

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

ALVA FIRE CONTROL & RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT

2660 STYLES ROAD, ALVA, FLORIDA 33920

DATE: SEPTEMBER 07, 2023

Call to Order

Chairman Crittenden convened the Special Meeting of the Alva Fire Control & Rescue Service District at 6:31 PM, September 07, 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
8 - District Firefighters
Union DVP - Jean Etcheverry
Richard Pringle, PA
Tim Jones - Vice President Local 1826
Chief Bobby Rewis, FMSFD

Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of Silence

Public Input on Business

None

New Business

- Presentation of Chief Kuhn’s Annual Performance Review Results
 - ✓ Richard Pringle, PA, District legal council, introduced himself to those in attendance.
 - ✓ Mr. Pringle read the official Notice of Special Meeting that was published in the Fort Myers News-Press (copy attached hereto).
 - ✓ He explained that the Notice was intentionally broad, allowing the Board to also discuss possible personnel actions once the Performance Review had been presented.
 - ✓ He stated that Chief Brandon S. Kuhn had submitted a Letter of Resignation, dated August 31, 2023, to Mr. Pringle himself, Commissioners and Administrative Specialist Sunny Sipes.
 - ✓ Mr. Pringle read the Letter of Resignation (copy attached hereto).
 - ✓ He also stated that Chief Kuhn submitted a second email requesting that his separation date take place after a period of 60-days.
 - ✓ Mr. Pringle informed the Board that since a Letter of Resignation had been submitted, the topic of tonight’s gathering has now “shifted”. He suggested that the Board consider only discussion related to Mr. Kuhn’s resignation and not that of his Performance Review results.
 - ✓ He informed the Board that they would need to formally accept Mr. Kuhn’s resignation while attaching a separation date to this motion.
 - ✓ He did advise the Board that they were allowed to approve the separation date with a delayed time frame allowing Chief Kuhn to be present while the transition is taking place.
 - ✓ Commissioner Crittenden asked Mr. Pringle to read into the record the Board’s Letter of Acceptance of Chief Kuhn’s resignation (copy attached hereto). Attorney Pringle agreed.

Commissioner Fichter moved to accept Chief Kuhn's resignation, from his current Chief's position. Commissioner Spence seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Commissioner Spence made a motion to declare Chief Kuhn's end of service / resignation date as 60-days beyond, September 07, 2023. He continued by stating that this would allow him time to aid in the transition process and address any lingering items that needed completion. Commissioner Fichter seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion was approved.

- Discussions District Personnel and Operational Matters
 - ✓ Attorney Pringle informed the Board that there was no statutory regulation as to how the Board would proceed in selecting an individual for the open Chief's position.
 - ✓ He stated that this decision did not have to be made this evening and could be discussed at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting.
 - ✓ Administrative Specialist, Sunny Sipes, stated that she had placed this topic on the, September 12, 2023, Meeting Agenda.
 - ✓ Administrative Specialist, Sunny Sipes, presented and read a statement that she had prepared, addressed to the Board, staff and Chief Kuhn (copy attached hereto).
 - ✓ Attorney Pringle agreed with Sipes that this is a very poignant time due to current Budget preparations and that a transition process needed to be implemented without delay.
 - ✓ Pringle stated that the transition time may be longer than usual since the District does not currently have an Assistant Chief to appoint in the interim. He also stated that the Fort Myers Shores Fire District is also willing to aid in this transition process.
 - ✓ Commissioner Fichter encouraged the other Board members to think about this transition process over the weekend and re-address the topic at the, September 12, 2023, regular gathering. He also stated that his thoughts were to advertise this position in order to gather information about inquiring and/or available candidates.
 - ✓ Commissioner Spence reminded the Board that the hiring process was at the Board's discretion. He stated that if District Policy's need revision, that would need to be addressed as well.
 - ✓ Mr. Pringle stated that the Board had two responsibilities at their next meeting: (1) formulate a transition procedure for the Chief's selection and (2) establish the declaration process for the Chief's position.

Public Comments

Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Spence thanked Chief Kuhn for "what he has done for the Board and hopes this period works out for the best for both he and the District".
- Commissioner Fichter thanked Chief Kuhn for the "ability to work together", stated that "he had a big heart, was a great man, he needed to hold his head high" and that "he looked forward to a bright future for Kuhn and the District".
- Commissioner Watkins stated that he would "miss you (Kuhn)" and to "call him if he needed anything". He stated that Kuhn "was challenged from the beginning" by taking over a department with aging equipment, he updated this equipment, oversaw the station living quarters remodel and didn't want him to forget these accomplishments.

Adjournment

Commissioner Spence moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 PM. This was seconded by Commissioner Fichter, and the vote was unanimous. Chairman Crittenden closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sunny Sipes, Administrative Specialist

Minutes Distributed Electronically to Board Members