
***MINUTES OF MEETING OF BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF THE ALVA FIRE CONTROL &
RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT***

January 10, 2022

Meeting called to order by Chairman Crittenden, at 6:34 P.M, of the Alva Fire Control & Rescue Service District. Others present were Chief Kuhn and Commissioner's Shearer, Watkins and Fichter. Also, in attendance were one District Fire Fighter, one District Volunteer, Union Interim Representative and two District citizens. Commissioner Crook and Chaplain Paul Cords were not in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of silence.

Prayer – Pastor Cords was not in attendance.

Award / Recognition – Chief Kuhn presented the Board with a wooden cross plaque that was completed as Pastor Cords' Christmas gift.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the December Minutes from the previous regular meeting. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Shearer and unanimously approved.

Administrative Assistant, Sunny Sipes, explained the higher monthly payroll costs accrediting this to additional overtime. Discussion also ensued regarding Impact Fees and related future expenditures. Mrs. Sipes stated that she would research these guidelines and have additional information for the February Board Meeting.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to accept the December financial data. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and passed unanimously.

Chairman Crittenden called, "Is there any public input on any business agenda items?" There was no public input.

Administrative Assistant, Sunny Sipes, asked the Board for their approval in order to have Sipes, Inc. reupholster the Administrative Office waiting area chairs. She stated that Sipes' will be donating the commercial fabric and will only charge for labor and re-webbing of the chairs.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the reupholstery of the waiting area chairs by Sipes, Inc. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and passed.

Chief Kuhn presented the Board with his Chief's Report. He stated that there was a total of 36 calls last month of which 25 were EMS calls and 3 were fire related. Kuhn informed the Board that B-123 was placed back into service but was now experiencing a fuel leak. He stated that newly hired C-Shift personnel start next week and that Matt Marculaitis, a dedicated and experienced Fire Fighter, has relinquished his position to accept employment with the Cape Coral Fire Department. Kuhn mentioned that the new generator ground work has begun, we were still waiting on TECO and that the current station generator will be returned to The Division of Forestry as soon as all work is completed. Commissioner Fichter inquired as to why Mr. Marculaitis left his position? Kuhn stated that he was seeking more opportunity within a growing department. He added that there would be ALS opportunity as well as established rankings.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the Chief's Report. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Shearer and unanimously approved.

Chief Kuhn asked for the Board's approval of a new VHF radio for the incoming Command Vehicle, at a total price of \$1,209.90, through Motorola. He stated that there is an expected 3-4-month backorder.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the purchase of the Motorola VHF radio at a cost of \$1,209.90. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Watkins and unanimously approved.

Chief Kuhn presented the Board with information to support the approval of a new Stihl rescue saw with an amount up to \$1,200. He stated that the existing saw will have downtime due to the backorder of repair parts. Commissioner Watkins suggested contacting Allstar in order to seek pricing. Kuhn agreed and stated that he chose Stihl due to the abundance of local repair shops.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the purchase of a new Stihl rescue saw with an amount up to \$1,200. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Shearer and approved.

Chief Kuhn informed the Board that he received notification of the Union's unanimous approval of the district's proposed Health Insurance and Wage Articles. He stated that, Article 20 - Education, was agreed upon to roll over education funds each fiscal year up to an accumulated amount of \$10,000. He reminded the Board that, Article 20.1 - Insurance, reflected the modification to include the Transamerica benefits within the sliding scale of coverage versus years of employment. He also stated that the proposal included removing one year off of the required timeframe in order to receive 100% covered family benefits and that a Life

Insurance policy was added for Fire Fighters. Kuhn stated that the modifications made to Article 30 – Wages was in bold lettering. He confirmed that there will be a 2% increase in wages with a 4% wage increase between existing Fire Fighter and Engineer STEPS and an increase of the Probationary Period base rate to \$38,000 annually. Kuhn also relayed the addition of a one-time, lump sum, bonus of \$1,000 for each Fire Fighter who remains employed with the district through, February 1, 2022.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the above Collective Bargaining Agreement ratification for FY end 09/30/22. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Watkins and approved.

Crittenden called for the Union Report. There was no Union Report.

Crittenden called for Volunteer / public comments. District Volunteer President, Steve Fair, read his Letter of Resignation to the Board (copy attached hereto). Fair discussed his difference in beliefs with Administration/Board as well as his future thoughts of the department. Commissioner Shearer inquired as to his thoughts on “what needed to be done”? Fair stated that improved communication with Administration would be helpful. He claimed that he would still be available to help fight fires but would not proceed in the President’s position for the Volunteer program. He proceeded to discuss his concern that some Board members were not receptive to purchasing an additional tanker that he felt was important to the district. Watkins explained their thoughts and clarified their concerns and discussions of repairs to the district’s existing large capacity tanker. Commissioner Fichter stated that the Board could not make changes or improvements if they were not aware of the issues. Watkins also reminded Fair that there is an open forum, at every Board meeting, for anyone to communicate with Commissioners. He stated that he has heard nothing in regards to Fair’s concerns to this point. Previous Alva Fire Fighter, Ed Campbell, explained his thoughts on the liability of the current 9,000-gallon capacity tanker. Fichter praised Campbell’s thoughts and stated that this is still a current topic of discussion. Crittenden reminded the Board of their discussion to modify the existing tanker by extending the frame and reducing it to 3,000 gallons in capacity. District Fire Fighter, Dylan More, stated that he would like to hear more discussions of gaining a reliable water source. Watkins asked how many gallons would be sufficient? Crittenden proceeded to inform the Board of an approximate \$50,000 option to purchase a used vehicle that has been equipped with a 3,500-gallon tank, new pipes, fittings and pump. Watkins inquired if Impact Funds could be used for this purchase and others stated as long as the equipment is new to the district and not a replacement. Commissioner Fichter thanked Mr. Fair for his service and contributions to the district and voiced his determination to find solutions for his concerns. Kuhn stated that he and Fair had a previous discussion about his thoughts, stated that he was an asset to the district and hated to see him depart.

Chairman Crittenden called for Commissioner comments. Commissioners inquired on Commissioner Crook's absence? Kuhn stated that he was on duty this evening and was unable to find a replacement. Commissioner Shearer voiced his concern with the number of meetings that Crook has missed and would like to proceed with finding a replacement. Crittenden explained that Crook will be voluntarily departing the Board but would like to attend one additional meeting in order to do so himself and thank additional Board members for their support. Board members asked district citizen, Dick Spence, to return to the February gathering.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Shearer, at 7:56 PM, then seconded by Commissioner Fichter. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya R. Sipes
Administrative Assistant