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

October 18, 2021

Meeting called to order by Chairman Crittenden, at 6:33 P.M, of the Alva Fire Control & Rescue Service District. Others present were Chief Kuhn and Commissioner's Crook, Watkins, Shearer and Fichter. Also, in attendance were two District Fire Fighters, one District Volunteer, Fort Myers Shores Fire Department Representative as well as Chaplain Paul Cords.

Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of silence.

Prayer – Pastor Cords.

Award / Recognition – Chief Kuhn introduced newly hired Fire Fighter/EMT, Richard Johnson.

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

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the September Minutes from the previous special meeting. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Crook and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to accept the September 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.

Chief Kuhn presented the Board with a new Purchasing Control Policy. Kuhn reviewed the details with Board stating that it would give him the authority to make and approve purchases, up to \$10,000, other than recurring expenses.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the Purchasing Control Policy. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and passed (copy attached hereto).

Chief Kuhn informed the Board that he was still waiting on the final proposals for the new Command vehicle. He stated that he was aware that the Board had considered possibly "holding-off" due to current Union negotiations so he had not followed through with the process. Crook voiced his concerns with current vehicle inflated costs. A decision was made to table the discussion to the November meeting.

Chief Kuhn presented the Board with his Chief's Report. Kuhn stated that the fire truck went to Trailway Campers, on North River Road, to visit a facility that houses adults with special needs. He said that it was a productive and rewarding experience for all. Chief informed the Board that there was a total of 49 calls during the previous month with 31-considered EMS and 3-considered fire related. Kuhn stated that the new flag pole arrived with damage to the pole and base plate. He said that the person handling the return claim had left for maternity leave so he was waiting for the company to assign a new adjuster to handle the return/replacement. Kuhn mentioned that the department was awarded an \$8,500 grant, through a Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant, for new brush and fire structure gear. He also stated that MES has a 20-week backorder on all new gear purchases. Kuhn mentioned that the deadline has passed for new job applicants, the district received a total of 10 applications and that interviews were scheduled for the first week of November. Chief stated that B-121 was now back in service from its alternator repair and that the mechanics shop had broken and subsequently replaced the windshield.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to accept the Chief's Report. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Crook and unanimously approved.

Chief Kuhn reviewed with the Board new locker and stairstep machine proposals. The three new lockers will be purchased through MES at a total cost of \$1,654.63.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the purchase of (3) new locker through MES at a cost of \$1,654.63. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Watkins and approved (proposal attached hereto).

Kuhn also presented the proposal for the Matrix Endurance ClimbMill machine. He informed the Board that it comes with a 5-year warranty / 3-years parts and labor. He also stated that it is commercial exercise equipment through Commercial Fitness Products, it was included in the current fiscal year approved budget and it comes with a cost of \$6,109.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the purchase of the Matrix ClimbMill machine, through Commercial Fitness Products, at a cost of \$6,109. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and approved (proposal attached hereto).

Chief Kuhn initiated the tender replacement discussion. Commissioner Crook felt that Mutual Aid was sufficient for the Alva District and that the tanker was not necessary. He made a suggestion of purchasing, a less costly, water truck. Chief Kuhn stressed the importance of tenders/tanker to the district for brush and roadside fires and voiced his concerns of the issues created when surrounding districts are “busy” and unable to respond in a timely manner. Commissioner Watkins inquired as to the location of the closet hydrant? Kuhn stated that there are none within the Alva District. Commissioner Watkins asked Chief Kuhn’s opinion as to the purchase of a tanker? Kuhn felt that it was very important to Alva’s rural district and stated that he “needed water” when arriving on scene. Watkins inquired if 3-employees on shift could drive/respond with three different vehicles? Crittenden suggested contacting the Division of Forestry to see if they had an available vehicle, to donate to the district, that could be equipped for use. Kuhn stated that he wasn’t sure who could complete this for the department as things have changed in regards to employees who are mechanically knowledgeable and he felt that the department needed to purchase equipment that was ready for service. Fichter inquired on the turnaround time for a new tanker? Kuhn stated that the one he was viewing was stock and ready for delivery upon completion in February of 2022. Someone stated that Pine Island Fire Department may have a used tender for sale and the Board stated that they would like for Kuhn to explore this option. Further discussion was tabled for the November gathering.

Chief Kuhn provided the Board with (3) new station generator proposals. He stated that they are all different machines with multiple price ranges. He stated that he felt the 25K was sufficient to run the station and that the Board needed to decide if they preferred propane or natural gas operation. He did inform the Board that there is a natural gas line on the station’s side of Styles Road and discussion ensued on the possibility of losing power should the gas lines be “turned-off” during inclement weather. Kuhn stated that if winds were at that level, district employees would not be at the station since the structure is not hurricane rated. After the weather had passed, he was confident that the gas lines would be, once again, functioning a normal capacity. Board member reviewed the presented proposals (copies attached hereto). Watkins voiced his approval for natural gas. Kuhn stated that there was an approximate 6-month lead time but the Board felt as though the fire station may take precedence in the contractor’s schedule. All Board member agreed on natural gas operation and Kuhn stated that he was looking for generator approval.

Commissioner Shearer made a motion to approve the purchase of the 30K Cummins powered generator, with natural gas hook-up’s, through PowerHouse Electrical Services, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and approved.

Chief Kuhn informed the Board that Union negotiations have went to Impasse declared by Union members. He also stated that he had presented the maximum proposal allowed to him by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Fichter presented a draft of a “Counseling Statement” in regards to the Kuhn/COVID discussions at the September meetings. All attendees read the statement and Shearer voiced that he approved the statement and felt as though it was accurate. Fichter asked Kuhn if he felt that the Counseling Statement was accurate and revealed that he was not certain as to specific dates and times but felt that Kuhn did attend work knowing that he was not feeling well. Chief Kuhn stated that he would review the document, check the dates and also stated that his Employment Contract does not dictate specific appropriate actions of this sort by the Board. He stated that he would like for the Board to review this as well prior to signing. This discussion was tabled for the November meeting.

Crittenden called for the Union Report. There were no Union Representatives present.

Crittenden called for Volunteer / public comments. Pastor Cords suggested repairing the current 9,600-gallon water tanker and having one employee per shift CDL certified. Crittenden and Crook relayed to Cords that the large tanker, “was not safe”. Watkins suggesting contacting district citizen/welder, Robert Ahern, to discuss the option of fabrication/build-out of a used tanker. Volunteer, Steve Fair, started that the group will be discussing the possibility of organizing another annual chicken dinner barbeque in February or March of 2022.

Chairman Crittenden called for Commissioner comments. Commissioner Crook stated that we needed a new generator and was happy that the Board was going to proceed with the purchase. Commissioner Shearer voiced his opinion that he hopes Kuhn is considering employees that will stay and remain loyal to the Alva District. He also suggested putting together an outside committee for the hiring process. Kuhn stated that he has explored that option considering having other local Chief’s review his interview documents. Crook offered to provide Kuhn with the Tice Fire District’s hiring process and deadlines.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Watkins at 8:13 PM and seconded by Commissioner Fichter. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya R. Sipes
Administrative Assistant