into it from you browser. You could build a much nicer, much better website that is user friendly because this one is not.

If yes, did you find the site useful and why?

- 53% Yes
- 46% No

Additional comments:

- It works but is outdated and the links to documents don't always work
- Survey was not easy to find
- It keeps me informed (3)
- Hard to use (3)
- Poor website structure
- I read the consultant's report on the website and none of the recommendations given are followed.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide exceptional fire protection and emergency medical services efficiently and cost-effectively without compromising the health and safety of residents or personnel.

Core purpose: Our reason for being Examples

3M

To solve unsolved problems innovatively

Mary Kay Cosmetics

To give unlimited opportunity to women

Nike

To experience emotion of competition, winning and crushing the competition

Disney

To make people happy

Wal-Mart

To give ordinary folk the chance to buy the same things as rich people

Sony

To experience the joy of advancing and applying technology for the benefit of the public

Boeing

To eat, breathe, and sleep the world of aeronautics

GE

To improve the quality of life through technology and innovation

3M

Our real business is solving problems

Citicorp

To be out front, such as the biggest, best, most innovative, most profitable

Google

To do no evil

Merck

To preserve and improve human life

What is *our* board's core purpose?

Choose a facilitator, a recorder, and a reporter.

Individual Assignment (5 minutes)

Read the examples of Core Purpose on the reverse side of this page. Take five minutes to reflect on what purposes are truly reflective of why we exist, *our reason for being*.

Group Assignment (15 minutes)

In round robin fashion, share your Core Purpose statement with other group members. Then as a group, decide on ONE final purpose you want to nominate to the entire group. Record your work on the flip chart and be ready to report out.

Our Core Purpose is to:

Core values and guiding principles
"The line we will not cross"
"Values don't change, plans do"
"All decisions are measured against our values"

Examples

Nordstrom

- ❑ Service to customers
- ❑ Hard work and individual productivity
- ❑ Never being satisfied
- ❑ Excellence in reputation, being part of something special

Sony

- ❑ Elevation of Japanese culture and national status
- ❑ Being a pioneer, not following others
- ❑ Doing the impossible
- ❑ Encouraging individual ability and creativity

Disney

- ❑ No cynicism
- ❑ Nurturing and promulgation of wholesome American values
- ❑ Creativity, dreams, and imagination
- ❑ Fanatical attention to consistency and detail
- ❑ Preservation and control of Disney magic
- ❑ Everyone is part of the show

Amazon.com

- ❑ We start with the customer and work backward.
- ❑ If you don't listen to your customers, you will fail. But if you only listen to your customers, you will also fail.
- ❑ We live in a time of unheralded revolution and insurmountable opportunity – provided we make every minute count.
- ❑ Ownership matters when you're building a great company. Owners think long-term, plead passionately for their projects and ideas, and are empowered to respectfully challenge decisions.
- ❑ When making a hiring decision, we ask ourselves, "Will I admire this person? Will I learn from this person? Is this person a superstar?"
- ❑ We spend money on things that really matter and believe that frugality breeds resourcefulness, self-sufficiency and invention.

What are *our* core values and guiding principles?
Choose a facilitator, a recorder, and a reporter.

Individual Assignment (5 minutes)

Read the examples of Core Values on the reverse side of this page. Take five minutes to reflect on what values are truly core to the identity of your board.

These behaviors and beliefs make up the identity of the organization. They are the values that we uphold even when the going gets tough. Together they constitute the core ideology of the organization.

Write down the list of values that you believe fit these criteria.

Group Assignment (25 minutes)

In round robin fashion, share your list of core values. Then as a group, decide on a final list that you want to nominate to the entire group. Record your work and be ready to report out.

Developing the Fire District's Key Focus Areas

Each group chooses a facilitator, a recorder, and a reporter

Individual Assignment (5 minutes)

Take five minutes to reflect on what you think are the district's focus areas and the relevant issue statement (the problem) that need to be dealt with.

Write down the 3 most important focus areas and their issue statement...be as concise and clear as possible.

Small Group Assignment (15 minutes)

Compare individual top 3 lists and reach consensus on the top 3 for the group.

Whole Group Assignment (20 minutes or as long as it takes)

We will work to consensus on the board's top 3 focus areas and their issue statement. We will multi-vote the top 3 issues for the board to adopt.

Individual Focus Areas/Issue Statements

1) Focus Area:

Issue Statement:

2) Focus Area:

Issue Statement:

3) Focus Area:

Issue Statement:

Consensus for Group’s Top 3 Focus Areas/Issue Statement

1) Focus Area:

Issue Statement:

2) Focus Area:

Issue Statement:

3) Focus Area:

Issue Statement: