WEST MANATEE FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

Minutes of April 15, 2025
Administration Building

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

A. Willie Cirone from Manatee Fire Academy thanked WMFR for their past contributions. Mr. Cirone noted that these efforts and equipment have impacted 1,200 to 1,500 students. He also noted that the fire engine donated by WMFR will be retired on May 1st.

B. Fire Marshal (FM) Kwiatkowski presented an Above & Beyond Award to Mr. & Mrs. Cohen for the generous donation of two trailers that equated to $11,000. Mr. & Mrs. Cohen then presented the District with a $9,000 donation to fund thermal imaging devices.

C. Lisa Kiernan was promoted to Level 1 Inspector effective March 25, 2025.

D. The new employee oath was administered to Jordan Hinton and William Whitfield.

The meeting was called to order at 6:17 p.m. with the following members present: Robert Bennett, Larry Jennis, Dana Tindall, Derrick Warner, and Billy Burke. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence.

2023/2024 AUDIT PRESENTATION: Randy Dillingham and Bo Slemons presented the 2023/2024 Audit. They had no difficulties in communication with District staff, no disagreements, and no deficiencies. They expressed that the District was compliant, and it was a clean report.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: Chief Rigney requested that "June Meeting" be added to New Business D.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

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

COMMUNICATIONS: Administrative Assistant (AA) Wright read two cards, one that came from Casa Mora and one that came from the daughter of a patient.

CARRIED FROM CONSENT AGENDA: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Budget Workshop Continuation: Chief Rigney reiterated that the budget workshop was based on a 7.5% assessment rate increase, and the maximum is 7.52%. The Board agreed that a 7.5% increase is reasonable to fund the current contract and maintain service and a progressive outlook moving forward. Commissioner Warner asked how this projected budget will fare if the District faces an extreme hurricane season. Chief Rigney gave possible options on how the District could cope, including the contingency fund, canceling the twin-engine purchase, and reaching out for FEMA grants. Chief Rigney also reflected on last year's storms. Commissioner Jennis commended the District for last year's response to the hurricanes. Commissioner Tindall noted past experiences with storms. Commissioner Bennett gave kudos to all WMFR personnel for what they are able to accomplish for far less money than the surrounding districts. Chief Rigney noted the difference in rate changes for ad valorem versus non-ad valorem. The Board directed Staff to bring back a resolution with a 7.5% assessment increase.

B. 2024 Annual Report: Lieutenant Agresta presented the 2024 Annual Report, highlighting the successful response to two substantial hurricanes. Lt. Agresta summarized financials, highlighted training efforts, and spoke on the District's public education programs and external communications. Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve the 2024 Annual Report; Seconded by Commissioner Tindall. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Committee Appointments: Chairman Burke stated that the Strategic Plan and Events Committees need a Board representative. Commissioner Tindall volunteered to fill the vacancy on both committees.

D. June Meeting: Chief Rigney stated that the June meeting falls in the same week as the FASD Annual Conference. Chief Rigney stated he is aware of Commissioners attending the conference and asked the Board if they would like to change the meeting to a different date. The Board agreed to move the June meeting to June 24th at 6 p.m.

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief Rigney thanked the Staff for the Budget Workshop preparation and thanked Lt. Agresta for the composition and presentation of the Annual Report. Deputy Chief (DC) Johnson thanked Commissioner Warner for his participation in the FDIC conference. DC Johnson thanked Training Chief Tuttle for his work on the current orientation process and noted that Finance Clerk Larson and AA Wright completed the Certified District Manager program. DC Johnson thanked Lt. Agresta and Battalion Chief Bill for integrating Bluetooth capabilities between the District's radios and air packs. DC Johnson then informed the Board that spring break coverage was successful and spoke on other recent events, including Climb Tampa and the Spartan Race. FM Kwiatkowski mentioned the Bayside vs WMFR softball game. FM Kwiatkowski then stated that the Brian Reed Homecoming Event was very successful, and the goal is to make it bigger and better each year.

OTHER REPORTS: Administrative Assistant (AA) Wright reminded the Board that financial disclosures are due by July 1st. AA Wright stated it must be done online with the credentials that were created last year. AA Wright explained that the Board has until December 31st to complete the required 4-hour ethics course.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS: Commissioner Tindall expressed her condolences regarding Commissioner Bishop and stated she is honored to be appointed to the Board. Commissioner Tindall said she looks forward to productive relationships and is floored by the camaraderie she has already witnessed amongst WMFR personnel. Commissioner Bennett thanked the Staff for the continued hard work. Commissioner Jennis thanked the Bureau for planning the fantastic Homecoming Event and thanked the Staff for the hard work on the audit and Budget Workshop. Commissioner Warner spoke on the events he attended recently on behalf of the District, as well as noted the Resiliency Committee meeting and potential. Chairman Burke thanked the Staff and the Bureau for all their efforts, as well as thanked the operations staff in the room.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Administration building.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Burke adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary

(Seal) WEST MANATEE FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT MANATEE COUNTY 2000 FLORIDA