



Sanibel Fire & Rescue District
Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 @ 9:00 AM

ATTENDEES: Jerry Muench (Chairman)
Bruce Cochrane (Vice Chairman)
Richard McCurry (Secretary Treasurer)

Kevin Barbot (Fire Chief)
John DiMaria (Deputy Chief)
Chris Jackson (Assistant Chief)
Larry Williams (Fire Marshal)
Greta Fulkerson (Administrative Assistant) – *excused*

Tiffany Repecki (Island Reporter)
Richard Cristini (BJM Group)
Jeanine Bittinger (BJM Group)

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Muench. Commissioner Muench led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The minutes of the November 8, 2023, special meeting were reviewed. **A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

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2. Pinning Ceremony

Chief Barbot was pleased to announce three pinnings, Cliff Steele, who would be starting as Lieutenant on January 1st, Captain Mike Martin and Assistant Chief Chris Jackson. Deputy Chief DiMaria completed the swearing-in ceremony.

3. Performance Review Presentation by BJM CPA, LLC

Richard Cristini and Jeanine Bittinger from BJM Group, joined the meeting to present the state-mandated performance review. Richard Cristini was pleased to report that the District was doing an excellent job in implementing its policies in accordance with state law and the charter. Jeanine Bittinger commended the responsiveness of the District, particularly Assistant Chief Jackson and Chief Barbot. Chief Barbot noted that there had been some addendums to the report, he was concerned that additional fiscal responsibilities were stretching staff. Richard Cristini clarified that there was no independent follow-up on any recommendations provided in the report.

Richard Cristini noted that the performance review was unfunded, suggesting that the fee would increase in accordance with the financial position of the state. The recommendation of BJM Group was to repeat the performance review every three years.

The performance review was approved by the Board and would be submitted to the Florida Attorney General's Office and the Florida Auditor General's Office.

Richard Cristini and Jeanine Bittinger left the meeting.

4. Fire Marshal's Report

Fire Marshal Williams highlighted that there had been 69 plan reviews for the month of November and that he had completed 43 building inspections, 40 of which were for the City. Fire Marshal Williams noted that Sanibel Moorings' second floor had been opened up, the electrical inspector would be responsible for the first floor once underground work had been completed.

5. Assistant Chief's Report

I) Equipment Maintenance

Assistant Chief Jackson reported they were dealing with the usual wear and tear on apparatus, the generator for the ladder truck had been removed as it was no longer a requirement. Assistant Chief Jackson was in the process of checking the wiring on the ladder truck, the tip-light would be replaced for LED lighting.

II) Building Maintenance

Assistant Chief Jackson was pleased to report on the donation of five cabinets and countertops from Lowe's, which would be used to rebuild the copy room and front office; Lowe's had also donated the installation. Assistant Chief Jackson reported that a 15,500-watt portable generator had been purchased from Lowe's for Station 172.

III) Station 172 Reconstruction

Assistant Chief Jackson reported that there had been a presentation given to the planning committee, core money and funding for variances had been applied for and unanimously approved by the planning committee with ten recommended conditions. Assistant Chief Jackson anticipated that final meetings would be upcoming. Commissioner McCurry thanked the team for their presentation to the planning committee and ongoing work on the Station 172 rebuild project.

6. Deputy Chief's Report

I) Call Volume

Deputy Chief DiMaria reported that the District had responded to around 878 calls this year, which was still around 54% less than last year. Deputy Chief DiMaria noted that the dynamics of calls were changing, more traumatic injuries were being seen as rebuilding continues on Sanibel, and more helicopter evacuations of casualties were being seen. Call turnout times were improving and were within the 90th percentile, however it was noted that drive times were dependent on traffic, which was becoming more of an issue and was delaying response times particularly at weekends.

II) Medical Training

Deputy Chief DiMaria reported that they had enrolled in the STARS program to enable parents of children who may have special needs, to share their child's care plan with emergency responders should there be a need. There had been a presentation from Lee Health to all three shifts and online pediatric training had taken place.

III) Fire Training

Deputy Chief DiMaria reported that PPE training had taken place and that Sunset Beach Inn would be used for first five-minute response training; Iona and Captiva would join that training as mutual aid districts.

IV) Marine Operations

Deputy Chief DiMaria reported that Upper Captiva had two fires requiring response, both of which were at night. In response to that, boat operator class in-house training was being offered to interested firefighters with regard to becoming a boat operator.

V) CPR Classes

Deputy Chief DiMaria noted these were ongoing, with continued calls for classes.

VI) Short-Term Rentals

Meetings had been held with Condominium Associations with regard to opening short-term rentals, Fire Marshal Williams had presented information with regard to safety codes.

VII) Public Relations

Deputy Chief DiMaria was pleased to note the Annual Banquet had been a success, as was the reindeer run. Meetings were being held with NBC Universal, who were making a film about survivor and rescue services.

7. Chief's Report – Financial Update

I) Summary

Chief Barbot noted that Assistant Chief Jackson had not been fully able to support Fire Marshal Williams yet, Chief Barbot expressed gratitude to Fire Marshal Williams for his continued work and thanked the wider team for their support. Chief Barbot reported that this year, \$5.9 million in Ad Valorem revenue would be collected, of which they would receive 28%; \$1.6 million had been received so far. 100% of the refund for the property tax rebate had been received; a \$670,000 check had been deposited.

II) Station 172

Chief Barbot reported that a meeting had been held with FEMA, Chief Barbot was hoping to finalize the last project worksheet for station 172 within a couple of months. Chief Barbot reported that he had met with legislator lobbyists in Tallahassee regarding the \$2.1 million appropriations request, other funding options were being pursued.

III) Questions and Comments

Commissioner McCurry wondered how long Hagerty Consulting would need to continue to be engaged, Chief Barbot reported that although billing had reduced, the company was still needed for FEMA category Z reimbursements, which covered administrative fees and could not be applied for until all other project worksheets had been closed. Chief Barbot anticipated that Hagerty Consulting fees would be paid as a category Z FEMA reimbursement.

Commissioner McCurry asked whether Hagerty Consulting was being paid a retainer, Chief Barbot responded that they were not. Commissioner McCurry suggested Chief Barbot should investigate the possibility of having the company on a stand by contract should another natural disaster hit the island and make a recommendation to the Board.

Actions:

Chief Barbot to investigate the possibility of paying a retainer to Hagerty Consulting and make a recommendation to the Board.

8. Chief's Report – District Update

Chief Barbot confirmed that he had no District updates to report. Chief Barbot was pleased to announce that Assistant Chief Jackson had achieved twenty years of service, firefighter Arian Moore had achieved seven years, and firefighter Todd Walter had eight years of service.

9. Business Agenda Items

I. Resolution 231201 - Approve the Purchase of a Brush Truck

Assistant Chief Jackson presented the rationale and process, reporting that the District had received six bids. Assistant Chief Jackson explained that scoring for each bidding company had been ranked and Warrior Manufacturing had been the successful bidder, with a cost not to exceed \$195,807. Commissioner Muench noted that it was an investment in something that needed to go forward.

Questions and Comments

Commissioner McCurry noted there were no cannons, he also wondered whether there would be a platform for firefighters to stand on if they needed a higher advantage. Assistant Chief Jackson explained there were restrictions on people riding on the outside of a moving vehicle, however there were areas that could be used to gain height when the vehicle was stationary.

Assistant Chief Jackson recommended that they use \$100,000 of impact fees to fund the vehicle as it was a new asset and not a replacement, the other \$95,807 would come from the general budget.

Resolution 231201 was read, to take effect on December 13, 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to accept Resolution 231201. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

II. Resolution 231202 - Station 172 - Invitation to Bid for Demolition Services

Chief Barbot noted that five bids had been received, the winning bidder was Triple D Land Clearing and Development at an amount not to exceed \$39,488.04.

Chief Barbot read **Resolution 231202**, to take effect on December 13, 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to accept Resolution 231202. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. Resolution 231203 - State Funding for Station 172 Reconstruction

Chief Barbot noted this resolution was in two parts, the first was to accept the funding agreement of \$6 million, the second was to accept stipulations which included not keeping any interest on state funding. Chief Barbot noted there would be a sub account within Bank of the Islands to ensure this was adhered to.

Chief Barbot read **Resolution 231203**, to take effect on December 13, 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cochrane to accept Resolution 231203. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. Resolution 231204 - State Funding for Revenue Loss

Chief Barbot read **Resolution 231204**, to take effect on December 13, 2023. Chief Barbot noted that the funding had to be spent by June 30, 2024.

A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to accept the legislative appropriations funding as set out in Resolution 231204 and to establish a sub account at Bank of the Islands. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

V. Resolution 231205 - Disaster Loan Agreements

Chief Barbot outlined that this was a line of credit for operating expenditures, an amount of \$1,597.423 had been secured.

Chief Barbot read **Resolution 231205**, to take effect on December 13, 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to accept the Community Disaster Loan administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the amount of \$1,597.423 to be used as a revolving line of credit for operating expenditures. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI. Resolution 231206 - Performance Review

Chief Barbot read **Resolution 231206**, to approve that the final document of the state-mandated performance review conducted by the BJM Group to be submitted to the Florida Attorney General and the Auditor General's Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to accept Resolution 231206. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

10. Commissioner Items

Chief Barbot reported that House Leadership was presenting a bill that some were calling the Anti-Special District Bill. Chief Barbot summarized that Sanibel would fall under the category, which added additional criteria for declaring a special district and would require all special districts to have goals and objectives as well as goals and standards, monitored on an annual basis. Chief Barbot would report back in due course.

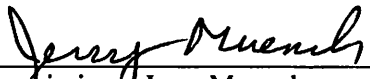
11. Union Items

Nothing to note.

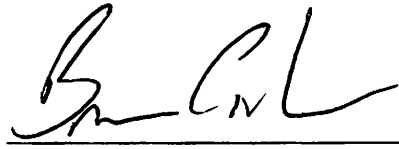
12. Public Input

No members of the public were in attendance.

There being no further business, Commissioner Muench adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM.



Commissioner Jerry Muench



Commissioner Bruce Cochrane



Commissioner Richard McCurry