

**FORT MYERS SHORES FIRE & RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
August 19, 2021  
MINUTES**

**Call Meeting to Order**

Commissioner Apperson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Commissioners Apperson, Ragen, Detzel, and Schneider were in attendance. Also in attendance were Chief Dowaliby, Deputy Chief Rewis, Admin. Assistant Howard, Captain Jones, Engineer Hunt, Firefighters Janey, Glenn, and Salyers, James Shewmaker, Anita Kressel, John O’Grady, Chris Klotz, and Matt Everett. Attorney Pringle participated in the meeting by Zoom.

**Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence**

**Prayer offered by Chaplain Cords**

**Amendments to the Agenda**

1. Old Business: Approval of Article 32: Promotions
2. Old Business: Procedure to fill vacant Commissioner seat
3. New Business: Approve extension of Dr. Rodi’s contract – expired June 30, 2021
4. New Business: Approve renewal of VFIS insurance policies: 1. Auto, Property, Liability, and Excess \$33,275; Cancer \$3,940; Accident and Sickness for Career and Volunteers \$5,954 – Total \$43,169
5. New Business: Approve renewal of Workers Compensation insurance with FMIT \$51,443

**Presentations/Awards**

None

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for July 2021 were presented for approval. Commissioner Ragen made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.

## Treasurer's Report

<b>First Bank - General Fund</b>			
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>July 1, 2021</b>		<b>\$3,790,750.50</b>
<b>Credits</b>		<b>\$28,349.72</b>	
<b>Debits</b>		<b>\$307,618.85</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>July 31, 2021</b>		<b>\$3,511,481.37</b>
<b>First Bank - Impact Fee Fund</b>			
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>July 1, 2021</b>		<b>\$1,459,087.16</b>
<b>Credits</b>		<b>\$150,283.66</b>	
<b>Debits</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>July 31, 2021</b>		<b>\$1,609,370.82</b>
<b>First Bank - CDARS</b>	<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Ending Balance</b>
<b>4 Week Public Funds CD</b>	<b>\$ 1,255,313.78</b>	<b>\$240.72</b>	<b>\$1,255,554.50</b>
<b>13 Week Public Funds CD</b>	<b>\$ 2,500,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$2,500,000.00</b>
<b>26 Week Public Funds CD</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$2,000,000.00</b>
<b>Total CDARS</b>			<b>\$5,755,554.50</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$10,876,406.69</b>

Commissioner Schneider made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.

## Chief's Report

### **Items of Interest**

- The August 5th Special Meeting was cancelled.
- During the month I have heard from two of the people who attended last meeting that are interested in filling Mr. Kimball's position. Mr. Pringle will be at the meeting if you have any questions for him.
- Depending on the outcome of the Union vote we may have a new Article 32 Promotions/Working out of Class for your approval.
- Union negotiations are ongoing for the Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association (VEBA) account.
- Mr. Pringle will update you on the contract with Fortress/Summit.
- Under Old Business we will discuss the 2021/2022 budget.

- I would like to see us approve the budget at 2.25 mils.
- In Old Business I would like to answer any questions that you have concerning the 2021/2022 Budget. You will have Commissioner packets a week ahead of the meeting that will have the budget breakdown included.
- As we have discussed in the past, I would like to hire a Deputy Chief during the 2021/22 budget cycle. There has been a lot of discussion at Board of Commissioners meetings on this topic and much of it has been negative. I am planning to leave sooner than the end of my contract and I think the department needs an outside influence in the Deputy Chief position. I think we need an experienced chief officer that can assume much of Chief Rewis' current responsibilities to help set him up for success as he transitions to Fire Chief. I've talked with Captain Jones and Captain Clouse; neither are interested in the Deputy Chief position. If you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience prior to the meeting.
- Department anniversaries: Captain Swindle (16 years).
- Birthdays to celebrate this month: Firefighter Janey, Firefighter C. Gee, Firefighter Salyers, and Firefighter Mimbs wife.
- Wedding anniversaries: Firefighter A. Gee and his wife 7 years.
- If you have any questions, please come see me.

#### **Meetings Attended**

- FDOT meeting about the sidewalks and widening of SR 80.
- I met with EMS Chief DiCicco
- Countywide Finance Directors meeting (Debbie will give you a synopsis).
- Union negotiations.
- Met with Lee County Permitting requested by an owner trying to get approval for an RV Storage facility
- Chiefs Association meeting
- Officers Meeting

#### **Training Attended**

- We had our first medical in-service with Dr. Rodi.
- Captain Jones will give the Captain's Training Report this month.

Commissioner Detzel made a motion to accept the Chief's Report. Commissioner Schneider seconded and the motion passed

### **Attorney's Report**

- Article 32 amendment has been ratified by the union and now should be ratified by the Board.
- Fortress contract update: I have presented an agreement to Fortress and we are still negotiating with them. There are several provisions that have to be included in the contract due to our use of the P3 process, one of which is the financing portion. The type of financing proposed is a ground lease with a lease-back arrangement. This is a form of financing that has been used for many years and was first used in this area by Bayshore Fire Department for the construction of their current station. The District owns the land and will enter into a ground lease with the lender which gives the lender the right to possess the property while Fortress performs the construction of the station and for the term of the loan. Upon completion the District will then lease back the completed fire station and when the loan is paid off the ground lease will also expire. The Chief and Studio AD will participate in the design process and I would like the final design to come back to the Board for final approval. While the contract is being negotiated Fortress is willing to act "At Risk" in order to begin working on some of the preliminary planning and design processes to allow us to continue making progress. John O'Grady from Fortress confirmed that they would like to continue to move forward on a voluntary basis during the contract negotiation process so they can be ready to get started quickly once that process is completed. There was some further discussion and explanation of the ground lease arrangement.
- Mr. Pringle will be discussed under Old Business.
- Dr. Rodi's contract extension will be addressed under New Business.
- Mr. Pringle's daughter gave birth to his first grandchild!

### **Fire Prevention Division Report**

- Current Construction: Multi-family units in Portico; Publix (Buckingham)
- New Construction: Verandah pool house
- Projects Completed: None to report
- Revenues: The Division billed \$75 for the month.

- Meetings Attended: Lee County Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association; Lee County Fire Arson Task Force; Lee County Communications Committee; Construction meeting with Corradi RV & Boat Storage
- Prevention Education: Incident Inquiries and Internal Formal Investigations class (8 hours); Fire Alarm System Agent class (8 hours)
- Public Education: A-Shift visited the summer camp at Olga Community Center
- Inspections: In June we conducted a total of 19 inspections including 1 re-inspection
- General Information: The volunteers completed their 6-month test and all the current volunteers passed with the best group of testing scores to date. We are reviewing current applications and will be conducting interviews soon to fill five open volunteer positions.

Commissioner Ragen made a motion to accept the Prevention Report. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.

### **Training Report**

- **Daily Training:** Functional training and circuit style workouts; Truck checks; SCBA & Gear checks; Target Solutions
- **Monthly Training:** Ladder inspections and proper use; 1 pre-incident plan per shift; R.I.T. drills; Fire ground skills; Hydraulics/Apparatus; EMT
- **Upcoming Training:** Tice TRT training August 20<sup>th</sup>, Structure Collapse Tech class August 23<sup>rd</sup> – Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, Fire Alarm class August 16<sup>th</sup>
- **Training Needs:** None
- **A-Shift:** Target Solutions: daily workouts: forcible entry door: Probies taught us four classes on four different subjects; pike pole, fire helmet, Maltese cross, fire prevention: tool familiarization: confined space drill: new Publix walk around: monthly ladder training
- **B-Shift:** Pre-plan Fox Plumbing: Firefighters Gee and Janey studying for FO1 exam: Firefighter Schumacher studying for state Pump Operator exam: Engineer Hunt completed his Associate Degree: B-Shift working on acquiring vehicles for shift extrication class for Firefighter Schumacher: Technical Rescue training with Tice on August 20<sup>th</sup> at FPL: hose management and hose deployment drills: three B-Shift members taking Structural Tech class

- **C-Shift:** Pre-plan at River Hall Elementary: Engineer promotional training: Captain promotional training: engine work group: new brush truck build up
- Congratulations to Firefighter David Mimbs for passing his state paramedic test; to Firefighters Paul Salyers and Tommy Shumacher for their state pump operator certification; to Engineer Danny Hunt for completing his Associates Degree.

Commissioner Schneider made a motion to accept the Training Report. Commissioner Ragen seconded and the motion passed.

### **Public Input on Agenda Items**

None

### **Old Business**

1. Update on contract with Fortress Secured: Mr. Pringle asked the Board to confirm their wish for him to continue to negotiate the contract. The Board told Mr. Pringle to continue working with the attorney from Fortress Secured on the contract under the terms he discussed.
2. Approve Article 32: Promotions  
Commissioner Ragen made a motion to approve the updated Article 32: Promotions as presented by the Chief. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.
3. Determine procedure to fill Board of Commissioners seat vacant due to the passing of Commissioner Kimball  
Attorney Pringle explained that the Board has the right to fill the seat by appointing a new Commissioner if they choose. The seat will then be up for election in 2022 to fill the remaining two years of Mr. Kimball's term which ends in 2024, at which time the seat will again be up for election for a four-year term. There is no specific procedure required by current law but the Board may fill the vacancy if they wish. Once common method is to post notice of the vacancy in the newspaper and/or on the website with a deadline and a request for qualified electors of the District to send letters of interest or résumé for consideration by the Board of Commissioners. The Board decided to post notice of the vacancy on the District's website requesting that letters of interest or résumés be returned to the District by Wednesday, September 8, 2021 for consideration at the Board of Commissioners meeting on Thursday, September 16, 2021.

Commissioner Ragen made a motion to place the notice. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.

4. Budget Discussion: Chief Dowaliby quickly reviewed the reasoning for setting the millage at 2.25 mills this year to help move the District forward according to our long-term plans including the second station. The only point of contention has been the addition of a Deputy Chief from outside the department when DC Rewis moves into the Assistant Chief position. Chief Dowaliby has spoken to both Captain Jones and Captain Clouse and they said they are happy where they are right now and Chief believes we need to bring somebody in.

Commissioner Ragen: Agrees that this is the time to bring in someone who can take over some of Bobby's responsibilities to allow him to grow into the Chief's position since Chief Dowaliby is going to be leaving. He thinks this is a good time to move forward if we have the budget for it.

Commissioner Schneider: Does not want to have another permanent chief position and does not want to bring another chief in just to run a paramedic program. He is supportive of the position if the intention is only to have three chiefs during a transition period if Chief Dowaliby is planning to retire. He does not want to have a third chief permanently after Chief Dowaliby leaves.

Chief Dowaliby: The plan is to move Bobby into the Assistant Chief position next fiscal year and bring in a Deputy Chief to take over some of his responsibilities so he can become more involved in the Chief's administrative duties. At the time of Chief Dowaliby's retirement the plan is for Bobby to move into the Chief's position and not to fill the Assistant Chief's position.

Commissioner Schneider: When is Chief Dowaliby planning to leave?

Chief Dowaliby: Current contract term ends at the end of fiscal year 2023, but he believes he will leave earlier than that. He plans to stay at least until Union negotiations are completed next year.

Commissioner Schneider asked about the Deputy Chief job description which was passed in the July meeting. The only dissension about the job description was the paramedic requirement. It was noted that we are one of only a handful of fire departments in Lee County that do not have paramedic programs. The others do not require all their firefighters to be paramedics but there is a minimum number that would be necessary to start a program. The important thing to remember is that putting a paramedic program in place is an eight to ten year process. Chief Dowaliby feels that we need to take the first step now but it is ultimately the Board's decision.

Commissioner Schneider said that his concerns are that none of the guys are required to become paramedics, new employees are not required to be paramedics to be hired, and the third chief position does not become permanent.

Chief Dowaliby asked the Board for direction about whether he should leave the Deputy Chief position in the budget for the preliminary budget hearing.

The Commissioners all agreed that the position would remain in the budget. No action is necessary.

### **New Business**

1. Approve Internal Controls Policy update which puts procedures in place to allow us to pay bills through the bank's online bill payment system.

Commissioner Schneider made a motion to approve the updated policy. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.

2. Approve painting bay walls \$3,400

Commissioner Ragen made a motion to approve the expenditure. Commissioner Schneider seconded and the motion passed.

3. Approve repairs/upgrades to A/C ducting \$4,410

Commissioner Schneider made a motion to approve the expenditure. Commissioner Ragen seconded and the motion passed.

4. VFIS Insurance renewal \$43,169: Includes property, auto, liability, excess, accident & sickness, and cancer policies

Commissioner Detzel made a motion to approve the renewals. Commissioner Schneider seconded and the motion passed.

5. Approve extension of Dr. Rodi's contract which expired June 30, 2021. He has agreed to an extension until the October 1st at no additional cost.

Commissioner Schneider made a motion to approve the contract extension. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.

6. FMIT workers compensation renewal \$51,443

Commissioner Ragen made a motion to approve the renewal. Commissioner Detzel seconded and the motion passed.

**Public Input on Non-Agenda Items:**

Attorney Pringle thanked the Board for the services we provide and he understands the limited resources we have to provide emergency medical services. He asked as a resident of the District that the Board consider providing the most, the best, the highest level of those services that we can with the dollars the tax-payers provide to us.

**Union Report:**

DVP Hunt: We are still negotiating the VEBA. Thanks to the Board for approving Article 32.

**Comments from Commissioners:**

Thanks to the guys. Keep up the good work. Congratulations to Mr. Pringle on his first grandchild. Everybody be safe.

**Adjourn**

Commissioner Detzel made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ragen seconded and the motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.