



Sanibel Fire & Rescue District Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 @ 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)

Todd Walter (Firefighter)
Adam Felix (Firefighter)
Rob Bell (Firefighter)

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

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the April meeting were reviewed. **A motion was made by Commissioner Cochrane to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

2. Fire Marshal's Report

Fire Marshal Williams noted that in April, there had been 107 plan reviews and 164 inspections. Pelican's Roost and the Congregational Church had been CO-ed, and the Lighthouse Cafe, Building 1 of Compass Point, Building 1 of Tarpon Beach, and Building D of Blind Pass opened with three of the seven total to go. The Community Church was around 50% complete. Sundial was confirmed to be looking for their final at the end of the month, but with quite a few inspections to go, and the East End Deli was identified as having been taken over by Dante's Pizza with plans to reopen it as a deli. It was highlighted that the former location of the Three Crafty Ladies and Sanibel Home Furnishings was changing occupancy to become a restaurant in the shopping plaza, and Fire Marshal Williams stated that he still hadn't heard anything back from Bailey's, and while he had been told the 7/11 was not coming back as a convenience store, he didn't know if it was coming back as something else.

Commissioner Muench wondered what was happening with properties like the Jacaranda that were just sitting and deteriorating. Fire Marshal Williams explained that in the case of the Topsy Turtle, formerly the Jacaranda, and the Fish House, the owners were both currently trying to sell their properties. Chief Barbot confirmed these situations were a code compliance issue with the City, and not Sanibel Fire & Rescue's responsibility despite the hazard presented.

3. Assistant Chief's Report

Assistant Chief Jackson noted that they were still waiting on the brush truck chassis, but all the components for the bed had been received, so that would be constructed ahead of the chassis' arrival, which would hopefully expedite the rest of the process. Engine 179 was identified as going in for maintenance early next week with a leaky water pump, meaning that there was a discussion over whether it could be driven there or would need to be towed, after which Ladder 171 would be scheduled for maintenance. Assistant Chief Jackson added that he was communicating with Deputy Chief DiMaria in order to coordinate hose testing and fire truck schedules. Marine 171 was stated to have a fuel pump issue with the fire pump which Assistant Chief Jackson and Firefighter Walter were working on getting parts for but expected to be able to resolve in-house. New graphics, designed by Chief Barbot, were confirmed as being applied to vehicles in rotation, and it was explained that numbers for identification were only used on the top of the brush trucks, boats, and engines, where it could facilitate communication with helicopters during brush fires etc.

Assistant Chief Jackson highlighted that blood work for NFPA-required physicals would be taking place tomorrow, with the physical exam part taking place on June 24th, including EKGs and fitness tests, to give all

firefighters and administrative staff a baseline for comparison, and a yes or no 'fit for duty' for each individual to the District, although it was noted there was no impact on insurance rates.

Station 172's official ground-breaking day was confirmed to be Friday, June 7, at 10:00 AM, with Deputy Chief DiMaria to promote the event on social media, Manhattan and Schenkel Shultz expected to make a big deal out of it, and various local dignitaries, VIPs, members of the public, etc. to be invited. Assistant Chief Jackson added that he and Chief Barbot also had a couple of construction planning meetings coming up.

4. Deputy Chief's Report

Deputy Chief DiMaria explained that year-to-date, they were at 508 calls this year compared to 316 last year, up 61%, but slowing down due to the high season ending, and that out-of-chute times were still above the 90th percentile, being 120 seconds out-of-chute, at around 92%. He noted that there had been 473 training hours last month, including sessions at the Strauss Theater, which was scheduled for demolition around June 10th, with the first being focused on ropes, and more expected to take place around search and rescue. Firefighter Walter was identified as putting on his second marine boat operators' course from May 20th to May 24th, putting him one class away from being a BOSAR instructor, which would have huge benefits in terms of training other boat operators in advanced techniques and skill sets around search and rescue, survival, patient transfer etc. Probationary employees were highlighted as making good progress through the probationary manual and starting to put everything together, and Deputy Chief DiMaria confirmed that he was working with Fire Marshal Williams to start updating pre-plans as businesses were opened in the First Due program in the truck computers, as the locations and sizes of things such as propane tanks may have changed as part of rebuilding. It was stated that a database of phone numbers for all home and business owners was being worked on, with Chief Barbot adding that businesses were already in First Due, and they had reached out to Sanibel PD for residentials when necessary in the past, and Fire Marshal Williams highlighting that he had updated contacts for all the buildings he had inspected in the ESO program.

Regarding medical training, Dr. Abo was identified as having carried out a medical in-service covering junctional tourniquets, which they were looking to add to the boat, and snakebite care, with another in-service planned for May 29th. Deputy Chief DiMaria noted that the last month had been pediatric ingestion training, concluding the state requirements for renewing Paramedic and EMT licenses, which would take place later in the year, and that Firefighter Bledsoe would be attending the EMS medical conference from May 21st to May 23rd.

Regarding public education, a Narcan, Stop the Bleed, and CPR refresher course was held for Sanibel PD at the beginning of the month, with 8th grade CPR classes scheduled at the Sanibel School on May 24th, and a request from VIP Realty Group for an overview of their newly installed AEDs that Deputy Chief DiMaria would be giving on May 30th.

For community involvement, the Kiwanis Club was highlighted, with the Board noting that all the feedback received had been positive. A few ribbon-cutting ceremonies were noted to have been attended, including Island Therapy and Hurricane House, with some more scheduled. Deputy Chief DiMaria explained that the career day for foster children had been very successful, with a request for a reciprocal event, which he hoped could be arranged in the next couple of months. Commissioner McCurry added that there had been good feedback from the Island Nights ball field event.

5. Chief's Report

I) Financial Update

Chief Barbot highlighted that almost 100% of the ad valorem revenue had now been received, although this was still \$2.6 million under the same time last year, and that the District strategy was to carry over as much as possible into the next financial year, with all diligence applied to expenditures, and savings identified wherever possible. He added that soft numbers would be out in the first week of June, which would assist in planning for next fiscal year's funding and confirmed that the two CD bank accounts had been merged, closed, and placed into a high-interest-bearing checking account with Bank of the Islands, as previously directed by the Board. Chief Barbot explained that he and Assistant Chief Jackson were working on the \$1 billion CDBG-DR funding for issues and items directly related to Hurricane Ian, but the requirement for 70% to be used in low-income areas meant that they were only able to access up to 30%, although critical infrastructure was a key area, so a proposal for land acquisition on the east end of the island and a third station had been discarded due to the inability to relate it to Hurricane Ian, and a proposal for \$8.6 million to raise the structure of Station 171 above the flood plain elevation was being submitted instead. Chief Barbot added that special taxing Districts were excluded from applying for the funding if not tied into a city organization, but they had been working with the City Council and approval had been received to move forward with them as the administrator for the grant. Regarding appropriations, he updated that the lobbyists were expecting a signature from the governor in the first week of June, stating that it seemed unlikely that Governor DeSantis would veto it.

II) District Update

Chief Barbot noted that the wording of the contract for construction administration between Schenkel Shultz and Sanibel Fire & Rescue District had been agreed, and the contract signed and completed, as previously authorized by the Board. Quotes for builder's risk insurance were noted as being sought currently, which would cover any natural disasters, fires, or other issues outside of the control of the contractors, but Chief Barbot admitted that there was a hold-up on getting full construction permits, as they were waiting on IWA's director to bring the question of reducing the water hook-up fees to their Board in late May, which would potentially save a few thousand dollars, so a phased permit had been issued allowing construction to start.

Chief Barbot confirmed that the July 4th fireworks had been canceled by the City Council, but there would be a parade, including Senator Martin and his family who had accepted the invitation to attend with the District. Chief Barbot identified that he and Administrative Assistant Fulkerson had attended PGIT's Member Education Day relating to legal labor and workers' compensation, where Sanibel Fire & Rescue had received the sole claims excellence award from PGCS out of around 300 attendees, recognizing the administrative efforts and due diligence whilst also maintaining operations, and Administrative Assistant Fulkerson was congratulated on attending the first Certified District Administrative Professional Program through FASD, with her certificate to be presented at the annual FASD conference in June.

A scheduling conflict with the June 12th Board meeting was highlighted, with two commissioners due to attend the annual Florida Association of Special Districts conference that week and agreed that the meeting should be rearranged to June 19th instead.

Action:

Next Board meeting is to be rescheduled to June 19th in all appropriate calendars.

III) Staffing Update

It was stated that one employee had resigned last month, having decided to move on and pursue other endeavors, but that testing of the 19 applicants to turn up had been completed yesterday, of which 15 had progressed to interview, and Chief Barbot and Deputy Chief DiMaria would be issuing an offer to a potential candidate shortly. Chief Barbot also noted that the Union DVP had resigned after being asked to step down by the body, so all communications would go through the Principal Officers at Local 1826, Tim and Henry, until the process of peer election to appoint a new DVP had been completed by the body, but that two negotiation dates had been set for June 17th and July 12th. Chief Barbot confirmed that there were no years of service for May.

6. Business Agenda Items

I) Resolution 24-014 - Set New Fire Prevention Fee Schedule

Chief Barbot noted that the changes were minimal but would be permanent, explaining that a lot of emergency permits would be submitted to the District as a result of Hurricane Ian, and the amount of tear-down required by condos, giving Pointe Santo as an example, and the resultant workload on Fire Marshal Williams in terms of plan reviews etc. He added that the City had given a 50% reduction in permits because of the storm, but the District had never changed its fees, leading to complaints, and then the decision to review fees, with the City indicating imminent plans to change to a square footage model, which would likely lead to another review of the fee schedule in the near future. For context, Fire Marshal Williams highlighted that 107 plan reviews in the previous month had resulted in \$21,400 of income, which would be reduced to \$10,700 with the planned change to make the minimum fee for new and existing constructions \$100 rather than \$200. Administrative Assistant Fulkerson read the resolution, and the Board was requested to approve the modification to the fire prevention fee schedule.

A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to accept Resolution 24-014 as read. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

II) Approval of District Policies (upon completion of CBA-required Union review period)

Chief Barbot explained that Board approval was being sought for eight District policies, sent by email for their review, to avoid delays in implementation once the 30-day required Union review period was complete and that the policies had also been sent to the Local Principal Officers last week for this purpose.

A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to approve the eight District policies as presented, and as follows: 913 – Ground Ladder Testing, 1009 – Reporting for Duty, 1011 – Overtime, 1013 – Conduct and Behavior, 1041 – Driver’s License Requirement, 1100 – Facility Security, 1400 – Hours of Work for Administrative Employees, and 1401 – Vacation Leave for Administrative Employees. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Commissioner Items

Commissioner McCurry shared very positive feedback and gratitude from an individual to the fire department and EMS paramedics for their handling of a situation, adding the Board's thanks and appreciation for the attitude and dedication of everyone in the service.

8. Union Items

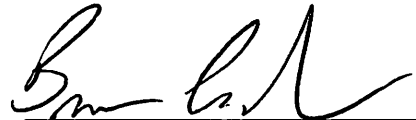
There were no items to discuss.

9. Public Input

There was no input to discuss.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:42 AM.

Commissioner Jerry Muench



Commissioner Bruce Cochrane



Commissioner Richard McCurry