

**DESTIN FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT**  
Regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners  
**Main Station**  
848 Airport Road  
Destin, Florida 32541

February 10, 2015

**Minutes**

Commissioners present: Tommy Green, Rick Moore, Mike Buckingham, Jack Wilson, Bob Wagner

Staff present: Chief Kevin Sasser, Division Chiefs Ron Gerdeman and Joe D'Agostino, and Kathryn Wagner

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Tommy Green.

**Public Comments:**

None

**Review of minutes:**

The minutes for the regular meeting of January 13, 2015, were presented. Rick Moore made a motion to approve the minutes. Jack Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Review of the Financial Report:**

Kathryn Wagner presented the financial report for January 31, 2015. She stated our cash position continues to increase as we collect this year's ad valorem taxes. Accounts receivables are a little high at \$11,000 but half is an expected refund from Blue Cross Blue Shields for former employees. She stated other current assets are in line and fixed assets have yet to be adjusted as of September 30, 2014, but will be within the next two weeks as our audit begins February 24, 2015. She stated the liabilities and equities are in line and have been adjusted appropriately.

Kathryn Wagner reviewed the Revenue over Expenditures vs Budget report. She stated we still have approximately 1.5 million to collect of ad valorem taxes, which are slightly behind last year's rate. She stated the gain on the sale of assets currently shows \$6,527 and we have since sold the 3 remaining ATVs, so additional revenue will be recognized in February of approximately \$6,900. Jack Wilson asked if that was the gross amount of sales or net over accumulated depreciation. Kathryn Wagner stated it was the gross. She further states the first invoices to the City of Destin for the Beach Safety Program will go out in the spring.

Kathryn Wagner reviewed the expenditures as of January 31, 2015 and stated we are four months into the current fiscal year so we are looking for a percentage remaining of 67% or higher. She stated an invoice has been received for workers compensation insurance resulting from an audit of our fiscal year ended September 30, 2014. She stated this additional cost resulted from the wages paid for the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program which was not initially budgeted and a mid-year adjustment will need to be made in April. Jack Wilson stated it was basically an expense of last year that is paid this year.

Kathryn Wagner stated duty overtime has exceeded the budget by \$941 and an adjustment will need to be made. She stated comp time is now being earned for overtime hours worked. She further stated other mid-year adjustments will also need to be made for dues and subscriptions as well as professional services as these line items have been used for grant expenditures.

Kathryn Wagner stated the total expenditures percentage remaining for the fiscal year is 70.22%, which is higher than where we need to be so we are on target for this fiscal year.

Mike Buckingham made a motion to approve the financial statements for January 31, 2015. Rick Moore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Old Business:**

#### 1. ATV, Viking, & Wave runner purchase

Chief Sasser stated the sale of the remaining three ATVs went to the same bidder who purchased the wave runner, so we did not need to advertise again. Bob Wagner asked what they were sold for. Chief Sasser stated the minimum bid was \$2,000 and his bid was \$2,300 for each.

Chief Sasser reported that the purchase of the new assets was not awarded to Wards Yamaha as in the past, as they were not the lowest bidder nor were they close enough to the lowest bidder. He stated Ft. Walton Beach Yamaha was the lowest bidder, though they did tie with Panama City. He stated with the tie, we purchased where we were going to get the other assets from. He stated that also with a tie, keeping the purchase local in Okaloosa County is what we want to do. He further stated the equipment has been ordered.

#### 2. Grants

Chief Sasser stated Firehouse Subs is still in the process of awarding the grant and no equipment has been purchased yet.

Chief Sasser stated an apparatus grant has been applied for.

Chief Sasser stated we are working on adding three people through the Safer Grant. He states if the economy continues on the current path we should be able to pick up the expense of those three people in the third year. He stated if during the process we feel like we could not pay for the employees we could decline the grant. He further stated the rules have been changed so if we hire the people and we don't have the money to pay for them after the grant expires we do not have to keep them, although we do not want to put the department in that position.

Rick Moore asked how many times we have been awarded the grant in the past. Chief Sasser stated we have received the grant once but does not know how many times we have applied.

Jack Wilson asked if the County gives us any estimates or forward look as to what they expect ad valorem taxes to be over a two year, five year, or ten year period. Chief Sasser stated no and the further out they will go is only a few months.

### **Chief Reports:**

#### 1. Beach Safety report

Joe D'Agostino stated that visas have been approved and eight people are coming from Australia. He stated the new vehicles will be ready to pick up this week and training will begin in two weeks.

Rick Moore asked where we are doing our swimming. Joe D'Agostino stated they are using Hulbert for now and he is checking with Emerald Coast Scuba to see what they can do.

Jack Wilson asked what size the pool is at Emerald Coast Scuba. Joe D'Agostino stated he would guess the size to be less than 25 yards.

## 2. Training report

Chief Sasser stated 27 hours of well-rounded training was done for the month. He stated the training consisted of drills, online training, classroom training and EMS protocol.

## 3. Inspection report

Ron Gerdeman stated there was nothing new to report.

## 4. Response Change report

Chief Sasser stated this is the start of the calendar year and January had a potential of 210 calls of which we actually ran 164, consisting of 46 alpha, skilled nursing facilities, and animal lock in calls. He stated we had seven requests by Okaloosa County EMS for assistance and one of those was specifically for man power. He stated where he normally pulls the EMS numbers from is now in a different location as the County has moved it. He stated between October 2013 and January 2014 we actually ran on 906 calls compared to this year, October 2014 to January 2015 we had a potential of 880, and actually only run 723 calls. He stated the difference of 157 is a significant difference in four months.

## 5. Overtime report

Chief Sasser stated we have hit the \$15,000 budgeted amount for duty overtime and are now into comp time. He stated there were two 24 hour incidents and the remaining were holdovers.

Bob Wagner asked about the medical reports and where zone 1 and zone 8 are. Chief Sasser stated zone 1 is in the Calhoun area and zone 8 is the far end of the county on the other end by crystal beach, both being on the ends of the District. Bob Wagner stated that is where most of the calls come from. Chief Sasser stated that for a full year, zone 1 is the busiest zone.

## **New Business:**

### 1. Re-inspection Fees

Chief Sasser presented resolution 11-04 which was implemented in January 2012. He stated we are looking to gain compliance. He stated it is not as much generating the dollars as much as it is to insure that people come into compliance with the codes. He stated if we went to a business and see that their extinguishers are out of date we write them up then come back at a later date. At the later date, if it is in compliance there would be no fee, however, if we come back and you are not in compliance then there would be a fee.

Mike Buckingham stated taxpayers are paying for the service for us to go out and inspect their place. He stated if we go out and inspect them and they fail he does not feel we should charge them then. He stated we should give them the opportunity to fix it. He stated whether we charge \$25 or \$50, he doesn't think that's an issue.

Rick Moore stated we do not charge for the initial inspection even if they are none compliant. He stated it's when we go back the second time is when they are billed. He stated the first time

we show up and it is not compliant then we come back a second time. If the second time we come back and it is in compliance, then there is no charge because they made the correction which we asked. He further stated if the second time we come back and it is not in compliance, then there is a charge and if we come back a third time then it's another \$25. He stated there comes a time that we need to draw a line in the sand and there may be a bigger fine.

Tommy Green stated he had no problem with the way you have presented it.

Rick Moore stated the first visit is bringing awareness that you are out of compliance.

Jack Wilson stated this gives everyone two shots and if that is not good enough it is a much higher penalty. He stated there will be few people who do not get it right by the second time, so the cost is put truly on the people who can't get it done.

Chief Sasser stated he had spoken with attorney Dawn Stuntz about the collection of the funds. He stated there are some who are refusing to pay right now. He stated he would like to come back to the Board with a new resolution reflecting the change you want as well as some kind of collection mechanism.

Mike Buckingham made a motion that for the first inspection there will be no charge, at the re-inspection if the violation has been taken care of there will be no charge, if at the re-inspection the violation has not been taken care of there will be a \$50 charge and there will be a \$50 charge every 30 days which we have to come back to re-inspect. He stated it needs to be in writing that when the Inspector comes out, we are not charging for this first inspection and we will not charge you if you take care of this issue by the next visit, and if you do not take care of it, it will state you will be charged \$50. Bob Wagner seconded.

Tommy Green stated he is going to abstain from voting as this actually could affect his business.

Rick Moore stated he is not in favor of \$50 and believes that \$25 is fair.

Mike Buckingham stated the only reason he stated \$50 is because the first visit we did not charge them. We told them you have to be in compliance in 30 days, so if they didn't, we've already been there two times and now has to go back a third time. Rick Moore stated that is fair enough.

The vote passed 4 in favor and 1 abstention.

## 2. Public Comments

Chief Sasser stated a Commissioner asked what the other governmental entities were doing in regards to public comments. Chief Sasser presented policies of other governments which show that they limit their public comments. He stated the City, County, School Board and TDC all have limits.

Bob Wagner stated he would like to keep this uniform with three minutes to comment and address the board. He stated it is a hardship on the Board when someone rants and raves for 20 to 25 minutes.

Rick Moore stated the reason others may limit to three minutes instead of five, six, or seven minutes is due to the amount of people who show up to meetings that could potentially tie up a lot of time in the meeting.

Mike Buckingham stated that is not the reason why they do it.

Jack Wilson stated that Okaloosa County clearly states three minutes so that others in the audience may have the opportunity to be heard. He stated that is not exactly our problem. He stated we have one or two that come in and lecture us for a while. He stated he does not like to listen to that but every once in a while you hear something good in that. He stated he hates to do something which says we are going to stymie public input as we don't have that much and it is not the biggest problem which we have.

Mike Buckingham stated Jack Wilson had a good point and would we be smart to allow the chair to have the ability at any meeting to hold them to five minutes.

Bob Wagner and Rick Moore both stated they would like to see the limit.

Tommy Green states he does not want someone to say that this Board did not allow them to speak. He stated even the firefighters; if they want to talk he allows them to talk. He stated if someone calls and knows they are going to be here, have them submit the question to us in advance, and that way we know how many people want to speak at that meeting.

Kevin Sasser stated that is typically presentation. He stated if someone what's to make a presentation, like in the City's, you will see if you want to present, you have to submit. He stated just for public comments that's three minutes. Kevin Sasser stated there are 29 or 30 days which they can have public comments with any of the Commissioners which they want. He stated they can call you at any time and talk to you for multiple hours, but they don't have to do it in these meetings. He further stated if they come to the meetings, we have business to get done and if you have comments about something that needs to be done that's on this agenda speak and you have three minutes to address it.

Jack Wilson stated he liked the idea of empowering the chair if a large amount of people or if there is a heavy agenda and time is an issue, than the chair can kind of move people along. He stated it is painful to sit through some of this but we get paid to do it. He stated the stipend the fire commissioners get, by most people's standards, for one hour of work is hefty, whether you take it or not.

Tommy Green stated he agrees with Jack Wilson that if we see the potential for several people to comment, I, as chairman, could have the ability to limit to five or three minutes.

Mike Buckingham stated he agrees with Jack Wilson and stated giving the Chairman the ability to limit them to five minutes is the way to do it.

Bob Wagner agreed.

Rick Moore stated that five minutes is an ample amount of time to make a point.

Bob Wagner made a motion to allow the Chairman the ability to limit public comments to five minutes. Mike Buckingham seconded.

Tommy Green read a line in the City's policy which said any person who makes personal, impertinent or slanderous remarks, or who shall become boisterous or use offensive language, will be requested to leave the meeting. He stated he will not tolerate personal attacks on anyone on the Board or at this Department.

Bob Wagner stated he would like to amend his motion to include this verbiage.

Rick Moore stated if we could come up with a policy as he likes bits and pieces of each policy presented.

Jack Wilson stated the County had similar language. He stated that is aimed at giving everybody the opportunity in a polite and respectful way to hear their opinion, and it's not aimed at stifling. He stated he would empower the Chairman in managing the meeting to limit the time, if necessary or at his discretion.

Tommy Green asked Chief Sasser to put something together on this and bring back to the next meeting.

Bob Wagner stated he would withdraw his motion.

**Next meeting:**

Tommy Green reminded the Board of the next regular meeting will be March 10, 2015, at 5:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:**

With no additional business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.