

SOUTH WALTON FIRE DISTRICT

911 North County Highway 393, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida 32459

"Prompt, Competent, Caring Response in Time of Need"



The Board of Fire Commissioners of the South Walton Fire District will hold a regular meeting on **May 10, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.** at the South Walton Fire District Administration building.

The agenda will include, but not be limited to the following:

Special Item: Emergency Medical Services Week Proclamation
May 16 – 22, 2021
Chairman Maurice Gilbert

Special Item: Beach Safety/Rip Current Awareness Week Proclamation
May 24 – 31, 2021
Chairman Maurice Gilbert

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Minutes
Regular Board Meeting: 04.12.2021
- III. Secretary/Treasurer's Report
- IV. Attorney's Report
- V. Chief's Report
- VI. Committee Reports
Audit Committee
Commissioner Mike Stange
- VII. Unfinished/Old Business
- VIII. New Business
Board Advisory: Impact Fees
Fiscal Officer Carole Martin
- IX. Public Comment*
- X. Adjournment

***Note:** Persons who wish to be placed on the agenda must contact the Administrative Assistant within five days of any meeting and provide the name of the person who will be speaking and the subject to be addressed. If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board of Fire Commissioners of the South Walton Fire District with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings and that, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

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SOUTH WALTON FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Minutes – May 10, 2021

*****PENDING APPROVAL*****

Commissioners Present: Brian Christenson, Tom Cooper, Charlotte Flynt, Mark B. Foley, Maurice Gilbert, Mike Stange, Rick Talbert

Commissioners Absent: None

Call to Order: 4:00 p.m.

Special Item:

Chairman Gilbert read a proclamation into the record whereas the South Walton Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners declared the week of May 16 – 22, 2021, as Emergency Medical Services Week in South Walton in honor of the men and women whose diligence and professionalism keep the community, citizens, and visitors safe.

Chairman Gilbert read a proclamation into the record whereas the South Walton Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners declared the week of May 24 - 31, 2021, to be South Walton Fire District Beach Safety/Rip Current Awareness Week in South Walton.

Chairman Gilbert announced that there was a quorum present.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Stange and seconded by Commissioner Christenson, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the April 12, 2021, Board of Fire Commissioners regular meeting.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Commissioner Flynt read the March 2021 cash report into the record.

Attorney's Report:

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Flynt and seconded by Commissioner Cooper, the Board unanimously approved Attorney Youell's April 2021 billing statement.

Fire Chief's Report:

Chief Crawford reviewed the Emergency Response Activity Report which included Beach Safety Responses.

Chief Crawford stated that the EMS transport volume was the highest of any month on record for the district.

Chief Crawford informed the Fire Board of significant incidents from the past month which included:

- On April 22, 2021, a 2-alarm residential structure fire occurred on South Shore Drive in Miramar Beach.
- On April 28, 2021, crews responded to a three vehicle MVA which resulted in a total of 6 trauma patients qualifying this as a Level 1 Multi Casualty Incident. All patients were rapidly assessed and transported to Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast for treatment.
- On May 1, 2021, crews responded to a commercial structure fire at the Miramar Beach La Quinta Inn. Firefighters quickly attacked and isolated damage to a 2nd

floor room of origin. This fire was determined to have been caused by the misuse of electrical equipment.

- On May 8, 2021, crews were dispatched to a 2-alarm commercial fire involving a large multi-unit warehouse in the South Walton Industrial Park. Mutual aid support was provided from Destin, Panama City Beach, North Bay, and Walton County Fire Rescue. Three units were deemed a complete loss and the preliminary cause has been determined as accidental in nature.
- Also on May 8, 2021, crews were dispatched to a residential structure fire in the Seagrove Beach area. Firefighters arrived to find a grill had caught the side of a home on fire and were able to quickly extinguish before structural involvement isolating damage to the exterior siding of the structure.

SWFD's Beach Safety Division had a total of eight single red and nine double red flag surf condition days last month. Chief Crawford noted that south Walton has had a total of thirty-three single or double red flag days within the first sixty-one days of the 2021 beach season.

The Walton County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) established a beach safety working group to bring forward recommendations toward enhancing the County's Beach Safety and Education programs. The workgroup consists of SWFD, Walton County Emergency Management, Walton County Sheriff's Office, Walton County Tourist Development Council, and Walton County Code Enforcement. Walton County Tourist Development Council is scheduled to host an industry partner meeting on May 18, 2021, at 9 a.m. and a public workshop is scheduled for May 20, 2021 at 4pm. Chief Crawford will keep the board updated on these discussions.

SWFD's Beach Safety Division hosted de-escalation training provided by the Walton County Sheriff's Office. The training was intended to provide lifeguards with additional tools to aid with public contact de-escalation, compliance, and improved communications with beachgoers. Lifeguards were able to share individual experiences encountered this season and network with one another to come up with strategies and solutions toward improved public compliance with beach safety messaging.

Staff and Negotiations Consultant Linda Edwards continue to meet with labor leadership to work through the contract negotiations process.

SWFD facilitated retirement celebrations this past month honoring the careers of Sgt John Bunniceilli and FF/PM Michael McHenry. Chief Crawford presented each with a shadow box representing their service to SWFD.

SWFD's Fiscal Officer obtained a matching reimbursement grant of \$5,000 through PGIT, SWFD's property and liability insurance carrier. This award will provide reimbursement of the costs incurred toward the purchase of an SCBA decontamination washer which was a budgeted purchase this fiscal year.

The promotional testing process for Lieutenant and District Chief positions are complete. Chief Crawford stated he was proud of all members that participated in the assessment process.

SWFD hosted a Florida Fire Chiefs Association Regional meeting with approximately seventy attendees representing sixteen counties in Northwest Florida. SWFD demonstrated the many functional efficiencies of the new Fleet Maintenance and Logistics facility.

Staff transferred ownership of a 2001 Freightliner ambulance (surplus) to Gulf Coast State College for their public safety Fire and EMS training programs. As part of the agreement, SWFD received \$12,000 in future tuition credits toward funding education for SWFD employees. A copy of a letter from the college's foundation was included in the board packet.

SWFD continues to recruit for several vacant positions including Plans Examiner, 911 Communications Operators, part-time EMT's for the non-E transport program and seasonal lifeguard positions. Chief Crawford announced that SWFD recently filled the following positions: one Customer Service Specialist, one Fleet Mechanic, and two 911 Communications Operators. Staff completed interviews this past week for the Communications Director position and an offer has been made. Training Chief interviews are scheduled throughout the May 12 – 14, 2021. Currently, SWFD's most critical personnel needs are 911 Communications Operators and seasonal Lifeguard positions.

An SWFD retiree breakfast is scheduled for May 29, 2021, at the Fleet Maintenance and Logistics facility.

An FY 21/22 draft budget calendar was included in the Board packet. Chief Crawford stated that the public hearings remain tentative as they are scheduled around the dates of the Walton County Board of County Commissioners and School Board public hearings neither of which have currently been set.

Chief Crawford provided a brief update on the Miramar Beach Fire Station project which has been slowed due to the discovery of an 8-foot utility easement between SWFD's parcels. South Walton Utilities board has agreed to deed this easement over to SWFD provided SWFD agrees to incur any cost associated with relocating the existing 8" water main to the North side of the property and provide a utility easement. South Walton Utilities requires a site plan and drawings showing where the new fire station will be placed on the parcel, the location of any water retention features, and the location of the new utility easement that would contain the relocated 8" waterline.

The next quarterly Pension Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 7, 2021, at 2:30pm.

The next regularly scheduled Board of Fire Commissioners meeting will be at 4pm on Monday, June 14, 2021.

Committee Reports: Audit Committee Chairman Stange reported the Audit Committee met prior to this Fire Board meeting to review proposals received from certified public accounting firms in response to the District's Request for Proposals. Stange presented the Audit Committee's recommendation of Warren Averett to the Board of Fire Commissioners for approval. On a motion duly made by Commissioner Talbert and seconded by Commissioner Christenson, the Board unanimously approved to retain Warren Averett as the District's certified public accounting firm.

Unfinished/Old Business: None

New Business: Fiscal Officer Martin presented a Board Advisory whereas Staff evaluated current impact fee rates from comparable agencies within the commutable area as well as Fire Districts with similar demographics from around the state. Staff did not recommend increasing impact fees at this time. Commissioner Talbert complimented the Fire Board for analyzing impact fee rates during the recession in anticipation of growth.

Public Comment: None

Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.