

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 **March 10, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.** on the third floor of the South Walton Fire District Logistics Building.

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

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment*
- III. Approval of Minutes
Regular Board Meeting: 02.10.2025
- IV. Secretary/Treasurer's Report
- V. Attorney's Report
Trademark Update
Title Insurance Claim Update
- VI. Chief's Report
- VII. Committee Reports
Pension Board Quarterly Report
Fiscal Officer Carole Martin
- VIII. Unfinished/Old Business
- IX. New Business
Board Action: Seaside Community Development Corporation Beach Safety and Education Program Contract
Beach Safety Director David Vaughan
Board Action: Pension Board Resident Trustee Appointment
Fiscal Officer Carole Martin
Board Action: Fire Commissioner Seat 3 Vacancy
Fire Chief Ryan Crawford
- X. Public Comment*
- XI. 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 concerning 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 – March 10, 2025

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

Commissioners Present: David Bailey, Brian Christenson, Charlotte Flynt (arrived 4:09 pm), Mark Foley (arrived 4:15 pm), Maurice Gilbert, Mike Stange

Commissioners Absent: None

Call to Order: 4:02 p.m.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Gilbert announced that a quorum was present.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Bailey and seconded by Commissioner Christenson, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the February 10, 2025, Board of Fire Commissioners' regular meeting.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Commissioner Bailey read the January 2025 cash report into the record.

Attorney's Report: Attorney Youell reported there was no change from the previous Board meeting regarding the Notice of Title Defect for SWFD's Geronimo Street property.

Attorney Youell reported there was no change from the previous Board meeting regarding the Trademark status.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Bailey and seconded by Commissioner Christenson, the Board unanimously approved Attorney Youell's February 2025 billing statement.

Fire Chief's Report:

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

On February 24, 2025, nine firefighters began a new hire orientation and probationary training. Most of these firefighters will provide for the expanded staffing of a secondary engine scheduled to be assigned to the Inlet Beach Fire Station beginning in April. This engine and crew will provide a critical resource throughout the eastern portion of the Fire District. As a result of this planned expansion of services, SWFD is scheduled to promote six firefighters to Sergeant and three Sergeants to Lieutenant on April 1, 2025.

In February, Chief Crawford attended the Congressional Fire Services National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium. Capping off the two-day symposium was the Congressional Fire Caucus Dinner. Chief Crawford along with the Florida Fire Chiefs' Executive Board met with members of Florida Congressional Delegation and had the opportunity to speak with them on issues facing the US and Florida Fire Service.

Chief Crawford reported the delivery of two Braun Ambulances. Chief Crawford invited the Fire Commissioners and public to take a closer look at these vehicles at the conclusion of the meeting.

SWFD's Apparatus Specification Committee visited Escambia County Fire Rescue to inspect their Squad or Heavy-Duty Rescue Pumpers. Staff intend to present a board action to formalize the purchase of the Squad's replacement in the coming months once the committee has the final apparatus design. The current Squad has been in frontline service since 2017 and is due for replacement in 2027.

SWFD executed the 911 Transfer Agreement between SWFD and WCSO. This agreement codifies the mutual intent to move forward with having all 911 calls which originate in South Walton to ring simultaneously in both 911 Communications Centers and will provide for a more rapid deployment of emergency resources. Once implemented, the District will expand SWFD's Communications Center staffing by employing four additional telecommunicators to address the immediate increase in 911 call volume. Staff anticipate full functionality will take approximately 12 months to implement as it will take time to hire, train, and certify the new telecommunicators.

On March 1, 2025, SWFD's Beach Safety Division returned to each of the Regional Beach accesses with daily staffing of seasonal lifeguards between the hours of 10am – 6pm. SWFD celebrates its 20th year operating the Beach Safety & Education program for Walton County.

On March 10, 2025, fire crews began relocating into the new Miramar Beach Fire Station's living quarters. The final walkthrough of old Station 5 will be conducted on March 16, 2025, with the demolition of the old station beginning March 18, 2025.

The Request for Proposal process for the solicitation of an architectural firm for engineering and design of fire station #6 is complete. The District received a total of eight responses. Staff continue to negotiate terms with the highest ranked firm, and hope to bring a recommendation and a contract to the Board of Fire Commissioners' regular meeting in April.

Facility preparations are underway at Fire Station 1 in Inlet Beach for the planned addition of Engine 6 next month. This facility's prep work includes expanding the hot water capacity, additional beds and furniture, some electrical work, expanded sewer & grinder pump capacity and the relocation of a storage shed to provide housing for additional bunker gear capacity.

On February 11, 2025, staff attended a pre-spring break planning meeting hosted by Walton County Sheriff's Office. The meeting is held each year with all local Condo Association Managers and Homeowner Associations to provide a forum for public safety partners addressing questions regarding operations and posture ahead of the surge in visitors.

Chief Crawford is scheduled to attend the Florida Special Districts Legislative Symposium on March 25-26, 2025. The symposium provides a focus on Special District related legislation.

On April 3, 2025, SWFD will be represented at the Florida Fire Service Day on the Hill event which will take place just outside the State Capitol building. This event highlights the many facets and specialized services the Florida fire service provides to communities throughout the state including specialized vehicles and equipment, innovative programs

and initiatives, and demonstrations. This event has been organized to highlight many unique services that Florida's Fire Service provides to communities throughout the state.

The evening of April 3, 2025, Chief Crawford is scheduled to attend the 2nd Annual "For Love and Honor Gala" benefiting the Florida Fire Foundation. The fundraising event is organized between the State Fire Marshal's Office and the Joint Council of Fire and Emergency Services to bring Florida's Fire Service leadership together for a formal evening honoring the legacy and families of Florida fallen firefighters and to raise funds to support the Florida Fallen Firefighter Memorials.

Several Staff members are scheduled to attend the Annual Fire Department Instructor Conference in Indianapolis on April 8-11, 2025.

SWFD's auditing firm has started work for the completion of the annual financial audit. Staff anticipate presentation of the completed audit at the Board of Fire Commissioners' regular meeting in May.

Included in the board packet were a few articles of interest representing SWFD in Florida Fire Chiefs Association's magazine.

Chief Crawford closed his report by acknowledging for the record the passing of SWFD's Firefighter/Paramedic Dan Corcoran.

Committee Reports: The pension board held its regular quarterly meeting on March 3, 2025. District Appointee / Battalion Chief Nate Brown was chosen by the board to take the position of Chairman following the resignation of Commissioner Roger Hall. The pension board will be seeking nominations for the two member elected trustee positions soon with elections to follow.

Following a return of 22.73% for the fiscal year ended 9/30/2024, the fund sustained a loss of 1.12% for the quarter ended 12/31/2024. The 12 months ended 12/31/2024 were still up over 11%.

The actuary presented the preliminary annual valuation; however, it will be adjusted following the application of the new assumptions voted on by the trustees. It is estimated that the fund will have a funded ratio of approximately 96% after the adjustments.

Unfinished/Old Business: None

New Business: Beach Safety Director Vaughan presented a Board Action whereas Staff recommended that Chairman Gilbert execute a negotiated contract with Seaside Community Development Corporation for Beach Safety Services.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Christenson and seconded by Commissioner Flynt, the Board unanimously approved Chairman Gilbert to execute the negotiated contract with Seaside Community Development Corporation for Beach Safety Services.

Fiscal Officer Martin presented a Board Action whereas Commissioner Hall's resignation from the South Walton Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners as of February 18, 2025, effectively resigned him from the Pension Board as well and leaving that position vacant. Commissioner Brian Christenson offered to fill the vacant seat on the Pension Board.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Flynt and seconded by Commissioner Bailey, the Board unanimously accepted Commissioner Brian Christenson's offer and appointed him Resident Trustee of the South Walton Fire District Firefighters' Retirement System effective immediately for the term ending December 31, 2026.

Fire Chief Crawford presented a Board Action whereas Commissioner Roger Hall provided written notice of his relocation to Huntsville, Alabama, and resignation from the Seat 3 Fire Commissioner position with an effective date of February 18, 2025. Staff asked for the Board's direction on how they wished to proceed with the selection of a candidate for appointment to the Seat 3 vacancy on the Board of Fire Commissioners.

After a lengthy discussion and on a motion duly made by Commissioner Foley and seconded by Commissioner Christenson, the Fire Board directed Staff to advertise for the Seat 3 position.

Public Comment: Members of the public were invited to comment. There was no public comment.

Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.