

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

July 26, 2023 10:00 am
Diamondhead Beach Resort
2000 Estero Boulevard

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

Via Teams: Commissioner Jacki Liszak

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

Commissioner Wood motioned to approve the agenda, Commissioner Fleming seconded and the motion carried 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 June 28, 2023
- B. Checks approval 48205 – 48255 total \$266,330.87

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

7. **Unfinished Business**

- A. Update on Facilities and Lands [Discussion]

Chief Wirth gave an update on the status of the District property appraisals. Chief Wirth has been working with Attorney Salzman to ensure we can move forward acquiring land. Attorney Salzman provided information regarding requirements as the District moves forward.

- B. Fire Chief Selection Process [Discussion/Action]

The Board met with Chief Wirth individually over the last month. Commissioner Fleming shared he thinks Scott Wirth is an excellent candidate and he endorses his selection. Commissioner Knickle noted that Chief Wirth has the skills and abilities

to do all that the job requires and he supports his selection. Commissioner Wood noted it is beneficial that Chief Wirth has experienced negotiating and collective bargaining from both sides of the table and has directly been involved in land purchases and station design. He added that Chief Wirth has a calm demeanor and he supports his selection. Commissioner Lyszak's computer connection was lost and unable to provide comment. Chairman Bennett shared that over the past several months Chief Wirth has stepped up and he is impressed with Chief Wirth's professionalism. He supports his selection and motioned to authorize Attorney Salzman to negotiate a contract for hire. Commissioner Knickle seconded the motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Lyszak was not connected for this vote. Attorney Salzman shared that he will review and consider contracts from past Chiefs then bring it back to the Board for approval. Chief Wirth thanked the Board for their support and for the opportunity.

8. **New Business**

A. Farmer's Market Review and Inspection Fees [Information/Discussion/Approval]

Linda Miller, owner of Shop Local Productions, shared her permit information and details about her experience both with Fort Myers Beach and other Districts in the area. She asked that the Board reduce or waive her fees for the Farmer's Market.

Commissioner Bennett asked Ms. Miller a few clarifying questions.

Chief Wirth gave a synopsis and details regarding the fee of \$573 for the year and the inspection plan.

The Board of Commissioners gave input regarding the total fees and necessity for inspections. Commissioner Bennett noted that he cannot justify to the tax payers eliminating the fees for this event.

There was no motion to waive the fees and no vote was taken on this matter.

B. Trim Rate [Discussion/Action]

Chief Wirth proposed maintaining the current trim rate of 2.9851.

The Board briefly shared their thoughts on the Trim rate. Chairman Bennett motioned to keep the current trim rate of 2.9851, Commissioner Fleming seconded and the motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Lyszak was not connected for this vote.

C. Set Date and Time for Tentative Budget Hearing [Discussion/Action]

Chief Wirth proposed the date September 13th at 5:15 pm for the tentative budget hearing with no regular meeting to follow.

Commissioner Wood made a motion to approve the September 13th date for the tentative budget hearing, Commissioner Knickle seconded the motion and it carried 4-0. Commissioner Lyszak was not connected for this vote.

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

Chief Wirth thanked Ms. Miller for meeting with him and is confident the District will do all it can to help.

He shared that he appreciates the District's collaboration with the Town in planning for emergency events.

Chief Wirth shared that crews are continuing to do a great job and are always improving and training.

10. **Attorney Report** [Information/Discussion]

No remarks.

11. **Commissioners Remarks** [Information]

Commissioner Wood shared that he appreciates the public input and information he received over the past few weeks and he congratulated the new Fire Chief.

Commissioner Knickle congratulated Chief Wirth and thanked him for a great job. He thanked Ms. Miller and shared he sees the importance of events and that he hopes she understands the Board's view on safety and responsibility to citizens. He also thanked everyone for their input via email.

Commissioner Fleming echoed the sentiments of the rest of the Board. He also received several emails regarding the farmers market but agreed that inspection is necessary for safety. He congratulated Chief Wirth and thanked him for his hard work through the storm even though his own home was impacted.

Commissioner Lyszak was not connected for remarks.

Chairman Bennett congratulated Chief Wirth and shared that he has confidence in the future of the District.

12. **Adjournment** – 11:05am