

# 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 **February 13, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.** at the South Walton Fire District Administration 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: 01.09.2023**
- IV. Secretary/Treasurer's Report
- V. Attorney's Report  
**Trademark Update**
- VI. Chief's Report
- VII. Committee Reports
- VIII. Unfinished/Old Business
- IX. New Business  
**Board Action Item: Agreement to provide Beach Safety and Education Services on behalf of the Walton County Board of County Commissioners**  
David Vaughan, Beach Safety Director  
  
**Wage Study on Management Personnel**  
Commissioner Brian Christenson
- 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.

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

## **Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2023**

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

**Commissioners Present:** Brian Christenson, Charlotte Flynt (arrived 4:14 pm due to traffic), Mark Foley, Phil Friday (arrived 4:16 pm due to traffic), Roger Hall, Mike Stange

**Commissioners Absent:** Maurice Gilbert

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

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

In Commissioner Gilbert's absence, Vice-Chairman Foley chaired the meeting and announced a quorum was present.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Christenson and seconded by Commissioner Hall, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of January 9, 2023, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.

**Secretary/Treasurer's Report:** Fiscal Officer Martin read the December 2022 cash report into the record.

### **Attorney's Report:**

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Christenson and seconded by Commissioner Hall, the Board unanimously approved Attorney Youell's January 2023 billing statement.

### **Fire Chief's Report:**

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

SWFD participated in the Walton County Tourism Department's Job Fair on January 13th seeking the best candidates for career opportunities in Beach Safety, 911 Communications, and Operations Divisions.

In January, SWFD facilitated firefighter selection and physical ability testing to update its 2023 hiring eligibility list. Nearly thirty candidates were tested. Twenty-two firefighters were asked to return to participate in interviews. Eight of the twenty-two interviewees are dual-certified as both Firefighter/Paramedics.

Chief Crawford attended a Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs Board meeting in Wilmington, NC. In addition, Chief Crawford and staff members attended the Florida Fire Chief's Fire Rescue East Conference in Daytona Beach where they participated in state committee meetings, educational sessions, and vendor trade shows.

Chief Crawford announced that SWFD is scheduled to participate in the Florida Association of Special District's Legislative Forum scheduled to take place March 8-9, 2023.

SWFD will be well represented at the "Special Districts Day" in Tallahassee, Florida on March 9, 2023. SWFD will have a booth showcasing its Beach Safety program, Fire Prevention, Community Risk Reduction initiatives, and our Technical Rescue Team's capabilities to demonstrate the many benefits special districts provide to communities throughout the state.

Staff continues to participate in many Walton County working groups. Over the past several weeks we have attended an Emergency Management EOC planning meeting, a Local Mitigation Strategy or (LMS) Working Group meeting, hosted a Walton Fire Council meeting last week and participated in a Florida Forest Service Cooperators meeting here in the Chipola District.

SWFD staff is scheduled to speak at two Spring break community meetings. The first is for neighborhood watch, private security agencies, and beach vendors. The second meeting scheduled is intended for Community Management Associations. SWFD participates in these pre-spring break planning meetings each year to provide a forum for our community to hear from the Sheriff's Office, Code Compliance, and the Fire District on our spring break operational posture and to respond to any questions or concerns they may have in advance of the crowds.

The Walton County Board of County Commissioners adopted the Short-Term Rental (STR) ordinance requiring an annual registration process to be completed on each short-term rental within the county. Registrants will be able to self-attest that they have complied with all ordinance requirements upon completing the annual registration process.

Should there be violations or issues of noncompliance - Florida's Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) is the designated state agency charged with managing these complaints. Issues related to the fire/life safety requirements within the STR ordinance would require a site visit by the local fire authorities having jurisdiction.

Staff anticipates the impact may likely require 1.5 to 2 additional positions to adequately meet the projected demands placed on the District.

In February, former Fire Commissioner Jack Abbit and his family toured the Fleet Maintenance, Logistics, and Training Facility. Abbit served on SWFD's Fire Board overseeing the project from conceptual design to final project completion but had never been able to see the finished product. Staff was thrilled to show him the many efficiencies the facility provides our fire district today and in the future.

Chief Crawford provided a brief update on SWFD's 3rd floor logistics facility buildout. The project is progressing well and Staff looks forward to gaining the capacity to better accommodate our public meetings in a larger state-of-the-art facility.

Public Information Officer Mackenzie McClintock will be co-instructing an L-105 Basic Public Information Officer course for Walton County Emergency Management. PIO McClintock has partnered with the Walton County Sheriff's Office PIO to provide instruction to county stakeholders.

SWFD's Beach Safety Division lifeguards are scheduled to return on March 1st with lifeguard presence resuming daily from 10 am – 6 pm at each of the County's Regional beach accesses.

SWFD is scheduled to host the hands-on portion of training (HOT) for the North Florida Fire Expo - March 2-4, 2023.

Lieutenant Steve Newsom has announced his retirement after serving SWFD for the past twenty-four years and serving a total of twenty-seven in the Fire Service. Lieutenant Newsom will work his final shift on March 25, 2023. A retirement celebration will take place on the patio of the Training and Logistics building on March 24, 2023.

The SWFD's Annual Awards banquet is scheduled for Saturday, March 18, 2023, at the Sandestin Hilton. A flyer providing details was included in the board packet.

Chief Crawford shared that Florida's Chief Financial Officer and State Fire Marshal Jimmy Patronis is scheduled to tour SWFD's Headquarters facility and to visit with firefighters, staff, and Fire Commissioners on the morning of March 1, 2023.

SWFD's Audit Committee is scheduled to meet on February 14, 2023, for an initial presentation of the FY22 draft audit findings. The Audit Committee will present its recommendation to the Fire Board at the regular meeting on March 13, 2023.

Chief Crawford is scheduled to serve on an interview panel for the selection of the Division's next Assistant Director of State Fire Marshal's Office in Tallahassee on March 14-15, 2023.

The Fire District's Annual Report for 2022 is nearing completion and staff is optimistic it will be published and ready to present to the Fire Board at the regular meeting on March 13, 2023.

SWFD's administrative offices will be closed on February 20, 2023, in observance of President's Day.

A quarterly Pension Board meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2023, at 2:30 pm.

The next regularly scheduled Board of Fire Commissioners' meeting will be on Monday, March 13, 2023, at 4 p.m. at SWFD's Administrative Office.

Committee Reports: None

Unfinished/Old Business: None

**New Business:**

Beach Safety Director David Vaughan presented a Board Action Item on the Agreement to provide Beach Safety and Education Services on behalf of the Walton County Board of County Commissioners.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Flynt and seconded by Commissioner Hall, the Board unanimously approved the execution of the agreement to provide Beach Safety and Education Services for Walton County.

**Wage Study on Management Personnel**

Commissioner Brian Christenson recommended Staff research whether an in-house or independent wage study on Management Personnel would be more cost beneficial to SWFD and report their findings to the Fire Board.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Christenson and seconded by Commissioner Flynt, the Board unanimously approved to proceed with the research.

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

Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.