

Minutes for the Meeting of
the Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District Board of Commissioners

July 24, 2024 10:00 AM
Diamondhead Beach Resort
2000 Estero Boulevard

In attendance: Chairman John Bennett, Vice-Chairman Larry Wood, Secretary/Treasurer Jim Knickle, Commissioner Jacki Liszak, Commissioner Ron Fleming, Fire Chief Scott Wirth, Finance Director Jane Thompson, Fire Official Jennifer Campbell and District members.

Via phone: Attorney Andrew Salzman

1. **Meeting Called to Order** 10:05am
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Adoption of Agenda** [Discussion/Approval]

Commissioner Liszak motioned to approve the agenda, Commissioner Wood seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

4. **Restate Agenda Items** [Information]
5. **Public Input on Non-Agenda Items** - *none*
6. **Consent Agenda** [Approval]

Items listed are considered routine and action will be taken by one motion; if a Commissioner desires discussion, the specific item will be removed during the Adoption of the Agenda and considered separately.

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 19, 2024
- B. Approval of Checks General Fund 48805-48845 total \$120,746.12
- C. Approval of Checks Capital Improvement Projects Fund 1007-1008 total \$75,302.50

Commissioner Fleming motioned to approve the consent agenda, Commissioner Knickle seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

7. **Unfinished Business**

- A. Contract for Sale of Real Property 3043 Estero Blvd
[Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief With presented information on two bids for the property at 3043 Estero Blvd and opened discussion to the Board on how they would like to proceed.

Commissioner Bennett asked what the original appraisal was, Chief Wirth advised it was originally \$1.4 million.

Commissioner Wood inquired where the potential swap property was located for one of the bids, Chief Wirth answered it is located on San Carlos Blvd close to Station 32.

Per Attorney Salzman we can counter the two respondents or list the property on the market again.

The Commissioners expressed their opinions on counter offering and re-listing. The District's realtor Dan Barrile advised on the appraisal amount and the real estate market on the beach with the current appraisal estimated at \$1.2 million.

Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve Chief Wirth to counter offer both parties for the current appraisal value with a time frame of 14 days and if a counter offer is not accepted within that time frame the property will be re-listed. There was no public comment and the motion passed 5-0. Was there a second?

B. Update on Land and Facilities Projects [Information/Discussion]

The District closed on the Shrimp Boat Lane property Friday, July 19th and Chief Wirth is working on getting a surveyor for the property.

The new Station 31 rebuild is moving along and permit review is currently underway.

The District is on track for an October 2024 ground breaking.

Station 32's elevator is currently being replaced and the generator at Headquarters will begin replacement next week.

The Board had no questions.

C. Approval of Revised Merger Contract [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth presented changes to the merger feasibility study contract following Iona-McGregor Fire District's Board Meeting.

Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve the revised contract, Commissioner

Knickle seconded the motion. There was no public input and the motion passed 5-0.

8. New Business

A. Resolution 2024-03 Amend the Budget for Fiscal Year

2023/2024[Information/Discussion/Approval]

Jane Thompson presented updated fiscal budget numbers per the audit to adjust the estimated balance carried forward. She proposed that the difference between the budgeted number and the actual number be put toward the Station 31 construction project.

The Commissioners had no questions.

Commissioner Knickle motioned to approve Resolution 2024-03. Commissioner Fleming seconded the motion. There was no discussion or public input. The result of roll call vote was as follows:

Wood - Yes

Knickle - Yes

Fleming - Yes

Liszak - Yes

Bennett – Yes

The motion passed 5-0.

B. Presentation of 2024/2025 Capital Replacement Plan

[Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth presented his capital replacement plan for the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Fleming asked about the replacement of the beach front ambulance.

Chief Wirth advised the District is waiting on the construction of Station 31 to make sure we have storage room for that equipment.

C. Approval to Replace Overhead Doors at Station 32 [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth presented information on the overhead door replacement at Station 32.

Commissioner Liszak motioned to approve replacement of the overhead doors at Station 32 for a total of \$51,904 and an additional 5% as quoted. Commissioner Bennett seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

D. Set 2024/2025 TRIM Rate [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth was pleased to share that he is proposing lowering the TRIM rate from the current 2.9851 millage rate to 2.8. The Board briefly shared their opinions and Commissioner Bennett reiterated to the community that if passed today 2.8 mills would be the maximum millage rate for the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve the Trim rate of 2.80 mills, Commissioner Knickle seconded the motion.

John King provided public comment, thanking the board for their approval of the new TRIM rate on behalf of the tax payers.

The motion passed 5-0.

E. Set Date for Tentative Budget Hearing – September 12th at 5:15pm

[Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth presented the suggested date of September 12th for the tentative budget hearing at 5:15pm.

Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve the date and time and Commissioner Liszak seconded, the motion passed 5-0.

F. Fire Chief Annual Performance Appraisal [Information/Discussion/Approval]

The Board went through the evaluation form and shared their scores and comments for each performance section. Chief Wirth received a total score of 105 of a total maximum score of 105.

The Board discussed wage adjustments in accordance with surrounding areas.

Commissioner Fleming believes Chief Wirth is deserving of an increase and is open to the Board's suggestions.

Commissioner Liszak asked what the Chief wants. Chief Wirth advised he is comfortable where he is currently and asked that the Board table pay and benefits until negotiations are done with Districts 3 and 15 so changes can be across the board.

Commissioner Wood appreciates Chief Wirth's input and is open to waiting on negotiations.

Commissioner Knickle thinks is it wise to wait on negotiations but also agrees Chief Wirth should get a raise.

Commissioner Bennett motioned to postpone the conversation of a pay increase pending completion of negotiations and to apply any changes retroactively to the date of this meeting, Commissioner Wood seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

9. **Fire Chief Remarks** [Information/Discussion]

The District received another reimbursement from FEMA and to date has received approximately \$2.5 million in reimbursements. Chief Wirth thanked Jane for all her hard work.

Chief Wirth introduced two new employees Alex Krause and Diego Castillo. Alex Krause will be in fire school for the next four months but is already a credentialed paramedic with Lee County.

Chief Wirth has been sharing the Urban Search and Rescue training journey of three District employees over the past few years. All three district members did well in their interviews and will be moving forward with USAR. He thanked Chief Brunson for his leadership in training and guidance and he extended his congratulations to Firefighter Gaudet, Firefighter Llaser and Firefighter Miranda on being the newest USAR team members.

The District had two negotiations with DVP Jennifer Gordon for the upcoming contract. DVP Gordon recently retired and the role has been assumed by Lt Williamson.

Chief Wirth shared the following June anniversaries:

Director of Finance Jane Thompson 18 years

Firefighter Adames 10 years

10. Commissioners Remarks [Information]

Commissioner Liszak thanked everyone for a great meeting. Appreciates the team and everyone in the field.

Commissioner Fleming has shared all he has to share.

Commissioner Wood had nothing further to share.

Commissioner Knickle thanked Chief Wirth again for all his work.

Chairman Bennett reiterated the previous sentiments and indicated how impressed he is with the District as a whole.

11. Adjournment 11:36am