

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

May 10, 2016

**Minutes**

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

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

Staff absent: Division Chief Kathryn Wagner

Absent: Dawn Stuntz

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Tommy Green. Chairman Tommy Green stated item b of new business was removed from the agenda under advisement of counsel.

**Public Comments:**

John Harvey of 4327 Preserve Place stated Commissioner Buckingham brought up the idea of videoing the meetings at the last meeting. He stated he had made a phone call and found out the City of Destin U Streams their meetings. He further stated the silver package costs \$99 per month and would allow you to attach to your website to watch live or watch later; it would give information like how many people watched live, how many people watched later and the length that people watched the video. John Harvey stated with talk of trying to be more transparent, people can watch for themselves and form their own opinion on what happens here and at \$99 a month that's pretty cheap. He stated according to the agenda you are already thinking of purchasing video equipment which would already be there; you may need a cable or a speaker, but thinks that would be pretty good for the people of Destin to know what's happening here and draw their own conclusions as to what happens at the Fire Commission meetings instead of hearsay.

**Review of minutes:**

The minutes for the regular meeting of April 12, 2016, were presented. Rick Moore made a motion to approve the minutes. Jack Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Review of the Financial Report:**

Rick Moore made a motion to table the review of the financial report until next meeting.

**Old Business:**

1. Planning project

Chief Sasser stated he, Mr. Harvey, Commissioner Wilson and Kathryn Wagner had a meeting with Institute of Senior Professionals. He stated they would be meeting amongst themselves then would probably set up interviews with the Board and others to get their input and put together a plan.

Rick Moore asked what kind of notice the ISP would give before they interviewed the Board. Chief Sasser stated we would work out any notice needed.

Jack Wilson stated he would be surprised if all five ISP representatives would want to sit down at the same time and interview every Commissioner. He stated he believed they would want to parse this down a bit since they have been given the three keys things to look at. He further stated they are going to do

what they do and their credibility is much better than anything we would do, but we had given them a direction and encouraged them to talk to as many people they could. Jack Wilson stated they are seasoned guys; they are good, hoped they had enough time to put to it and some muscle behind it to get something done.

John Harvey stated he had googled some of the members of the ISP and these gentlemen are pretty professional people and thinks the results are going to be pretty good. He stated in addition to interviewing the Board they should interview every employee here simply being because this will be a five year plan and will affect everybody here. He further stated we do not know what the results will be but whatever they say someone is going to like it and someone is not going to like it. While it is the final vote of the Board whether they take all the recommendations or some and he would not want somebody to come in here and say you never let me talk to them. John Harvey stated he is sure Joe D'Agostino would have a lot of input for Beach Safety especially going and talking to the TDC; Joe D'Agostino knows a lot about the beach and he should be interviewed along with Ron Gerdeman, all the Battalion Chiefs and the fire fighters.

Chief Sasser stated that was exactly their intention. He stated he mentioned the Board because the Board was in front of them, but they are going to interview a lot of people.

### **Chief Reports:**

#### 1. Beach Safety report

Joe D'Agostino stated the statistics for the month did not change too much with Easter coming early the attendance all came a once. He stated he did want to point out boat and personal water infractions are down from years past possibly because of the Sheriff's Office be being more strict on the law of coming within 700 feet, but it is a good thing.

Joe D'Agostino stated he and Chief Sasser made their presentation to the TDC and did receive \$550,000 the County received \$500,000 and the Sheriff's Office received \$125,000.

Chief Sasser stated he and Joe D'Agostino stressed to the TDC that the division of funds should be based on something; whether it is miles of beach or number of visitors just something that would be a level playing field. He stated Mr. Anderson felt we were asking the TDC to cut money to the County, but he clarified no if it is 22 cents a visitor then that is what it is whereas before there were 2 agencies therefore the money is split 50/50 when 1 agency covers twice as much as the other agency.

Chief Sasser stated we also added Crab Island patrol to their presentation for budgeting purposes for next year along with covering the current year. He stated when they left the meeting the TDC stated they would have to check with legal counsel to see if they could even do it; they were told that they could but choose not to award any money to us to provide that service. He further stated he anticipated not being awarded money from the TDC and did budget enough money to patrol Crab Island on the weekends starting Memorial Day weekend unless otherwise directed by the Board. Chief Sasser stated he could not see us doing nothing with the tragedies that have occurred whether they fund it or not people have died and it is unfortunate the TDC did not want to put the money forward, but we will work with the Sheriff's Office to coordinate our efforts.

#### 2. Training report

Chief Sasser stated the guys completed 24 hours of training for the month consisting of pulling hoses, drills and vehicle extrication utilizing the new Hirsch tools we received through the grant from Firehouse Subs. The stated the guys were thoroughly impressed with the way the tools operated. He further stated Phillips came in and trained everyone on the new heart monitors which allow us to transmit results to the hospital while keeping them for our records.

#### 3. Inspection report

Ron Gerdeman stated nothing new for the month except for a conversion with an engineer concerning a new apartment and commercial complex near Wal-Mart.

#### 4. Response Change report

Chief Sasser stated that the response time was very similar to last month at 86% with Zone 1 being the one of the higher zones. He stated the division of calls was about 65%/35% between the stations however if plans come to fruition and a mini pumper is placed on the west-end those numbers would change significantly. He further stated there were 160 calls for the month of April and anticipates an increase in calls beginning around Memorial Day.

Jack Wilson asked if was a 160 calls or 210 calls. Chief Sasser stated he had misspoken it was 210 overall calls and 160 medical calls.

#### 5. Overtime report

Chief Sasser stated there was zero overtime for the month which was unusual but attributed it to hiring another employee.

### **New Business:**

#### 1. Video equipment for meeting room

Chief Sasser stated he had not received a call back from the City regarding their equipment, but had researched the cost of purchasing equipment utilizing our existing recording software. He stated the options included 1 or 4 cameras so we went with 4 to give better coverage of the room and the proposal came in around \$3,800 to \$4,000.

Mike Buckingham stated he liked what Mr. Harvey said about the City uses that keeps track of how many people are watching; that way we know is it doing what we want it to do; are people really watching. He asked if this system would do that. Chief Sasser stated he did not ask that question.

Jack Wilson stated he had looked through the specs and it will record and store the video, but what Mr. Harvey is talking about is recording and streaming which is what we need to make it available to people. Jack Wilson asked if those 2 things were compatible with this system. He stated this will store it somewhere on a computer which is better than not, but we want to make it available to people.

Rick Moore stated we looked at this company because we already have the audio software and we were looking to match it up video. Chief Sasser stated that was correct.

Rick Moore asked if the City has 2 systems one for the written and one for the stream. Chief Sasser stated he did not know, but could check.

Prebble Ramswell stated the City clerk takes the full minutes from the audio and transcribes from that. She stated the video is a completely different process done by the streaming company and the tape is given to Cox and U tube giving several different mediums for the video to be played and viewed.

Bob Wagner asked how many people have requested audio of the meetings. He stated before spending taxpayers money he would like to know if it is worth it. Chief Sasser stated within the last week we have had quite a few but because of another item on the agenda.

Bob Wagner asked how many within the last couple of years. Chief Sasser stated not many.

Bob Wagner stated he was having a hard time spending \$4,000 if not being used. He stated he considered the District to be similar to Destin Water Users not a City entity but with taxpayer money. He further stated he checked with them; they have the same system we have audio only and they have no problem with it. Bob Wagner stated he had a hard time spending the money if no one wants to look at it; if people

want to come to a meeting then come to a meeting he is not in favor of spending \$4,000 of taxpayer's money for no reason.

Jack Wilson stated Bob Wagner raised a good point we should only be doing this if somebody wants it and maybe we should take this in 2 steps. He stated we already have it on audio if no one even listens to the audio. Jack Wilson asked if we could take the audio and make that more available to people possibly putting on the website. Chief Sasser stated we would probably be able to do that.

Mike Buckingham stated there is a system called Dragon where the audio is transcribed word for word and costs around \$250 that way everything that was said will be on paper verses picking pieces of it and putting them in the minutes.

Bob Wagner stated he even had a problem with that since we have the audio people can spend \$2 and listen to the audio which would be much easier than reading through transcripts.

Mike Buckingham stated the reason he brought it up last month was because some of the firefighters can't come to the meetings; some of these guys have 2 and 3 jobs and I understand they can listen but sometimes our actions of sitting here watching us he thinks would be better for the guys to understand what we are doing here.

Bob Wagner stated their primary job is this job not their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> job, if it was important to them they could come to this meeting or they could listen to it.

Jack Wilson stated he thought there are people beyond just fire fighters that have a difficult if not impossible time to coming here. He stated we should parse this down a bit; do we capture what went on here and do we make it available to people. He further stated this equipment we are looking at is what it takes to record and store the video, the other thing we are talking about is how do we take the audio and put that online. But our objectives should be capturing what goes on and making it available to people that can't be here real time then if we find lots of people doing it then we might start streaming it. He further stated we should step into this.

Mike Buckingham asked how much money would it save us by spending \$99 a month by having this recorded and anybody can watch this at any time. He asked how much time would it save our staff having to pull stuff and all these requests when they can just go watch it.

Bob Wagner stated not that many people are interested the same people come every month; obviously not many have requested it over the last several years so why are we spending money that's not ours for something nobody wants to use. He stated he has a hard time spending that money.

John Harvey stated you don't really know how many people are interested and not interested.

Bob Wagner stated we can tell by how many have requested it.

John Harvey stated a lot of people can't make these meetings and you wonder why the voters don't vote for this or they don't vote for that a lot of them just don't understand. He stated they don't understand what you are trying to get across to them and that's why when you put stuff on a referendum it gets voted down some people just go in there blind.

Jack Wilson stated maybe we should think about in this way; our objective is to record everything that goes on in these meetings and to preserve that as a record and we do that. Is it available to everyone, not very easily? He asked if we really needed a four camera bridge to make it available to people, what is the next step we could take to make it more available. He further stated if we get 50 people reading every

month then maybe we can enhance it with video, then we know we are spending the money wisely. He stated maybe the next step would be to make the audio more available.

Jack Wilson asked if the audio file could be put on our website and people could just download it. Chief Sasser stated he would find out and would like to be able to track how many times it has been downloaded or listened to.

Chief Sasser stated the \$99 Mr. Harvey suggested would just be the monthly fee that would not be purchasing the equipment.

Mr. Harvey stated you have already purchased the equipment. Chief Sasser stated no, that would be additional cost.

Chief Sasser stated he would ask our webhost what our capability would be and come back to the Board with a cost.

Tommy Green suggested this item be tabled until the next meeting.

Mike Buckingham asked if Chief Sasser could check into the Dragon program. Chief Sasser stated yes.

**Next meeting:**

Tommy Green reminded the Board of the next regular meeting will be June 14, 2016, at 5:30 p.m.

Prebble Ramswell asked if the patrols on Crab Island would be daily or just on the weekends. Chief Sasser stated we budgeted for the weekends which would be Friday through Sunday and Friday through Monday on holiday weekends.

Prebble Ramswell asked if that was the same amount she had received from Chief Sasser before. Chief Sasser stated yes there around \$42,000.

Mike Buckingham stated he thought the City Council had gone to the County trying to get control of the businesses out on Crab Island without any luck. He asked since we have to be out there because of all the business creating so much more of a problem would that help Council to show we are happy to do this to control that.

Prebble Ramswell stated anything brought forth in public meeting shows a necessity and is a good thing because it justifies the need to a greater audience. She stated she was not done approaching the TDC; their interpretation of the bill...Mike Buckingham stated was not what it was intended for. Prebble Ramswell stated absolutely.

Mike Buckingham stated they do not want to take responsibility or control of the businesses out there that are creating so much on us and making us go out there and do what we are having to do right now.

Prebble Ramswell stated their angle is a jurisdiction issue; is it state, is it federal, is it county, is it city, is it fire control district, which is responsible for what.

Tommy Green stated it is that past issue we have gone through in the past.

Mike Buckingham stated it just puts more of a load on us until someone else steps up and takes responsibility.

Prebble Ramswell stated she would follow up on the corridor since that should have already been done.

Tommy Green stated drownings are not happening in the corridor they are happening on the outside while it is great to have access it is not where drownings are. He stated the problem is no one wants to take responsibility but let the PR get out that people are drowning in Destin while they are not in Destin they are on Crab Island, but it is going to be Destin and it is going to be Okaloosa County and it is going to be our fault and that is the bottom line.

Mike Buckingham stated we did not have half the problems when it was people going out anchoring and having fun; the problems started when all the entertainment and all the businesses started. He stated it is a lot on us to have to go out there and babysit when it is really not our area or our district, it is the County.

Tommy Green stated the County has already said they will not do it. Tommy Green asked at the TDC meeting did they not say they were not going to do anything out at Crab Island. Chief Sasser stated they were not going to give any money.

Joe D'Agostino stated the way that meeting ended was with every dollar that was awarded we work all together to come up with something. He stated it was actually less and they are asking for more.

Tommy Green stated it was his understanding the Sheriff's Office has a certain amount of money to go toward that and they are supposedly going to have a rescue person on their boat which we have only ever seen one deputy on the boat at a time and he cannot leave the boat.

Prebble Ramswell stated he would have to wait for backup.

Tommy Green stated maybe we could come to an agreement where they could pay for one of our lifeguards to go on their boat as a rescue swimmer.

Bob Wagner stated it would a liability to have one of our lifeguards on their boat.

Mike Buckingham stated it is a liability for us to run our boat through that corridor in an emergency.

Tommy Green stated somebody has to do it and we are the only ones who will.

Prebble Ramswell stated a suggestion from the meeting was to have a permanent station out there manned by an EMT or Paramedic operating during the peak hours of the day and the boat would be used as backup.

Tommy Green stated now we are talking dollars and nobody wants to pay for it.

**Adjournment:**

With no additional business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.