

**LEHIGH ACRES FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 30, 2024 – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

The January 30, 2024, regular meeting of the Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District Board of Commissioners was held at Station 104, 3102 16th Street, SW, Lehigh Acres, FL 33976. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by the President/Chair, Commissioner Cooper. After leading the Pledge of Allegiance, Comm. Cooper gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present at the meeting were Commissioners Debra Cooper, Robert Bennett, Lucia Sherman, and Melissa Barry who was in attendance via telephone. Fire Chief DiLallo, Deputy Fire Chief Naranjo, Finance Manager Kressel, Attorney Pringle, and Administrative Secretaries Reith and Perez were also present. Commissioner Linda Carter had an excused absence. Derek Felder, Tim Jones, Chris Schaefer, Tomas Diaz, along with several staff members were in attendance. No one from the press attended.

Comm. Cooper welcomed the attendees. She explained the purpose and protocol of the meeting. She gave encouragement and general instructions for public participation and comments in two segments of the meeting.

WALK-ON ITEM – Interlocal Agreement/Medical Director

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMM. BENNETT TO APPROVE THE WALK-ON AGENDA ITEM, INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT/MEDICAL DIRECTOR. WITH A SECOND FROM COMM. SHERMAN, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chief DiLallo reported on many different topics:

1. Construction on Station 107 is still moving very fast. They have been completing all the Mechanical trades and are starting to hang drywall on the inside and stucco on the outside. We are still on Target to be completed by May or June.
2. We are planning to re-apply for the Safer Grant when it opens hopefully in the next few weeks. My plan is to open Station 107 with current staffing and supplement with Overtime until we get notification from the SAFER sometime in September or October.
3. Our annual Audit will start this month Feb 19-22.
4. As of January 1st, we are now working with the Gehring Group for employee benefits and insurance. So far, their team has been amazing to work with.
5. We will be having our first Budget Meeting in March and will also start negotiations with District 6 and 19 to negotiate successor agreements that are scheduled to expire October 1, 2024.
6. We are still working with SHI, a computer technology company, to complete our evaluation of our IT Division, Network and Security. As I mentioned, this process would take approximately two months. We are hoping to complete the evaluation by the end of February.
7. We had two new employees' complete orientation and are now on shift, with one being a Cadet. We have now successfully hired four Cadets.

8. As a reminder we will be conducting our annual employee awards on February 17th from 1500-1700 at the Rise Church. Please Mark your Calendars.
9. We currently have one inspector position available and are currently accepting applications through January and will be filling the position.
10. We will be conducting final inspections on two Sutphen engines and taking delivery hopefully in late March. We also should receive our two LMTV builds at about the same time. The Pierce Ladder truck has started to be built and we expect it to be completed by the time we open Station 107.
11. We are still waiting for a clearing permit for the training facility and are currently preparing RFP's for clearing, land fill, irrigation, and landscaping.
12. Chief Bennett will be retiring in October of this year. We will be looking outside our agency for an experienced Fire Marshal to take his place when he retires.
13. We still have some Cadet Calendars available if you know anyone who may be interested. Contact Katie.
14. The crews continue to stay extremely busy and are doing a great job! Everyone is ready and excited for the New Year!

DVP 6 & 19 – Engineer/Paramedic Schaefer thanked the Commissioners for their support and reported that all is good.

Attorney Report – Mr. Pringle reported on pending legislative items.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

All Commissioners held their comments to the end.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

COMM. BENNETT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. COMM. SHERMAN PROVIDED THE SECOND AND THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

GENERAL BUSINESS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. District Revenue Sources: Mr. Pringle had nothing to report.
2. Purchasing Policy: Ms. Kressel reviewed the changes made to the Purchasing Policy and the two supporting resolutions.

Mr. Pringle addressed the Purchasing Policy and indicated his support for the adoption of both Resolution 24-01-01 and Resolution 24-01-02.

Comm. Cooper called for public input. There was none. Comm. Cooper closed public input. Commissioner/Chair read into the record, Resolution 24-01-01.

COMM. BENNETT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REVISED PURCHASING POLICY AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION INCLUDED APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 24-01-01. COMM. SHERMAN PROVIDED A SECOND AND A ROLL CALL VOTE FOLLOWED.

Comm. Barry - AYE
Comm. Bennett - AYE
Comm. Cooper - AYE
Comm. Sherman - AYE

THE MOTION PASSED, 4:0.

Comm. Cooper called for public input. There was none. Comm. Cooper closed public input.
Commissioner/Chair read into the record, Resolution 24-01-02.

COMM. BENNETT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REVISED PURCHASING POLICY AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION INCLUDED APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 24-01-02. COMM. SHERMAN PROVIDED A SECOND AND A ROLL CALL VOTE FOLLOWED.

Comm. Barry - AYE
Comm. Bennett - AYE
Comm. Cooper - AYE
Comm. Sherman - AYE

THE MOTION PASSED, 4:0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Potential New Benefit – Voluntary Employees’ Beneficiary Association (V.E.B.A.) – Chief DiLallo introduced the Voluntary Employees’ Beneficiary Association or V.E.B.A. Chief recommended that the Board approve paying ½ of the cost of the actuary study with District 6 and 19 to investigate feasibility of a District wide V.E.B.A. benefit.

FF/Engineer Tomas Diaz gave a presentation explaining V.E.B.A.

After some discussion, the following motion was made.

COMM. SHERMAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE PAYING ½ OF THE COST, APPROXIMATELY \$12,500, OF THE ACTUARY STUDY WITH DISTRICT 6 AND 19. COMM. BENNETT PROVIDED A SECOND AND THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Districts 6 & 19 – Request to Negotiate – Chief DiLallo noted that Local #1826 – District 6 and 19 Collective Bargaining Agreements are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2024. Chief DiLallo asked the Board for authorization to initiate negotiations of the Collective Bargaining Agreements between the Lehigh Acres Fire Control and Rescue District Board of Commissioners and Local #1826 – District 6 and District 19.

COMM. SHERMAN MOTIONED TO AUTHORIZE CHIEF DILALLO TO INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE LEHIGH ACRES FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND LOCAL #1826 – DISTRICT 6 AND DISTRICT 19. COMM. BENNETT PROVIDED A SECOND AND THE MOTION PASSED BY 4:0 VOTE.

3. Walk-On Item - Interlocal Agreement with Lee County for Medical Director Services and to Approve the Early Termination of the Medical Director’s Agreement with Dr. Carolina Pereira

Attorney Pringle summarized the interlocal agreement proposal with Lee County and the potential benefits to the District. Mr. Pringle explained that once the District enters into the Interlocal Agreement

with the County, we have 45 days to give notice to the current Medical Director. The current Medical Director would be paid through the 45-day period.

COMM. SHERMAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH LEE COUNTY FOR THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL DIRECTOR SERVICES TO THE DISTRICT THROUGH LEE COUNTY'S MEDICAL DIRECTOR AND AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF AND ATTORNEY PRINGLE TO FINISH ANY REQUIRED NEGOTIATIONS WITH LEE COUNTY ON THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE DISTRICT; AND TO APPROVE THE EARLY TERMINATION OF CAROLINA PEREIRA. M.D.'S MEDICAL DIRECTOR AGREEMENT WITH THE DISTRICT ON A DATE THAT IS AUTHORIZED BY THE AGREEMENT AND APPROVED BY THE CHIEF. COMM. BENNETT PROVIDED A SECOND AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – There were no comments.

COMMISSIONERS' CLOSING REMARKS

Comm. Barry thanked everyone for their service.

Comm. Bennett thanked the staff and firefighters. He encouraged all to keep up the good work.

Comm. Sherman wished everyone a Happy New Year! She thanked her fellow Commissioners and the staff. Comm. Sherman recounted her recent CDM class and stated it was "a great experience." She added that the department is the pinnacle of the County.

Comm. Cooper thanked everyone for attending. She thanked the firefighters for all they do and acknowledged their busy shifts. She also thanked the staff and Ms. Rachel for all that they do.

ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSING REMARKS

Chief DiLallo was thankful for all.

Deputy Fire Chief Naranjo thanked the Commissioners for their continued support.

Ms. Kressel echoed the previous sentiments and wished all a Happy New Year!

ADJOURNMENT adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

Date approved: March 26, 2024

for Melissa E. Cooper - Chair
Melissa Barry, Secretary/Treasurer