WEST MANATEE FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

Minutes of January 20, 2026
Administration Building

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:
Promotions: Matthew Joseph to 3rd Class FF, eff. 8/14/25. David Miller to 1st Class FF, eff.1/3/26. **Unit Citation:** Lt. Cameron Frazier, FF/Medic Gabriel Gonzalez, and FF Gavin Johnston. **Phoenix Awards:** Jerrod Apple, John Balzer, Crystal Bercot, Nicholas Evangelista, Casey Fischbach (2), Cameron Frazier, Gabriel Gonzalez (2), Paul Hopkins, Gavin Johnston, James Leigh, Dane Miller (2), David Miller (2), Zachary Misiura (2), Ryan Moore, Christopher O'Kelly, Maxwell Pollock, Andrew Powers (2), Christopher Rudolph, Tyler Snyder, Daniel Tackett (2), and William Thomas. **Annual Awards:** 1 Year – Matthew Joseph & Samuel Martinez; 5 Years – Casey Fischbach; 10 Years – Jacob Thiele; 15 Years – Adam Baggett; 20 Years – Ben Rigney; 30 Years – John Stump; Soteria – Joshua Adkins; Rookie of the Year – Matthew Joseph; Firefighter of the Year – William Thomas; Officer of the Year – Paul Hopkins.

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. with the following members present: Billy Burke, Dana Tindall, Larry Jennis, Robert Bennett, and Derrick Warner. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence in honor of fallen Southern Manatee Firefighter Justin Markey.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: Chairman Jennis noted the Agenda was updated to include Surplus Property on the Consent Agenda portion to align with what was already in the meeting packet.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Burke motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Tindall; motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

CARRIED FROM CONSENT AGENDA: None

OLD BUSINESS:
A. Ad Valorem Discussion: Deputy Chief (DC) Johnson stated a calendar has been set for information sessions at the Administration Building on February 21st, 28th, and March 7th at 2 pm. DC Johnson stated there is an event at the VFW on January 21st. Following the Chiefs' Report, DVP Gonzalez provided a Labor update. He reported the election is seven weeks away and shared a campaign calendar and door hanger. DVP Gonzalez stated outreach efforts are focused on educating the public on special districts, services provided, and potential service expansion if the measure passes, noting primarily positive public feedback.

B. Bradenton Beach Property: DC Johnson reported that WMFR has taken ownership of the Bradenton Beach Fire Lodge and is coordinating with the Bradenton Beach Police Department regarding a squatter. He stated the Association has until February 1 to remove any remaining items, after which the building will be secured and windows boarded.

NEW BUSINESS:
A. Committee Appointments: Chairman Jennis confirmed the current committees and made two changes. Manatee County Fire Commissioner's Association – Commissioner Bennett; Barrier Island Elected Officials – Chairman Burke; Awards/Appreciation – Commissioner Tindall; Safety Committee – Commissioner Bennett; Strategic Plan Committee – Commissioner Tindall; Engine Apparatus Committee – Commissioner Jennis; Banking & Finance Committee – Commissioner Burke; Total Patient Care – Commissioner Warner; TPLEs – Commissioner Warner; Council of Government – Commissioner Warner with added Chairman Jennis as an alternate; Resiliency Committee – changed from Commissioner Warner to Chairman Jennis.

B. Pension Board Reappointment: DC Johnson explained that Burdette Parent's term on the Firefighter Pension Board ended January 1, 2026, and he is seeking reappointment from the Board. Commissioner

Bennett motioned to reappoint Burdette Parent to the West Manatee Firefighters' Pension Board. Seconded by Commissioner Tindall. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Engine Donation**:** DC Johnson reported that Engine 122 has been declared surplus and recommended its donation to the Stewart Simmons Volunteer Fire Department (SSVFD) in North Carolina, providing a brief background on the rural volunteer department. DC Johnson highlighted their rural location, 30 volunteers, and $550,000 budget. DC Johnson also noted that former Commissioner Rigney is a member of this department, and Retired Chief Price also lives in that area. Commissioner Warner motioned to approve the donation of the surplus 2004 Pierce Enforcer Pumper, seconded by Commissioner Burke. Chairman Jennis noted the limited cash value of engines over 20 years old and supported assisting a volunteer department. The motion passed unanimously.

CHIEF'S REPORT: DC Johnson reported 2025 as a strong year for WMFR, noting Florida Fire Chiefs' Association recognition of FM Kwiatkowski (Fire Marshal of the Year), Lt. Josh Adkins (Inspector of the Year), and DC Johnson (Executive Fire Chief Officer of the Year). Recognition will occur at the Manatee County Commission meeting on February 10 at 9:00 a.m.
Operations updates included progress in specialty response capabilities (Rescue Swimmer course development, IADR swim accreditation efforts, internal SOG alignment), finalization of Special Operations guidelines for 10 FLUSAR Specialists by March, and ROSC rates exceeding the national average. Monthly Operations reports will be provided; Commissioner Burke requested notification of training events, and Commissioner Warner requested that acronyms be spelled out, along with apparatus and property updates.
Apparatus updates included ladder truck repairs nearing completion, pending brake drums and warranty review with Ten8, delivery of new engines within two weeks with a push-in ceremony planned, and FB136 refurbishment expected by mid-March.
FM Kwiatkowski reported the annual Open House on February 7 with a sensory-safe hour in partnership with the Autism Society of Florida; Alzheimer's Association Gulf Coast training scheduled February 10–12; hosting of Bradenton Kiwanis Action Club participants with special needs; attendance at Fire Service Day in Tallahassee February 17–18; and debut of the NFPA 1730 "Risks, Resources, and Results" course, with additional classes scheduled statewide through April, along with TPLE courses.

OTHER REPORTS: None

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS: DC Johnson and Chairman Jennis recognized Commissioner Burke for his service as 2025 Chairman with the presentation of a commemorative gavel plaque. Board members expressed pride in the District, recognized District events, acknowledged the recent awards, and thanked personnel for their continued dedication and service. Commissioner Bennett advised that he will be absent from the February meeting. Chairman Jennis encouraged Board members to review District Counsel Maggie Mooney's guidelines regarding the Ad Valorem process.

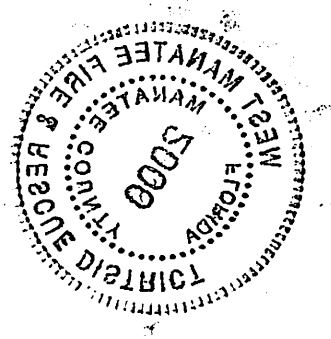
NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, February 17, at 6:00 p.m. at the Administration building.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Burke adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary

WEST MANATEE FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT MANATEE COUNTY 2000 FLORIDA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