

# **LEHIGH ACRES FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE DISTRICT**

## **COMMISSION MEETING**

### **MINUTES**

**January 17, 2008**

The January 17, 2008 meeting of the Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District Board of Commissioners was opened at 7:30pm by President Berndt. Present were Commissioners Berndt, Adams, Guzman, Barrett and Hemingway. Chief Don Adams, Assistant Chief Jeff Haugh, Assistant Chief Solon Duncan, Fire Marshal Ken Bennett, PIO Patrick Comer, Administrative Assistant Susan Platas, Secretary Brannon Johnson, and Secretary Jill Marcolini. Attorney Richard Pringle was also in attendance.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, Commissioner Berndt asked Chief Adams to give the invocation.

Commissioner Berndt asked if there were any additions, corrections, or deletions to the agenda. Attorney Pringle stated he would like to add under unfinished business, Amendment to the Chief's Contract - an extension with prevision of a change in salary. Chief Adams stated he had one correction under Unfinished Business on the agenda sheet it should read rental/lease agreements. Under New Business he would like to add, Presentation from Kelly Price from Bouchard Insurance on life insurance and dental, and also he would like to add under New Business, meeting location and time. Commissioner Hemingway would like to add under Unfinished Business our last month's topic on not receiving the total 3.8 million dollars in ad valorem. Commissioner Hemingway would also add under New Business an update on signing a contract for the architect for the new station on Williams Road. Commissioner Guzman made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended, second by Commissioner Hemingway. Motion Passed.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

Commissioner Berndt stated a motion needs to be made to accept the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Guzman made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as is with a second from Commissioner Barrett. Commissioner Hemingway questioned the treasurer's report regarding the \$250.00 checks for employees. Commissioner Berndt answered that the \$250.00 is clothing maintenance for employees. Motion Passed.

#### **Chief Adams had the following report:**

- Chief Adams referred to a letter in the newspaper regarding critical statements with reference to the District for wasteful spending. Chief Adams gave an explanation and justification for the camcorder equipment purchased and Public Information Officer, Patrick Comer. He explained since Patrick Comer has been here, the District has had a positive image.

- Chief Adams addressed the Commissioners with a memorandum of the most recent fires.
- Chief Adams explained how he and Assistant Chief Duncan attended the Bonita Springs, Carlos Park & Estero consolidation meeting at the Three Oaks Conference Center. He explained how the group discussed immediate, short-term and long term benefits of consolidation.
- Chief Adams explained the EMS billing position being approved for full-time in the previous administration. Our billing specialist, Vanessa Koza will start working 40 hours a week starting in February.
- Chief Adams spoke of the Wildfire Blitz, that the department will be addressing on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Firefighters will go door to door in the community talking to property owners and leaving helpful literature. They will also assess homes if homeowners would like to see if there are a few simple things they can do outside their homes to make it safer in case a brush fire threatens.

#### **DVP 6 and 19:**

- **DVP 6:** Lt. Dale Pinheiro stated PIO Patrick Comer is doing a great job representing the department and is motivated with the upcoming media “Brushfire Blitz”. He also thanked Administration Assistant Susan Platas for all her hard work on the new insurance.
- **DVP 19**  
None.

#### **Department Attorney Pringle report:**

1. Attorney Pringle explained to the Board how the tax collector has made up the shortage to the district for the tax revenue.
2. Attorney Pringle explained that he received paperwork on both companies for the proposals for ambulance billing. He stated that United Financial Management Services, Inc. had certain missing paperwork and he did not receive in time. The Board needs to make a decision to either let them have their presentation or dismiss their proposal. He stated that a motion needed to be made to waive the technical deficiencies of the company.

Commissioner Hemingway made a motion to waive the technical deficiencies of UFMS, Inc. and allow them to proceed with the selection process. Commissioner Guzman second. Motion passed 4-1, with Commissioner Berndt opposing.

3. Attorney Pringle explained a resolution he had prepared upon request, it is under unfinished business, rental/lease agreements. He explained that the Board can proceed with the document he prepared and/or think it about for 30 days or adopt today.

4. Attorney Pringle also had prepared an amendment to Chief Adams contract. Attorney Pringle would like to add this amendment under unfinished business.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Agenda Items):**

- None

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

- None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Ambulance Billing Proposals:**

**United Financial Management Services, Inc. (UFMS)  
Advanced Data Processing, Inc. (ADPI)**

**ADPI representative Don Pissaro:**

- Mr. Pissaro gave an overview of how they are the leading provider of ambulance billing on EMS billing alone. He explained they have many new clients with high return, low risk. They have been in business for 25 years.
- Commissioner Hemingway asked about old collections. Mr. Pissaro explained they do soft collections. He stated anyone who is paying their bill on time will not go to collections.

**United Financial Management Services, Inc. representative Tom Hynes:**

- Mr. Hynes gave an overview and explained how they gather information. They go to the patient first for insurance information.. He stated they would come and train our staff. Our staff would have immediate data accessible whenever needed and older accounts could be handled in many different ways. They are based out of Lake Mary, Fl. and are nationwide.

Commissioner Berndt asked Chief Adams if he had any preference about companies. Chief Adams replied, APDI, he knows of their reputation and track record on collections, and other Fire Districts benefit from their company.

Commissioner Guzman made a motion to rank ADPI first and United Financial Management, Inc. second. Commissioner Hemingway second. Motion Passed.

Commissioner Guzman made a motion to allow Attorney Pringle to proceed with contract negotiations with ADPI. Commissioner Hemingway second. Motion passed.

**Insurance – Standard or Reliance.**

Representative Kelly Price from Bouchard Insurance gave an overview of benefits on comparing Life, LTD, STD and Dental premiums. She had a handout for all

Commissioners to review and stated Reliance would reduce the monthly premium for the department.

Commissioner Hemingway made a motion to accept the recommendation of Kelly Price and go with Reliance Standard Insurance as the carrier for Life, LTD, STD and Dental. Commissioner Barrett second. Motion Passed.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

##### **Rental/Lease Agreements or Contracts:**

At a previous Commission meeting Chief Adams asked for direction from the Board on signing rental/ lease agreements or contracts for the Department.

Attorney Pringle spoke on this issue and prepared a handout which was a resolution for the Board to review. Attorney Pringle stated that in the resolution pg. 2 number 2 the total value of the non-capital business item needs to be filled in by the direction of the Board. Item 3 would be a cap for the item approvals over the phone, purchasing supplies, purchase orders etc. that would also need to be filled in by the direction of the Board.

After much discussion Commissioner Guzman made a motion to table the resolution until next months Board meeting. Commissioner Adams second. Motion Passed.

##### **Chief Adams' Contract Amendment:**

Attorney Pringle prepared a handout for all Board members in reference to the Amendment of Employment Contract between Lehigh Acres Fire Control District and Donald R. Adams, Sr. This amendment would extend the employment contract and also amend the Chief's base annual salary for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2007 and ending September 30, 2008.

Commissioner Guzman made a motion to table this item to the February meeting. Commissioner Hemingway second. All in favor.

##### **Ambulance Billing Write Offs:**

Assistant Chief Haugh referenced to page 18 of the Commission book regarding Ambulance Billing write offs. The balances of the deceased write-offs and small balance write-offs total \$2,422.46. Assistant Chief Haugh also referenced the dates of service for the past 24 months to transfer these accounts to collections.

Commissioner Guzman made a motion to accept the ambulance write-offs as presented by Assistant Chief Haugh. Commissioner Barrett second. Motion passed.

##### **Automatic Fire Alarms Write-Off's:**

Chief Adams recommends to the Board write off \$1,340.00 in automatic alarm activations which were made up of several claims. Chief Adams and Attorney Pringle concur that the amount of write-offs are not a realistic amount to send to collections and/or hire a collection attorney.

Commissioner Guzman made a motion to accept the recommendation of Chief Adams and Fire Marshal Bennett to write off Automatic Alarm Activations that pre date to the resolution passed by the Board. Commissioner Barrett second. Motion Passed.

Commissioner Hemingway would like to delete from the agenda ad velorm taxes. Previously in the meeting, Attorney Pringle explained that we have received our whole amount due to us.

**Commission Meeting Dates and Times:**

Chief Adams suggested to the Board to discuss meetings places and times. He stated that we can not always reserve the library. He would like direction from the board. Other municipalities are meeting during the day. After much discussion with Chief Adams and the Board, Commissioner Adams made a motion to table for 2 months the time of the Fire Board meetings with Commissioner Hemingway second. Motion Passed.

Commissioner Guzman made a motion to table for 2 months monthly meeting location of the Fire Board meetings. Commissioner Adams second. Motion passed.

**Architect for New Station on Williams Road:**

Commissioner Hemingway would like to discuss the progress on hiring an architect for the new station on Williams Rd. This would be the relocation of Station #102. Chief Adams stated that we have a proposal with I & E that needs to be updated. Attorney Pringle stated that we would do a RFQ type process for the designing. Commissioner Guzman stated that step one would be to decide what property. The District is looking at Milwaukee & Alabama or Williams Rd. and 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> St.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Sonny Haas Lehigh resident stated that it is a popular decision county wide for the districts to regionally organize. He feels that Lehigh would be the leaders because of our ALS we provide and how big our land mass is.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Berndt: Supports Chief Adams in hiring PIO Patrick Comer and purchasing his needed equipment. Chief Adams has backing from the Board. Good turn out tonight. Thank you.

Commissioner Hemingway: Satisfied we conducted a lot of business tonight. Extremely pleased with our Fire Marshal being on top of fire alarm activations.

Commissioner Adams: Thanked the public for turning out.

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:**

None.

Commissioner Guzman made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hemingway second. All in favor.

**MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:42 PM**