

**Fire Commission Meeting
Immokalee Fire Control District
Board Meeting
November 19, 2015**

These Minutes are a summary of the meeting. Any further information can be obtained by the tape. The minutes will follow the order of the Agenda.

Present Commissioners: Anderson, Goodnight, Halman, Keen and Olesky; Chief Paul Anderson, Board Attorney Kenneth Thompson, Leo Rodgers, Alma Valladares

1) **Call Meeting to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:07pm by Commission Chair Goodnight

2) **Pledge of Allegiance**

Lead by Commissioner Goodnight

3) **Moment of Silence**

Lead by Commissioner Goodnight

4) **Proof of Publication**

Copy of publication at the annual publishing

5) **Establish a Quorum**

Quorum established by Commissioner Goodnight

6) **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Olesky motioned to approve the revised Agenda and seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Motion carries unanimously.

7) Approval of the minutes of the following meeting:

A. October 15, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Olesky motioned to approve October 15, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes and Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.

8) Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Halman motioned to approve Treasurer's Report and Commissioner Olesky seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.

9) Consent Agenda

Commissioner Keen asked if Chief's report regarding the new hire. Chief Anderson mentioned that he's interviewed three people and none have accepted the position yet. One wanted more money, 2 were concerned with stability of the position. After speaking with their wives, they chose not to accept the position because they were going to have to move their families here. Their concern was because we have 9 fire fighters on the safer grant. At the end of that grant, if we don't have the funding to keep all 9 fire fighters and have to lay off; let's say we have money to keep 6 and lay 3 off. If we are laying 3 fire fighters off; is the board going to eliminate the Deputy Chief position to try to save the fire fighter positions. The positions really are not connected because the fire fighter positions are grant funded. He does intend to apply for a grant and also going to look at the fire assessment fee that can generate revenue to maintain all the positions. The Deputy Chief position is needed whether we have those additional fire fighters or not. It's needed today without those guys on shift. He doesn't know if there is any way to alleviate that concern or not. Even if the board agrees now to keep that position; there's no guarantee in 2 years what the financial status will be. Everything on the horizon looks good, it looks like we would be able to do it. It's just like any other position. If someone goes to work anywhere; there's no guarantee that that position is going to be there forever.

The other thing is the salary and he's not asking to raise the salary. We should be able to find someone to take that job at that salary. It's just going to take longer than he thought it would. He thinks we can fill the position but it would be easier to do if he had some kind of assurance from the board that they are not going to eliminate the position in 2 years. Commissioner Olesky mentioned that he wouldn't try to eliminate that position. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that there are a lot of variables and maybe after we got the fire assessment fee passed then, maybe she would feel a little more comfortable about it. She's not sure that she can look into the future and say that it is never going to happen; what if something similar happens and we don't get the fee established? She thinks that this time next year that she might be more positive about it, but right now she can't say that. She can say that the position wouldn't be associated with the safer grant.

Commissioner Anderson mentioned that it's not a contract position and the attendance of this board can change next year. He's in agreement with Commissioner Goodnight but there is no way to guarantee anything. Commissioner Halman mentioned that he agrees, we don't know what is going to happen. So, we can tell them it's not associated with the grant and that wasn't the reason for the position anyway. One of them has 2 smaller kids and they were just concerned about that. Chief Anderson tried to explain it to them that the cost of that one position in reality is not going to save 3 fire fighters; it will save 1 fire fighter position. The Deputy Chief position will generate money due to the fire assessment fee and we are bringing payroll back in house and that saves \$9,000 a year. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned is the Deputy Chief going to be in charge of the payroll? Chief Anderson mentioned that he would be able to do the payroll with Alma. **Commissioner Olesky motions to approve that there is no connection between the Safer Grant and the Deputy Fire Chief and seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Motion carries unanimously. Commissioner Anderson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda and seconded by Commissioner Olesky. Motion carries unanimously. Commissioner Olesky motions to approve Consent Agenda and seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Motion carries unanimously.**

- A. Fire Marshal's Report
- B. Chief's Report
- C. Status on Current Contracts

10) Union Report

No one available from the Union

11) Business of the District

A. Old Business

1. Status of Fire Code Official's Office

Chief Anderson mentioned that Greater Naples presented our proposal for the revision for the final agreement to their board. They had directed their finance director and he doesn't think they approved what we wanted. They said they would have an alternative that would work. He sent an email to the Chief a couple days ago asking for a status and they have not prepared that yet. That's going to go back to their next board meeting for the final. So, after Greater Naples next board meeting we will have their final answer on that. They are trying to get an addendum added so we can sign it. So, hopefully they will have a new document for the board to sign next month.

- a. Public comment
None

2. Status of Collier Emergency Services Task Force (County-wide Fire and EMS Merger/Consolidation)

Chief Anderson mentioned that he wasn't able to attend the meeting last month so, Captain Devan attended in his absence. He passed out a copy on what their purpose of their group was. They had some discussions on several things including inter-local agreements for advance life support. He explained some of the issues that Immokalee would have in entering into an inter-local agreement doing a swap program. He explained some of the deficiencies in doing the swap program; some reasons why it's just not in the best interest of Immokalee. Which, they were pretty understanding. It was a good meeting. They learned a lot about the swap program and things that they never thought about.

Basically, Collier County wants anyone that wants to provide any ALS through the fire department to participate in the swap program. What that means is that they put a Collier County EMS Paramedic on our fire truck and we send them an Immokalee Fire Fighter to drive an ambulance. Dr. Tober believes that a fire fighter that's a paramedic is not capable of keeping his skill level up unless he works on an ambulance. Chief Anderson explained to them that he can show them that fire fighter/paramedics that work for fire departments all over the state routinely score higher on protocol exams and practical skills testing than paramedics on an ambulance do. He went into what would be the problems with Immokalee doing the swap program.

For one thing, start from the beginning; Just to get a fire fighter to ride in a Immokalee fire truck; they have to go through our testing and pass a written exam, go through a physical ability test so they can show that they are physically capable of doing the job of a fire fighter. Collier County EMS doesn't have a physical ability test and we don't know if they are physically able to do the job of a fire fighter. We even require our volunteers to go through the same physical ability tests to ride an Immokalee fire engine. So, why would we let a Collier County EMS/Paramedic ride if he can't pass our test? So, they said, "ok, we can put that in our inter-local agreement". Then, he talked about the special training that we have: hazardous materials, technical rescue; we don't just do fire and EMS, we do a lot of other stuff. They wanted to know if Collier County EMS/Paramedics were trained to the same certification level; would that still be a problem. Chief Anderson said, no, not if they had all of the same training that Immokalee Firefighters do. They said if we put into the inter-local agreement that they have to meet the same qualification levels as Immokalee Fire Fighters; would that work? Chief Anderson mentioned that it would work. So, the meeting was pretty productive. No one in their group had even considered all these things because it was always done the way it is. No one questioned it until he came along and questioned it.

Commissioner Keen mentioned that she would like to say as being a passenger in the ambulance that, if the fire department hadn't of gotten her on the stretcher; she doesn't think that the ambulance staff could of gotten her on it because she was dead weight. Chief Anderson mentioned that the other issue is that we would be training every shift. Immokalee Fire Fighters train every shift and there's time that even just the ambulances in Immokalee; from day to day, the guys don't know what paramedic is going to be in that ambulance because they rotate between ambulances. They don't have an assigned station. That's evident that on a routine basis; he's been out there and he had to call an ambulance on the radio that already passed the call and ask us directions on how to get there. He hears that routinely. They are not familiar with Immokalee area. All of those issues; they were receptive to. So, it looks like we are actually working towards the beginnings of an inter-local agreements. So, we are ready to put our own paramedics in service.

The one thing that they did at the end of this meeting was that the group agreed to go to the Greater Naples board and they wanted to present to the North Collier board as well but Garrity made a statement even if North Collier doesn't agree to do it; Greater Naples is going to put a question on the ballot for 2016. They said that if Greater Naples be the only one, they will put the question on the ballot. "Should Greater Naples and North Collier Fire District consolidate?" This group is pushing for a question on the ballot. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned don't they have to have so many people requesting it? Chief Anderson mentioned that they talked about a straw ballot vs. a regular ballot question. They said that at minimum; they were going to get a straw ballot put on. Any one government entity can request a straw ballot. If Greater Naples wants to do it; they can be the one government entity to put it on.

- a. Public comment
None

3. Status of Fire Station 32 Property and Construction

Chief Anderson mentioned that he had a meeting with Barron Collier and they are not ready to agree on the site. They are negotiating with some other developer about different projects. However, he asked them about the site near Publix because operationally, that would be the best place for the fire district. He did say that it would be a possibility that it's not off the table.

Commissioner Halman mentioned Barron Collier may be more agreeable to identifying a site for a fire station if they had some input from the people of Ave Maria about getting them a station. He doesn't think that the people of Ave Maria understand that we need a station. They don't know that we are out in a trailer. Somehow, he thinks there should be like a campaign of some kind that would allow people in Ave Maria to see what the fire house looks like. So, if we had an open house so that people can say, "why are they in a trailer?" Then they would find out that Barron Collier is holding up the works. Right now they don't have a problem because we show up, but if they knew where we came from to show up; then, that would be a different situation. There needs to be some informational campaign of some sort and have them see where we are housed and EMS is housed and then they would see why we don't have a real fire house. All they need is one influential person out at Ave Maria to say, "We need a fire house". We have to put pressure on Barron Collier to make a discussion to move forward.

Commissioner Goodnight mentioned are we going to use the same architectural design for Ave Maria? How far are we from having a sketch of what we are proposing to do? Chief Anderson mentioned that we are meeting with them next week. It's in your packet. They should be able to have a preliminary floor plan and maybe even a sketch for Station 31 by next Commission meeting. Commissioner Olesky asked if the County can force us to merge if they own the property. Attorney Thompson mentioned that we are always going to have problems when three entities are joined together. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that we need a lease for 99 years with the option to renew.

- a. Public comment
None

4. Status of Fire Station 31 Construction

Chief Anderson mentioned that he met with Barron Collier about the easement for their piece of property. Barron Collier sold the fire district that land. They have no problem with granting us an easement on the deed of the property as long as it's non-restrictive.

That means, they have use of that easement as well. He talked to them about us constructing a roadway according to the roadway standards. If they want to use it as an entrance for that subdivision or something they can. They said that most likely they will not use that as an entrance because if they develop that for residential use, the entrance way would be a divided entrance with a landscape island in the middle and a monument sign, with the easement property just being used as a construction entrance and in the end if they just need a secondary egress or something because of the number of homes back there. They said that there is nothing on the horizon for the next 3 to 5 years to be done on that property. So, we are having a meeting next week with the architect and hopefully they will have a preliminary site plan and the basic floor plan pretty shortly.

The other thing that he wanted to discuss on the Carson Road Station is not using the Impact Fee in the bank to pay for all the construction in that building, because of the area it's located in; we should be eligible for some USDA funding for construction. Attorney Thompson mentioned that he talked to Alma at USDA and asked her to look at it but she doesn't believe we qualify. The population has increased so much since 2010.

Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that we need a motion and is there further discussion? We need to go further and see if we can get the USDA and wait to see what their opinion is one way or the other. Chief Anderson mentioned that if we can get USDA for the construction at Station 31 then we can save the Impact Fee money for the construction of Station 32 and we wouldn't have a mortgage. Attorney Thompson mentioned that we would have a mortgage. Chief Anderson mentioned that it would be at a low interest rate. Commissioner Olesky mentioned how much time do we have to use it? Chief Anderson mentioned that he would have to review the whole thing again but he thinks that the stuff that was coming up on the deadline is what we used on the new trucks and equipment on the trucks. We are using some Impact Fee money to buy bunker gear and radios for the new fire fighter positions. So, he thinks that the remaining Impact Fee money should be safe for at least a couple of years. Commissioner Olesky mentioned to check on that. Attorney Thompson mentioned that we should have somebody do a sketch and a legal description of the easement. Chief Anderson mentioned that we do and at the meeting next week, he will ask them if they already have someone lined up to do the survey. Attorney Thompson mentioned that Ms. Cain from the Immokalee & Water Sewer board is a surveyor.

B. New Business

1. Resolution 2015-05, User Charges for False Alarms (Revisions to Resolution 2014-07)

Chief Anderson said this was passed last year and what we found when we went to create some forms is that the warning and billing forms; we had wording in there that talked about false alarm fines. The statute that allows us to charge for this allows us to charge user charges, but doesn't allow us to fine people. So, because the document had a schedule of fines, and talked about false alarm fines, it wasn't a legal document that we could use. So, wherever it said fines, we had to change it to user charges. Once we change this, we can go back 3 months and send the warning out and then go from there. Commissioner Olesky asked how many false alarms we get. Leo Rodgers mentioned that we need to get our guys to use the right code on the reports in order to determine that and in order to be able to charge them. We had 6 or so in the last month, not a lot. **Commissioner Halman motioned to approve the Resolution 2015-05, User Charges for False Alarms and Commissioner Olesky seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.**

- a. Public comment
None

2. Approval of expenditure of District funds for establishment of Immokalee Volunteer Firefighter Association Non-Profit status

Chief Anderson mentioned that right before he got here the Immokalee Volunteer Firefighter Association started the process to become a Non-Profit Corporation. The 501C3, which would not only benefit that organization but the fire department as well. With them working under our umbrella as our volunteers. If they are non-profit, it would be easier for them to get donations because people would have tax credit for donating to a non-profit. They would also be eligible to apply for some grants that they are not eligible to apply for now. Also, they would be eligible for other funding from various corporations. They could be getting money from Fire House Subs, Walmart, Radio Shack, etc. Right now the Firefighter Association doesn't have any money to pay the fee to submit the paperwork to become a non-profit. Attorney Thompson mentioned that the fee is \$450.00 for filing and an annual fee up to \$2,000 and that the Fire District is allowed to use District funds for this purpose. **Commissioner Olesky motioned to approve the payment for the association fees for the Volunteer Firefighter to be non-profit and hire an accountant if needed up to \$2,000 and Commissioner Halman seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.**

- a) Public comment
None

12) Concerns of Commissioners

Commissioner Olesky asked if the fees that we charge for an automobile accident; do we have any of those or anything? Chief Anderson mentioned that we sent a couple reports to the company and got several back. It's in the process of being done. Commissioner Olesky asked why we are going with an outside company. Chief Anderson mentioned that we contracted with the billing company because they already have the codes and a relationship with the insurance company. Commissioner Halman asked if we could type a letter with our letterhead and send it to them so the people that they send bills to would call the billing company with questions instead of the fire district. Commissioner Olesky asked how much is the billing company keeping? Chief Anderson mentioned that he would have to look at the contract but thinks it's 10%.

Commissioner Keen mentioned that First Baptist Church is having a Luncheon on Sunday at 12pm in honor of the Fire men for all they do. Everyone is invited if they want to attend and bring your families. Chief Anderson mentioned that he sent an email already to all the staff. Attorney Thompson mentioned that our annual elections are coming up in January. Chief Anderson mentioned that our Christmas Party in Monday December 21st at 6pm and we are having our badge pinning ceremony for our new people and our recent promotion for officers. It looks like we might have 60 people and maybe we should find another place.

13) Public Comment

None

14) Adjourn Meeting at 7:18pm

Next Scheduled Meeting(s):

- **Regular Board Meeting: December 17, 2015, 6 p.m.; Immokalee Fire Control District Station 30, 502 New Market Rd. E, Immokalee, FL 34142**