

SANIBEL FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT  
Minutes of the Fire Commission Meeting  
March 8, 2023

Commissioners – Chairman Jerry Muench, Vice Chair Bruce Cochrane - *excused*, Secretary Richard McCurry  
Fire Chief Kevin Barbot  
Fire Marshal Larry Williams  
Captain John DiMaria  
Administrative Assistant Greta Fulkerson

In attendance were the following: FF Martin, FF Nygaard, FF Johanson, FF Tejada, and the general public.

Commissioner Muench opened the meeting at 9:00 AM. Commissioner Muench led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1st Order of Business: The minutes for the February 8, 2023, commission meeting were reviewed and accepted by the Board Members. **A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muench. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

2nd Order of Business: Captain Training Report. Fire Training. The focus over the past week has been on forcible entry with fire attack. Given the change in dynamics on the island, the goal going forward is to hyperfocus on those changes and adjust strategies and tactics accordingly while prioritizing safety and efficiency. Medical Training. The number of trauma-related calls over the past several months has been significant, so that has been the focus for medical training. Captain DiMaria gave an update on an inspector who had fallen through a rotted wooden roof. The inspector called the District the day before to express his gratitude for the crew that ran his call at the time of the incident. Captain DiMaria and Medical Director Dr. Abo have discussed getting the USAR (Urban Search And Rescue) truck out to the station for training purposes. USAR deals with structural collapse, confined space, trench, etc. Captain DiMaria expressed that he wants officers and acting officers to know what various assets are capable of doing if ordered. Medical training would be incorporated into USAR's specialty training. Captain DiMaria is working with FF Walter, a retired Coastguard, to put together an in-house boat operator course. The District's boat is on the boat lift and marine operations are back up and running. Captain DiMaria noted that the waters surrounding the island have changed significantly, so the crews have been out there more often to relearn the area. Temporary Station 172's ribbon-cutting ceremony was a success. CPR classes have been scheduled over the next few months. The kids at Sanibel School will be partaking in a fire extinguisher class. The District will participate in the egg hunt set up at the Recreation Center for Easter. Regarding call volume, the District is down 191 calls from last year. Year to date, the District is down 57 percent in call volume. Commissioner Muench asked, is there an estimate as to how many people are back on the island? Chief Barbot replied, if I had to guess I would say about 85 percent down. Fire Marshal Williams added, vast majority of the resorts are still empty. Most of the island traffic at this point is due to construction, or people visiting for the day given that beaches have started to open back up.

3rd Order of Business: Fire Marshal Report. Fire Marshal Williams has been working with Bailey's and said they plan to demolish in the next week or so. He has also reviewed Island Cow's new plans, and they should be demolishing the old structure in the next week or two. Commissioner Muench asked, what about the 7/11's? Fire Marshal Williams replied, I haven't heard anything and no one has been in them. Gene's Books and George and Wendy's are not coming back. A lot of resorts on the island have been completely gutted down to the studs and will be remodeled rather than demolished. Commissioner Muench asked, are we responsible for permits or anything when it comes to houses being torn down? Fire Marshal Williams responded, other than fire investigations, no, I do not have jurisdiction over anything residential, that is

handled by the City. Fire Marshal Williams completed 66 fire plan reviews in February and has already completed 34 so far in March. Under normal circumstances, he completes an average of 70 in a year.

4th Order of Business: Chief Report. Financial Update. The District has been preparing for the annual financial audit, which will be handled by Chief Barbot and Administrative Assistant Fulkerson along with Grau & Associates. Regarding Ad Valorem revenue, the District is at 86 percent as of February 28, 2023. Regarding the Tax Relief bill, refund numbers will not be released to fire districts until May. Since the District does not receive distributions past April, the refund amounts will be taken from the District's distributions received in November and December. This will be beneficial to the District when it comes time for budget planning this summer. Given the circumstances and the unknowns in the months and years to come, being financially responsible remains at the top of the District's priority list. Fiscal year to date, the District has used 40.58 percent of the annual budget for personnel services. The overtime budget sits at 146 percent, which directly correlates to Hurricane Ian. The operating expenditures amount is off due to the delay in insurance claims. Removing insurance claims from the equation, the District has used 20.12 percent of the budget for operating expenditures. Capital Improvement Projects sits at 3 percent of the annual budget. Community Disaster Loan Update. The District is now in Phase 2 of the reviews, which is all in FEMA's hands and will be a 90 to 100 day process. Commissioner McCurry addressed Chief Barbot, I appreciate that you are really paying attention to detail and cutting back on costs where you can for the sake of the District's future.

5th Order of Business: Department Update. The District remains vigilant and alert to the heightened brush fire conditions around the Tri-County area. The District has a meeting the following day with US Fish and Wildlife, Ding Darling, Florida Forest Services, SCCF, and City of Sanibel to discuss potential prescribed burns, on the conservation lands of SCCF as well as on Federal lands. When it comes time to handle these prescribed burns, most likely in June, the District will potentially be requesting personnel overtime as well as additional assets from neighboring fire districts to ensure all goes smoothly given the current state of the island. No FEMA Update. Regarding Station 172, the District has already responded to many calls from location and is currently just as busy as Station 171, mainly due to The Sanctuary Golf Club area. A building committee meeting took place last week regarding the RFQ process. The District has narrowed it down to two highly-qualified firms. The building committee is in the process of negotiating hourly wage and pricing and working on the contract and agreements. Once completed, everything will be brought to the Board for approval. The District will then put out a RFWO, Request For Work Order, which outlines the detailed work that the District wants designed for Station 172. Chief Barbot said that he hopes to have a firm chosen by May, designs done by mid to late August, and estimates demolition by October or November. Commissioner Muench asked, will the bays be demolished as well? Chief Barbot replied, what I have been told from the firms is that the walls currently in place will not be strong enough to withstand a second story. The question going forward is what can be and what cannot be saved. The communications tower on the North side of the structure will be saved. On the building committee is Captain Chris Jackson, Acting Officer Mike Martin, FF Allen Schelm, and Lieutenant Brian Howell. Commissioner McCurry asked, no citizens? Chief Barbot responded, no citizens.

6th Order of Business: Maintenance and Facilities Update. Hose testing was performed by the District's crews last week, about 4 months behind schedule as expected. Marine 171 is back in service. However, given the dilemma with the new lift installment – it was taking a long 5 to 7 minutes to lower the boat into the water – Stokes Marine will be installing high speed motors for free. All apparatus will be rotating through their annual preventative maintenance in the coming weeks. During the storm, the State Fire Marshal's Office donated 4 older side-by-side Kawasaki Mules to the District. Given that these vehicles are very slow, they cannot be used for emergency response, so the District re-donated 2 of them to SCCF back in January.

7th Order of Business: Personnel Updates. Per CBA, the District is full-shifted at 21 personnel. The District currently has 22 personnel on the line. Chief Barbot discussed with Captain DiMaria the possibility of learning more of the administrative side of the job – assisting with training, public relations, repairs and

other day to day issues, etc. Captain DiMaria showed interest, so Chief Barbot temporarily moved him to an administrative role until he can get a better understanding of where the District stands financially in June. Commissioner Muench asked, will he remain a Captain? Chief Barbot responded, right now he will remain a Captain until we can make those sound financial decisions this summer. Captain DiMaria is on-call and does have a take-home staff vehicle. Commissioner McCurry asked, how is this change affecting the body? Chief Barbot replied, we had to do 2 shift changes. Both of those individuals were communicated with prior to the shift change happening and neither of them showed any concerns and relayed that they will do whatever is needed at this time. Commissioner McCurry added, you have an excellent group of men and women here, and I appreciate you all making adjustments in these difficult times, so thank you. Annual physical testing is being done at the start of April, which is a District requirement for all personnel. Years of Service. Captain Tom Tracy at 21 years, Lieutenant Rob Wilkins at 10 years, FF Rob Bell at 2 years, and Administrative Assistant Greta Fulkerson started part-time with the District 1 year ago.

8th Order of Business: The first business agenda item was regarding the sale of the 2017 Nissan Frontier. **A motion was made by Commissioner Muench to approve the sale of the 2017 Nissan Frontier. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCurry. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

9th Order of Business: The second business agenda item was regarding all pre-procured items under State of Emergency for temporary Station 172 and set up services, including electrical, A/C, plumbing, skirting, etc. **A motion was made by Commissioner McCurry to approve the pre-procured purchase of temporary Station 172 and all supporting pre-procured set up services. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Muench. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

10th Order of Business: The first new business item was regarding the 2 CDs that the District currently has with Bank of the Islands. One holds \$400,000 and the other holds \$25,000. Both CDs were established back in 2012 and with a fixed rate of 0.08 have only earned a collective \$23,000 in interest since then. Chief Barbot asked for direction and approval from the Board to start looking at alternative means to switch and transfer these accounts to where they would be better suited. The Board Members gave Chief Barbot approval.

11th Order of Business: The second new business item was regarding the cost to build Station 172. Although FEMA will be responsible for a portion of the cost associated with rebuilding Station 172, the District will have to handle a lot of the cost upfront. That being said, there is the possibility that the District will have to get a construction services loan until FEMA reimburses the District in the future. Chief Barbot noted that the mortgage on Station 171 has officially been paid off, so the District currently has zero debt services. Commissioner McCurry asked, if that money is going to be replaced by FEMA, what if you used money from the reserves in the meantime? Chief Barbot responded, my concern with that is if we touch those reserves and happen to get hit with another storm. Commissioner McCurry asked, what type of loan are you considering? Chief Barbot replied, the construction cost estimate is at a wide range right now of 3.5 to 5.5 million dollars. If this will be the District's only debt service going forward, I think we will be fine.

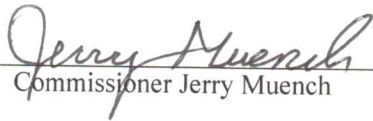
12th Order of Business: The third new business item was regarding the recouping of insurance funds for the Gators. The Gators act as the District's beach response vehicles, and one of the Gators was totaled and is now gone. It was already set in the current year's budget to procure a faster beach rescue vehicle. The District has recouped \$16,000 in insurance funds. The District estimates that a Polaris will cost \$30,000. Chief Barbot asked the Board if they want to proceed with purchasing a new beach rescue vehicle this fiscal year or hold off until the next. The Board Members agreed to move forward with the purchase of a new beach rescue vehicle this fiscal year.


13th Order of Business: Commissioner Items. No items to discuss.

14th Order of Business: Union Items. No items to discuss.

15th Order of Business: Public Input. No input to discuss.

Meeting adjourned at 9:41 AM.

  
Commissioner Jerry Muench

  
Commissioner Bruce Cochrane

  
Commissioner Richard McCurry