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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 25, 2009

St. Lucie County Fire District Approves 2009-2010 Budget

Fire District Total Budget down by $11 million – Tax Rate Stays the Same

St. Lucie County, FL –
During its second and final public hearing on the budget on September 23, 2009, the Fire Board of Commissioners voted to freeze the St. Lucie County Fire District's 2009-2010 millage rate at $2.20 per $1,000 of taxable value. The Fire District also set a streamlined 2009-2010 general operating budget at $63.3 Million, which was down from $63.8 Million last year.

"The Fire Board is pleased to have been able to hold the line on the tax rate for the third consecutive year despite the significant reduction in property values," explained Fire Board Chairman Doug Coward. "This was made possible due to the hard work of the fire district staff and their willingness to voluntarily take pay freezes this fiscal year. The Fire Board is fully aware of the difficult economic times our community is facing and we have done our part to promote greater efficiencies and reduce costs, while simultaneously sustaining a high level of fire and emergency service."

The Fire District and IAFF Local 1377 agreed to renegotiate the financial terms of the Fire Union's collective bargaining agreement, and have postponed for a year the currently approved cost of living increases for all Fire District employees. As a result, the Fire District realized savings exceeding $2.7 Million over the next three years.

"Our troops worked diligently to make this budget happen. The collective efforts of our system, efficiency in operations and going to our reserve fund were what the making of this fiscal year's budget took. Our employees understood, felt and recognized the challenges that their community is facing and overwhelmingly took the necessary action to help their community", states Fire Chief Ron Parrish