

MINUTES  
WORK SESSION & MEETING OF THE  
FORT MYERS BEACH FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TIME: 9:30 AM  
DATE: APRIL 13, 2022  
Fort Myers Beach Public Library

IN ATTENDANCE: Chairman Larry Wood, Vice-Chairman Ron Fleming, Secretary/Treasurer John Bennett, Commissioner Jacki Liszak, Commissioner Jim Knickle, Fire Chief Ronald Martin, Attorney Salzman, District Chief of Operations Scott Wirth, Fire Official Jennifer Campbell and District Members.

1. **Meeting Called to Order**

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Adoption of Agenda** [Discussion/Approval]

Motioned by Commissioner Fleming and Commissioner Knickle seconded. Motion approved unanimously 5-0.

4. **Restate Agenda Items** [Information]

5. **Public Input on Non-Agenda Items** – *no public present*

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.

March 23, 2022 Board of Fire Commissioner Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes.  
Commissioner Knickle moved to approve, Commissioner Fleming seconded. Motion unanimously approved 5-0.

7. **Unfinished Business**

A. Life Safety Fee Schedule Review [Information/Discussion]

Chief Martin reviewed supporting information and advised that we have recaptured \$407,305 in fees. Commissioner Liszak noted and clarified that we had flipped user fees and ad valorem projections and commented on fees from previous years. Commissioner Fleming inquired about the fees listed on page 12 for friends and family AED training having no fee but heart saver training has a fee. Chief Martin explained the difference between friends and family and heart saver courses and that the district charges fees for registration of users, books, etc. Commissioner Fleming inquired about page 14, the apparatus standby rate. Chief Martin explained how the apparatus standby fee is applied and when it would be

applicable. Commissioner Lyszak shared that she has received some community feedback on fees and forwarded any concerns to Chief Martin and Fire Official Campbell. Commissioner Knickle noted that life safety is somewhat of a new concept to fire department/districts.

B. Update on Facility Station 31 [Information/Discussion]

Chief Martin shared that after the last meeting, Chief Wirth has returned to the design group with specific directions. We are working on revisions to trim back costs. Finance Director Thompson and Chief Martin are also looking at alternative funding options.

C. Staff Retention/Recruitment Updates [Information/Discussion]

Chief Martin discussed ongoing discussions with staff regarding retention and recruitment. The District is getting ready to execute an agreement with national testing network which will cast a wider net for staff recruitment. Chief Martin thanked the human Resources Manager and Director of Finance for their work on the retention survey. There was a 55% response to the survey, among some concerns were lack of recognition, training, work-life balance, pay, and feedback. Over 50% of the employees do not like the Vector Solutions training software. The survey reflected a high priority for work-life balance, citing mandatory OT as a concern. Chief Martin shared his plans to continue with this survey annually. Commissioner Knickle commented we need to continue with communication to improve in these areas. Chief Martin added there is a national trend of employees transitioning away for the same career. In terms of pay, our District is a little below average and the wage gap is getting bigger with each new contract negotiation. Commissioner Fleming commented that this organization led the nation in mandatory OT and resignations six years ago and has been trying hard to figure out a solution. Commissioner Fleming added that mandatory OT was and continues to be the biggest issue. Chief Martin advised the District is currently down 15-16 Operations employees. The national testing network will allow applicants to complete all testing and select if they want to be considered for Fort Myers Beach Fire. This will allow the District to arrange interviews with a pool of candidates and removes the need for Saturday testing and a written assessment. Candidates pays a small fee to ensure they show up for testing. Commissioner Lyszak commented that she appreciates Commissioner Fleming's input as he has worked in this field.

**8. New Business**

A. BOFC Regular Meeting and Work Sessions Meeting Times

Chief Martin shared some community statistics and possibly changing meeting times; looking to increase participation in the community. Chairman Wood shared that he does not see a reason to have the 5:00 p.m. meetings as other community meeting are in the morning. Chief Martin advised that budget meeting times are set by statute, but would consider 10:00 a.m. meeting times. Chairman Wood also recommend 10:00 a.m., with the exception of September budget meetings.

Attorney Salzman shared that in the past budget meetings were at 5:01 followed by a regular meeting. Chairman Wood advised that they could postpone regular commission meetings if needed. Chief Martin shared that our new IT Administrator will be developing something to have videos posted to the website. Commissioner Lyszak shared that morning meetings are not necessarily best for people who work and that only morning meetings would limit working individuals' attendance. Commissioner Fleming agreed that there should be a couple of night meetings and suggested 6:00pm. The IT Administrator added that he plans to get the meetings streaming on YouTube. Attorney Salzman added that 6:00pm is a common time for evening meetings. Commissioner Knickle agreed what daytime meetings make it difficult for those working and that traffic during season makes getting to the location difficult. Commissioner Bennett liked the idea of 10:00am and 6:00pm meetings. Chief Martin added his goal is to bring back a sense of family and fellowship to the organization. He will update the schedule according to their conversation and present it to the board for consideration.

**B. Collective Bargaining Negotiations with IAFF Local 1826, District 15 [Information/Discussion]**

Chief Martin shared that we are nearing the end of the three year term for District 15 and negotiations can start after May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**C. Introduction of District Policy Manual [Information/Discussion]**

Chief Martin presented the new Lexipol policy manual. Commissioner Bennett asked to have the entire handbook as a document within the Lexipol software. Commissioner Lyszak and Commissioner Knickle agreed advising to put the manual in Lexipol and the board can start reviewing it.

**D. Request for Proposals: District Performance Audit [Information/Discussion]**

Chief Martin shared that the audit is very comprehensive and he would like to start soon, as other Districts expressed it was a time consuming process. The audit is not due until the end of 2023 [post meeting correction - due date is June 30, 2023] and will cost approximately \$25,000-\$50,000. Attorney Salzman shared that he has seen up to \$100,000. Commissioner Knickle inquired if there has been anything from legislation to raise caps on taxes. Attorney Salzman advised he thinks the end goal is to eliminate fire districts from the completed report. Commissioner Lyszak noted that a lot of special districts are rogue, this audit is a way to manage districts that are not following rules.

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

Chief Martin shared that work continues with FGCU. The organization just completed the assistant fire chief assessment for the Assistant Chief of Support Services, and there is

one candidate he will meet with later this week. The Chef thanked the Board and staff for their continued support.

**10. Attorney Report- none**

**11. Commissioners Remarks [Information]**

Commissioner Knickle commented on interactions with district staff, noting that they do a great job serving the community and everyone is exceedingly professional.

Commissioner Bennett mirrored Commissioner Knickles' statement, adding that Life Safety did a great job recouping financials. He added that everyone is doing a great job and that many industries are suffering with staff shortage and mandatory overtime.

Commissioner Lyszak echoed what everyone said, adding she knows guests and visitors to the Beach are thankful.

Commissioner Fleming echoed everyone's statements, adding he is looking forward to the use of iPads for meetings and welcoming IT Administrator Craig.

Chairman Wood echoed everyone's sentiments and that he appreciates the input from the commissioners. Chairman Wood also shared that the Grandview building will be done about this time next year. An Executive session is to follow this meeting.

**12. Adjournment 11:05AM**