

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

March 26, 2025 5:00PM  
Diamondhead Beach Resort  
2000 Estero Boulevard

In attendance: Chairman John Bennett, Vice-Chairman Jim Knickle, Secretary/Treasurer Ron Fleming, Commissioner Jacki Lyszak, Commissioner Keran Farrell, Fire Chief Scott Wirth, Attorney Andrew Salzman and District members.

Note: Commissioner Knickle arrived late due to traffic and was absent for the first 2 votes.

1. Meeting Called to Order 5:05 PM
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Adoption of Agenda [Discussion/Approval]

Commissioner Fleming motioned to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Lyszak seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

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 January 22, 2025
- B. Approval of January General Funds Checks 49167-49212 total \$217,504.96.
- C. Approval of January Capital Project Checks 1021-1022 total \$71,741.50.
- D. Approval of February General Funds Checks 49213-49246 total \$122,146.82.
- E. Approval of February Capital Project Checks 1023-1024 total \$297,628.68.

Commissioner Lyszak motioned to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

7. Recognition of First Responders to 3-18-25 Incident

Chief Wirth recognized the Town of FMB employees, off duty Naples firefighters, LCSO and District crew members involved in a successful CPR rescue at Margaritaville. Tom Torgeson with Margaritaville shared a few words and his gratitude for first responders who helped that day. Commissioner Bennett shared the importance of an AED in this situation and reminded everyone of the District's discount program. Commissioner Fleming thanked everyone involved and shared he is proud to be part of this organization.

Chief Wirth shared information on CPR, fire safety, and AED classes offered by the District.

8. Chief's Report [Information/Discussion]

Chief Wirth shared his quarterly Chief's report. The District has been busy hiring multiple positions and candidates are currently going through the vetting process.

He thanked members of the community for participating in the merger study and thanked Beach Radio for broadcasting the meeting.

The District recently participated in the Shrimp Boat Parade, the St. Patrick's Day parade, and the grand reopening of the Library.

Construction of Station 31 is progressing and is visible from Estero Boulevard.

Finance has finalized paperwork with FEMA for Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

Chief Wirth provided an overview of the hiring process and the current status of open firefighter positions as well as the Assistant Chief's positions.

The District is in the process of purchasing new laptops and upgrading the Telestaff staffing program.

District members attended the Orlando Fire Conference in February.

Departments around the County have been completing high rise training through out the month in a building that is set to be demolished. Chief Wirth shared a summary of training and response data.

The Life Safety team inspection volume has been consistent and is gradually increasing, however, permit numbers have decreased over the past year. External plan review has increased over the past year. The Life Safety team has been completing AED and CPR classes.

Sunset Beach Tropical Grille is in review, as well as Bowditch Park and First Baptist Church.

Chief Wirth recognized the following anniversaries:

Engineer Villa – 19 years

Engineer Sturtevant – 19 year

Firefighter Llaser- 9 years

Firefighter Montenegro - 8 years

Fire Official Campbell - 6 years

Life Safety Specialist Cox- 5 years

IT Administrator Craig Kaufmann- 3 years

9. Unfinished Business

A. Update on the Progress of the High Water Vehicle [Information/Discussion]

Chief Wirth gave an update on the purchase of a high water vehicle. The cost of this vehicle will be around \$300,000.

B. Update on Hiring of Firefighters, HR Manager, and AC of Training [Information/Discussion]

Chief Wirth shared the current progress of hiring for multiple positions. The District extended offers to two Assistant Chief candidates and Assistant Chief Armiger will be promoted to District Chief.

The Human Resources candidate is currently undergoing background checks and is anticipated to start mid-April.

Commissioner Knickle arrived at 5:34pm. Commissioner Bennett made a note to avoid an evening meeting in March next year due to heavy seasonal traffic.

10. New Business

A. Draft Ordinance [Information/Discussion/Public Input/Approval]

The State of Florida passed the HALO law in January. After consulting with Attorney Salzman, the District will be designating public and non public areas within District facilities. Commissioner Bennett shared his agreement with the resolution in order to protect personnel.

Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve resolution 25-01 Public Access, Commissioner Knickle seconded the motion. There was no board discussion or public comment.

The motion passed 5-0.

11. Fire Chief Remarks [Information/Discussion]

Chief Wirth highlighted that there were strong internal candidates in the hiring process and thanked them for applying for the position of Assistant Chief of Training, Education and

Safety. He is pleased to share that a lot more District members are taking advantage of training opportunities.

12. Commissioner Remarks [Information]

Commissioner Farrell is in awe of those involved in the 3-18-25 rescue. He is interested in the CPR and AED classes that the District provides. He is excited to see the progress of Station 31 and looks forward to participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade.

Commissioner Lyszak thanked everyone involved in the CPR rescue. She extended appreciation to the team for taking advantage of training and furthering their careers and growth.

Commissioner Fleming was happy to recognize those involved in saving a life with CPR. He is happy with the progress of the District since Hurricane Ian. He shared that the National Fire Academy has been closed by DOGE and he hopes it comes back.

Commissioner Knickle agreed that a March 5pm meeting should not be scheduled in 2026. He thanked Engine 33 for their responses at Estero Cove and noted they have done an outstanding job.

Commissioner Bennett shared the board's sentiments on the CPR save and thanked everyone involved. He reiterated the importance of AEDs and encouraged community members to acquire an EAD. He is excited by the progress of Station 31 and to see new hires coming onboard soon.

13. Adjournment 5:51pm