



# *Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue*

304 FIRST STREET  
INDIAN ROCKS BEACH, FLORIDA 33785-2587

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[www.psfrd.org](http://www.psfrd.org)

FIRE CHIEF  
T. MICHAEL BURTON

**MINUTES  
DECEMBER 17, 2019  
WORKSHOP AND REGULAR MEETINGS**

**Held at Indian Shores Municipal Building  
19305 Gulf Blvd., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Indian Shores, FL 33785**

**WORKSHOP MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:00 p.m.  
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

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**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS** – None.

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**FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARDS** – Steve Surface with the VFW presented Brandon Anderson an award for Firefighter/EMT of the Year and John Webber an award for Firefighter/Paramedic of the Year.

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**SERVICE PIN AWARDS** – Assistant Chief John Mortellite presented District Chief Raymond Norton with a service pin for 25 years of service to the District.

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**GENERAL REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE:** None.

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**DISCUSSION ITEMS:** None.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

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**REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:10 p.m.**

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**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:**

**19-33 Fire Chief Job Description**

*Discussion:* Commissioner Ardman stated that it was decided at the last meeting to discuss Action Item 19-33 – Fire Chief Job Description at this meeting; however, that item needs to be tabled once again until the next meeting.

**19-37 Fire Chief's Accomplishments for the Last Year**

*Discussion:* Chair Bruni stated that he would like to discuss Fire Chief Mike Burton's accomplishments for the last year during the Action Item portion of the meeting.

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**MONTHLY BUSINESS:**

1. Approval of Minutes: November 19, 2019 Workshop and Regular Meetings

*Discussion:* None.

**A motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2019 Workshop and Regular Meetings.**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER ARDMAN**

**SECOND: COMMISSIONER SCHEAR**

**All in favor, motion passed unanimously.**

2. Treasurer's Report: November, 2019

*Discussion:* Secretary/Treasurer Larry Schear stated all balance sheet accounts have been reconciled as of November 30, 2019. He reported the following: Consolidated government fund assets and liabilities are \$2.4 million; the investment program in accordance with District policy is \$ 2.1 million; current liabilities are within normal end-of-month limits at \$89,200; the capital projects fund revenues total \$3.4 thousand; general fund revenues are in line with the adopted budget except for the CME pass-through funding that offsets overtime expenditures. The reserve ratio remains slightly ahead of GASB recommendations at 19.0%. Reserves have been depleted through the last ten years which continues to be a concern. Fiscal year general fund projection does not include the FEMA claim for Hurricane Michael expenditure refund. See detailed Financial Report for further details.

Commissioner Gardella asked Finance Director David Martin to explain why the County did not provide the \$1.2 in funding for Truck 28. Mr. Martin explained that the settlement agreement called for them to consider it for Penny for Pinellas funding in the first phase. He explained that they did consider it; however, they have chosen not to fund any apparatus during this phase. Chief Burton is working with the County to possibly move those funds to the replacement of Station 28. Mr. Martin added that there is another application process the Chief will be working with the County on to add that in the Penny for Pinellas second phase.

Commissioner Ardman stated that the financial report mentions that the Chief is revisiting the 2019/2020 Capital Plan to determine which, if any, asset purchases can be deferred to a future year and asked if there is a schedule for this. Mr. Martin explained that the Capital Plan is included as one of the attachments to the budget. He explained it was a fairly aggressive purchasing process this fiscal year with a lighter one next fiscal year; however, he explained that he was planning on using the \$1.2 million from the County to increase the District's reserves, but that funding is no longer happening. Mr. Martin stated that it has not been decided yet which type of apparatus will replace the squad, and the committee hasn't yet been formed and it can be estimated that there will be a year build-out, so that money will not be spent this year anyhow, except for potentially the down payment, so that is part of the deferral program. He added that Chief Mortellite and Chief Burton have been working on looking at other utility vehicles and what will be needed or not needed this year. He confirmed that Chief Burton will keep the Commission updated moving forward.

Commissioner Ardman inquired as to whether there is a statute of limitations for previously uncollected impact fees. Mr. Martin stated no, but the only legal avenue the District has in that situation is a lien, but that is a labor-intensive process and not worth it. He added that it only works when the cities in the District work with the department.

**A motion to approve the November, 2019 Treasurer's Report.**

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

3. Correspondence: None.

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**GENERAL REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE:** None.

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**REPORTS:**

1. **COMMISSION:** Commissioner Ardman stated that the Indian Rocks Beach Mayor, Cookie Kennedy, expressed her gratitude for the honorary salute that was given to former Indian Rocks Beach Mayor, Robert DiNicola, on December 9<sup>th</sup> at St. Jerome's. The involved employees were Honor Guard/Life Safety Inspectors Robert Hill and Marshall Eiss, and the Truck 28 crew of Lieutenant Todd Grantham, Firefighter/Paramedic Doug Howard, and Firefighter/EMT Jim Norberg.

Commissioner Ardman discussed that he and Chief Burton provided comments to a postcard that was produced in the mail throughout the City last week [regarding the prohibition of fireworks]. He added, in addition to the postcard, various other signs will be deployed before New Year's Eve, and the Sheriff's Office has also agreed also to step up enforcement.

Chair Joe Bruni thanked Commissioner Ardman for the information he provided on Pasco County's RFQ for station construction.

Commissioner Schear stated that Engine 27 supported Indian Shores in the tree lighting ceremony last weekend. The involved employees were Lieutenant Karpinecz, Firefighter/EMT Brandon Anderson, and Firefighter/EMT Patrick Schwab. He added that the Mayor sent letters of commendation to each of the firefighters and the Fire Chief. Commissioner Schear also mentioned that Indian Shores' boat parade will be taking place on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and he hopes the fire boat can participate.

Chair Bruni stated that he and Chief Burton met with Jim Fogarty and Craig Hare from Pinellas County Fire and EMS regarding Penny for Pinellas funding and how to go about moving forward for the

building of Station 28. He added that Chief Burton is making great strides at the County level to ensure that the District is on the right path to procure Penny money for that project.

**2. ATTORNEY:** No report.

**3. CHIEF'S REPORT:** Assistant Chief Mortellite said that Chief Burton extends his apology for not being in attendance, as he is currently in Kansas participating in a train-the-trainer seminar. He stated that Chief Burton also confirmed that the Fire Chief job description will be on the January agenda.

Assistant Chief Mortellite stated that Chief Burton is continuing to work with Indian Rocks Beach to make it a "fireworks-free" city within two years. Chief Mortellite stated that the new ladder truck was placed in service on November 23<sup>rd</sup>; it is going back to Ten-8 for a recall, but will be back by Friday.

He discussed that the Growth Management Agreement discussed at the last meeting was signed by the Board of County Commissioners on December 10<sup>th</sup> and received back by the District today. Implementation for that will begin on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

Assistant Chief Mortellite stated that he also attended the meeting with Chair Bruni and Chief Burton with Craig Hare and Jim Fogarty regarding the relocation of Station 28. He added that it was discussed to meet with a third party to do some modeling for where the new locations might be for all PSFRD stations. This is expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

Chief Mortellite confirmed that Fire Boat 27 was delivered and personnel is currently working on getting the equipment placed on it and getting the dock and lift taken care of. The replacement vessel for the smaller boat, Marine 27, has also been received and will be put in service in approximately one week.

Chief Mortellite reiterated that staff members participated in the tree lighting ceremony in Indian Shores. Lastly, he explained that he and Chief Burton are in the preliminary planning stages with a third-party vendor to utilize for promotional process for the ranks of lieutenant and district chief. The expected completion of that process will be in 2020.

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**ACTION ITEMS:**

**19-36 Mainland Meeting Location – St. Jerome Parrish Hall**

*Discussion:* Assistant Chief Mortellite stated that, since St. Jerome's was so forthcoming and accommodating regarding our initial request to utilize their Parrish Hall as a meeting location, he and the Chief would like the Board to consider keeping this as a third rotating location for Commission meetings.

**A motion to add St. Jerome Parrish Hall as the third location for holding Commission meetings.**

**MOTION: COMMISSIONER GARDELLA SECOND: COMMISSIONER SCHEAR**

**All in favor, motion passed unanimously.**

**19-37 Fire Chief's Accomplishments**

*Discussion:* Chair Joe Bruni discussed that, in the last year, Chief Burton has assembled a task force to study revenue generation, and that committee came up with the idea for the referendum to increase the fee for service. He added that that referendum passed, which is why the District is in a much better position now. He continued that Chief Burton "took the bull by the horns" immediately following the Truck 28 crash and worked with Ten-8 in Wisconsin to have it returned in a timely fashion. He discussed that Chief Burton was successful in procuring a bargaining agreement with the bargaining unit that was

palatable to the board. He also reiterated from earlier that Chief Burton has worked diligently with Pinellas County Fire and EMS officials regarding Penny for Pinellas funding.

Chair Bruni stated that he would like to make a recommendation to the Board to give Chief Burton a bonus of \$10,000 to \$15,000 – \$10,000 would be 1% of the revenue generated by the referendum. He added that he has worked with the Finance Director to ensure this is possible, and stated that Chief Burton is the most experienced Fire Chief in Pinellas County.

Commissioner Gardella asked what Chief Burton’s current salary is; Dave Martin stated that the Chief started at \$129,000 two years ago, and has received one 5% increase since that time. Mr. Martin added that Chief Burton was in the middle of the bargaining process during his one-year anniversary, and felt it was an inappropriate time to discuss a salary increase, which is why it was deferred to year two. Commissioner Ardman stated that he feels \$10,000 is a fair number; Commissioner Schear agreed.

**A motion to approve a \$10,000 bonus for Fire Chief Mike Burton for his hard work as the Fire Chief of the Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District.**

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

Attorney Jeff Albinson stated that he wanted to ask a question to clarify – this is a one-time event, not establishing precedent that can be carried to future years or future chiefs? All commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Schear asked, on an unrelated note, if the District has formally thanked Belleair Beach for allowing the Board to use their facility. Executive Assistant Kim Fugate stated that the District has not formally thanked them. Mr. Albinson stated that a resolution or commendation could be taken up at a future meeting and that can be sent to both Belleair Beach and Indian Shores. Chair Bruni asked Assistant Chief Mortellite to discuss this with Chief Burton.

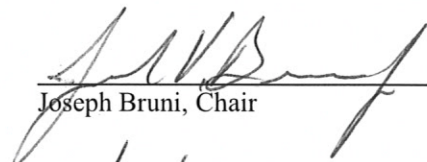
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**REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE:**      None.

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There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned in due form at 6:36 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

  
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Joseph Bruni, Chair

11/21/20  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved

**ATTEST:**

  
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Kimberly G. Fugate, Executive Assistant