

Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District Board Minutes

February 11, 2008

Present:

Chairman, Frank Liles
Commissioner, Pat Buttino
Commissioner, Evans Conforti
Commissioner, Ed Fitzgerald
Commissioner, Bob Paterson

Administrative:

Chief Phil Kinsey, Jr.
Assistant Chief, Ken Craft
Deputy Chief, Joe Daigle
Deputy Chief, Dan Ryan
Deputy Chief, Shane Sibert
Fire Marshal, Tim Fernandez
Finance Director, Tony Gambino
Administrative Director, Iris Roman
Union President, Greg DeWitt

Chairman Liles called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM and began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Asking for public input on agenda items and having none, **Chairman Liles asked for a motion to approve the regular minutes of the January 14, 2008 meeting. Motion made by Commissioner Buttino; seconded by Commissioner Conforti. Motion carried. Motion made by Commissioner Buttino to approve the joint board minutes of January 15, 2008; seconded by Commissioner Fitzgerald. Motion carried. Motion made by Commissioner Paterson to approve wire transfers and transfers between accounts; seconded by Commissioner Conforti. Motion carried.**

Chiefs' Reports

Chief Kinsey

The first issue Chief Kinsey reported on is the site on Hickory Bay for a station. This site was explored previously by the Board and former Chief Gourley. Permitting of this site would be time and cost prohibitive and as Terry Lewis stated, we could come under litigation due to environmental concerns. To proceed with this would be risky at best but asked the Board if they still wanted to pursue this or not. According to Commissioner Conforti, when this issue was discussed a couple of years ago, there was opposition from the residents living down there as well as SW Florida Water Management and the Army Core of Engineers. Commissioner Fitzgerald concurred with the other commissioners that this is not an appropriate site for another station.

The second issue is that Lee County is considering reducing or abolishing impact fees in an attempt to stimulate the economy of Lee County. There was no decision at the meeting but Lee County would reconvene in a couple of weeks with a final decision.

Assistant Chief Craft

Assistant Chief Craft gave his activity report for the month of January. He also stated that the department is in the process of receiving a hazmat trailer from Lee County for our Water Rescue Division for use of hazardous materials spills on the water ways. The value of the trailer is over \$10,000.00.

Deputy Chief Joe Daigle

A brief synopsis of the EMS Division was given and it was noted that the purchase of some new equipment, training on that equipment and refinement of practical skills was conducted during the month.

Deputy Chief Dan Ryan

Deputy Chief Ryan updated the Board on the high-rise training and smoke evolutions in the training tower. The Ladder Committee is finishing up their recommendations for a new ladder truck and should have the recommendations to the Chief by March or April. The two light rescue units will be in service tomorrow. A preventative maintenance program for the trucks is being developed in-house and should save the Department money on repairs.

Deputy Chief Shane Sibert

The Special Ops Division reported that the new radios were being set up and Lee County has completed their installation. Applications for water rescue were also reviewed.

Fire Marshal Tim Fernandez

After giving his report on Fire Prevention activities, Commissioner Fitzgerald congratulated Fire Marshal Fernandez on installing a fire watch at Manna Christian.

Union President Greg Dewitt

Greg had nothing to report other than he commended the department on their professionalism with the Lieutenant's exam.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Liles read a written motion he prepared regarding the merger of Bonita Springs, Estero, and San Carlos Fire Districts. He made **the motion to table the joint merger study until the district can determine the potential loss of the 2008-2009 budget and re-agenda this item until October 2009, seconded by Commissioner Buttino.** Commissioner Paterson offered that it was troubling to postpone this for another six months stating that it doesn't cost us anything to do the RFP and that after we receive the results, we can make a decision at that time. Commissioner Conforti reiterated that the Board should continue on with the RFP. Chief Kinsey stated that at a meeting of the three fire districts, it was suggested that instead of doing an RFP, a RFQ for which the Board could base their pick on qualifications and not a dollar figure was another option.

The motion made by Chairman Liles was re-voted on with Chairman Liles and Commissioner Buttino voting to table the study and Commissioners Conforti, Fitzgerald, and Paterson voting to proceed. **Motion made by Commissioner Fitzgerald “that our three fire district boards prepare a RFP to engage management consultants, with successful histories of merger/consolidations of small to medium sized fire departments in the United States, to conduct a cooperative feasibility study for the Bonita Springs, Estero, and San Carlos Fire Control and Rescue Districts of Florida, for the stated purpose of consolidation or merger of our three districts.”** After lengthy discussion by the Commissioners, a new vote was taken. **Motion made by Commissioner Fitzgerald to move forward with the RFP, seconded by Commissioner Paterson. Motion carried.** Commissioner Conforti stated he would not vote for a merger until Station 5 is built and a ladder truck is purchased.

New Business

No new business

Public Input

Alex Grant spoke regarding the impact fees and the effects on the City of Bonita Springs in the future. He stated that the Department is going to need five engine companies in Bonita by 2011 or a total of 87 suppression personnel. Commissioner Conforti thanked Mr. Grant for serving as liaison for the fire district.

Commissioners Business

Commissioner Paterson stated that with regard to the white paper written by the three fire districts, Commissioner Fitzgerald was totally disrespectful of the Chief's and the Committee that wrote the paper, passing it off as an “academic exercise.” Commissioner Paterson apologized to the Chief, Committee, Chiefs of Estero and San Carlos for the disrespect shown to them in Commissioner Fitzgerald's statement.

Commissioner Fitzgerald stated that Terry Lewis did go back and studied his information on the agreement with Bonita Bay for a location for another station. A seven page summary of the actions and verbal agreements was presented to the rest of the board. Commissioner Fitzgerald is still of the opinion someone from the Board should meet with Bonita Bay to have them re-iterate what agreements they had with former Chief Gourley. **Motion by Commissioner Paterson that Commissioner Fitzgerald accompanied by Chief Kinsey meet with Bonita Bay to discuss the issue of Station Five and report back to the Board next month, seconded by Commissioner Conforti. Motion carried.**

A letter from Council Member Richard Ferrera from a resident in Spring Creek was read regarding the professional and carrying manner of the firefighters who responded to a call there.

Meeting adjourned at 6:16 PM

Mary Huss