

BAYSHORE FIRE PROTECTION & RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
September 12, 2023

**Meeting called to order** at 7:10 p.m. by Chairman Mere

**Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation and Roll Call stand from Prelim Budget Hearing**

**Invocation** – Commissioner Hansen

Commissioner Griffin – Present  
Commissioner Ducrou – Present  
Commissioner Hansen – Present  
Commissioner Cook – Present  
Commissioner Mere – Present  
Chief Doug Underwood – Present  
Office Manager – Present  
Attorney Ian Mann – Absent

**Others Present:** None

**Public Input Agenda Items** – None

**Performance Review Report** – Sal D’Angelo of Special District Services is here to present the findings of the Performance Review. He covers major points required by statute to be addressed by the review and notes in summary states:

- the District is meeting its goals and objectives the District was created for and
- is doing so with clear cut means of tracking those activities and evaluating the effectiveness of the programs in place and
- is managing operational costs effectively and resourcefully and
- is right sized for the community it serves and
- has sights appropriately set for the growth and expansion the District is anticipating in the current and near future.
- It is recommended the District continue its monitoring and assessment.

Full Report is available on website at: [Bayshore Performance Review Final Report \(bayshorefire.org\)](http://bayshorefire.org) (control and click to follow link.)

**Minutes** – Review and Acceptance of the June 13, 2023 Board Meeting minutes -

Motion made by Commissioner Hansen to accept the minutes. Commissioner Ducrou seconded the motion. Chairman Mere calls for any discussion. Hearing none, he calls for vote and with all in favor, motion passed. With no further discussion offered Chairman Mere calls for Review of Financial Reports.

**Financial Reports** – Review and Acceptance of the Financials for June 2023 - Motion made by Commissioner Ducrou to accept the financials. Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion. Chairman Mere calls for any discussion. Hearing none, he calls for vote and with all in favor, motion passed. With no further discussion offered Chairman Mere calls for July 2023 Financial Reports.

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**Financial Reports** – Review and Acceptance of the Financials for July 2023 - Motion made by Commissioner Ducrou to accept the financials. Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion. Chairman Mere calls for any discussion. Hearing none, he calls for vote and with all in favor, motion passed. With no further discussion offered Chairman Mere calls for August Financial Reports.

**Financial Reports** – Review and Acceptance of the Financials for August 2023 - Motion made by Commissioner Hansen to accept the financials. Commissioner Ducrou seconded the motion. Chairman Mere calls for any discussion. Hearing none, he calls for vote and with all in favor, motion passed. With no further discussion offered Chairman Mere calls for Fire Marshal Report.

**Fire Marshal Report** – Chief Underwood states Annual Inspections have begun and all else is as stated in the report. He moves on to read the Administrative Report into the record.

**Administrative Report** (attached) – Chief Underwood reads the Administrative Report into the record. He adds a few months ago Pulte Homes started building models on Lee County side of Babcock and he's advised they will begin building and selling soon. And with that said, they have just pulled something like 25 permits for homes on the Lee County side a few weeks ago. Each shift visited the areas for familiarization. Commissioner Ducrou asks if we have an automatic aid for that area. Chief Underwood states between us and Shores, but not with Charlotte County. He's had several conversations but it is not automatic. He explains it takes a lot more time since he has to go through the county not just the Chief. It has to go through County Commissioners. Commissioner Ducrou asks why we don't just call them. Chief states Lee County calls Charlotte if it is a Delta level call, but nothing is automatic yet and it's more difficult with different dispatch centers. Commissioner Ducrou asks if Shores runs those medical calls who backs up their district? Chief responds they now have a second station, as of a few weeks ago, and they just move up and Tice and City of FM are also there. Commissioner Hansen asks if they are building Charlotte County's station. Chief states they are and it is probably 3000-4000 feet from the county line. There's some discussion as to locations for ours and theirs and how they probably need our mutual aid more that we need theirs and how it sounds like they're not too interested in sharing. Chief states they already use us a lot and if they have a structure fire, they have one engine and an ambulance and their closest engine is quite a ways away. It's not an automatic, but their dispatch will automatically call our dispatch getting us enroute. Commissioner Ducrou wonders why we can't get our dispatch to do the same thing. Chief says our dispatchers are being proactive to start with. Both Charlotte and Lee are more proactive than they were. It started about 3 years ago on the interstate. Commissioner Ducrou states he's referring to Babcock. Are our dispatchers automatically calling them for a response when we have a call there? Chief responds they are, for high priority, such as structure fire or cardiac arrest, echo level, yes. Captain Lemieux adds also brushfire as he had one they responded to and there were no issues. Chief states we are working as if we have an agreement in place but we just don't have an

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executed agreement, and this will help. We are kind of fine tuning what we want to assist each other with, it's just not in writing. Commissioner Ducrou states they are right there; if they're using us the same way, he doesn't want to have Shores running up there. Chief Underwood states if it's a structure fire, they're going to have 3 engines automatic and a tender Commissioner Hansen asks if they wouldn't tone out Alva. Chief states no, they are doing 3 closest units. Station 9 and Shores would be our closest units. Commissioner Ducrou is satisfied, as long as we have some kind of working agreement. Chief adds that if dispatch misses something the Captains will, and do call for the additional coverage and we cancel each other if we have it handled. Chief reiterates it is just for high priority calls; high mechanism vehicle accidents, Delta, Echo, structure fires and cardiac arrest. And he will continue to work toward getting a signed agreement. He finishes reading his report. Chairman Mere calls for any questions. Hearing none, he calls for Union Petitions.

**Union Petitions – NONE**

**Old Business –**

- **MW Horticulture** - Chief does wish to add this Old Business item, to let the Board know the lien has now been filed on the property. Chairman Mere calls for New Business.

**New Business –**

- **Ratify the Bargaining Unit Agreement** – Commissioner Ducrou does wish to hold Executive Session to get a question answered so the contract is tabled until after the Executive Session.
- **Overtime Policy** – Chief is updating the policy to facilitate reimbursement by FEMA and the State for mandatory recall at a rate of 2.5 times regular pay for locally declared or Federally declared State of Emergency and those regularly scheduled will receive straight rate. Commissioner Ducrou asks if the language in the policy guarantee us reimbursement for the expense. Chief explains how the new system works with FROC instead of 214s and states he has checks with other agencies that have this and the first document requested on reimbursements is the pay policy and with the written policy provided, payment is received. No one expresses any difficulty between Lee County EMS, Iona and North Fort Myers. They were all reimbursed no questions asked. Chairman Mere asks since it is a policy change, do we need a motion on that? Chief Underwood confirms we do. Commissioner Ducrou states he just wants to make sure we have our bases covered, and asks if we brought in additional staff for declared state of emergency. Chief states we do, we brought half a shift in before the storm and the other half after the storm. Commissioner Ducrou asks and that's ok when they are in house – not deployed. Chief states yes, probably easier than if deployed. Commissioner Ducrou states, ok, he just wants to make sure we're not opening a can, it's a lot of money. Chief understands and agrees and states we have it in policy instead of contract so that if reimbursement guidelines change, we can change our policy. Commissioner Ducrou moves to adopt SOG 03-014 as

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presented. Commissioner Hansen seconds the motion and with all in favor, motion passed.

- **Commission Meetings for the next fiscal year** – it is agreed by all that the meeting dates will remain the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month.
  
- **Change Capital Threshold from \$1000 to \$5000** – Chief states we still track everything internally at \$1000 but requests we change our capitalization policy to the newer accounting standards. Chairman Mere asks if the Auditors are requesting that or what. Chief states we've had discussions, it is the newer standard. Office Manager explains we can do what we like, but it changes the threshold amount for depreciation and with everything getting so much more expensive... Commissioner Ducrou asks if we'll still track it. Office Manager explains it will not change our inventory records, we will continue to keep that, tracking anything and everything, even for just a few hundred dollars if it has value and is not a disposable, we track it. Chief explains the property stickers and Inventory stickers will still go on whatever we can get them to stick on and they'll still be tracked, it's just for capitalization/depreciation that will change. Commissioner Ducrou states as long as were still tracking he's ok with the change. Commissioner Ducrou moves to change capital threshold from \$1000 to \$5000. Motion is seconded by Commissioner Griffin. Vote is called and with all in favor, motion passed.
  
- Chairman Mere calls for any other New Business, and hearing none, calls for Chief Items.

**Chief Items –**

- Chief asks to update his contract and Administrative wages to match the wage adjustment the Bargaining Unit is receiving. Commissioner Ducrou moves to adjust the Chiefs and Office Managers wages the same as the Bargaining Unit. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and with vote called and all in favor, motion passed. Chief adds that the proposed budget allows for that adjustment.
- **Homestead Exemption** – Chief advises the Board that while it has not been so in the past, Matt Caldwell, Property Appraiser has opted to apply the Homestead Exemption to the Fire Departments thereby reducing our taxable base by \$79M on the approximately 1500+ units it applied to; resulting in a reduction of approximately \$279,000 available to the District revenues. 46 Counties of 47 have been doing it this way all along. Larry Nisbet offers that we have discussed this in the past and he was assured multiple times by Ken Wilkerson that this would never happen. He apologizes for the false sense of security. He states how it has been done all the way back to our enabling acts back in 1976 and supposedly it has been defended twice by Ken Wilkerson to the State Supreme Court the way it has been done all these years. What bothers Mr. Nisbet is the cowardly way it was done. It was done underhandedly. He didn't call the Fire Chiefs, he didn't let them know it was coming, he didn't give the opportunity to the Boards to let them know it was coming, or give them the opportunity to have a discussion or get it in their budgets or their millage rates, he did it under the umbrella of the previous hurricane saying he was going to adjust the value of the properties and he has no apology for not

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letting anybody else know. It is constitutional so...it makes it a little more difficult. Again, he apologizes. Chief Underwood states ultimately, it's only going to affect a few districts, us, Tice, Alva and maybe North and Pine Island; because we are at our voted caps. The others can raise their millage in their budget hearings to make up the difference. Mr. Nisbet states one District in Lee County lost about \$2M. The outcome may not have been difference, but letting everyone know in advance would have been the right thing to do.

- Lastly, Chief Underwood states he has just received word that Chief Brandon Kuhn of Alva has resigned. He has given them 60 days, and Alva is going to be going through a new hiring process and Chief Rewis from Shores has offered to help them out and Chief Underwood has offered if they have a large event on the North side of the river, we will communicate through Active 911, and we'll step up with support to help out.

Chairman Mere calls for any other Chief Items and hearing none, calls for Commissioner Items.

**Commissioner Items** – No Commissioner Items offered

**Public Input – None** - Chairman Mere calls for recess for Executive Session. 8:15

**Reconvene - 8:30 Call to Order**

**Bargaining Unit Contract Ratification** – Commissioner Ducrou moves to Ratify the Bargaining Unit Agreement. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and with all in favor, motion passed.

**Adjournment** – Commissioner Ducrou moves to adjourn and motion is seconded by Commissioner Hansen and with none opposed, meeting is adjourned 8:30p.m.