

Pender County Emergency Services Merger

September-October 2025

Presentation begins at 7pm

Overview

- ◇ What does Emergency Services look like now?
- ◇ What is a merger?
- ◇ How did we get here?
- ◇ What does the process look like?
- ◇ How does this affect first responders?
- ◇ What does this mean for you?

What do
services look
like now?

Fire	Municipal departments Non-profit departments NC Forestry
EMS	Pender EMS & Fire Union Rescue
Law Enforcement	Sheriff's Office Municipal police departments NC Highway Patrol
Other	E-911 Emergency Management Fire Marshal's Office

What is a merger? How did we get here?



What is a merger?

When two or more organizations agree to go forward with a shared vision to create a single new organization

This merger is between:

- Pender County
- Pender EMS & Fire
- Penderlea Fire Department
- Maple Hill Fire Department



How did we get here?

Discussed since 2013

Transition from volunteer to paid/career staffing

Fire/EMS tax does not cover all services

The Process

Who is involved in making decisions?

Staff from each agency
NC Fire Chief Consulting guides conversations
Boards for each have final approving authority



What does the process look like?

We agree on a shared vision (MOU)
Task list items/ workgroups
Final merger agreement
Implementation

Timeline



How does this affect First Responders?



Pender EMS & Fire Staff

Become County employees

Competitive pay/ benefits based on surrounding agencies

Longevity for years of service to Pender County



Volunteers

Keep all qualified volunteers (Fire & EMS)

Determining incentive/ role of associations

How does this affect you?



Will my ISO
(Insurance) rating
change?



Will there still be a fire
truck/ ambulance at
the station near me?



What will service
delivery look like post
merger?



How will information
be shared moving
forward?



What is this going to
cost? Are my taxes
going up? (next slide)

Costs

Staff Salary & Benefits

- \$328,806 increase in salaries per year
- \$1,556,045 increase in retirement/ benefits per year

Debts & Liabilities

- Total debt assumed is \$14,489,878- This is already paid in the annual budget.
- Assets- Debt = \$986,354
- THIS NUMBER DOES NOT ADD ANY NEW DEBT SERVICE.

Asset costs

- IT network equipment- \$95,000 one-time cost
- IT network, software licensing, connectivity, timekeeping software- \$250,000 per year

Operational

- Fire, EMS, Special Operations, Training- already paid for in the annual budget

Legal costs

- NC Fire Chief Consulting- \$50,000 one-time
- Deeds & Titles- \$50,000

Capital

- New Fleet Garage for County/ Emergency Services/ Schools- \$15,000,000
- This would have been 3 separate capital expenditures.

Cost Summary

	Additional Recurring /Annual costs	One-Time Costs	Notes
Personnel	\$1,875,675		Additional Full Time Salary & Benefits; Salary increases & additional retirement contributions
Debts & liabilities			Already paying debt service in annual budget
Assets	\$250,000	\$95,000	IT services; timekeeping software; Physical security with cameras; software licenses
Operational			Already paying utilities, vehicle maintenance, facilities maintenance in annual budget
Legal		\$100,000	NC Fire Chief Consulting/ Deeds & Titles
Capital		\$15,000,000	*Fleet Garage needed for 3 entities- County, Emergency services, Schools
TOTAL	\$2,125,675 Additional funding in the annual budget	\$195,000 One-time cost \$15,000,000 capital expense	

*PEMS&F 2024 Audit, projected to 2025, assumes no changes

Assets	Amount	Debt Type	Amount
Property & Equip	19,506,615	Long Term Debt	4,337,416
Finance Leased	10,815,525	Finance Leases	9,074,418
Operating Leased	160,496	Operating Leases	46,321
Accum Depreciation	(14,889,680)	Accrued Vacation	1,031,723
Accum Amortization	(116,724)	DBP (Funded)	-
Totals	15,476,232	Totals	14,489,878
		Assets - Debt	986,354

	2024 Audited	2026 Budgeted	
Total Fund Balance	71,102,435	Assume No Change	71,102,435
Available FB	61,889,265	Assume No Change	61,889,265
GF Exp & Transfers	122,544,070	16,474,175	139,018,245
Available FB %	50.5%		44.5%

Full-Time Salary		Before	After	
EMS		4,554,603	4,931,869	
Fire		6,221,886	6,507,471	
Admin		1,195,841	1,210,359	
Logistics		506,436	527,331	
Training		211,162	223,255	
Total Annual Salaries		12,689,928	13,400,285	329,660

Adj for 3% COLA

Benefit Estimates		Before	After	
Health Insurance (Annually)		8,131	8,088	
		1,731,920	1,722,744	(9,176)

Taxes & Retirement		Before	After	
Medicare	1.45%	184,004	194,304	
FICA	6.20%	786,776	830,818	
401K	6.00%	761,396	335,007	
ORBIT	0.00%	-	1,928,301	
Total Estimated Cost		1,732,175	3,288,430	1,556,255

Total Estimated FT S&B 16,154,023 18,411,459 1,876,739

This total does not include S&B information for part-time employees. Nor does it include and training, association or certification cost. The total is an estimate based on current FT positions (including vacant) and the PC Estimated/ HR Suggested Salaries.

Before	After	Increase
51,757	56,044	4,287
60,407	63,179	2,773
91,988	93,105	1,117
84,406	87,889	3,483
70,387	74,418	4,031

(21,025)	(8,640)	12,385
(1,626)	(300)	1,326

(864)	(912)	(48)
(3,694)	(3,901)	(207)
(3,575)	(3,575)	-

(8,132)	(8,387)	(255)
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Family Plan	Before	After	Increase
EMS	22,599	39,017	16,417
Fire	31,249	46,152	14,903
Admin	62,830	76,077	13,247
Logistics	55,248	70,861	15,613
Training	41,229	57,391	16,161

Employee Only	Before	After	Increase
EMS	41,998	47,357	5,358
Fire	50,648	54,492	3,844
Admin	82,229	84,417	2,188
Logistics	74,647	79,201	4,554
Training	60,629	65,731	5,102

Add'l Retire
10.89%
7,051

EMS & Fire Revenues

				General Fund Contribution	
	2026 Tax Rate	Value of 1 Penny	TOTAL Budgeted Tax Revenues	2026 PROPOSED	2026 Total
EMS	0.0925	1,018,330	9,419,554	-	9,419,554
Fire Districts					
Sloop Point	0.0950	251,348	2,387,810	2,487,811	4,875,621
Hampstead	0.0950	152,673	1,450,389	1,511,132	2,961,521
Scotts Hill	0.0950	41,209	391,484	407,879	799,363
Long Creek Grady	0.1100	49,240	541,643	564,327	1,105,970
		494,470	4,771,326		
Pender EMS & Fire		1,512,800	14,190,880	4,971,148	19,162,028
<i>To Pender EMS & F</i>	0.0300	10,020	100,197	542,803	643,000
<i>To Penderlea</i>	0.0700	23,379	233,792	-	233,792
Penderlea	0.1000	33,399	333,989		
<i>To Pender EMS & F</i>				643,000	643,000
Maple Hill	0.0700	10,949	76,645	61,355	138,000
<i>To Pender EMS & F</i>				643,000	643,000
Penderlea-Shiloh	0.1000	13,628	136,277		136,277
Atkinson	0.0800	24,198	193,586	138,000	331,586
Rocky Point	0.1000	77,567	775,669	150,000	925,669
Pender Central	0.1100	38,491	423,404	50,000	473,404
Northeast Pender	0.1000	32,389	323,891	300,000	623,891
Penderlea Duplin	0.0700	2,833	19,833	-	19,833
Total			16,474,175	7,499,307	23,973,481
Pender EMS & Fire Total			14,291,077	6,799,951	20,584,305

County Tax Rate	0.7375	Fire Levy	7,054,621
EMS Tax Rate	0.0925	GF Contr to Fire	7,499,307
Avg Fire Tax Rate	0.0938	Total Fire	14,553,928
	0.9238		



Questions