

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
ALVA FIRE CONTROL & RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT
2660 STYLES ROAD, ALVA, FLORIDA 33920
DATE: DECEMBER 11, 2023

Call to Order

Chairman Crittenden convened the regular monthly meeting of the Alva Fire Control & Rescue Service District at 6:35 PM, December 11, 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

Jean P. Etcheverry, Chief
Sunny Sipes, Administrative Specialist
District Firefighters & Volunteers
Pastor Paul Cords
FMSFD Chief Bobby Rewis
Bayshore FD Chief Doug Underwood

Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of Silence / Prayer

Prayer Performed by Pastor Paul Cords

Presentation of Awards & Acknowledgments

None

Approval of the November 13, 2023 Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Watkins moved to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023, regular monthly meeting. Commissioner Spence seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Approval of the Financial Data from November 2023

Administrative Specialist, Sunny Sipes, detailed District income and expenditures.

Commissioner Fichter moved to approve the financial data from November 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 Etcheverry reported the following:

- ✓ Thanked Volunteer, Dave Phelps, for the manual repairs he made to T-122.
- ✓ Thanked Firefighters Matt Richards, Brady Christensen and Joe Randall for the repairs that they made to the marine vessel.
- ✓ Stated that the Christmas gift initiative at the LaBelle Walmart was a success and he thanked Firefighters Richard Johnson and Travis Wright for their participation.
- ✓ Stated that the Alva School’s Fall Festival was a success.
- ✓ The Department will hold a fire extinguisher operation seminar, at Syngenta, on January 10, 2024.

- ✓ Pre-incident planning will also begin at Syngenta during the month of January.
- ✓ Congratulated Firefighters Chris Young, James Barritt and Joe Randall for completed their Pump-Op class.
- ✓ The graphics have been completed on the new F-150 Alva-1.
- ✓ The electrical upgrade for the new Cascade system will be completed the beginning of January 2024.
- ✓ Informed the Board that the new 500-gallon fuel tank has been installed and filled with fuel.
- ✓ Stated that the Engineer testing will begin in January with (2) interested candidates.
- ✓ Informed the Board that he is researching costs and job descriptions for the implementation of the Captain's position.
- ✓ Stated that preliminary budget figures show that implementation of an Assistant Chief's position would be more costly to the District versus adding the Captain's position to each shift.

Commissioner Fichter moved to accept Chief Etcheverry's Chief's Report. Commissioner Meloy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- Chief Etcheverry voiced his thoughts of modifying the title of Administrative Specialist to Finance Manager. He stated that this position is focused primarily on finance and budgeting procedures and that the title will also help with administrative decisions that do not require Board approval.
 - ✓ Sunny Sipes informed her desire to gain an employment contract as well. She stated that all staff with the Alva Fire District was protected by a Union Contract and/or Administrative Contract with the only exception being the Finance Manager-Administrative Specialist position. She reminded the Board of her 15-years of service to the District and planned to continue her commitment for years to come.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the title modification of the Administrative Specialist to Finance Manager-Administrative Specialist with additional approval to allow legal counsel to draft an employment contract for Mrs. Sipes. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Spence and unanimously approved.

- Chief Etcheverry presented the Board with a proposal, from Oaks Electric, LLC, for the Station Bay ceiling lighting LED replacement and exterior office building lighting. He informed the Board that the Bay lighting is outdated and partially non-operational. The LED lighting will be more efficient and reliable.
 - ✓ Commissioner Watkins asked for Chief Etcheverry to receive two additional quotes.
 - ✓ Commissioner Fichter stated that a total of two quotes may be sufficient due to the difficulty of having three vendors available to provide proposals.
 - ✓ Crittenden moved to postpone discussions to the January 2024 Board meeting.
- Chief Etcheverry informed the Board that the necessary repairs to bring the Kenworth semi-tractor (T-600 / Tender 121) to operational status would be upwards of \$22,000. He stated the importance of the District being able to provide water to District property owners and reminded the Board that a tender purchase was proposed by the previous Chief two years prior.
 - ✓ Presented the Board with specifications and a proposal for a 2023 Fouts Brothers Freightliner 3,000 gallon tanker in the amount of \$445,000 through South Florida Emergency Vehicles.

- ✓ Etcheverry stated that this vehicle could be used on the front line response for 15-years and 7-years as reserve equipment.
- ✓ Stated that it would need to be equipped with additional hose.
- ✓ This tanker will be available in March of 2024.
- ✓ He suggested taking \$45,000 from the budgeted utility truck purchase and use this as a down payment.
- ✓ He suggested taking the remaining utility truck budgeted balance and use this for upgrading/repairing the District's current Expedition and F-250 to allow for additional years of service.
- ✓ Commissioner Spence voiced his thought that a new tanker was not necessary. and stated that he would prefer to utilize Impact funds for large equipment purchases.
- ✓ Commissioner Crittenden inquired if this equipment could also be utilized as additional or new equipment for the District versus a replacement vehicle?
- ✓ Bayshore Fire Chief, Doug Underwood, informed the Board that this vehicle could be classified as adding or enhancing services due to District growth. He also stated that District legal counsel could develop the wording for Impact Fund usage inquiries in regards to dual purpose equipment.
- ✓ District Engineer Travis Wright stated that the Department needed a tanker that could be operated by all employees and did not require special licensing. He stressed the importance of having equipment that District personnel could efficiently train with in regards to water conservation. He stated that this vehicle would also provide additional response equipment. He commented that he did not agree with implementing the District Captain's position.
- ✓ Spence stated that he wanted to keep this tanker within the District boundaries and not provide mutual aid service to surrounding fire districts.
- ✓ Commissioner Watkins stated that Spence, "could not think that way". He stated that we must be prepared to help surrounding districts.
- ✓ Commissioner Fichter voiced his opinion that the District needed a tanker in order to provide a water source and that the price of this equipment is not expected to decline. He stated that whether they choose to use Impact Funds or budgeted General Funds, this equipment was feasible.
- ✓ Commissioner Crittenden voiced his opinion to surplus Tanker-122 and not put any additional funds into this vehicle.
- ✓ Chief Etcheverry detailed the available financing terms through Leasing II, Inc. (copy attached hereto).

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the purchase of the Fouts Brothers Freightliner 3,000 gallon tanker, in the amount of \$445,000, through South Florida Emergency Vehicles. Watkins also moved to use \$45,000, from the Impact Funds reimbursement in previous months, for the down payment of said tanker. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Crittenden and unanimously approved.

- Chief Etcheverry presented the topic of the Expedition (old Alva-1) and the Utility vehicle F-250 (U-121) repairs.
 - ✓ Stated that he would like to "outfit" the Expedition as a rescue vehicle for additional response equipment.
 - ✓ District Fire Fighter Randall suggested inquiring with Lee County EMS as to the possibility of staging a rescue vehicle, at Station 121, that can be operated by on-duty EMS personnel as a "chase vehicle".
 - ✓ FMSFD Chief Bobby Rewis relayed that Lee County EMS has reached out to him in regards to staging an ambulance at Station 82.
 - ✓ The Board proposed for Chief Etcheverry to inquire on repair costs to the Expedition (old Alva-1) and report at the January 2025 gathering.

- Chief Etcheverry tabled the discussion to surplus and/or donate the old Cascade System (Asset #165) to the LaBelle Fire Department. He stated the new system has arrived and is ready for “hook-up” as soon as the electrical work is completed. He relayed that the current system has a value of only \$1,000.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve the donation of the District’s old Cascade System (Asset #165) to the LaBelle Fire Department. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Spence and unanimously approved.

- Chief Etcheverry presented the Board with a proposal for the screen room grill repairs.
 - ✓ Commissioners asked for 3-proposals for the actual screen enclosure repairs.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the grill repairs in the amount of \$3,800 labor plus material costs. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and unanimously approved.

- Chief Etcheverry tabled the discussion of future Babcock Ranch development within the Alva District.
 - ✓ Bayshore Fire Chief, Doug Underwood, informed the Board that Babcock developers have agreed to provide their Department with a prepared parcel, within the community, in order for them to construct a fire station. He stated that he would need a letter from the Alva Fire Board of Commissioners allowing them to service this area that lies within the Alva Fire District. He stated that a future contract will need to be developed that will dictate the details of said agreement. He also stated that there should be future discussions as to the development of access for the Alva Fire District’s rescue vehicles.
 - ✓ Sipes inquired as to who will be collecting the ad valorem proceeds?
 - ✓ Chief Underwood stated, the Alva District.

Old Business

- Discussion ensued regarding Chief Etcheverry’s Employment Contract.
 - ✓ Commissioner Spence stated that the modifications listed below should be made:
 1. November 7, 2023 is contract start date.
 2. Remove the verbiage “Interim Chief” and replace with “1-year Chief”.
 3. 5-days unexcused sick prior to required doctor’s excuse.
 4. Remove the clause that allows Mr. Etcheverry to return to line duty.
 - ✓ All Board members unanimously agreed.

Union Report

District Paramedic Joe Randall, DVP

- Stated that he will be the new Alva District DVP and looks forward to working with the Board.

Volunteer / Public Comments

- ✓ Engineer Wright stated that he does not agree with the Captain’s position implementation at this time. He believed that the Firefighters who will be eligible to step-up into the Engineer positions have not had enough experience.
- ✓ Chief Etcheverry reminded Wright that this process is approximately one-year out as he is only now working on developing the job description for this position.

- ✓ Wright complimented Etcheverry on his job as Chief thus far.
- ✓ Fire Chief Underwood, stated that he looks forward to future discussions in regard to the Babcock development.

Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Spence thanked all for their work and input.
- Commissioner Fichter thanked Chief Etcheverry for the tender research and provided information. He thanked the Bayshore and Fort Myers Shores Fire Chiefs for their attendance and thanked District Firefighters for their help in the Christmas Toy Drive.
- Commissioner Meloy would like to have his friend/District citizen review the Lee County School Board drafted letter, in regards to the Joel school development, prior to disbursement. He will provide an update in January.

Reminders

- The January Board Meeting will be held Monday, January 08, 2024, at 6:30 PM.
- The District Employee & Family Christmas Breakfast will be held Thursday morning, December 14th, at 8:30 AM.

Adjournment

Commissioner Fichter moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 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