



Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue

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FIRE CHIEF
SALVATORE A. D'ANGELO III

**MINUTES
NOVEMBER 21, 2017
WORKSHOP AND REGULAR MEETING**

**Held at the Indian Shores Municipal Center
19305 Gulf Blvd., Indian Shores, FL 33785**

**WORKSHOP MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 p.m.
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

ROLL CALL: Commissioners answering roll call were Chair Joe Bruni, Secretary/Treasurer Larry Schear, and Commissioner David Gardella. Vice Chair Lou Snelling and Commissioner Laura Martin were excused. A quorum was present with Chair Joe Bruni presiding. Attorney Jeff Albinson, Fire Chief Mike Burton, and Finance Director David Martin were also present.

SERVICE PIN – Lieutenant David Karpinecz – Fire Chief Mike Burton recognized Lieutenant David Karpinecz for 10 years of dedicated service to the District.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS: None.

GENERAL REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE: None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

11-26 Service-Connected Total & Permanent Disability Tax Exemption and Non-Ad Valorem Assessments **Fire Chief**

Discussion: Fire Chief Burton explained that there is a provision in Florida Statute that exempts 100% disabled military veterans from paying property taxes, but it does not exempt them from paying non-ad valorem assessments. He explained that, historically, these properties were not being assessed, but have since been identified since working with GSG in their analysis, and thus these property owners have begun receiving a tax bill with PSFRD's assessment. The District estimates that there might be roughly 75 property owners with this exemption, a few of which have called in with their concerns. Chief Burton explained that the Board has the option to offer an exemption to these homeowners. The Board requested that the Chief and staff conduct further research on the properties and come back with a final number.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:10 p.m.

ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS: Chair Joe Bruni stated that the election of board officers will be put on hold and take place at the December meeting so that all Commissioners could be in attendance.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

17-28 Community Stakeholder Group

Discussion: Fire Chief Burton discussed the proposed makeup of the Stakeholder Group to explore funding options that was discussed at the last meeting. He stated that he would like members to include the Board Chair, Finance Director, a Firefighter or Fire Officer, one resident from each Indian Shores, Indian Rocks Beach, Belleair Beach, and Belleair Shore, two residents from the Oakhurst area, a rental property owner from any of the aforementioned communities, and a business owner from any of the communities. The Chief proposed to get a general consensus on the model tonight, and he will then work through November and December to solicit interested parties, and require those interested parties to submit an application to us by a date in December, with the Board to make a decision at the January meeting. There was a consensus among all Commissioners in attendance. Chief Burton stated that he will provide a status update at the December meeting, and names for the makeup of the group will be provided for the Board's consideration at the January meeting.

MONTHLY BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Minutes: October 11, 2017 Workshop and Regular Meetings

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2017 Workshop and Regular Meetings.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER GARDELLA SECOND: COMMISSIONER SCHEAR
All in favor, motion passed unanimously.**

2. Treasurer's Report: September and October, 2017

Discussion: Secretary/Treasurer Larry Schear stated all balance sheet accounts have been reconciled as of October 31, 2017. He reviewed the District's total assets of the Money Market Account and Fixed Income Investment Program, as well as the state of Fund Balance reserves. Secretary/Treasurer Schear explained that there was a revenue increase in the consolidated government funds from last year. Cash and expense management programs remain closely watched, but the loss of the ad valorem tax has resulted in the elimination of a proposed pay raise for personnel and deep expense cuts. Regarding the Capital Projects Funds, impact fees are projected to cover budgeted items, and funds have been earmarked to replace Engine 27. The Restricted Fund Balance is in accordance with the budget. The current Unassigned Reserve Ratio is 24.7%.

A motion to approve the September and October 2017 Treasurer's Reports.

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER GARDELLA SECOND: COMMISSIONER SCHEAR
All in favor, motion passed unanimously.**

3. Correspondence: None.

GENERAL REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

John Pfanstiehl – 448 Harbor Drive South, Indian Rocks Beach – Mr. Pfanstiehl thanked Chief Burton for reaching out to the public. He asked the Board to revisit 2008 auditor's report to increase efficiency and decrease cost.

REPORTS:

1. **COMMISSION:** Commissioner Schear stated that FASD has received the District's updated membership for next year. Commissioner Schear stated that there are two upcoming courses that he would like to attend to complete the Certified District Officer program. All commissioners were in favor of Commissioner Schear attending. Finance Director David Martin mentioned that most travel had to be cut from the budget. Commissioner Gardella mentioned that there was zero dollars allotted for Commissioner travel. Discussion ensued.

2. ATTORNEY: Attorney Albinson stated that he met with Chief Burton recently to bring him up to date on things going on in the District. He stated that Chief Burton discussed his idea for the Stakeholder Group and he thinks it is a fantastic idea; he suggested that only one Commissioner is part of the group, otherwise the meeting would have to be advertised.

Attorney Albinson stated that Mr. Hoofnagle has filed a second lawsuit against the District alleging that the District violated the Sunshine Law on a public records request. Attorney Albinson explained that during Mr. Hoofnagle's first lawsuit against the District, Mr. Hoofnagle made a public records request that included all invoices from any attorney who had worked on the lawsuit, which were provided to him with redactions. He stated that Mr. Hoofnagle also requested the lawyer's notes, and Hill, Ward, Henderson (HWH) determined that those notes were not public record until such time that they were converted to an invoice to be submitted. In that same request, Mr. Hoofnagle also requested all email correspondence between PSFRD and HWH. Attorney Albinson discussed that there was a considerable amount of work product in those emails that, while litigation was ongoing, had to be reviewed and redacted by an attorney. Additionally, neither the invoices and email correspondence were limited to referendum discussion; they also referenced the ongoing EMS litigation taking place at that time. Because of this, Mr. Hoofnagle's counsel was informed that it would cost approximately \$3,000 due to the amount of time it would take for the law firm to review the approximately 1,000 pages of email correspondence and to make necessary redactions. Attorney Albinson stated that Mr. Hoofnagle's public records lawsuit had been filed with the Clerk but not served on the District, and once he learned about it, he contacted Mr. Hoofnagle's attorney and discussed with him the relative merits of the lawsuit, particularly because by that time the case was essentially over, although it does still remain open now to resolve a cost issue. Attorney Albinson stated that he was hopeful that Mr. Hoofnagle, through his attorney, would step away from wanting to sue the District over the public records issue. Attorney Albinson stated that he has discussed with Mr. Hoofnagle's attorney the ability to provide the requested materials now that the litigation is essentially over, and also discussed his request for attorney's fees, which, at this point, exceed \$5,000, and Chief Burton and Kim Fugate have worked to review the materials. Attorney Albinson continued to explain that he had a conversation with Mr. Hoofnagle's attorney requesting that he not serve the lawsuit on the District until there had been a chance to work things out. Additionally, it had been apparent that Mr. Hoofnagle did not inform his attorney that he had scheduled a meeting to discuss a number of things, including the lawsuit, with Chief Burton outside of the lawyers being involved. Attorney Albinson stated that it was to his surprise that Mr. Hoofnagle's attorney still had the lawsuit served upon the District and it is now active litigation, and he will give the Board an update at the next meeting.

Attorney Albinson added to his report (after the Chief's Report) that the members of PSFRD who previously had been members of the Union voted to not be members of that particular Union any longer, and their intention is now to join a different Union. Attorney Albinson stated that he has been working on the issue with their attorney, Ryan Barack, and the proposal is continue operating under the previous Union Contract until they are in a new Union and a new Collective Bargaining Agreement can be negotiated; however, it became apparent that the exact Agreement could not be adopted due to parts which reference giving notice to the Union. The Chief and Finance Director took the time to go through the Agreement and identified everything that needed to be corrected. Attorney Albinson stated that he made a few minor revisions, sent it to Mr. Barack, and is now awaiting a response.

3. CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief Burton stated that he has spent the month meeting with a number of folks, including county officials, colleagues in other fire departments, and residents, in an attempt to learn more about current situations and things that are underway. He explained that, due to the Court's ruling and reduction of revenue, the District will continue to struggle to accomplish the day to day administrative work and the work that needs to be done within the District. The Chief explained that there has been a realignment of some duties, with certain administrative tasks being reassigned to the District Chiefs. The District Chiefs, along with the other Chief Officers and administrative personnel, have committed to a complete revamp of the District's Standard Operating Procedures. Chief Burton also stated that they also had a positive meeting with FEMA officials regarding Hurricane Irma and the reimbursement process. Lastly, Firefighter/EMT John Webber has accepted a position which was recently vacated by Firefighter/EMT Casey Hannah, and it is expected that he will come on board the first week in December.

ACTION ITEMS:

17-27 FY2017/2017 Budget Amendment #1
(Resolution 2017-14)

Finance Director/Attorney

Discussion: Finance Director Dave Martin stated that he and the Chief spent a great deal of time going through the budget that was originally adopted to get to this point, and they actually show a small surplus at the end of the year in the general fund. Finance Director Martin reviewed the affected accounts outlined in the budget amendment. Attorney Jeff Albinson read Resolution 2017-14 in its entirety.

REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE: None.

A motion to adopt Resolution 2017-14.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER GARDELLA SECOND: COMMISSIONER SCHEAR
All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned in due form at 7:45 p.m.

APPROVED:


Joseph V. Bruni, Chair

12/19/17
Date Approved

ATTEST:


Kimberly G. Fugate, Executive Assistant