

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

December 9, 2014

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

Present: Dawn Stuntz

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Tommy Green. He welcomed new Fire Board Commissioner Bob Wagner and recognized outgoing Commissioner Hillary Anderson for eight years of service.

Public Comments:

The floor was then opened for public comments. There were none.

Review of minutes:

The minutes for the regular meeting of November 12, 2014, were presented. Rick Moore made a motion to approve the minutes. Jack Wagner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of the Financial Report:

The financial report was not presented for review or approval.

Old Business:

1. COLA

Chief Sasser stated that the COLA has been tabled for several meetings due to a new, full board being desired before action was taken.

Jack Wilson stated that it would be a disservice to the employees to give a COLA based solely on having included it in the budget. He also stated that the amount budgeted may be too much or too little. He had rather wait until contract negotiations to decide if a salary adjustment should be given.

Tommy Green stated that the staff and union employees of the District have not received any type of salary increase or adjustment in five years and that a COLA should be considered as they have taken on more responsibility. He noted that the city, county and school employees have received raises and/or COLAs. He stated that whether or not a COLA is awarded at this time, an increase could still be used in negotiations. It is in the budget and no other item will have to be cut in order to make a COLA work.

Bob Wagner stated that a COLA should not be given at this time as a new contract will be negotiated soon and will be in effect in 10 months. He also stated that awarding a COLA will be a disservice to the current contract.

Rick Moore stated that a bad precedent will be set if a COLA is given since it has not been negotiated. The Board should wait until negotiations.

Mike Buckingham stated that he had rather wait until negotiations, but the employees do deserve something. He stated that a bonus could be given in lieu of a raise or COLA.

Jack Wilson stated that he liked the idea of a bonus and the employees deserve anything the Board could do for them.

Bob Wagner stated that a bonus is not in the contract and he cannot support giving it out.

Tommy Green stated that a bonus has never been part of the contract. He pointed out that Commissioners' stipends are budgeted for \$30,000 in the current fiscal year, but only \$6,000 will be utilized. He stated that, for the record, Bob Wagner has signed a waiver as has three other Commissioners. He stated that the remaining \$24,000 could be redirected to the bonus.

Mike Buckingham asked how many employees the District currently has. Chief Sasser stated that 32. Mike Buckingham stated that each would receive \$750.

Jack Wilson asked if some of the revenue allotted for the COLA could be utilized. Chief Sasser stated that it could and asked if the employees or the District would pay the taxes. Previous years' bonuses were discussed. Chief Sasser stated that the amount given was \$500 and the District paid the taxes.

Jack Wilson asked for the amount that was budgeted for the COLA. Chief Sasser stated that it was 5%, or approximately \$35,000. Jack Wilson stated that the COLA amount added to the unspent Commissioners' stipend could allow approximately \$1,200 per employee.

Tommy Green asked Dawn Stuntz if the Board could vote on a bonus since it is not on the agenda, but is part of the COLA discussion. Dawn Stuntz stated that it would be allowed.

Chief Sasser stated that he miscounted the employees and that there are 33.

Jack Wilson made a motion to declare a one-time bonus for all employees of \$1,500 gross each. Mike Buckingham seconded.

Rick Moore stated that \$1,500 was too much and he was in favor of \$500.

The motion passed 3-2, with Rick Moore and Bob Wagner casting the dissenting votes.

Chief Reports:

1. Beach Safety report

Joe D'Agostino stated that bids are being received to sell the ATVs and Waverunner. The beach patrol starts on March 7, 2015. The District will be purchasing a new lifeguard tower and vehicles for the beach.

2. Training report

Chief Sasser stated that each shift received 28 hours of training in November. The yearly totals of training hours will be presented at the next meeting.

3. Inspection report

Ron Gerdeman stated that a lot of new construction is being built. Jack Wilson asked how much revenue in impact fees are expected to be received by the District. Ron Gerdeman stated that impact fees have already been paid if the ground has been broken on the projects. Currently the only outstanding fee is the dinner theater and it is anticipated to be approximately \$32,500.

Tommy Green noted that several newly completed projects will be added to the tax base.

4. Response Change report

Chief Sasser presented the report for November. He stated that the District responded to 196 calls out of a possible 233. The difference of 37 responses were alpha emergencies or for the skilled nursing facility. Four calls were manpower assist only.

Jack Wilson asked for explanation of responding to fewer calls, yet giving more responsibility to the personnel. He stated that the amount of work is 16-18% less for shift personnel.

Chief Sasser stated that the Board and administrative staff will have to discuss how the reconciliation of the two will occur, but there are less personnel employed as in previous years.

5. Overtime report

Chief Sasser stated that overtime has significantly been reduced compared to last year. The staffing of apparatus has been revised.

New Business:

1. 2015 meeting schedule

Tommy Green presented the 2015 meeting schedule and stated that the meetings could remain on the second Tuesday of each month starting at 5:30 p.m. Mike Buckingham made a motion to approve the schedule. Rick Moore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Jack Wilson asked if some executive sessions and budget workshops could be scheduled. He would like for an executive session to be within the next 45-60 days so that the Board could start planning for contract negotiations.

2. Trustmark signature cards – changing Commissioners

Chief Sasser stated that the Board has to approve changing the signature cards. Mike Buckingham made a motion to approve the change. Jack Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Purchase new lifeguard tower for James Lee Park

Chief Sasser stated that the TDC has approved spending up to \$25,000 for a new tower for James Lee Park and up to \$15,000 for a new Viking UTV.

Mike Buckingham made a motion to approve the purchases. Rick Moore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Bids for new ATVs and Viking

Chief Sasser stated that request for bids for the new ATVs and UTV are being sought. The bids will be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

Next meeting:

Tommy Green reminded the Board of the next regular meeting will be January 13, 2015, at 5:30 p.m.

Joe D'Agostino reminded the Board that the Destin Fire Rescue Foundation will be holding its annual Polar Bear Plunge on January 1, 2015, at James Lee Park. All proceeds will benefit the Junior Lifeguard Program.

Adjournment:

With no additional business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.