

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

June 25, 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.

1. Meeting Called to Order 5:00pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Board recognized a moment of silence for former Fort Myers Beach Fire Chief Markus who recently passed.

3. Adoption of Agenda [Discussion/Approval]

Commissioner Fleming requested item 8A: Battalion Chief Position be moved to section 9 under New Business.

4. Restate Agenda Items [Information]

5. Public Input on Non-Agenda Items

BC Terry Brunson spoke briefly to the Board and made a proclamation of no confidence for Fire Chief Wirth and Assistant Chief Armiger on behalf of Southwest Florida Professional Firefighters and Paramedics local 1826 and the Fort Myers Beach Fire District.

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 May 28, 2025

B. Approval of May General Fund Checks 49349-49409 Total: \$181,405.94

C. Approval of May Capital Improvement Fund Checks 1035-1044 Total:
\$682,613.13

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

7. Fire Chief Report

Chief Wirth gave an update on the District's hurricane preparedness.

He welcomed and introduced new hires Assistant Chief Sullivan, Firefighter Rillo, Firefighter Prisco, and Human Resources Generalist Mellissa Lucas.

Chief Wirth gave an update on the construction of Station 31.

Chief Armiger recently attended the opening of the new Lee County Emergency Operations Center.

Preparations are underway for the 4th of July parade and fireworks.

The District recently received reimbursement from hurricanes Helene and Milton.

Lee County property appraiser will certify property values on July 1st.

HR Generalist Lucas is preparing grant applications for gear and training.

8. Unfinished Business

A. Purchase of Highwater Vehicle [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth presented information on the purchase of a highwater vehicle.

Commissioner Lyszak motioned to approve the purchase of a highwater vehicle in the amount of \$94,000, Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

9. New Business

A. Painting & Waterproofing- Fire Station 32 [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth presented information for the waterproofing of station 32.

Commissioner Knickle motioned to approved the bid of \$21,600, Commissioner Lyszak seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

B. Fire Station 31- Capital Asset Purchases [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth shared budget information on the capital asset purchases.

Commissioner Farrell motioned to approve \$200,000 in capital assets for Station 31, Commissioner Lyszak seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

C. 2025/2026 Budget Review: Capital Sustainment [Information/Discussion]

Chief Wirth gave an update on the budget.

D. Commissioner Item (Commissioner Fleming): Battalion Chief Position [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Commissioner Fleming discussed the organization of command and his disagreement of removal of the Battalion Chief position.

Chief Wirth shared data and reasoning for the removal of the position.

The board asked follow up questions and discussed the details of eliminating the Battalion Chief position.

The board took a brief break at 6:40pm and resumed at 6:47pm.

The board continued with comments and discussion on the position changes.

Commissioner Fleming made a motion to retain the Battalion Chief position and Commissioner Bennett seconded the motion.

The board had further discussion and shared their thoughts. Commissioner Bennett opened the discussion for public comment.

Community and district members shared their thoughts and opinions on the position changes.

This was a roll call vote; votes were as follows:

Fleming Yes

Knickle No

Farrell No

Liszak No

Bennett No

10. Fire Chief Remarks [Information/Discussion]

Chief Wirth expressed he knows that staff is upset about organizational changes and that it was a difficult decision.

He shared information on the passing of former Fort Myers Beach Fire Chief Markus and his funeral.

11. Attorney Report [Information/Discussion]

Mr. Salzman thanked the board for their handling of the discussion on the Battalion Chief position and for taking everything into consideration. He advised he will keep the board posted on grievances being handled.

12. Commissioner Remarks [Information]

Commissioner Farrell said this was a tough decision but he believes the board made the right decision.

Commissioner Liszak extended condolences to Chief Markus' family. She requested to meet with Chief Wirth regarding some follow up questions on organization changes.

Commissioner Knickle shared that this was not an easy decision and he appreciates the District members who attended the meeting.

Commissioner Fleming stated he stands by his position.

Commissioner Bennett shared appreciation for the conversation and that he is glad for the open communication. He noted he was disappointed in a misleading community hanger that was handed out and requested a follow up notification from the District.

13. Adjournment 7:20pm