

NORTH FORT MYERS FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE SERVICE
DISTRICT

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

May 16, 2022

Chairman Robert Hoke called the North Fort Myers Fire Control and Rescue Service District Board of Commissioners to order at 5:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Present:

Commissioner Robert Hoke	Commissioner Tom Mere
Commissioner Leroy Nottingham	Commissioner Michael Gatewood
Chief Ronald Beecroft	Assistant Chief John Manson
Assistant Chief of Training Eric Klos	Fire Marshal Rick Jones
Office Manager Monique Brooks	Administrative Specialist Avrey Brooks
Union Representative Jarrett Slaybaugh	

Absent:

Commissioner Danny Ballard (excused)
Public Education Officer Christi Kulwicki (excused)

Invocation: Commissioner Mere

Pledge: Commissioner Gatewood

Public Input: None

Minutes: Commissioner Gatewood made a motion to accept the April 18th, 2022, minutes, as written. Seconded by Commissioner Nottingham. The motion was put to vote, and approved by the Board. All were in favor. The vote was 4-0. (1)

Treasurer's Report: The April treasurer's report was presented. At this time, we are 59% through the budget year, received 96% of revenues (including carryover) and spent 51% of expenditures (less reserves). There were no questions. (2)

Chief's Report:

By Chief Beecroft –

- Thank you to Monique for her work on the previous year's audit.
- Monitoring State legislation.
- Working with the State on the First Responder Payments authorized by Governor DeSantis.
Commission Hoke asked if these payments are for \$1,000? Yes.
- Attended CPR training course put on by The District at North Fort Myers High School for 9th and 11th grade. The training went very well and he is appreciative to Christi who organized the event and for the staff who contributed.
- Working on the RFP process for the Performance Review.

By Chief Manson –

- Run report attached. Commissioner Hoke asked is Station 2 running the most calls? Yes.
- Working with contractor for Station 1 remodel.
- Fire alarms tested at all stations.
- Engine 4 and Engine 5 have been re-named and decaled and are currently getting PMI.
- Our mowers have been getting serviced at Barry's Gravely.
- Working on hydrant maintenance.

Fire Prevention: Report attached. Commissioner Hoke inquired how the new Inspector was doing. Fire Marshal Jones replied he is doing well and still learning. There were no other questions or comments.

Public Education: Report attached.

By Monique -

- In March, we ran a call for a two-year-old drowning where our guys were able to revive the child and he was air lifted out. The family reached out a month later and wanted to bring the little boy in to meet the shift that saved him. He was able to come in, meet the guys, ride in the truck, and spray the hose. He has made a full recovery and is healthy. The child's family and the District are very appreciative for the great work by that shift and the positive outcome of this event.

- Commissioner Nottingham's great-grandson, Carter, is the recipient of a nation-wide drawing supported by the Muscular Dystrophy Association. He will be receiving a brand new "magic wheelchair" on June 6th at station 1. It is also Carter's birthday so we will be celebrating his birthday as well.

There were no other questions or comments.

Training: Report attached. Commissioner Hoke inquired if all personnel were trained on pumps? Yes. There were no other question or comments.

Union: Involved in Carter's Event and working on negotiations.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- **2020/2021 Audit Presentation – The 2020/2021 Audit was presented by Jeff Tuscan**

Commissioner Mere made a motion to accept the 2020/2021 Audit, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Gatewood. The motion was put to vote, and approved by the Board. All were in favor. The vote was 4-0.

- **Slater Road Station Discussion**

Due to growth, the District is looking to expand Station 3 on Slater road. We have outgrown the current facility. After talking with Scott Carter and Dick Pritchett, they are willing to trade our current property for a larger parcel just north of the current Station 3. In building a new facility we would consider moving administration and training as well as adding a training tower and a larger station at that location.

Commissioner Nottingham asked if we tried this expansion before? Chief replied, We discussed the pole barn at Station 3.

Commissioner Gatewood agrees with expanding the Slater road station. We are seeing a lot of growth in the area and he also wanted the new location to have the ability to expand.

Commissioner Mere asked if we carry flood insurance on Station 3? No.

Commissioner Gatewood would like to have an option to make a future offer on all 11 acres.

Commissioner Mere would like to see us have all 11 acres.

Chief Beecroft stated that Carter-Pritchett would require access to the right of way.

Commissioner Mere made a motion to allow the Chief to investigate the expansion project on Slater road and the trading of properties with Carter-Pritchett. Seconded by Commissioner Gatewood. The motion was put to vote, and approved by the Board. All were in favor. The vote was 4-0.

- **Special Hazardous Duty Payment**

Chief Beecroft stated there were excess funds and he would like to recognize the sacrifice and dedication that personnel have made over the last few years and he would like to distribute a one-time payment to all certified personnel.

Commissioner Hoke asked how much? \$2,000 per person.

Commissioner Mere made a motion to allow the Chief to pay a one-time special hazardous duty payment of \$2,000 to all certified personnel. Seconded by Commissioner Nottingham. The motion was put to vote, and approved by the Board. All were in favor. The vote was 4-0.

Commissioner Items:

Mere – Would like to discuss some details regarding the board and the relationship with the Chief. He felt so burdened by this issue and feels that everyone needs to know. Commissioner Ballard is mad at Chief Beecroft because Commissioner Mere asked the Chief to inquire and verify employment of Commissioner Ballard at South Florida Emergency Vehicles. It is not the job of the Commissioners to do the day-to-day operations of the District, that is what they have hired the Chief for. The Board only oversees the finances. Chief Beecroft has tried numerous times to communicate with Commissioner Ballard and he refuses to communicate. Last week when Chief Beecroft delivered the packets there was an issue. Commissioner

Mere asked Chief Beecroft to state what transpired. Chief Beecroft stated that Commissioner Ballard told him he was upset about the inquiry he did for Commissioner Mere and said that I could've handled it and made it to where it wasn't a big deal. He told Commissioner Ballard that he did it because he was asked to and that he would have done the same thing for him. Commissioner Ballard said "I'm going to ask you something, I'm going to ask you to get the F#@K off my property."

Commissioner Hoke asked if he said the actual word?– But he said the actual word? Chief Beecroft replied yes, and he also said, "don't come back".

Commissioner Nottingham asked if Commissioner Ballard signed checks? No.

Commissioner Mere stated therefore, I recommend to the board that if Chief Beecroft is not allowed on his property, that no District employee goes to his house and he can pick up his packet at the station.

Commissioner Gatewood stated We are here to govern the Chief, not to run the department, that is what the Chief was hired for. In order to do our job as a commissioner we have to be able to communicate with the Chief. He stated that Chief Beecroft was doing what he was asked to do in regards to inquiring about Commissioner Ballard's other employment.

Something needs to be done about the situation. This is not how we communicate with the Chief and need to take responsibility. If you don't want to be on the board, then you need to write a letter of resignation.

Commissioner Hoke asked how many times has Commissioner Ballard signed checks in the last year? Chief Beecroft replied three times.

Commissioner Gatewood noted that we are a voice of the people in our community, and I believe the people would not agree with this behavior.

Commissioner Nottingham feels this is a matter of insubordination.

Commissioner Gatewood suggested we contact the attorney and see what disciplinary action could be taken.

Commissioner Hoke said he wished Commissioner Ballard was here to give his side of the story. He also agrees that Commissioner Ballard can come to the station and pick up his packets if he doesn't want the Chief on his property.

Commissioner Mere displayed two letters from two attorneys stating the same issue regarding employment with a company that the District does business with. The first letter was in 2011 and the second is from this year, 2022. Commissioner

Ballard is harassing Chief Beecroft and he would like him to step down and resign immediately.

Commissioner Hoke made a motion for Administration to contact the attorney and find out the legalities and any repercussions regarding Commissioner Ballard's issues with the Chief. Seconded by Commissioner Gatewood. The motion was put to vote, and approved by the Board. All were in favor. The vote was 4-0.

Public Input: None

Community Goodwill & Thank You:

Daltry Family
Millette Family
Lee County EMS
San Carlos Fire District

Commissioner Gatewood made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Nottingham. The motion was put to a vote, and approved by the Board. All were in favor. The vote was 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Supportive Documents:

1. April 18, 2022 Minutes
2. April 2022 Treasurer's Report