

LEHIGH ACRES FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE DISTRICT

COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

December 14, 2010

The December 14, 2010 regular Commission Meeting of the Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District Board of Commissioners was held at the Microtel Inn and Suites, 1320 Business Way, Lehigh Acres, FL. The meeting was opened at 4:00 PM by President Berndt. Present were Commissioners Berndt, Adams, Carter, Becker and Shea; Chief Donald Adams, Assistant Chief Diana Watson, Fire Marshal Ken Bennett, Finance Manager Ben VanKlingeren, Billing Specialist Vanessa Koza and Administrative Assistant Susan Platas. Attorney Richard Pringle was also in attendance.

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

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Berndt asked if there were any additions, corrections or deletions to the Agenda. Chief Adams requested to add *Assistance to Firefighter Grant* and *Press Contact for the Board*. Commissioner Shea asked for the documentation of the two items Chief wants to add. Commissioner Adams requested to add *Changes to Commission Manual*. Commissioner Becker requested to add *Discuss Maintenance Detail; Discuss Workweek for Admin Staff* and *Explore the Consolidation of Fire Districts*. Commissioner Shea requested to postpone Review of Legal Services until the January meeting and make a workshop for January. Commissioner Carter requested to add *CERT*. Commissioner Shea moved adoption of the amended Agenda with a second from Commissioner Carter. Motion carries.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Fire Board Regular Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2010
- Treasurers Report

Commissioner Carter motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda with a second from Commissioner Shea. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Cathy Kruse requested the Board to move forward⁴ with the approval of the SAFER grant picking up the dependent insurance for the rehired and new hired employees that were hired through the SAFER grant.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chief Adams spoke on the following items:

- We have a new PA system. We have abilities to eliminate feedback.
- Would appreciate Commissioners bringing their calendars so if meetings or workshops need to be scheduled, it can be done at the meeting.

DVP 6 and 19:

Larry Arfmann, representative for District 6 asked the Board keep an open mind while they discuss the SAFER grant and the insurance.

DEPARTMENT ATTORNEY:

None.

COMMISSIONER REPORT:

Commissioner Shea handed out an article to Commissioners.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

FEE RESOLUTION – Fire Marshal Ken Bennett spoke on a Fee Schedule he wishes to be adopted tonight. After reviewing the highlights, Commissioner Shea moved that we amend this Section D on false alarm fees to clarify or modify that the first two false alarms for residential would be free and then we implement a fee scale. Third false alarm fee would be \$25; fourth would be \$50; fifth would be \$75; and the sixth and each thereafter would be \$100 for residential responses. The second section is for commercial fees. The first two are free. The third would be \$50, fourth would be \$100 and fifth would be \$200. Commissioner Carter seconded. Commissioner Carter added the sixth and thereafter false alarm for \$300. Commissioner Shea accepted the amendment. Motion carries. Bring back to Board for adoption.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL COMPUTER SERVICES – There was a presentation of computer representatives at the workshop on 12/9/10. Chief stated after reviewing both companies and speaking with his staff, it is his recommendation to go with Genesis Global. Commissioner Carter requested for the website to be included from this company. Chief stated it will be a significant cost for this company to maintain our website. Commissioner Berndt stated we are not talking about website at this point, we are talking about maintaining computers. If we choose this company, we can then talk to them about the cost of maintaining our website.

Attorney Pringle stated you need to rank the companies and then the negotiating will begin.

Commissioner Shea moved that we select Genesis Global as the Department's IT provider and initiate contract negotiations and report back with a proposed contract with the Board for the January Meeting with a second from Commissioner Carter. Motion carries 4-1 with the opposing vote from Commissioner Berndt.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL – Chief stated Commissioner Hemingway was the Board liaison for the Community Council. Commissioner Carter is now a member and is requesting to be the liaison.

Commissioner Shea moved that Commissioner Carter be appointed by the Board as the fire department representative to the Community Council with the understanding of the following; the Commissioner is our representative; does not act independently of this Board; does not put forward any proposal to the Community Council which does not previously receive the concurrence of this Board as its adopted policy, understanding that the concept of representation of one group to another and not allowed to advocate positions independent of the approval of this Board. Commissioner Berndt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

COMMISSIONER COMPENSATION – Commissioner Shea stated that the previous compensation for Board members was \$500 a month. He moves to compromise and the salary be \$475 taking a 5% cut keeping in line with staff starting January 1, 2011. Commissioner Becker seconded the motion. Commissioner Becker thinks Commissioners should make it 20% and go with \$400. Commissioner Shea seconded the amendment. Calling the question, the motion failed 3-2 with the opposing votes from Commissioners Adams and Carter. Motion failed due to lack of super-majority.

Commissioner Shea motioned that we adopt a \$250 a month compensation. Commissioner Becker seconded the motion. After discussion, Roll Call vote:

Commissioner Shea – aye
Commissioner Carter – aye
Commissioner Becker – aye
Commissioner Adams – nay
Commissioner Berndt – aye

Motion carries.

MEETING SCHEDULE – Commissioner Shea stated this Commission Meeting schedule was adopted by the previous Board. He believes we should adopt a standard schedule of meetings. He would like to see the meetings once a month on the 3rd Thursday at 4:00pm. Commissioner Carter would like to change the time to 5:00pm and go with the same day of the week. Commissioner Carter motioned that we go with the third Thursday of each month at 5:00pm. Commissioner Carter would like the staff who receives overtime to have flex hours on the days that possible overtime would be needed. Motion dies for lack of second.

Commissioner Shea moved we continue current schedule for the rest of the physical year and then revisit when it normally arises with a second from Commissioner Berndt. Motion carries.

SAFER INSURANCE - Chief stated that after checking with FEMA, we can utilize the additional money for dependant insurance. Chief would like to open the contract and change the language and give dependant insurance coverage to those who were rehired by the SAFER grant along with the new hires of the SAFER grant. Finance Mgr Ben VanKlingeren spoke regarding the cost of the insurance. Commissioner Carter would like a copy of the SAFER grant given to all new Board members. Commissioner Adams requested Chief to poll employees to see who would be getting dependant insurance. Commissioner Becker wants to make sure we don't go over the grant amount.

After much discussion, Commissioner Adams motioned to allow Chief to enter negotiations to discuss dependant coverage for SAFER covered employees with a second from Commissioner Carter. Commissioner Shea strongly opposes without detailed spreadsheets and analysis. We need a fundamental rethink of this whole situation.

Motion carries 4-1, with the opposing vote from Commissioner Shea.

NEGOTIATING TEAM - Since negotiations will be started with regards to the above SAFER Insurance, a negotiating team must be named. Chief requested himself, Assistant Chief Watson, Fire Marshal Bennett, Ben VanKlingeren and Attorney Hament. Commissioner Berndt motioned that the negotiating team include Chief Adams, Assistant Chief Watson, Fire Marshal Bennett, Finance Mgr VanKlingeren and Attorney Hament with a second from Commissioner Carter. Motion carries 4-1, with the opposing vote from Commissioner Shea.

FIREFIGHTER ASSTANCE GRANT - We received a grant for Radio Communications and Voice Communiuns. The grant is for 47,728.00. We would have to meet our 10% of the grant or \$5303.00.

Commissioner Carter motioned to approve and accept this grant with a second from Commissioner Adams. Motion passed.

PRESS CONTACT FOR BOARD - The Commission Handbook states to have a Press Contact. Commissioner Berndt would like to know if the current Commissioners wish to keep this the same or make changes. Do we want to continue to have a sole press contact or do we want to allow each Commissioner to speak on their own. All Commissioners agreed and are comfortable with the handbook language.

COMMISSION MANUAL CHANGES - Commissioner Adams stated he wanted to read that no Commissioner shall give a direct order to any district personnel.

Commissioner Adams motioned to add as the last sentence of Section VIII - the Chief will have 5 working days to provide the information. The 5 days will begin the day after the date of receipt. In case of emergency, this shall be waived. Commissioner Adams amends his motion to make it 3 days instead of 5. Commissioner Becker seconded the amendment. Motion carries.

MAINTENANCE RECORDS – Commissioner Becker was looking through some of the budget sheets and asked the Chief how much it cost to maintain the apparatus. He would like a cost of how much to repair, cost of labor and the same with building maintenance. We need to get a little more detailed in our vehicle cost and our building cost. We need documented status of each piece of apparatus. Without records we cannot make good judgments in the future.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF WORK WEEK – Commissioner Becker stated he would like to ask that we go back to 5 day work week and work 8 hours instead of 10 hours. Commissioner Carter would like a comparative analysis for prior and benefits; pros and cons. Chief stated that it would be almost impossible to pull numbers now that the station is open and the other side is back. Chief stated he needs to go back to 5 days per week to be available. He believes key positions need to be 5 days. Chief recommends that he should work 5 days. He hasn't spent a lot of time regarding other staff but he feels Commissioner Becker is on target.

Commissioner Shea stated it would be his strong recommendation that we return to a standard of 5 week day schedule for public availability. Commissioner Berndt stated Chief should have discretion to allow staff to start at 7:00 and work till 4 or have employees who work well on 4 days to keep that schedule.

Commissioner Carter motioned to give Chief discretion for starting time but go back to 5 day work week. Commissioner Becker seconded the motion. Motion carries. 3-2, with the opposing votes from Commissioner Adams and Berndt. To begin January 1.

CONSOLIDATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS - Commissioner Becker stated we have 17 fire districts in Lee County. He sees south area, Bonita, San Carlos and Estero considering consolidating. He would like the get the approval of the Board to observe what they are doing. It was determined that he doesn't need to be appointed by the Board. He is not to represent the Board.

CERT ISSUE – Commissioner Carter stated we applied earlier this year for \$15,000 grant. Only two people in Lee County received grant money. We are going to be receiving some cert money. We should be getting anywhere between \$4,000 and \$8,000.

WORKSHOP IN JANAUARY – Commissioner Shea stated in view of the multimillion deficit, we need to start getting detailed sheets and detailed analysis to start reviewing. Bailout funds are going to disappear.

He would propose an illustration of benefits and review medical services. He would like to see how we structure our Agenda. We need to have an open discussion at a work shop. Commissioner Berndt stated that February would be a better time to have this workshop so we can bring our calendars. He would like to have a time perimeter to work within.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioners wished all a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Shea wants the website revamped. It's a very advanced tool for educating the public.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

None.

Adjourn: 6:40pm.