

SOUTH WALTON FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Minutes – March 9, 2020

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

Commissioners Present: Brian Christenson, Tom Cooper (arrived 4:15 pm), Mark B. Foley, Maurice Gilbert, Mike Stange, Rick Talbert

Commissioners Absent: Charlotte Flynt

Call to Order: 4:00 p.m.

Commissioner Gilbert announced a quorum was present.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Cooper and seconded by Commissioner Talbert, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the February 10, 2020, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.

Secretary/Treasurer Report: In Commissioner Flynt's absence, Fiscal Officer Martin read the January 2020 cash report into the record.

Attorney's Report:

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Stange and seconded by Commissioner Cooper, the Board unanimously approved Attorney Youell's February 2020 billing statement.

Fire Chief's Report:

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

SWFD hosted Leadership Training for all SWFD officers and supervisors on February 12-13, 2020.

SWFD is currently in the process of migrating to the Tenzinga employee performance tool.

Beach Safety Season began on March 1, 2020. Between the current strength of the economy and the additions of professional lifeguard services in nearby counties, SWFD is experiencing challenges securing a minimum number of lifeguards. Staff has adjusted entry level hourly compensation and implemented a structured sign-on bonus program intended to incentivize recruitment of lifeguards in order to fulfill contractual staffing obligations. In addition, Chief Crawford, executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Labor Leadership for the period of March 1- 31, 2020, to provide an opportunity for any SWFD firefighters with the proper USLA credentials and training to fill remaining short-term personnel gaps. Commissioner Talbert complimented Staff on their creative management in handling the lifeguard position shortage.

SWFD participated in a Walton Chamber Non-Profit Mingle event on February 19, 2020. SWFD leveraged this opportunity to speak on our Beach Safety Division activities and its effort to seek talent for these critical positions.

In-service training regarding the new firefighter occupational cancer coverage requirements were completed in February 2020. The District purchased insurance through United Badges, LLC. at a cost of approximately \$15,000 annually.

SWFD provided event planning and coordination of emergency medical services assets in support of the Seaside Half Marathon, which was held Sunday, March 1, 2020. This event was once again successful and is a model of proper event coordination and planning for our community.

Staff coordinated SWFD's Annual Employee Benefits Showcase on February 20-21, 2020, for its employees and spouses to meet with representatives from Blue Cross Blue Shield, AFLAC, SWFD's Peer Support Team and various vendors. Employees were provided a personal summary of all district provided compensation and benefits and given the opportunity to make updates to their beneficiary or emergency contact information. Chief Crawford commended SWFD's HR Coordinator Lois LaBarreare and Fiscal Officer Carole Martin on an excellent job putting together this year's showcase.

On February 24-28, 2020, SWFD hosted a team from Florida State University's Emergency Management and Homeland Security Program where our firefighters and beach safety personnel were engaged in a UAV / Drone training course. Students were able to operate multiple airframes throughout the week under unique conditions including night operations.

Chief Crawford announced that SWFD received its FAA COA (Certificate of Authorization) as a UAV / drone operator program which grants certain additional capabilities when operations require flight at night or within restricted airspace as SWFD is in close proximity of Eglin AFB.

Chief Crawford provided the Board with an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) threat which is a rapidly evolving public health situation. As a result, SWFD has adjusted its operational posture as is provided for in SWFD's Emergency Management Plan. Chief Crawford will keep the board apprised as operational posture evolves.

SWFD is in the final planning phase of a multi-agency wildfire tabletop exercise to be conducted late March and will simulate a large wildfire occurring here in South Walton during peak tourist season. The exercise will test many core capabilities of each agency such as evacuation process coordination, internal and external communications, as well as identifying and requesting resources.

On March 2 and 4, 2020, Chief Crawford assisted the City of DeFuniak Springs this past week with the candidate interview process as they seek to identify a new Fire Chief.

On March 9, 2020, Chiefs Crawford and Anderson represented SWFD when they attended a service at Florida's State Capitol where Fire Commissioner Flynt's late husband, Colonel Mike Flynt, was recognized and honored by the Florida Cabinet. Colonel Flynt's name, along with fifteen additional decorated veterans, was placed on the Florida Veteran's Hall of Fame – Wall of Honor in the Capitol.

Division Chief Orenic is scheduled to speak at the Emerald Coast Emergency Care Symposium in Sandestin on the EMS response to the "Route 91" Las Vegas shooting incident, how the agency handled and managed the response, and key lessons learned.

A strategic planning session has been scheduled for March 26-27, 2020, to update and adopt a new five-year strategic plan as well as to redefine SWFD's focus for goals and objectives for the remainder of 2020.

Staff is confident the SWFD's 2019 Annual Report will be presented at SWFD's April board meeting.

The next regularly scheduled Board of Fire Commissioners meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 13, 2020 at 4pm.

Committee Reports: In Commissioner Flynt's absence, Fiscal Officer Martin reported that a quarterly meeting was held on March 2, 2020. Daniel LaTour was elected as the new Chairman and Travis Spencer as Secretary. The plan earned 6.68% in the first quarter of fiscal year 2020; however, along with the market, much of that gain was gone by the date of the meeting. The board voted to do a minor reallocation of domestic equity investments to diversify holdings. Bob Wells' term ends in August. Nominations for a new firefighter trustee will be accepted in June with a vote to take place in July to allow time for a new Trustee to be in place for the August meeting.

Unfinished/Old Business: None

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.