

BAYSHORE FIRE PROTECTION & RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
November 12, 2013

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Griffin

Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation – Commissioner Hansen

Commissioner Ducrou – Excused
Commissioner Hansen – Present
Commissioner Cook – Present
Commissioner Griffin – Present
Commissioner Klos – Excused
Chief Larry Nisbet - Present
Office Manager - Theresa Sharp - Present
Attorney Ian Mann - Absent

Others Present: Some Public

Minutes – Review and Acceptance of the minutes of the October 8, 2013 Board of Commissioners meeting. Motion made by Commissioner Cook to accept the minutes. Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion. Vice-Chairman Griffin calls for questions or comments. With no questions or discussion and none opposed, motion carries.

Financial Report: Review & Acceptance of the October 2013 financials. Commissioner Cook motioned acceptance of the October financials. Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion. Vice-Chairman Griffin calls for questions or comments. With no questions or discussion, and none opposed, motion carries.

Admin/Ops/Fire Marshal's Report (attached) –Chief Nisbet reads the Fire Marshal and Administrative Reports into the record. Vice-Chairman Griffin calls for questions or comments. Commissioner Hansen asks if the hazmat call was the cooking oil truck and remarks as to the smoke on the overpass bridge. Chief Nisbet responds it was not, it was a vehicle fire. He adds the recycled oil truck fire was impressive. He continues that the guys snuffed that fire quick. He continues, when we got there the cooking oil was already off gassing and was puffing like a dragon out the manhole cover on the top of the truck right to the overpass. We had North Fort Myers and Tice assist us on the fire and once we were on scene we had it under control in 1½ to 2 minutes putting foam on it. Commissioner Hansen states it was very impressive, when he passed it he called us advising there was smoke and we had better get there quick. Chief states they were going to send us a crash truck out of CFR, he continues, you knew we had something because the dispatcher was still talking when we got in the trucks. Commissioner Hansen states when he saw it, it was blazing. With no further discussion or questions, Vice-Chairman Griffin calls for Petitions.

Petitions before the Board – None

Union Petitions/Discussions – None

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Old Business –

- Chief Nisbet states that he has nothing listed on the agenda, but wishes to update the Board on the GSG study. He continues, we are working on providing them a fully funded budget reflecting everything as though it was back to status quo with the 5-year step plan, and our current budget as it is, so they can project our financial sustainability plan. He also advises they would like to meet with each Commissioner individually the week of January 6. They will be here one evening and one morning to go over the study individually so we don't violate any sunshine laws. That way when they make their presentation of the full report in January, any questions the board members had they will have answers to. At that point, what we do with the study depends on where we decide to go. Whether to move forward or abandon the Assessment plan. Chief respectfully requests the Board Members keep that week in mind and he will let the commissioners know as soon as he knows those dates. He also announces the first publication for the public hearing on December 10th was in today's paper. Therefore, he states, it is imperative we have a full board that evening so we can have the public hearing and if the Board decides to do so, we can execute the resolution and move forward to notifying the Property Appraiser/Tax Collector of the possibility of them collecting an assessment fee for us if the voters choose to permit it. Chief adds that he was very impressed and it was evident they have done this before. They have been working extensively with Captain Underwood on the call data, and they are saying that based upon what they have been seeing, we are pretty much average with everyone else they work with, and the largest assessment fee they have come up with so far has been about \$221 per residential home. Then, he continues, when they give the presentation, they will show you where we would be if 100% funded, 80% funded... Commissioner Hansen asks about grants. Chief Nisbet states that he hasn't heard anything and there hasn't been any more awarded yet, he plans on giving them this week and follow up again next week, he has to speak with them anyway as we are getting ready to lose Firefighter Gollither in January, one of our newest employees, as he has accepted a position at Iona McGregor, which Chief can't blame him for wanting a more secure paid position and until he has definitive information on the other SAFER, he does not want to fill that vacancy if he doesn't have to. He intends to ask them how he should go about doing that. Of course, if we get the other SAFER before that, we will have to fill the position, but if we don't he will see if they will let him keep it vacant until we find out the other's award status. He figures it would be about November or the first of December, because of the shutdown. He adds he is also currently working on an AFG grant for an exhaust capture system for the bay, and addressing our airpacks that are starting to get some age on them. They are 2 cycles old now. If we had to replace every airpack, it would be roughly \$183-185,000 so if he can get that grant, it would be another capital expenditure covered. We will have to cover 5% of the costs. He believes we could possibly cover that with the trade-ins we would have. Vice-Chairman Griffin asks for any other old business. Hearing none, he moves on to new business.

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New Business –

- **Election of Officers** –Commissioner Hansen motions to keep all officers unchanged. It is discussed that everyone is fine leaving it as is. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. With no further discussion offered and none opposed, motion carried. Vice Chairman Griffin asks for any other new business. Chief Nisbet asks the Board to consider giving a performance based bonus this year, as we have done on occasion in the past. He states the staff have been a tremendous support and have given so much and it has been tough on them. He continues that historically we have done \$1000, he suggests \$500 and feels if we don't get the SAFER funding, what he is asking for is not going to make any difference anyway, we will have to redo the contract and everything, and if we do, we will be in pretty decent shape, especially if we can get the assessments to go through. Commissioner Hansen asks where this will come from, if it will come from prior year carryover. Chief Nisbet respond that we did carry over roughly \$29,000 and while there will be other payroll costs associated with it, there won't be any FRS associated cost since it is performance based bonus. Chief adds that he has been struggling with this, but his heart tells him he needs to do something for the staff. Commissioner Griffin asks what is meant by performance based. Chief Nisbet responds that it used to be that you could just give an end of year bonus, but two years ago state statute changed that. Now it has to be based on a form of criteria that everyone must know about. He continues that the last time, 2 years ago, we did a 30 day performance evaluation and everyone that got above a 3 on their evaluation, received a bonus. That met all the legal requirements and makes it fairly simple. Commissioner Hansen asks if everyone received it. Chief responds they did. He then asks who evaluated Chief. Chief responds to Commissioner Hansen that he did. The Board had left it to him. They laugh as Commissioner Hansen says he was just checking his memory. Commissioner Hansen asks how much Chief thinks it should be since Chief had stated it was \$1,000 in the past and had asked about \$500. Chief Nisbet asks to meet in the middle at \$750. Commissioner Cook states he was thinking \$500. Chief states he is ok with that too. Commissioner Cook asks how much that costs us. Chief replies approximately 20% above the amount distributed which would be about \$8,000. Commissioner Cook states he feels that times are tough and everyone should be happy to get \$500, as it costs us \$8,000. Chief states \$8,400 would be our cost. Commissioner Hansen asks Commissioner Griffin what he thinks. Commissioner Griffin states he would like to give more, but as it is... we don't know where we are going to be or what...Commissioner Cook states they all would. Chief Nisbet states this is the struggle he is having. Commissioner Hansen asks what if we structured it like they are doing the teachers, where they are getting now & then getting a mid-year review. That would give us time to find out about the grant, and the assessment. Chief states he feels with the collective bargaining contract, that could leave us open to have to negotiate such things, where if we do it as a one shot deal it keeps him out of collective bargaining violations or unfair labor practice. He states he has also discussed the step plan freeze with GSG and has talked extensively with Billy that even if the assessment passes everything that has been frozen is not going to be unfrozen, it has to be structured out, because whatever we collect, we are probably going to be living on that at least 3 or 4 years, whatever that amount is. He notes, we

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also have to recoup whatever reserves we've had to use, plus compensate for the loss of SAFER funding, and any increases in insurance, and whatever is going on with Obamacare...He adds that he's not even sure we are going to be able to get insurance next year because everyone's plans are getting cancelled. We may, he continues, since we are under 50 employees, get forced into Obamacare as a group, because they are going to have group plans. We just don't know yet. Dwight Phillips is working on that for us, but that could very easily be our health insurance next year.

Commissioner Hansen states there's now there 4½ million more people uninsured. Everyone is in agreement it is definitely a mess and not well structured/run. Chief states he feels we are a pretty good model of efficiency, he and Commissioner Cook agree, when it gets any bigger than this, it's a mess. Commissioner Hansen asks Commissioner Cook if he is making the motion for \$500. Commissioner Cook makes the motion at \$500 and Commissioner Hansen seconded it and asks Chief to let them know the Board wanted to give more, but not knowing where we are at right now... Chief agrees. Commissioner Griffin asks, if doing it this way is ok, what prevents us from doing additional down the road. Chief Nisbet states, if we do it the same way, we probably can, but we are not committing to more in the future; and next year we negotiate the entire contract again. We can do a one time payroll adjustment at any time, but to maintain transparency, this time of year, he prefers to do it this way because that is what the statute calls for. Chief states where we are going to be in October next year, if we don't get renewed in SAFER, we get one more shot at applying for all 6, but he doesn't know if he'll have an answer by October, we will expend the reserves we identified to keep everyone working to keep the requirement of the current grant, if the assessment fee does not go through and we don't have the alternative funding sources to help stabilize our budget, depending on what our increase is through Ad Valorem, we had \$60,000 increase in uncontrollable costs in health insurance and worker's comp alone, we are going to drop 6 people. He repeats, we are going to drop 6 people, our ISO rating is probably going to go to a 9/10, and the average homeowner's fire insurance is going to go up \$2,500-\$3,500 per year. That is the reality of it. He adds that we could have been facing this 5 years ago. We have put up a good fight and gotten where we are by maintaining and doing what we have done, in his opinion, making some smart choices. He continues, our operating expenses in our budget are only \$283,000, and that even includes those truck payments. He states, operationally we are not funding things we shouldn't be funding. He states that is one of the things in the interview with GSG, she asked him how much we put aside each year for capital expenditure. He told her zero, and she asked what he does if we have to buy something. His reply was he goes to the Board and we have to take it out of reserves, or we get a grant, or a donation, or barter. We do whatever we have to. He states that we have some hoses and stuff that are coming due for replacement, the air packs are coming, and if we don't get the grant to cover the airpacks, Captain Underwood who is in charge of the airpacks, and he have discussed a plan to replace the 18 airpacks over a 3 year period, so we are not faced with all of them coming due at the same time like we are facing now. He states that those we currently have we can make due for the next 5 years, we can probably stay in compliance for the next 5 years, but then all the bottles will have to be replaced and a lot of the components will be Non-NFPA compliant. Commissioner Cook states we could do 6 every 2 years, and

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asks how long they last. Chief Nisbet responds 15 years. Captain Underwood states that we have packs right now that the bottles are ready to expire. He states we have 6 that we got on a grant in 2004. Then there are 4 more from a grant in 2005. Commissioner Cook states then we only have to replace 6. Chief Nisbet states that what he is going for is that the guys are all using the same packs. Right now we have the same make, but we don't have the same model, and we have some 30 minute packs and some 45 min packs and now the new standard that's coming out, the low air alarm is now going off at 1/3 instead of 1/4 so we want to go to 45 minute bottles so we can initiate an aggressive fire attack before they have to come out, and on a commercial occupancy, NFPA is 50%. So if they are fighting in a large commercial occupancy or a high rise structure, something like that, they are supposed to start exiting the structure when their airpacks are at 50%, so with a 45 minute bottle and they're breathing heavy, that gives them roughly 15-20 minutes. Commissioner Cooks agrees, that that is a smart way to do it, so they are not spending all that money at once. The other thing with GSG, when she asked about upcoming apparatus expenses are coming soon, the only thing he had immediate concerns with was in the next 5 years the chasis on Brush 131, but we'll just get another 6X from Forestry and pull the bed and everything, lift it up, slide the newer chasis underneath it, bolt it on, wire it up and we'll be good to go. He has already made it known if some deuces come available, even if he has to put it over here and park it for a year, he wants one, and he wants another automatic. Other than that, Brush 132 which is the truck we got from Hillsborough County airport when Chief started here, it is still in great shape, but probably in the next 5 years, that truck is probably going to need to be re-chasis'd and do the same as with B-131, or go to a rescue/brush truck kind of like North Fort Myers is running; something that is dual purpose. The engines are still good; but, engine 131 is in its 5th year, it is soon going to be 6 years old, and according to NFPA standards, we should do at least a refurb. on it at 10 years, that gives it 10 more years of service. If you look at the oldie we just got rid of, that's about when that truck had to be refurbished. The 10 year mark was when we started having problems with it. We still have some time, that stuff is down the road, but that's the kind of stuff Chief is thinking of with regard to sustainability. He is looking at more than 5 years on a sustainability plan, he chose to look at the next 8 years. We are going to have a five year plan, but he wants to have it built out for at least 8 for us. He also speculates that with the influx the Pritchett Parkway development is going to have, consideration will have to be made. Commissioner Griffin asks if they will be required to do something for us due to the number of homes going in. Chief Nisbet says they will not due to the proximity to the station they will be, but because of the increase in call volume, we will probably need to increase personnel. Right now we are staffed at 4 and Chief is very comfortable with our staffing level now, but if we get above 1000 calls a year, we are going to need to look at adding at least another person or two per shift to have the staffing level a 6 with maybe a minimum staffing level of 4 to kind of maintain so control over the overtime costs. Chief continues now referencing out east and the Bonita Bay project that once was going in, thankfully that didn't happen back then. That firehouse would have been sitting empty right now. Chief is quite happy that fell apart before it got started. But he feels if another developer came in to do something out there we would probably negotiate with them like we did with Bonita Bay, to put a fire station out

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there and impact fees up front to put the equipment in there and we'd have to man it. Commissioner Griffin states he knows the City did the one off of Treeline, they could only build so many homes until they put a fire station out there. Chief Nisbet states that that is something that we are facing even with our ISO rating as good as it is right now, is our response times out east of 31 and in that corridor, our response times dictate the need for a fire station out there, but our call volume does not. A majority of our calls are from Old Bayshore this way. And what we get out past there is usually pretty nasty, and our response time dictates we need a station out there, but not the call volume. Commissioner Hansen states the Pritchett Parkway project has a hearing scheduled December 2nd at noon. Commissioner Griffin asks where that is being held. Commissioner Hansen responds at the church. Chief Nisbet states his intention is not to rock the boat on any of that right now. Commissioner Cook wants to know who is putting on the meeting. Commissioner Hansen states Banks Engineering. Captain Underwood states that they could have turned dirt already, but they are wanting to change some things like additional entrances and the comp plan. Commissioner Hansen states the same. Chief states they have to reinstate their permit by Feb. 2014. They told Chief they were going to start in 2014 and are estimating 200 homes a year until it is built out, which makes it a 10 yr project. Chief adds that we got impact fees from Loves for about \$7000. Commissioner Hansen asks if they are trying to wean off and get rid of SAFER. Chief states that he feels they want to see different use of the money than what we are doing, they want more to add personnel rather than to sustain personnel. They do understand the situation and we are at the ground zero on that situation, but they have changed some of the criteria for the awards that hurts us now and that is population and call volume. They do know that the situation we were in and the possibility of defaulting on the grant was a very real possibility at that time, and our engine staffing would take us from 4 to 2, that carries a lot of weight, so in a lot of areas we are going to score high, but in some we will score low. He continues, last year, our scoring out of the fundability right now, and where we sat, was 2/10 of one point. That's how close we sat, and he honestly believes it is the Metro chiefs really banging the buck to get the SAFER dollars to beef up their departments. Chief does understand because they are busy, but SAFER wasn't designed for them, it was designed for communities like us. That want to provide a functional level of service and that's a reliable force engine company, that significantly increases the potential for us for a rescue on a fire event or a save on a structure fire, he states since his assumption of command here, any structure that was not fully engulfed on arrival we stopped the fire. Wells road is a good example, 7 or 8 years ago that could have gone to the ground very easily. The Board is in full agreement on that. Commissioner Griffin says 15 years ago when they moved out here, he told his wife, don't even call the fire department, call a couple guys down the street. Chief says as far as personnel, we also have to stay somewhat marketable to maintain people like Doug, that have the experience, and knowledge, and education, with all the time we have invested in them, if we don't figure out a long term sustainability plan to maintain the personnel we have, we are going to lose them to other places. Commissioner Cook states we also need to make them feel comfortable. Commissioner Griffin says we don't want to become another stepping stone for them. Chief is in full agreement. He adds, that's what would happen, and he sites Engineer Edwards who left us to be a firefighter at the same pay

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he earned here. Chief states he doesn't look to become the highest paid department, but feels we should set our sites on the lower mid-range level. He feels if they come here and they like it and as Commissioner Cook stated, they feel comfortable, then we are going to have an experienced, energetic workforce that's going to make sure we get things done. Commissioner Cook states he does think it is hard to be comfortable in any department. Chief agrees, it is. Commissioner Hansen states it is hard to be comfortable in any job right now. Commissioner Cook agrees. Chief Nisbet states that Iona, Estero, and Bonita Springs are all good departments and they have not felt the crunch like the departments north, City of Fort Myers and out east have. Our areas a predominantly heavily residential properties and we were the nuclear test site for the market crash. While we didn't have a lot of foreclosures, our comps are what hurt us. As the discussion weins, Chief Nisbet thanks the Board for considering the compensation request. Vice-Chairman Griffin calls for any other new business and hearing none, he calls for public input.

Public Input – None.

Motion to Adjourn – Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Cook and seconded by Commissioner Hansen. With none opposed, meeting adjourned 7:39pm.