

# **SOUTH WALTON FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**Meeting Minutes – April 8, 2019**

**\*\*\*PENDING APPROVAL\*\*\***

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

**Commissioners Absent:** Jack Abbit

**Call to Order:** 4:00 p.m.

Chairman Gilbert announced that there was a quorum present.

Chairman Gilbert read into the record the National Public Telecommunications Week Proclamation, proclaiming April 14 – 20, 2019, as Public Telecommunications Week in South Walton in honor of the men and women whose diligence and professionalism keep the community, citizens and visitors safe.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Christenson and seconded by Commissioner Stange, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the March 11, 2019, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.

**Secretary/Treasurer Report:** Commissioner Flynt read the February 2019 cash report into the record.

**Attorney’s Report:**

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Flynt and seconded by Commissioner Christenson, the Board unanimously approved Attorney Youell’s March 2019 billing statement.

**Fire Chief’s Report:**

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

Chief Crawford referred to the “Regular Salaries and Wages” line as well as the “Overtime” lines on the income and expense report that was included in the board packet. Chief Crawford made the Board aware that the report revealed that SWFD was over budget in the YTD “Overtime” line by \$226,000. Chief Crawford further stated this overage is primarily the result of all Hurricane Michael protective actions and state missioned deployments to Jackson and Bay counties. Chief Crawford further stated that SWFD is currently under budget by \$234,000 in the “Regular Salaries and Wages” line which offsets the overages in the OT line. These expenditures have been submitted for federal / state reimbursement. Chief Crawford stated that Staff does not anticipate any mid-year budget adjustment requests at this time but will continue to monitor closely.

A copy of the 2018 Annual Report was included in the Board packet. Chief Crawford acknowledged Staff’s time and effort to present the Fire District’s annual report.

Chief Crawford stated that SWFD recently experienced a couple significant wildland fire events. The first was an approximate 15-acre wildfire within Point Washington State Forest and was believed to have been started by gunfire. The second was approximately a 12-acre wildfire between Veterans Road and the Santa Rosa Beach

Publix which was determined to have been caused by an unattended campfire. No structures were damaged in either fire.

Chief Brian Hughes facilitated a Florida Firefighter Safety and Health Collaborative Regional Meeting on March 12, 2019, in DeFuniak Springs, Florida which hosted approximately 50 NW Florida fire service professionals. Topics discussed were first responder mental health and peer support models for the fire service.

SWFD hosted the 2018 Fire District Awards Ceremony and a Swearing In Ceremony for Fire Chief Crawford on March 16, 2019, at Sandestin Resort. There were nearly 180 employees and family members in attendance. Chief Crawford thanked the Fire Commissioners that were able to attend.

Chief Crawford announced that approximately 25 members of SWFD staff, labor leadership, and members of rank and file met on March 29, 2019, to establish the goals and objectives for the final remaining year of SWFD's Five-year Strategic Plan.

South Walton Fire District's Honor Guard traveled to Tallahassee, Florida on April 1, 2019, to participate in the unveiling and dedication of the Florida Fallen Firefighter memorial.

Staff attended the Florida Fire Chiefs Association - Northwest Florida regional meeting on Tuesday April 2, 2019, in Panama City. The meeting was attended by the Division Director of State Fire Marshal Office, The Florida State Fire College Superintendent, and the FFCA executive staff. Attendees were provided a legislative overview, updates on fire service course curriculum and credentials as well as updates to the Statewide Emergency Response Plan.

Staff met with St. Joe Company's Director of Development regarding future construction and development timelines on projects they are associated with in the eastern portion of the District. Currently, St. Joe is scheduled to build out Watersound North with approximately 750 single family homes to be constructed within a five to seven-year timeframe. Most of this construction is slated to be developed between Watersound North and the intercoastal waterway as well as the Camp Creek golf course.

In the near future, Staff plans to schedule a meeting with the Forest View Village developer to determine timelines for construction and build out of the property located near the new elementary school and the Industrial Park located North of Highway 98 between Inlet Beach and Point Washington. These meetings help Staff to evaluate and identify the forecasted need for additional fire stations and their conceptual locations.

Several personnel from SWFD's Training Committee attended the Fire Department Training Network's Live Fire Training Camp in Indianapolis. Training consisted of 24 hours of realistic live fire conditions including:

- a. Firefighter Survival techniques
- b. Forcible Entry skills
- c. Residential Basement Operations
- d. Searching without a line
- e. Hoarder conditions
- f. And firefighter rescue and Rapid Intervention tactics.

Chief Crawford, Chief Kuehner, and Chief Hughes are scheduled to travel to attend the Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) International in Indianapolis on April 9,

2019. This annual conference provides a forum to learn industry best practices, leadership and management education, hands on training evolutions, workshops, and professional networking as well as the largest fire service trade show for vendors to demonstrate their products and services.

An invitation for a promotional pinning ceremony scheduled April 18, 2019, for SWFD's new Assistant Chief of Operations Brian Hughes and new District Chief Chris Kidder was included in the board packet.

Chief Crawford announced that an SWFD retiree breakfast is scheduled for 9am on April 20, 2019, at SWFD's Miramar Beach Fire Station #5.

Assistant Chief Brian Hughes is scheduled to attend the Congressional Fire Services Institutes 31st Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Congressional Dinner on April 24-25 in Washington, DC. Chief Hughes has been an instrumental member of the Florida Firefighters Safety and Health Collaborative leadership team. Chief Crawford announced that Chief Hughes will be present at the congressional dinner to accept the Senator Paul S. Sarbanes Fire Service Safety Leadership Award alongside members of the Safety and Health Collaborative.

Chief Crawford informed the Board that Communications Operator Blake Griffiths announced his retirement after serving the District nearly 19 years – over 14 years as a Communications Operator and 4 years prior to that as a firefighter.

Included in the Board packet was an invitation to the ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony for SWFD's Training Tower on May 13, 2019, at 2:30pm.

The next Board of Fire Commissioners meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 13, 2019 at 4pm.

#### **Committee Reports:**

Commissioner Flynt announced there will be a By-laws Committee meeting on April 16, 2019, at 3:30pm to be held at SWFD's Administrative Offices.

#### **Unfinished/Old Business:**

##### **Board Advisory: Fleet Maintenance/Logistics and Training Tower Project Update**

Assistant Chief Marc Anderson presented a Board Advisory stating the roof system and the decks for each floor of the Fleet Maintenance building are currently being constructed. The metal stairs are scheduled to be delivered the week of April 15, 2019. In addition, the training tower exterior stairwells, metal handrails, standpipe system and sprinkler system have been installed. The contractor anticipates completion of the tower by the end of April.

#### **New Business:**

**Board Advisory: 393 South Lease** Staff was recently contacted by the Director of the Habitat Restore office who requested an extension on their lease agreement with SWFD. After much discussion, Commissioner Cooper made a motion to amend Habitat's lease by extending it one year and including an escalation clause to increase the payment by 10% per each additional year after April 30, 2020. In addition, the lease shall include a 120-day termination notice. Commissioner Cooper's motion was seconded by Commissioner Christenson and the Board unanimously approved the lease amendment as stated in the motion. The Board appointed Chairman Gilbert and

Assistant Chief Anderson to amend the lease agreement and present to the Board for approval at the regular meeting in May.

**Public Comment:** Commissioner Christenson asked for an update on the Geronimo Street property purchase. Commissioner Gilbert stated that the purchase was proceeding as expected and a closing date is scheduled for May 2, 2019. Chief Anderson thanked the Board for their forethought and prompt response.

**Adjourned:** The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.