

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

April 8, 2014

Minutes

Commissioners present: Tommy Green, Jack Wilson, Mike Buckingham, Rick Moore, Hillary Anderson

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

Present: Dawn Stuntz

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

Public Comments:

Mark Ward of 3840 Indian Trail – asked with cuts the Commission is looking at what will that do to our ISO ratings. He stated if it goes down our insurance rates will go up and the public needs to know. He asked are we losing any people through attrition or retirement instead of laying more people off. He further asked if there were any other cuts we could do without touching the contract or if there was any other money set aside which we could borrow off of for a few months until something else happens.

Tommy Green stated the ISO rating could be affected. He stated there were no retirements in the near future. He further stated that as far as any money anywhere else, we have reserves but they are basically assigned and there are some we can't touch.

Review of the minutes:

Minutes for the regular meeting of March 11, 2014 and special meeting of March 25, 2014 were presented. Rick Moore made a motion to approve the minutes of March 11, 2014 and March 25, 2014 as presented. Jack Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of the financial report:

The financial reports for the month ended March 31, 2014, were presented. Kathryn Wagner stated that we are now six months into the year and our target percentage on the revenue over expenditure report will be 50%. She stated cash is steady and we are receiving the last bit of our ad valorem taxes. Receivables are high for the month due our first billing to the TDC for beach services. Liabilities have been adjusted for normal accruals and payables are in line. She stated for expenditures there are a few items which are below the 50% level but we do have mid-year adjustments coming up later in the meeting. Hillary Anderson made a motion to approve the report. Rick Moore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

1. Approval of Mutual Aid Agreement

Chief Sasser stated that this agreement was tabled from previous meeting so Okaloosa County Public Safety could be removed from the agreement and that has been done. He stated that any mention to

medical calls have also been removed from this agreement. Chief Sasser asked the board to approve this agreement so it can be given to the other fire departments.

Rick Moore asked if we have had any dialog with the other departments. Chief Sasser stated yes and they were waiting on our agreement.

Jack Wilson asked Chief Sasser to highlight the differences between the tabled agreement and this agreement. Chief Sasser stated most of the differences were in the very first section where “Okaloosa County Public Safety” was removed. He stated that this included all their divisions in public safety which would include emergency management, EMS, etc.. He stated that under number 1. of the document, “EMS Units” was also removed. He stated that the rest of the agreement is as is.

Mike Buckingham asked Attorney Stuntz if she was good with this. Attorney Stuntz stated yes, and commented that this is the agreement which has been in place for many years and no substantial changes have been made other than the items removed.

Mike Buckingham made a motion to accept this agreement. Jack Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Budget and Restructuring of the Department

Chief Sasser stated that after the last meeting his direction was to work with the Union President. He stated they have had some good discussions and a lot of ideas have come forth. He stated we now have to determine the cost savings of these ideas. He asked the board to provide more time to continue to work on these options. Rick Moore asked if these meetings were open to the public. Chief Sasser stated yes.

Tommy Green stated that he commends Chief Sasser and the Union President for sitting down and trying to work on this.

Tommy Green asked Chief Sasser to review his meeting with the County Administrator. Chief Sasser stated he and Commissioner Wilson meet with Mr. Padgett and let him know where the District stands.

Jack Wilson stated it was a great meeting which was very cooridal, cooperative and fact finding. He stated that if we look at the cost doing ALS is about \$306,000. He stated another way to state this is if we did not do this services we would save about \$306,000. He stated this information was shared with Mr. Padgett. Jack Wilson stated they discussed ways which ALS can be provided to the citizens of south Okaloosa. He stated first Okaloosa County through EMS can do it, second some mutual agreement with the Destin Fire District could do it, or third would be to continue to do it has we are with them primary and us backing them up. He further stated the District is more than willing to help and be cooperative but this is just not our job.

Jack Wilson stated that we have asked our tax payers to pay for the department which we have and twice they have said no, so we have to have less fire department and this is one way to do it. He further stated that we need to get back to Mr. Padgett any comments or thoughts from tonight and see where that leads us.

Tommy Green stated that he has always felt the TDC should be funding some of this because our call is not limited to the citizens of Destin. He stated that when the population swells to 60, 70, even 80 thousand people we still have to provide the same service to them.

Hillary Anderson requested dates and options to make sure all Commissioners are available for the next meetings. Chief Sasser stated if anything productive comes from the meetings with the Union President he would schedule something if time allows before our next meeting.

Chief Reports:

1. Beach Safety update

Joe D'Agostino stated not many people have been in the water due to the cold start of the season. He stated the new tower is estimated to be delivered on Thursday or Friday. He stated the GPS units on the vehicles are working extremely well and all the visas were approved. He commented that statistics were provided but low do to the cold beginning of the season.

2. Training report

Chief Sasser stated that each shift received 24 hours of training in March which is back on target and should be able to make our 240 hours in by the end of the year.

3. Inspection report

Ron Gerdeman presented the March inspection report. He stated there were no major changes from last month. Rick Moore asked if there was any major construction going on. Ron Gerdeman stated the Destin Commons and the Venue have previously been reported and O'Quiglies on the Harbor is the next big project we will have.

4. Paramedic report

Chief Sasser presented the March paramedic report and stated it was a busy month. He stated the bad storm which came through keep us busy for a short period of time and is reflective in the number of calls which we have run. He stated that spring break was in March which increased the MVA and alcohol related calls. He further stated that the fractile response time for us was 96% for March and comparatively EMS fractile response time was at 52%.

5. Overtime report

Chief Sasser presented the March overtime report. He stated this has increased in part by an off duty injury and low manning on one shift.

New Business:

1. Resolution 14-06 to declare one 1999 and one 1996 Ford pickup trucks obsolete

Chief Sasser stated that the 1999 vehicle was Beach 10 which we took out of service last year due to frame rail rust. He stated we will sell this but make sure buyer is fully disclosed of this. He stated the 1996 is starting to cost us more than it is really worth and is an excessive vehicle which we don't really need. Kathryn Wagner stated the agenda is incorrect and this vehicle is a 1995 Ford pickup.

Jack Wilson asked if we are setting minimums on these for the auction process. Chief Sasser stated we will do the same process but we have not set a minimum on these. He stated we have checked with individuals in the whole sale business and it is anticipated the 1999 will bring in around \$900 and the 1995 in not in great shape and he would have to look to see what value it would bring in.

Rick Moore made a motion to approve Resolution 14-06. Mike Buckingham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Mid-Year Budget Adjustments

Kathryn Wagner presented two items. The first page being a summary of the adjustments and the next three pages are the budget in its entirety showing the adjustments and showing the new adjusted budget. She stated this year we have decided to simply adjust our expenditures and not pick up any revenue as we did not need to do this. A few expenditures have been reduced and these savings have been used to offset increases in communication equipment, gas utility, vehicle repair and maintenance and capital equipment. She stated some of the capital equipment will not be funded from ad valorem taxes as these monies have been set aside in the asset fund.

Kathryn Wagner stated that the last section is for beach safety. She stated there are multiple adjustments in categories. She stated that at the beginning of the year we did not have the contract with the City completed and once it was we needed to make some manning adjustments. She stated any expenditure for beach safety which was going up has an expenditure going down which will offset it.

She stated that the net result is a zero dollar affect to our budgeted expenditures for these adjustments.

Hillary Anderson made a motion to approve the Mid-Year Budget Adjustments. Mike Buckingham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting:

Tommy Green stated that the next regular meeting of the Commissioners would be on May 13, 2014 at 5:30pm.

Public Comments:

Tommy Green stated he will once again open the floor to public comments.

Shane Stewart of 306 Primrose Circle – stated he attended the meeting with Chief Sasser and the Union President and he stated it was excellent with good dialog across the table with lots of good ideas. He stated he was excited you were able to speak with Mr. Padgett and were able to help him understand the problems going on with the District as far as the medical runs. He stated that he agrees and it is apparent that the public does not want us to do medical response. He further commented on the EMS coverage in the area.

Jack Wilson commented on the ISO rating and stated we started out by saying that's what were about is keeping a 3 rating. He stated that what we have to do first is to provide fire service. He stated he is not sure the tax payers don't want us to respond but the problem is we can't do it for free and rightly the decision on how to manage that is the County's decision not ours.

Mark Ward of 3840 Indian Trail commented on how ambulance service shows up in Fort Walton Beach and then bills. He asked can't we get money from that? Kevin Sasser stated that on auto accidents that legislature has restricted us from billing this anymore. Tommy Green stated that Walton County receives funds from County but they transport and they also charge for that. He stated that we have talked about running ambulances but he did not feel that this was where we wanted to go.

Jenna McElyea of 593 Beethoven Circle – asked if we know what the new shortfall is now for the firefighters to cover since the firefighter was fired and another put in a two week notice. Tommy Green stated he could not give that answer.

Prebble Ramswell of 14 Country Club Drive – commented that through multiple conversations with people throughout the city she was asking why no to the referendum. She stated they were hoping to force the hand of the union to cut pay. She stated there was misinformation out there and did not think the people believed it would lead to this type of cut. She asked for further explanation on the 96% response for the District and the 52% response for the County.

Kevin Sasser stated that the national standard states we have to be there in 8 minutes as far as ALS being on the scene. He stated that people say its 8 minutes and 59 seconds so it becomes the 9 minute standard and that means what percentage of the time do you meet that standard. He stated that the District meets that 96% and the County meets it 52% of that 8 minutes and 59 seconds.

Jack Wilson stated we run the risk of being critical of County EMS and that is not what we want to do at all. He stated if you want the model we have today and it's inherent responsibility we dispatch and one or both of us go and the average response time is what it is and it will be solved.

Mike Buckingham asked if there was anything said about the amount of EMS ambulances coming from our district versus from other districts and if there is data for that and can we prove that they are here hauling more out from our city than any other city. He stated that if we can show we are in need of their service more will that data help.

Chief Sasser stated he is sure the data exists however we have not collected it.

Hillary Anderson stated that even if they are coming out here they are transporting to hospitals, which is an amount of time which they are not available in the area that we are living and servicing, and the fire department is still here.

Jack Wilson stated as a tax paying citizen of Okaloosa County he would ask what percent of the total revenue for the County comes from the Destin Fire Control district foot print and are of the total we spend on EMS what percent of the EMS expenditure gets spent in this fire district? He stated reality is we have built an incredible capability in our fire department that we contribute to solve the problem of EMS in this district.

Adjournment:

With no further business to be addressed, the meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.