

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

April 24, 2024 10:00am
Diamondhead Beach Resort
2000 Estero Boulevard

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

Remotely in attendance via phone: Commissioner Jacki Liszak

1. **Meeting Called to Order** 10:00 am
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Adoption of Agenda** [Discussion/Approval]

Commissioner Knickle motioned to adopt the agenda, Commissioner Fleming 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 February 28, 2024
- B. Approval of February Checks 48652-48673 total \$170,705.26
- C. Approval of March Checks 48674-48712 total \$123,927.98
- D. Approval of Capital Improvement Projects Fund check 1001 total \$6,525.00

Commissioner Fleming motioned to approve and Commissioner Bennett seconded, the motion passed 5-0.

7. **Chief's Report**

Chief Wirth gave a report on the first quarter of the year. Several members participated in professional development in the past few months. Station 31 is coming together and the replacement engine has been ordered. The District opened up applications and is currently evaluating applicants. The property for the new administrative building is moving along. The District will be meeting with representatives from Iona-McGregor Fire District for a feasibility study on the proposed merger.

In March, the District participated in the Shrimp Festival Parade and was present for the

opening of the new Coast Guard building.

The District has been participating in Town safety meetings.

The 75th anniversary celebration and ground breaking event is in the planning stages and will take place in October.

Applications for the firefighter paramedic position closed and applicants were moved through for interviews. Chief Wirth thanked those who participated in interviews.

The District has received reimbursement from FEMA and insurance deductibles. All together the District has recovered almost \$214,000 in the last few months. The District is earning 5.5% interest on invested reserve and surplus funds. All branches participated in budget meetings the past few months and the capital asset inventory was recently completed.

District Operations reports crews have responded to approximately 365 calls from January to March, with two thirds of those calls being run by Station 32. In February, District members received extrication training with the equipment received from the Firehouse Subs grant. Also in February, some members started training for the Blue Card certifications. March began a six month development program with Dr. Pereira. Six District members received new PFAS (carcinogens) free turnout gear and additional members have been fitted to receive new gear. Air pack inventory is being brought up to twenty.

1 minute 25 seconds was the average turnout time for March and call volume for the month of March was 164 indicating a spring break influx.

Chief Armiger went to Tallahassee in January to participate in the Florida Association of Special Districts program.

Life Safety has been busy with new projects and regular inspections. There are a few smaller special events set up and preliminary info for July 4th events are anticipated. Chief Wirth gave a brief overview of the life safety revenue numbers. Development Orders have been received for various sites.

Chief Wirth recognized District anniversaries for the following:

Engineer Andy Villa 18 years

Engineer Tate Sturtevant 18 years

Firefighter Hermes Llaser 8 years

Firefighter Paul Montenegro 7 years

Fire Official Jennifer Campbell 5 years

Life Safety Specialist Chris Cox 4 years

Technology & Security Administrator Craig Kaufman 2 years

Commissioner Fleming asked about the total value of contracts and residential values on the Beach. Chief Wirth answered that the information is not data we have readily on hand but estimates are likely available through the Town. The District should have rough numbers in June and firm numbers in July from Lee County.

8. **Unfinished Business**

A. Update on New Station and Administration Projects [Information/Discussion]

Chief Wirth gave an update on Station 31 including a presentation of the most recent drawings and building plans. Groundbreaking is anticipated in October of this year and opening date toward the end of 2025.

B. Update on Facility Repairs [Information/Discussion]

Overhead doors are being installed at Station 33 and should be complete within the week. Elevators at Headquarters and Station 32 have been pushed into June. The roof replacement and reinforcement at Station 32 is scheduled for May 13th. Transfer switches at all three buildings have been replaced. The generator for headquarters will ship in July and be replaced once it is received.

Commissioner Fleming asked about what mitigation company the District uses. Chief Wirth replied that he is currently organizing repairs and Jane advised we will likely put a contract out to bid.

C. Update on Hiring and Promotions [Information/Discussion]

There were 12 applicants that went through to interviews and four conditional offers were made, three positions will be filled at this time. There were two applicants for the Lieutenant position but both withdrew. Three applications were received for the Battalion Chief position and one withdrew, the remaining two will start testing soon. Commissioner Knickle asked how long the list is good for, Chief Wirth answered it is good for two years.

Commissioner Fleming asked who performs the testing. Chief Wirth replied that the District uses a firm called Fire Act.

The District is looking to promote four Lieutenants and one Driver Engineer as well as hire four new firefighters per shift by June of next year in preparation for the new Station 31.

Commissioner Bennett shared that he would like to see seniority picking station positions.

Commissioner Fleming asked about hiring an HR Director. Chief Wirth shared that after June and July the District will have more budget information and plan for hiring positions.

D. Update on Outstanding Equipment Purchases

Six sets of new PFAS free gear arrived and more will be ordered. The new air packs are ordered, bringing the total to 20. The District applied for an Assistant to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for personal protective equipment to purchase air packs, bottles and masks.

9. **New Business** [Information/Discussion]

A. Biennial Department of Health Review [Information/Discussion]

The District recently underwent review. The representative reviewed personnel records and spot checked service records. The District had an almost perfect inspection and Chief Wirth thanked personnel and Chief Kraus for their hard work and diligence keeping everything up to date.

10. **Fire Chief Remarks** [Information]

The District is slowly seeing progress. New buildings and the hiring process are moving along. The Fire District will be honored by the Chamber of Commerce on Friday, April 26th for outstanding service.

11. **Commissioners Remarks** [Information]

Commissioner Lyszak thanked everyone for a great meeting and shared her excitement to see elevations when she is back. She is looking forward to the anniversary celebration and is honored to award the fire department through the Chamber of Commerce.

Commissioner Fleming shared Commissioner Lyszak's sentiments and said the district has

come a long way and it is good to see where funds are going. He thanked staff and crews for all they do. He reviewed a few personal anniversaries.

Commissioner Knickle thanked everyone for a great meeting and noted that he is excited to see future plans unfolding.

Commissioner Wood shared that he appreciates all the information provided by Chief Wirth on the new station and ongoing repairs.

Chairman Bennett thanked Chief Wirth and noted crews are doing a great job. He is looking forward to seeing individuals promote.

12. Adjournment 10:58am