

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
ALVA FIRE CONTROL & RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT
2660 STYLES ROAD, ALVA, FLORIDA 33920
DATE: MARCH 11, 2024

Call to Order

Chairman Crittenden convened the regular monthly meeting of the Alva Fire Control & Rescue Service District at 6:46 PM, March 11, 2024. 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, Finance Manager
Pastor Paul Cords
Jeff Tuscan, Tuscan & Co., PA

Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of Silence / Prayer

Prayer Performed by Pastor Paul Cords

Presentation of Awards & Acknowledgments

Happy Birthday to District Engineer Travis Wright during the month of March.

Approval of the February 12, 2024 Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Fichter moved to approve the minutes of the, February 12, 2024, regular monthly meeting. Commissioner Spence seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Approval of the Financial Data from February 2024

Finance Manager, Sunny Sipes, detailed District income and expenditures.

Commissioner Watkins moved to approve the financial data from February 2024. Commissioner Fichter 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:

- ✓ Total monthly calls: 41
- ✓ Thanked all who helped with preparing for the Volunteer barbecue as well as the fire pit repairs.
- ✓ District Firefighters were Guest Readers at the Alva Elementary School on March 8th.
- ✓ Department will participate in the Alva School’s “Watermelon Day” on March 13th & 14th, as well as their “Spring Fling” during the month of March.
- ✓ Reminded all that the Volunteer barbecue will be held on Sunday, March 24, 2024.
- ✓ Department will participate in an Easter egg hunt within the Charleston Park Community on March 31st.

- ✓ TECO natural gas education classes were a success and very informative.
- ✓ On March 14, 15 & 28, district Firefighters will participate in Live Fire Training in a collaboration with surrounding Districts.
- ✓ Suburban Propane will be present at the Alva District, on April 3rd & 4th, for firefighter educational training on propane safety.
- ✓ Informed the Board that he and two District Firefighters will be attending the FDIC Conference in Indiana on April 15th - 20th. They will be attending training classes, view training props and take educational courses.

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

- Chief Etcheverry inquired with the Board on their approval to allow him to submit an Impact Fee usage proposal to the Lee County Attorney's Office.
 - ✓ Chief stated that he is currently collecting vehicle and build-out pricing from Alan Jay Ford, Galloway Ford and Lightning Radio.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve Chief Etcheverry's drafting of a proposal letter, to the Lee County Attorney, for Impact Fee usage to purchase the Alva District's new Rescue-121 (R-121) and related equipment. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Spence and approved.

- Chief Etcheverry presented the Board with a proposal from Motorola regarding the budgeted purchase of two (2) district radios.
 - ✓ Stated that \$16,000 was originally budgeted for this purchase. However, the radios are now quoted at an increased price of \$21,756.90.
 - ✓ Stated that the original radios proposed will be obsolete in one to two years. Chief believes that the Alva District will need dual band radios that will allow for communication with mutual aid departments including the Hendry County Fire Department.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the purchase of two (2) Motorola radios, quoted at \$21,756.90, including accessories (copy attached hereto). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and approved.

- Chief presented the Board with his thoughts of adding Training and Volunteer/Support Coordinator's to the District's list of incentives.
 - ✓ Stated that Engineer Travis Wright has shown interest in the Training position and Firefighter James Barritt has inquired about and begun taking steps to organize the District's Support/Volunteer program.
 - ✓ Etcheverry stated that he was considering these positions to hold a \$.50/hour incentive.
 - ✓ Commissioner Fichter asked Chief Etcheverry to continue his process of setting goals and detailing objectives for each of these positions.

Commissioner Fichter approved the incentives for a Training Coordinator and a Volunteer/Support Coordinator at a rate of \$.50/hr. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Spence and unanimously approved.

- Jeff Tuscan, with Tuscan & Co., PA, was in attendance to present the District's Final Financial Audit for FY end 09/30/23.
 - ✓ Informed the Board of a House bill proposal that was initiated by local Representatives (HB-7013).

- ✓ Stated that this bill proposed the requirement of having each Special District vote, every 10-years, as to whether or not they wanted to remain within an Independent Special District.
- ✓ He stated that this proposal was “shot-down”. However, they are still considering placing a 12-year term limit on Independent Special District Board members.
- ✓ Informed the Board that if Lee County approves the use of Impact Funds for the new R-121 purchase and someone within the District complains of the expenditure, Lee County will provide and pay for attorney services to defend this disbursement.
- ✓ Stated that the Final Financial Audit for FY end 09/30/23 had a “clean Auditor opinion” and there were no comments or financially related concerns.
- ✓ Tuscan stated that the District had a carryover of approximately \$100,198, the District spent approximately \$100,000 in Capital Outlay, saw approximately \$14,000 in Impact Fee collections as well as an increase in pension liability due to a larger and younger workforce.
- ✓ Informed the Board that the General Fund Equity/Income was approximately \$1.6 million dollars.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the findings of the Final Financial Audit for FY end 09/30/23, as presented by Jeff Tuscan with Tuscan & Co., PA (copy on file/website). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Meloy and unanimously approved.

- Chief Etcheverry presented the Board with a proposal for the new Foust Tanker appliance and equipment build-out.
 - ✓ Stated that the tanker arrival is now expected during the early Summer months.
 - ✓ He would like to have all equipment and appliances here waiting for installation upon its arrival.
 - ✓ The presented proposal is from AEST Fire & Safety, in the amount of \$24,201.00, and includes items like ladders, pipe, hose, nozzles, etc.
 - ✓ Commissioner Crittenden inquired on tank labeling?
 - ✓ Chief stated that he was not sure this would be possible due to the tanks being pressurized.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the purchase of the Foust 3,000 gallon tanker appliances and equipment, from AEST Fire & Safety, in the amount of \$24,201.00 (copy attached hereto). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Fichter and approved.

- Chief presented the Board with information concerning the Vector Scheduling Program.
 - ✓ Stated that this system calculates and organizes employee regular hours, overtime hours, sick and vacation calculations as well as employee replacements when accumulated hours are utilized.
 - ✓ Made the Board aware that this system will eliminate manual record keeping in order to reduce the possibility of human error.
 - ✓ Informed the Board that there is a one time start-up fee of \$2,100 and that the system cost will average \$115 per employee, minimum of 16-personelle, per year plus an annual maintenance fee.

Commissioner Crittenden made a motion to approve the purchase and implementation of the Vector Scheduling Program. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Meloy and unanimously approved.

- Chief Etcheverry presented the Board with new District Policy SOG #200.07.00 Rapid Intervention Team (RIT).
 - ✓ Chief stated that this policy is very important as it relates to live fire training and fire operations.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve District Policy SOG #200.07.00 Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) (copy attached hereto). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Watkins and approved.

Old Business

- Discussion of Chief Etcheverry's Probationary Employment Contract
 - ✓ Chief stated that his contract was modified to include one week bereavement pay as well as his inability to return to line duty in the event of resignation or termination.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve Chief Etcheverry's Employment Contract as drafted by District Legal Counsel (copy attached hereto). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Spence and unanimously approved.

- Discussion of Finance Manager/Administrative Specialist, Sunny Sipes', Employment Contract.
 - ✓ Sipes presented the final draft of her Employment Contract stating that all details discussed by the Board at the February Board meeting were included within the contract by District Legal Counsel.

Commissioner Fichter made a motion to approve Finance Manager/Administrative Specialist, Sunny Sipes', Employment Contract as drafted by District Legal Counsel (copy attached hereto). This motion was seconded by Commissioner Spence and unanimously approved.

Union Report

District Paramedic Joe Randall, Local 1826 DVP (not in attendance)

- None

Volunteer / Public Comments

- None

Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Fichter stated that he would like to place the discussion of the Chief's Performance Review on the April Agenda. He reminded the Board that this review, as noted within the Chief's Employment Contract, is to take place during the May-June months of the current year. He felt that they should approve the form and process at the April meeting, complete their employee inquiries during the following four weeks and then report their findings and results at the May Board meeting. He asked Sipes to forward a copy of the previous year's form to all Commissioners for their review.
- Commissioner Spence stated the importance of all employee evaluations and thanked Jeff Tuscan for his work on the Annual Financial Audit.
- Etcheverry stated that the Employee Performance Evaluations were in progress.
- Commissioner Crittenden thanked Chief Etcheverry on his committed work to the fire pit repairs.

Reminders

- The April Board Meeting will be held Monday, April 8, 2024, at 6:30 PM.
- Volunteer Chicken Barbecue will be held Sunday, March 24th, from 11 AM-3 PM.

Adjournment

Commissioner Spence moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 PM. This was seconded by Commissioner Watkins, and the vote was unanimous. Chairman Crittenden closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sunny Sipes, Finance Manager / Administrative Specialist

Minutes Distributed Electronically to Board Members