

SANIBEL FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT
Minutes of the Fire Commission Meeting
January 11, 2023

Commissioners – Chairman Jerry Muench – *excused*, Vice Chair Bruce Cochrane, Secretary Richard McCurry
Fire Chief Kevin Barbot
Division Chief Tim Barrett
Fire Marshal Larry Williams
Assistant Administrator Greta Fulkerson

In attendance were the following: Captain Jackson, Lieutenant Howell, FF Martin, FF Shelby, FF Moore, FF Bell, FF Bledsoe, and the general public.

Commissioner Cochrane opened the meeting at 9:00 AM. Commissioner Cochrane led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Cochrane led a Moment of Silence in honor of former Commissioner Lawrence, who passed away on Saturday, January 7, 2023.

1st Order of Business: Chief Barbot requested a motion to record the meeting. **A motion was made by Commissioner Cochrane to record the January 11, 2023, commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

2nd Order of Business: Board of Commissioners' Oath of Office. Chief Barbot asked the Board Members to stand, raise their right hand, and repeat after him. Chief Barbot recited the Commissioners' Oath of Office and swore in the Board Members.

3rd Order of Business: Board of Commissioners' seat assignment discussion. Chief Barbot stated that according to the District Charter, the Commissioners' seat assignments must be discussed and nominated every January. The Board Members agreed to remain in their current seat positions. **A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to nominate Commissioner Jerry Muench as Chairman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously. A motion was made by Commissioner Cochrane to nominate Commissioner McCurry as Secretary. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously. A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to nominate Commissioner Cochrane as Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

4th Order of Business: The minutes for the December 14, 2022, commission meeting were reviewed and accepted by the Board Members. **A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

5th Order of Business: Division Chief of Training Report. The District has continued to work with condos in the process of remodeling for a variety of training purposes. This has been a great opportunity for our personnel to get some training in unfamiliar territory as the set-up at Station 171 is standard and our personnel already know it very well. There has been focus on FF Bledsoe as he is still in his initial probationary period, but he is sharp and should be off probation soon. EVO (Emergency Vehicle Operator) training will start up again the following week now that Station 171 is back to normal operations. Dr. Abo's monthly lectures are in-person as the lectures are followed by relevant hands-on training. A pre-test will

also be incorporated prior to each lecture to ensure all personnel are staying on top of their material review. The District has many CPR classes lined up, a handful of which will be located at the Sanctuary Golf Club. AmeriGas has been helpful to the District by handling the removal of stray and damaged propane tanks. The B Shift crew did a great job of removing a large propane tank from a canal by kayaking out to it and hooking it up to the brush truck to be hauled out of the water.

6th Order of Business: Division Chief of Prevention Report. Regarding year-end numbers, Fire Marshal Williams completed 1,166 inspections, excluding the three months post-Hurricane Ian, which would have brought the total number to 1,554 inspections for 2022. Fire Marshal Williams also completed 78 fire reviews. Fire Marshal Williams has been meeting with many contractors regarding building plans and code requirements. Many of these buildings will have updated fire alarms as well as sprinkler systems. Fire Marshal Williams added that so far based on what he has seen, many beach cottages being rebuilt will no longer be one-story, but two-story on stilts with garages or workspaces underneath. Regarding Station 171, Fire Marshal Williams has procured bids on both the electrical repair in the training tower and the roof damage repairs, the former of which will be done by York Electric and the latter of which will be done by Colonial Roofing. Representatives of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) came down to Sanibel, and Fire Marshal Williams gave them a tour around the island, showing them particular areas where golf cart and other electric vehicle fires occurred. Fire Marshal Williams also had a visit from the Florida Fire Marshal Director and the Florida Bureau of Fire Investigations Chief, who he brought to see some of the house fire sites on West Gulf Drive. Chief Barbot asked Fire Marshal Williams to touch on buildings being reconstructed that fall under the 50 percent rule. Fire Marshal Williams said that these buildings require a private appraisal to determine where they fall on the scale, and surprisingly some locations such as Periwinkle Place are not even coming close to hitting the 50 percent mark. Chief Barbot added, I think it is important to note that when we looked at the island with a naked eye, we saw so much damage and devastation, especially in certain areas like Periwinkle Place. We certainly thought that it would have to be demolished and rebuilt from the ground up, and that is not the case. Fire Marshal Williams mentioned that other places, such as Topsy Turtle, have hardly even been touched. Commissioner McCurry said, I think it all depends on the management, the insurance companies, and the contractors.

7th Order of Business: The bid process for a new auditing firm has been put on hold due to more pressing matters needing to be tended to and will be completed by the end of this fiscal quarter. Through December 30, 2021, the District had collected \$6.1 million in ad-valorem revenue, and through December 30, 2022, the District collected \$2.5 million, putting the District down by 60 percent to date. Chief Barbot was able to procure reports from Lee County Tax Collector that show that \$5.8 million in taxes have been paid so far in 2023, which is a hopeful sign for the District come next distribution around January 15th. If this is the case, the District will still be down by about 20 percent. Regarding the Community Disaster Loan (CDL) application, Chief Barbot has had to review and redo spreadsheets because previous years' budget summaries format did not align with financial audits to CDL and FEMA standards. The next step is a budget projection, which will help the District to get a better sense of potential loss in funds and to plan accordingly for the next few years. Chief Barbot will be setting up a meeting with Matt Caldwell and his Deputy Chief later this month to discuss preliminary numbers of where they predict our island community will end up and what size financial hit the District will take, which in turn will help him to complete the CDL application. A committee was supposed to be formed between Lee County Fire Chiefs' Association and Lee County Tax Collector, which is still to be determined.

8th Order of Business: Although the District's call volume is down as the island is not busy as usual, there have been more critical trauma-related calls due to the number of contractors and construction crews currently working on Sanibel. The District ran 70 calls this December of 2022 compared to 143 calls last December of 2021. The District ran a total of 1,670 calls in 2022 compared to 1,737 calls in 2021. With that being said, Chief Barbot has noticed that in recent weeks, the call volume has started to pick up again, a tell-tale sign that residents are making their way back on island. Regarding the annual performance review, the consensus after discussion of this matter under the direction of Governor DeSantis is that areas highly

affected by Hurricane Ian may delay their submission past the June 30, 2023, deadline as long as a letter is sent to Senator Passidomo and other officials giving an explanation for the delay, and there will be no repercussions. Commissioner McCurry asked, how long can we delay the review for? Have we hired someone to handle this? Chief Barbot replied yes, a contract was signed back in September prior to the storm. Many other Districts are under contract and in the same boat as us, and this is a very lengthy process that we cannot prioritize or dedicate the necessary time to right now. The higher priorities include handling the rebuild of Station 172 and dealing with and recouping disaster funds from FEMA. Chief Barbot asked FF Martin to give an update on the District's status with FEMA. In order to keep the process moving forward, meetings with the team, including Hagerty consultant Andre and FEMA project manager Max, will be held bi-weekly. FF Martin has been working on collecting all documentation that shows tasks handled and equipment used by the District during disaster recovery. The District is looking at a 12 to 18-month timeframe on fund recouperation. The reason-being for the lengthy and complex list of requirements is to prove that the District was on top of everything with its facilities prior to the storm and that the extensive damage, particularly on Station 172, was not a result of the District's lack of care. Regarding temporary housing at Station 172, there was a delay in the shipment of the trailer. Chief Barbot has contacted the company a couple of times, relaying that the Sanibel community has a right to know when the second station will be back up and operating. Due to the delay, Captain Jackson has been looking into alternative options for the District. If the trailer rental falls through, he found a brand new single-wide trailer for the purchase price of \$68,000. With the \$40,000 that the District would be recouping from FEMA for temporary housing at Station 172, this new trailer would only cost the District \$20,000 and could be sold back and profited off of in the long run.

9th Order of Business: The District has procured an enclosed trailer for the purpose of Special Ops, hazmat and rope rescue equipment. This equipment was originally stored in the 2008 Support F-550, a vehicle that was towed away and will not be replaced. The enclosed trailer fell under the Procurement Policy, so it was not necessary to get bids for it based on pricing. Commissioner McCurry asked, was all of the equipment inside okay or did any of it get damaged? Chief Barbot answered, some of it got wet, but all of it is still usable and only a few items got replaced. The District was able to recoup \$40,600 for former Chief Briscoe's vehicle, which means that the purchase of the 2022 F-250 staff vehicle only cost the District \$700. The District received approximately \$6,400 to get the Nissan repaired and back in service, as well as some funds for Engine 179. The District has received all structural reimbursement checks from VFIS so far, totaling \$715,561 between Station 171, Station 172, and the training tower. However, the District is working on recouping additional funds for structure repairs given how the inaccessibility of the island in the early weeks of the disaster affected ServiceMaster's labor costs, work schedule and commute. The District has yet to receive any contents reimbursement checks, but the initial loss estimate that came in was much lower than the District's actual loss costs. The District is expecting to receive over \$100,000 in contents reimbursement checks.

10th Order of Business: Personnel Updates. This month, Captain Tracy reached 23 years of service. Chief Barbot added that Captain Tracy announced that he will be retiring this June. Commissioner McCurry mentioned that when he saw him the day before, he congratulated him and although it is too bad for the District, it is great for Captain Tracy to be able to retire. Captain DiMaria has reached 15 years of service, FF Steele has reached 11 years of service, and FF Johanson has also reached 11 years of service.

11th Order of Business: The first business agenda item was regarding the purchase of the 2022 F-250. This vehicle will be used to tow the District's marine asset and the new Special Ops trailer. It will also be used as a staff vehicle once the District is able to proceed with any structural staffing changes. The purchase of an F250 staff vehicle was approved by the Board Members last commission meeting, however since then, the purchase order submitted to Garber Ford was denied due to the dealership having sold too many of them already. The District found an alternative 2022 F250 for \$3,000 less than the original purchase price. **A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to approve the purchase of a 2022 F250 for \$49,153.50. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

12th Order of Business: The second business agenda item was regarding the extension of the contract with Hagerty Consulting. Hagerty Consulting's 3-year contract with the County expired on December 2, 2022. The District had been able to piggyback off that contract back in October to ensure that Hagerty Consulting's services would be covered and reimbursed by FEMA. There is a clause in the contract allowing the County to renew it for an additional year, which the District is also able to piggyback off of. Chief Barbot presented a letter to the Board Members stating the District's agreement to continue with Hagerty Consulting's services for an additional year. **A motion was made by Commissioner Cochrane to continue services with Hagerty Consulting for an additional year. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

13th Order of Business: The third business agenda item was regarding the replacement and purchase of furniture for the administrative offices. The District will be recouping funds from VFIS for contents damaged in the storm. The purchase order in question, through National Business Furniture, will furnish all administrative offices with the exception of the conference room. National Business Furniture is giving the District a \$5,000 discount, bringing the total purchase price to \$21,313.47, which is significantly below what will be recouped from insurance. **A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to approve the purchase of replacement administrative office furniture. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

14th Order of Business: The fourth business agenda item was regarding the sale of a refrigerator as well as Utility 172. A replacement refrigerator for Station 171 was purchased just after the storm that did not end up fitting in the proper space. Since it had been used during disaster recovery, Lowe's would not accept the return of the refrigerator. Utility 172, the Gator vehicle that was used for maintenance at Station 172, was submerged during the storm and has since seized up and cannot be repaired. Chief Barbot requested approval for the re-sale of the refrigerator and Utility 172. **A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to approve putting the refrigerator and Utility 172 out for bid. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cochrane. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

15th Order of Business: The fifth business agenda item was regarding the Request For Qualifications (RFQ). The District will be putting out a public notice for architectural and engineering services needed for Station 172. Chief Barbot mentioned that the District is not obligated to enter into a contract with any of the potential contractors once the proposals start coming in. The first step in the rebuilding process of Station 172 is finding a contractor to handle all of the drawings, planning, and cost-estimating. Commissioner McCurry asked, who wrote this RFQ? Chief Barbot answered, Hagerty Consulting, they have a procurement policy specialist on board that is currently located in Lee County. This service can be fully refunded by FEMA as long as it is procured properly. The motion needed to proceed with this RFQ must be tentative as it still needs to be reviewed by the District's legal representative, Lewis, Longman & Walker, P.A. The goal is to publicize the notice by January 17, 2023. The deadline for proposal submissions is February 17, 2023. Some of the requirements include at least 3 years of experience in the architectural and engineering field, at least 3 years licensed in the State of Florida, and must be compliant with Local, State and Federal regulation. A committee will be put together for review of proposal submissions, however the Board Members will have the final say. **A motion was made by Commissioner Cochrane to proceed with the Request For Qualifications regarding the rebuild project of Station 172. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

16th Order of Business: Commissioner Items. No items to discuss.

17th Order of Business: Union Items. No items to discuss.

18th Order of Business: Public Input. No input to discuss.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.

excused

Commissioner Jerry Muench



Commissioner Bruce Cochrane

Richard P. McCurry

Commissioner Richard McCurry