



Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue

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www.psfrd.org

FIRE CHIEF
JEFFREY DAVIDSON

**MINUTES
APRIL 19, 2022
WORKSHOP AND REGULAR MEETINGS**

**BELLEAIR BEACH CITY HALL
444 Causeway Blvd.
Belleair Beach, FL 33786**

**WORKSHOP MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

ROLL CALL: Commissioners answering roll call were Chair Joseph Bruni, Vice Chair Louis Snelling, Secretary/Treasurer Lawrence Schear, Commissioner David Gardella, and Commissioner Betsey McKenna. A quorum was present with Chair Joseph Bruni presiding. Attorney Jeff Albinson, Fire Chief Jeffrey Davidson, and Finance Director Erin Brooks were also present.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS: None.

SERVICE PIN AWARD – Fire Chief Davidson recognized Firefighter/EMT Josh Coley for 10 years of dedicated service to the District.

GENERAL REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

Kelly Cisarik – 448 Harbor Drive South, Indian Rocks Beach – Ms. Cisarik stated that she recently participated in a ride-along with District Chief Karpinecz. She additionally stated that she was hoping there would be discussion on a referendum at tonight's meeting. She stated concerns with using GSG, as well as Beth Rawlins, for any future referendum process. Chief Davidson confirmed that next month's agenda will include a public presentation to illustrate the financial state of the District, the problems it is facing, as well as recommendations; it will then be up to the Board to decide how to move forward with that information.

DISCUSSION ITEMS: None.

ADJOURNMENT

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

REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA: None.

MONTHLY BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Minutes: March 16, 2022 Workshop and Regular Meetings

Discussion: None.

**A motion to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2022
Workshop and Regular Meetings.**

MOTION: COMMISSIONER GARDELLA SECOND: COMMISSIONER SCHEAR

All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

2. Treasurer's Report: March, 2022

Discussion: Secretary/Treasurer Lawrence Schear stated balance sheet accounts have been reconciled as of March 31, 2022. Consolidated government funds, assets, and liabilities are \$4.51 million; the investment program in accordance with District policy is \$4.28 million; current liabilities are within normal end-of-month limits, at \$115,000; the capital projects fund revenues total \$19,900; installation of the compressor and SCBA fill station at Station 28 began this month. The general fund is currently on track with the adopted budget. An \$8,600 refund check from the FY20/21 Workers' Compensation audit was received during March. The projected FY2021-2022 Unassigned Fund Balance to Operating Expense ratio is 14.9%; FGFOA's recommended ratio is 17%.

A motion to approve the March, 2022 Treasurer's Report.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER SNELLING SECOND: COMMISSIONER MCKENNA

All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

3. Correspondence: None.

GENERAL REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE: None.

REPORTS:

1. **COMMISSION:** Commissioner McKenna discussed an incident on March 21st for which the fire department had to respond to her residence. Secretary/Treasurer Schear discussed his recent experience with a medical incident while at Station 27 for the washdown ceremony.
2. **ATTORNEY:** Attorney Jeff Albinson stated that the ongoing EEOC matter has been closed. He further discussed that he has been working with Chief Davidson on the contract

language for the grant for the installation of a generator at Indian Rocks Christian School which has now been finalized.

3. CHIEF’S REPORT: Chief Davidson stated that the grant with Indian Rocks Christian School was in process when he first started with the District. He added that it has taken a while, but they wanted to ensure that all liabilities have been addressed. He added that he has an emergency management meeting tomorrow with the church and Indian Shores Police Department to discuss emergency preparedness.

Chief Davidson stated that PSFRD is the only fire department in Pinellas County that does not have a fully funded paramedic seat, which has caused a significant financial burden on the District for many years. He stated that he attends the Data Driven Focus Group meetings and discussed the process of evaluating that data. At a recent meeting of the Pinellas County Fire Chiefs Association, he stated that all members agreed that, before enhancing any fire department, all departments should at least be at the same minimum level. He also discussed several recent conversations he has had with Craig Hare and the discrepancies they have encountered. He stated that Mr. Hare had informed him at one point that PSFRD will not receive funding for three seats until Station 28 is moved, which, Chief Davidson asserted, has nothing to do with EMS funding. He said they have also identified problems with the County’s proposed locations for Station 28. Since then, there have been more productive meetings which have also included Lourdes Benedict. Chief Davidson said the District is in serious financial trouble if the funding issue is not resolved, but does feel more confident recently that the District will receive the three seats of funding as well as reimbursement for Truck 28. He added that he is in the process of setting up meetings with each County Commissioner so that they are informed and prepared when members of the public have questions regarding this subject. He said that it has been a long process but the meetings this week have been very productive and positive.

Commissioner McKenna said that she does not understand why the District has not already received funding for Truck 28. Chief Davidson said that he cannot answer that and encouraged her to reach out to County officials on this matter. He further discussed discrepancies with call volume numbers that may have affected some funding issues. The Chief stated that Truck 28 is running approximately 1,200 EMS calls that taxpayers are paying for; however, the District is not receiving the proper funding from the County, despite having an obligation to provide that service to the community. Attorney Albinson discussed how this is a real issue that the voters in the District should be aware of, as they are virtually subsidizing the other areas of the County. He further discussed the history of special districts and the current issues they face. Vice Chair Snelling also gave a history on the implementation of County EMS tax funding and explained that PSFRD is not the only department that has had concerns about not getting the return on the money they were putting in to the system. Chief Davidson said that he understands this concern; however, he still feels that all departments should at least be at the same minimum level. He added that PSFRD is also the only department that has never received any Penny for Pinellas funding.

ACTION ITEMS:

**22-07 Community Project Funding (CPF) Grant
(Letter of Support)**

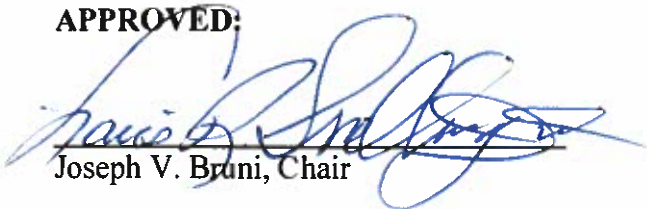
Discussion: Chief Davidson said that he had learned of a grant opportunity from Steven Carey, District Director for Congressman Crist after he had visited our stations and wanted to help us identify grant opportunities that might help our situation. He explained that the grant had a very short timeframe – less than two weeks – and Ms. Fugate did the legwork and submitted it within that timeframe. One of the required documents was a letter of support from the Commission, and since there was no meeting within that timeframe, Chief Davidson explained that he spoke with each Commissioner individually and each gave their vote of support, so the letter was drafted and Chair Bruni signed it. He added that a letter of support was also required from FDEM; however, while they were supportive of the project, they determined they were unable to provide a letter within the time constraints, so the grant application was submitted without it with an explanation as to why. If awarded, the grant will allow the District to build an EOC. The request made was for \$3 million.

Chief Davidson confirmed that Shawn Clark was recently hired as a new Firefighter/Paramedic and comes to the District from Madeira Beach Fire. His expected start date will be in a few weeks. He also added that there will soon be a new administrative position in fire administration to help work on some of the necessary projects and improve efficiencies and better serve the District. There is no cost to the District because there has been an existing vacancy for quite some time.

Secretary/Treasurer Schear asked about the termite tenting. Chief Davidson said that Station 27 has an active termite problem and District Chief Todd Best has worked with Couch's Pest Control to have the station tented. Crews will operate from the Holiday Inn across the street and there will be no change in operational response. All units and equipment will be moved and set up at the temporary location. Administrative staff will be working remote and he and Deputy Chief Mortellite will be working late hours to make sure everything runs smoothly. Chief Davidson commended personnel on their willingness to work together and accomplish this goal.


There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned in due form at 7:04 p.m.

APPROVED:


Joseph V. Bruni, Chair

ATTEST:


Kimberly G. Fugate, District Administrator


Date Approved
