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## Fanning Springs interim fire chief gives first monthly report - 20 calls missed

Story and Photo By Jeff M. Hardison © Dec. 14, 2016 at 4:47 p.m.

FANNING SPRINGS -- Fanning Springs Interim Fire Chief Roy Bass presented his first monthly report to the Fanning Springs City Council on Tuesday night, and he had to say there were 20 missed calls.



### Chief Roy Bass speaks to the Fanning Springs City Council.

That means Chiefland Fire Rescue or some other department had to respond.

Of the 52 calls this month, Chief Bass said, 27 were medical; seven were motor vehicle accidents; nine were brush fires; one was a structure fire; there were three fire alarms; one was a landing zone standby; two smoke investigations; and two special events that were attended by the department.

There were no injuries to fire personnel or damage to firefighting apparatus, Chief Bass said.

“Unfortunately,” he said, “there were 20 calls missed for fire service. With a volunteer fire department, everybody has a job. Everybody can’t respond all of the time.”

Former Fire Chief Ron McQueen who retired and former Deputy Fire Chief Elania Spain resigned, he said. They responded to many, many calls.

Chief Bass said he has a full-time job with the Dixie County Fire Services as a lieutenant, and he is on four 48-hours and then off for 24. He has been at Fanning Springs during his whole off time, since accepting the appointment to be interim fire chief by the mayor in early December.

The interim chief said that when the time comes for the city to accept applications to be the next fire chief, he intends to submit his application for that position.

In the meantime, he is seeking to recruit volunteer firefighters to assure better percentages of response to calls for help.

There are currently 12 members on the Fanning Springs Fire Department, Chief Bass said.

The chief said there is a need for some new fire gear, partly because some of it will be going beyond the date of it being able to be safely used, and some new gear is needed because some of the new volunteers are bigger than the current sets of gear.

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Chief Bass said he is updating records to assure the city is in compliance with the state.

Training for members is being addressed so that everyone can remain up to date in that regard.

The recent daylong and evening event for the Chamber of Commerce attracted hundreds of people to Fanning Springs and there were no injuries, the chief said. One man with breathing issues needed help returning to his car after walking a distance to see boats on the river in the parade.

The interim chief said he plans to speak with Chiefland Fire Chief James Harris about protocols between the two departments in regard to providing aid to each other.

Bass said “one of the demons of a volunteer service is the volunteers.” If the firefighter cannot dedicate the time, then he or she cannot respond at a particular time.

The chief said there are coastal communities in Dixie County where there is a shortage of volunteers and this creates a problem for quick response 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week.

The only way to have complete coverage all of the time, he said, is for a city to have a paid, professional fire department.

Former Deputy Chief Spain said she has worked with Chief Bass in Dixie County. She considers him to be an excellent firefighter and leader, and she urged the people of Fanning Springs to continue to help the fire department, even though she chose to separate from serving as its volunteer deputy chief.

## IN OTHER NEWS

In other news, Mayor Trip Lancaster announced that a 107-room hotel is going to be built in Fanning Springs.

Mayor Lancaster believes groundbreaking on the new hotel will be within the first six months of 2017. He thinks this will offer even more opportunities for people who enjoy vacationing in the area to stay in the area.

A resident of Fanning Springs said she would like to see the recycling trailer from Levy County returned.

As a result of people dumping household garbage in the trailer and not using it for recycling only, that trailer has been removed.

The City of Fanning Springs does not have mandatory garbage service like Bronson, Cedar Key, Chiefland, Inglis, Williston and Yankeetown.