

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

December 13, 2023 5:15 pm

Diamondhead Beach Resort

2000 Estero Boulevard

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

1. **Meeting Called to Order** 5:15 pm
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Adoption of Agenda** [Discussion/Approval]

Commissioner Lyszak motioned to adopt the agenda, Commissioner Bennett seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

4. **Restate Agenda Items** [Information]
5. **Public Input on Non-Agenda Items**
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 November 15, 2023
- B. Approval of November checks 48461-48521 total \$213,722.06

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

7. **Fire Chief's Report**

Chief Wirth gave a brief report on the District.

Engineers have begun designs on the new station 31.

Representative Botana proposed a second bill to dissolve the district but then pulled the bill during the November 30th meeting.

The District received draft documents for the State grant for revenue recovery and rebuilding of Station 31.

Administration has been working with consultants to file the annual performance review.

A new Life Safety Specialist candidate has been selected and is expected to start after the holidays.

There have been no major responses or events on the last month, however there have been a few motor vehicle accidents and motorcycle and e-bike accidents. Responses in 2022 compared to 2023 have changed by about 15 seconds, but the District is holding well to the service delivery model.

In November crews completed leadership training with a lecture from Frank Lee from FDNY. Dr. Pereira did a lecture on pharmacology and a Q&A with staff. Chief Armiger worked to bring in peer support counselors to visit with staff.

Life Safety has brought in approximately \$60k so far this fiscal year and large number of plan reviews for neighboring districts.

Chief Wirth recognized 5 year anniversaries of Commissioner Bennett and Commissioner Lyszak and 7 years for Commissioner Fleming.

8. **Unfinished Business**

- A. Update on Progress for Fire Station 31 and Administration [Information/Discussion]
Station 31 design is underway and Chief Wirth will be meeting with architects early next week. The District is working with FEMA to split the public meeting space from the fire station and updating contracts.

The District's backup offer for the Main Street property is still pending and there will be more information available after the 1st of the new year.

- B. Imposed Fire District Merger [Information/Discussion]

The second bill was pulled on November 30th after information was provided to Representative Botana regarding mergers that would make more fiscal sense.

A meeting took place in Tallahassee today, December 13, 2023, that also affected special districts.

- C. Approval of 2024 Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Schedule

No discussion was needed. Commissioner Wood motioned to approve the schedule, Commissioner Bennett seconded that motion and the motion passed 5-0.

9. **New Business**

- A. FMB/Iona McGregor Feasibility Study [Information/Discussion]

When going through Rep Botana's bill Chief Wirth found that it may be more feasible to merge with Iona McGregor. The two districts voluntarily started a study to see if a merger would be beneficial to the taxpayers.

Labor representative Jen Gordon, island resident Ed Moran and retiree Tom Edge shared their thoughts and made offered brief comments.

Commissioner Knickle motioned to approve moving forward with the study, Commissioner Wood seconded this motion and the motion carried 5-0.

B. State Grant for Revenue Recovery and Fire Station Rebuild

[Information/Discussion/Approval]

Chief Wirth presented information on the state grant. Attorney Salzman's office reviewed the grant and advised it was ok to move forward. The architect is currently putting together a timeline for the new station.

Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve, Commissioner Wood seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

10. Fire Chief Remarks [Information/Discussion]

The District recently met with the Town and LCSO for the upcoming New Year's Eve event. Chief Wirth thanked Commissioner Lyszak for her role in the community and all she does. He wished everyone a happy and safe holiday.

10. Attorney Report [Information/Discussion] - *none*

11. Commissioners Remarks [Information]

Commissioner Fleming thanked Chief Wirth and staff for their hard work and wished everyone merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Commissioner Knickle thanked Chief Wirth for his hard work and thanked firefighters for all they have done this year as it has been challenging. He wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Commissioner Lyszak reminded everyone of the Bayside concert series before New Year's Eve. She thanked the firefighters and paramedics for their recent response during the women's festival. She noted that the CVS on island is opening tomorrow (Thursday, December 14th). Commissioner Lyszak closed with thanking the Board for their support and cooperation and wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Commissioner Wood remarked that everyone in room has been affected by the events of this year and 2024 will be a better year. He thanked everyone for their hard work.

Commissioner Bennett thanked everyone for a great meeting, and thanked staff and labor for attending, adding that the Board and chief will fight to keep this district whole. He wished everyone happy and safe holidays.

12. **Adjournment** 6:23pm