

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
ALVA FIRE CONTROL & RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT
2660 STYLES ROAD, ALVA, FLORIDA 33920
DATE: AUGUST 14, 2023

Call to Order

Chairman Crittenden convened the regular monthly meeting of the Alva Fire Control & Rescue Service District at 6:30 PM, August 14, 2023. There were sufficient Board members present to establish a quorum.

Commissioners in Attendance

Adam Crittenden
Henry Grant Fichter
Richard “Dick” Spence
Darren Watkins
Paul F. Meloy, Jr.

Also in Attendance

Brandon Kuhn, Chief
Sunny Sipes, Administrative Specialist
3 - District Firefighters
Union DVP - Jean Etcheverry
Chaplain Paul Cords
Tim Jones - Vice President Local 1826
1 - Previous District Firefighter

Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of Silence / Prayer

Prayer performed by District Pastor Paul Cords

Presentation of Awards & Acknowledgments

Chief Kuhn wished District Engineer Etcheverry, as well as District Firefighters Young and Barritt, a “Happy Birthday”. He also recognized Engineer Etcheverry for his Health Professional Instructor of the Year award received from Florida Southwestern State College.

Approval of the July 10, 2023 Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Fichter moved to approve the minutes of the, July 10, 2023, regular monthly meeting. Commissioner Watkins seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Approval of the Financial Data from July 2023

Commissioner Watkins moved to approve the financial data from, July 2023. Commissioner Spence seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Public Input on Business

None

New Business

➤ **Chief’s Report**

Chief Kuhn reported the following:

- ✓ Stated during previous month: Total calls 47, EMS calls 33, fire calls 0.
- ✓ Kuhn informed the Board that District Firefighters have been performing extrication training on two vehicles that were delivered by Jaime’s Towing.
- ✓ Kuhn made the Board aware that new District Firefighter, Chris Avila, has now completed his first shift.
- ✓ Relayed that departed District Firefighter Gross has now served her first shift with the Fort Myers Shores Fire District.

- ✓ The gutters were installed on the pole barn and he is now working to have drains installed to route their water collection towards the drainage ditch.
- ✓ The base rock was delivered for the pole barn access points and needs to be spread once the drains above have been installed.
- ✓ The hose testing that was scheduled for today did not take place. He is waiting to hear from the company on a re-scheduled date.

Commissioner Watkins moved to accept Chief Kuhn's Chief Report. Commissioner Spence seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- Sunny Sipes presented the Board with USI / PGIT's Workman's Compensation Proposal for FY 2023-2024.

Commissioner Fichter moved to accept the USI Workman's Compensation Policy, in the amount of \$24,546 with an effective date 10/01/2023, through PGIT (proposal/invoice attached hereto). Commissioner Spence seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- Sunny Sipes presented the Board with the Examination Engagement proposal, from Tuscan & Co., PA, for financial audit services FY 2024, 2025 and 2026.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to accept the Examination Engagement proposal for FY 2024-26, from Tuscan & Co., PA. in the amount of \$14,000, \$14,500 and \$15,000, respectively (proposal amounts attached hereto). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- Discussion ensued on the closure of the District's Insurance Funds Account with First Bank of Clewiston.

Commissioner Spence made a motion to close the District's Insurance Funds account with First Bank of Clewiston and transfer the \$28.47 balance to the unassigned funds account. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Meloy. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- Chief Kuhn presented the Board with two proposals for the District's new Cascade System (copies attached hereto).
 - ✓ Proposals from Breathing Air Systems and Channel Innovations.
 - ✓ Stated that this system fills the Firefighter's SBA cylinders after calls and/or training and he provided a brochure displaying their mechanics and components.
 - ✓ Stated that the District's current system is 18-years old.
 - ✓ Commissioner Spence inquired how often bottles needed to be filled? Kuhn stated approximately 10-times per month.
 - ✓ Discussion ensued on price differences, delivery time frame and warranty details.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the purchase of the District's Cascade System, through Breathing Air Systems, in the amount of \$42,460.89 (proposal attached hereto). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Watkins. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- Review initiated of the FY end 09/30/24 Tentative Budget Worksheet (copy attached hereto).
 - ✓ Chief Kuhn detailed the expected Capital Expenditures (copy attached hereto).

- ✓ Kuhn detailed the listed Operational Expenditures.
- ✓ Sipes explained the current Contingency Fund balance that has not been designated for expenditures.
- ✓ Commissioner Fichter inquired on the consideration of purchasing a water tanker? Spence stated that it was “just too costly”.
- ✓ Kuhn voiced his thought of replacing the Ford utility vehicle and Spence stated that he did not believe that was a necessity.
- ✓ Engineer Etcheverry voiced his approval of the new utility vehicle stating that it could be used for rescue in confined and/or “hard-to-get-to” locations. He stated that this can be a common occurrence within our rural district.
- ✓ Other Board members voiced their approval of the importance of the smaller tanker.
- ✓ Commissioner Crittenden suggested the exploration of a “side-by-side”. Spence stated that the District would have almost as much in the ATV as they would in the Ford utility replacement vehicle.

Old Business

- Commissioner Fichter initiated discussion of the Fire Chief’s Performance Evaluation.
 - ✓ Fichter presented the Board with two evaluation formats that he had prepared; Staff and Commissioner Evaluation forms (copies attached hereto).
 - ✓ Fichter stated that he wanted to finalize on the forms as well as the format for the proceedings at this evening’s gathering. He stated the importance of following the channels dictated by Florida’s Sunshine Law and stressed that the results should be delivered, by each individual, to the District’s legal counsel, Mr. Richard Pringle, PA.
 - ✓ Fichter stated that the evaluation forms would be distributed to each staff member, as well as each Board member, the evaluations would be completed and returned to Mr. Pringle and legal counsel would then advertise for a future Special Meeting in order to discuss the evaluation results.
 - ✓ Fichter explained that he would prefer the evaluations be distributed electronically in order to retain the efficiency of time. However, if anyone preferred a hard copy, this request would be accommodated.
 - ✓ Crittenden voiced his concern of the Board’s ability to evaluate the Chief based on “seeing him once a month”. Fichter replied that their evaluations may ultimately be heavily influenced by employee feedback and encouraged Commissioners to schedule independent interviews with staff.
 - ✓ Crittenden asked Fichter to modify the word “Manager” to “Chief” within the evaluation forms. Fichter agreed.
 - ✓ Commissioner Spence asked Fichter’s thoughts of Pringle distributing the evaluations to the Board prior to the Special Meeting? He also asked if the name identifiers could be redacted? Fichter stated that this may not be a possibility. Spence also reiterated the importance of Chief Kuhn generating and keeping a list of duties and timelines for equipment testing and replacement.
 - ✓ Commissioner’s inquired with Chief Bobby Rewis, of the Fort Myers Shores Fire Department, how this process takes place within his District? He stated that Commissioner’s receive the evaluation forms and they independently interview employees prior to completing their reviews.
 - ✓ Fichter relayed his proposal to the following Chief’s Performance Evaluation & Review process:

- Evaluation forms to be electronically distributed to employees and Commissioners by the Administrative Specialist,
- Individuals to email, or mail via postal service, completed forms to legal counsel within one week from receipt,
- Legal counsel to review, redact identifiers (will confirm this possibility with Mr. Pringle) and forward to Commissioners prior to an advertised public Special Meeting for result discussions.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to accept the Chief's Performance Evaluation & Review process listed above. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Crittenden and unanimously passed.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the Special Meeting advertisement, for a date to be designated by legal counsel's availability, but prior to the District's regularly scheduled September 12, 2023 Board meeting. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Spence. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Union Report

District Paramedic and Local 1826 DVP, Jean Etcheverry, presented the Union Report

- Stated that the annual Backpack Drive hit its marker of 76-filled packs. He also stated that 20-empty backpacks were supplied to the local Charleston Park Community for their high school students.
- He is looking forward to the completion of the outsourced hose testing.
- Informed that Board that there was an "unexpected" influx of "equipment requested in the past" arriving within the last several weeks.
- Stated that Firefighter Gross will be greatly missed.
- Informed the Board that there is still a vacant Firefighter position that he would like to see filled soon.
- Looking forward to the implementation of the developing Gross and Technical Decontamination SOG.
- Stated due to lack of preparation/study material for the previous Engineer testing, would like to see clear promotional development plans for future Engineer and/or Officer testing.
- Anxious to get the Physical Trainer and exercise equipment in place for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Voiced his approval of the Chief's Evaluation process that was approved earlier in the meeting by Board members.

Volunteer / Public Comments

- Local 1826 Vice President, Tim Jones, relayed that he has reached out to individual Board members, via email, in order to schedule discussions of District management concerns. Mr. Jones provided his contact information and stated that the future direction of the Alva Fire District needed to be addressed.
- District Firefighter Johnson stated that he and Engineer Etcheverry developed a Shift Captain job description that mirrored that of the Bayshore Fire and Rescue District. This similar job description will allow the officer position to remain within the current District 24 - Local 1826 Bargaining Agreement.
- Previous Firefighter Gross thanked the Chief and Board for the time that they provided to her with the Alva District. She stated that she loves this Department, her co-workers, is leaving on good terms and looks forward to the available opportunities with the Fort Myers Shores Fire District.

Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Watkins relayed his thanks and expressed his positive impression of District Engineer Wright and Firefighter Young. He stated that they had responded to a medical call involving his neighbor, they performed CPR for over 20-minutes and saved the life of this gentleman.
- Kuhn congratulated Gross on her new position with the Fort Myers Shores Fire District.

Reminders

- The September Tentative Budget Hearing, for FY end 09/30/24, will be held **Tuesday**, September 12, 2023, at 6:15 PM.
- The September regular Board Meeting will be held **Tuesday**, September 12, 2023, at 6:30 PM.

Adjournment

Commissioner Fichter moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM. This was seconded by Commissioner Meloy, and the vote was unanimous. Chairman Crittenden closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sunny Sipes, Administrative Specialist

Minutes Distributed Electronically to Board Members