

Avery County Fire Association has been promised a revised contract- and firefighters all over Avery County are relieved to hear the controversy may soon be over.

A Monday meeting allowed fire chiefs to approach the County Attorney with possible word changes in the contract- none of which the Attorney objected to. From here, a new draft should be approved by the Fire Commission. Sources say county phone surveys are underway that will help gather firefighters' individual opinions on contract issues.

Fire Association President Junior Sluder wants time to make sure all the kinks have been worked out before the final contract is signed.

"By the time we get it back, we need a few days to see what it is and get together," he said.

He hopes that when the Association meets on September 6, chiefs will be ready to sign a new contract.

The initial deadline to sign fire service contracts was July 1. The rebellion of several fire departments has caused quite a bit of controversy. Executive officers of the Association released a [statement](#) earlier this week to address the conflict- and it is available on www.goblueridge.net