

Sanibel Fire & Rescue District BOFC October Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at 9:00 AM

Location: 2351 Palm Ridge Road, Sanibel, FL 33957 – Station 171 Training Room

Attendance: Commissioner Muench / Commissioner Cochrane / Chief Barbot / Deputy Chief DiMaria / Assistant Chief Jackson / Fire Marshal Williams / Admin. Asst. Fulkerson / DVP Zarick / District Personnel / The Island Reporter – Tiffany Repecki

Call to Order and Pledge

- Meeting called to order by Commissioner Muench and Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Approval of Minutes

- The minutes of the September Board Meeting and the September 29th Final Budget Hearing were reviewed. A motion was made by Commissioner Cochrane to accept both sets of minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muench. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Fire Marshal Williams' Report

Plan Reviews & Inspections

- September Plan Reviews: 30 (significant decrease since Hurricane Ian; however, historically averaged 70 annually prior to Ian)
- Inspections: 197 completed in September; appreciation expressed for administrative staff who assisted with inspections in Fire Marshal Williams' absence for a week

Facility Walkthroughs

- Shalimar: Ribbon cutting; all crews participated in property orientation (propane, sprinkler, fire alarm shut offs)
- Beachview: Ongoing walkthroughs with all crews
- Castaways: Hydrant flow tests completed in preparation for rebuilding

Station 172 Inspections

- Underground, flush, and pressure tests for sprinkler system complete; not active until fire alarm/devices are installed/tested

Knox Box Upgrades

- Company "Knox" currently in the district to replace deteriorating O-rings due to salt air (affecting all of Florida)
- Required official letter from Fire Marshal Williams for their district entry
- Initially, residential boxes were not to be serviced due to a recent safety incident in Lehigh. After discussion, residential units will also be upgraded with firefighter accompaniment

Assistant Chief Jackson's Report

Equipment, Maintenance, and Apparatus

Temporary Station 2 Trailer

- Kitchen sink and faucet replaced due to swelling and imminent leak risk; caught and handled in-house by firefighters

Apparatus Status

- All apparatus currently operational; no ongoing issues

Station 172 Construction Update

- Final construction weeks approaching for the two-and-a-half-year project
- Current focus:
 - Redoing bathroom epoxy (initial work unsatisfactory)
 - Labeling and adjusting electrical panels
 - Installing access control (fobs/readers)
 - Ongoing electrical tightening
 - Motorola scheduled next week for tower wiring into IT room
 - Antenna repair completed

Station 172 Schedule and Occupancy Planning

- Punch-Out: Tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, October 15th
- Move-In: Planned post-punch-out; substantial inspection for outstanding issues (painting, epoxy, repairs) before firefighter occupancy
- Preference: Building fully finalized before occupancy to avoid firefighter exposure to chemicals or having to manage and pay for any post-construction repairs

Station 172 Grand Opening Ceremony

- Timing Considerations:
 - Initial grand opening aimed for November, but conflicts with public officials' state session schedules
 - Likely rescheduling to early December to ensure full completion and maximum attendance by dignitaries
 - Estimated full completion early November; will provide at least 30 days' notice for invitations
- Certificate of Occupancy: Only Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) will be available soon; full CO awaits completion of lift and city sign-off
- Move Coordination: Need TCO before moving any equipment or furniture

Deputy Chief DiMaria's Report

Call Volume, Training, and Public Relations

Response Statistics

- Year-To-Date Call Volume: Up 15%
- September Comparison:
 - 2024: 146 calls
 - 2025: 77 calls (almost 50% reduction)
- Coming Season: Expected increase in calls as seasonal population returns
- Out-Of-Shoot Time (Response Readiness): 90.6% on-time

Fire Training

- October: Hydrant servicing month, so no additional fire training
- September: Water Survival in Gear successfully completed
- Upcoming Training:

- Active Shooter Class (Sanibel PD collaboration): November 3–5 with classroom and hands-on segments
- Air Consumption Drill: Scheduled for November or December
- Submerged Vehicle Operations: Utilizing PVC frame in-water module (no tank diving; focused on rapid extrication)
- Rope Rescue Technician Course: November 17–20 (on-site)
- RIB Class: Five scheduled training days for all personnel

Medical Training

- Recent: Finger thoracostomy (new procedure for collapsed lungs), led by Dr. Abo; equipment acquired and in use
- Upcoming: Pediatric emergencies training with guest speaker from Lee Health

Public Relations

- Recent Activities:
 - Kiwanis Club AED overview presentation
 - Fire extinguisher safety training for Sanibel School and CROW
- Upcoming Community Events:
 - Touch-a-Truck: Saturday, October 18th (at rec center)
 - Pink Out at Station 171: Thursday, October 23rd (ongoing planning and preparation)
- Brotherhood Ride: October 20th–30th (Deputy Chief DiMaria and Captain Martin participating; 750 miles, 10 days; Deputy Chief DiMaria will be absent those dates)

Chief Barbot's Report

District Financials

General Financial Update

- Fiscal year closeout in progress
- Confirmed: District remained within budget last fiscal year (2024-2025)

Administrative Office Lease

- Lease with RLR Investment Properties executed; move-in set for November (October move-in not necessary and not billed)

Grants and Funding

- WCIND Grant: West Coast Inland Navigation District
 - County-wide vessel tracking program for MERT teams
 - Improved resource allocation, dispatch, and incident management
- Cancer Grant: Second award in three years
 - \$24,475 for extractor (for gear washer) and gear dryer at Station 171
 - District to match \$6,118 (significant savings)
 - Equipment to be ready once new Station 171 is operational

Health Insurance

- Still seeking update/finalization (Aetna co-op is most viable)
- Max Miller, of Marsh & McLennan Agency, and staff actively exploring options and collaborating with other agencies

Station 171 Design and Construction Update

- Approximately 95% design completion (pending major change)

- **Change Required:** Generator must be relocated outside, not “under roof,” per new code; structural reengineering in progress (steel platform and high beam elevation)
- **Permit Review:** Aiming to submit for first round by end of October
- **Invitation to Bid for General Contractor:** In progress and planned to submit for early November
- **Latest building renderings shared with Board:**
 - **Future Administrative Expansion:** Space allowed for potential future hires
 - **Facilities:** Includes new public lobby, updated day room and kitchen, dorms, conference room, EOC/training/board meeting room, and a large wall-mounted response map for marine incidents in day room
 - **Murphy Beds:** In offices for extended emergency stays

Personnel Announcements

- **Captain John Reitenbach:** 22 years of service
- **Engineer Adam Felix:** 6 years of service

Business Agenda Items: None

Commissioner Items: None

Public Input: None

Union Items

Benevolent Fund and Community Outreach

Fundraising and Merchandise

- **Benevolent Fund:** Official Facebook and website launched; three payroll cycles in with ongoing union member contributions
- **Fundraising and Merchandise:** Christmas-themed shirts available for public and fellow responders; calendars to be printed by next week

First Community Donation

- Provided new pole saw to the Sanibel School

Upcoming Outreach and Events

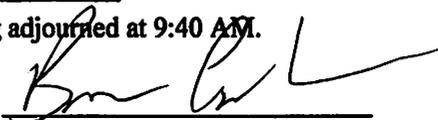
- **Pancake Breakfast:** Hoping for 1st or 2nd Saturday in December at Station 171
- **Calendars and Shirt Sales:** Targeting Pink Out and Touch-a-Truck events for promotional outreach; calendars available with hopes for “calendar guys” presence and autograph opportunities

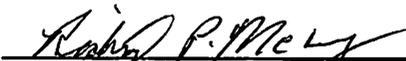
Transparency

- Clear public messaging that benevolent fund is firefighter- and community-donated, not taxpayer funded; disclaimer present on all platforms and materials

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:40 AM.


 Commissioner Jerry Muench


 Commissioner Bruce Cochrane


 Commissioner Richard McCurry