

**WEST MANATEE FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

*Minutes of August 17, 2021
Administration Building and via Zoom*

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS: Genesis Award Maxwell Pollock

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. with the following members present: Larry Jennis, Robert Bennett, David Bishop, Al Robinson. George Harris was absent. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence and the oath.

Chairman Jennis stated that Commissioner Harris is absent tonight. He stated that the board rules include that if any Commissioner is not physically present at a regular meeting they must abstain from voting, however, can participate in discussion. Commissioner Bennett motioned to allow Commissioner Harris to participate in discussion but abstain from voting; seconded by Commissioner Bishop; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Jennis asked if there was a motion to approve the excused absence for Commissioner Robinson from the July 20, 2021, meeting? Commissioner Bishop motioned to approve; seconded by Commissioner Bennett; motion passed unanimously with Commissioner Robinson abstaining.

PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE 2021-05 AMENDING & RESTATING FF RETIREMENT PLAN: Administrative Assistant Berggren verified that public notice was advertised in the Bradenton Herald on Sunday, August 8th, 2021. She then read the Ordinance. An Ordinance of the West Manatee Fire and Rescue District, Manatee County Florida, further amending Ordinance No. 2013-04 restating the West Manatee Fire and Rescue District Firefighters' Retirement Plan, as subsequently amended; amending Section 6, benefit amounts and eligibility; amending Section 7, pre-retirement death; amending Section 9, vesting; amending Section 10, optional forms of benefits; amending Section 16, minimum distribution of benefits; providing for severability of provisions; providing for the repeal of conflicting ordinances; providing an effective date. Chief Rigney stated this will require two readings. This has been approved by the pension board on July 22nd and was reviewed and approved by the Collective Bargaining Unit. The pension attorney along with the actuaries have confirmed that there is no cost associated with the adoption of this ordinance. Chairman Jennis opened the public hearing for public comments; there was none. Chairman Jennis closed the public hearing. Commissioner Bishop motioned to accept the first reading of Ordinance 2021-05 Amending and Restating the FF Retirement Plan; seconded by Commissioner Bennett; motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING PROPOSED 2021-2022 BUDGET: Administrative Assistant Berggren verified that public notice was advertised in the Bradenton Herald on Sunday, August 8th, 2021. Chief Rigney stated that this is a group effort and everyone on staff has put in a lot of time to prepare this document. The station alerting has been placed in capital again this year and we have also put \$50,000 into miscellaneous capital as we have some aging AC units and other incidentals. We have increased vehicle replacement in the assigned funds by \$100,000 and will continue to increase this over the next few years until we are ready to purchase our next engine. This is the first of two hearings. Chairman Jennis opened the public hearing for public comments; there was none. Chairman Jennis closed the public hearing. Commissioner Bennett motioned to accept the first reading of the proposed 2021-2022 budget; seconded by Commissioner Bishop; motion passed unanimously.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: Chief Rigney stated the Removal of New Business #A Revised Rules of the Fire Prevention Code Board of Appeals.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Bennett motioned to approve consent agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Robinson; motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

CARRIED FROM CONSENT AGENDA: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

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A. *Revision of Chief Rigney's Employment Contract:* Chairman Jennis provided brief timeline overview of the Executive Fire Officer's program that is required for a change in pay rate of Chief Rigney. However, due to extenuating circumstances unbeknownst Chief Rigney, the course has not been completed within the projected timeline. Chairman Jennis displayed salary study comparisons to other districts and requested discussion about waving the EFO portion of the contract. Commissioner Bishop supports the notion of removing this requirement and suggested a 5% increase on top of the 3% COLA. Commissioner Robinson asked Chief how he felt about Commissioner Bishop's recommendation. Chief Rigney explained his expectation to have completed the EFO program by now and how uncontrollable circumstances prevented the successful completion. He stated he would have completed the program in October and received the compensation in his contract. Commissioner Harris asked if there were any comparable programs to EFO offered. Chief Rigney stated there is not a comparable program offered, as the EFO is the highest level of training currently offered for the fire chief position. Commissioner Bishop reiterated the percentage increase he suggested based on the current circumstances. Commissioner Bennett concurred with Commissioner Bishop's suggestion for the current year and then reevaluate the contract afterwards. Chairman Jennis highlighted Chief Rigney's qualifications and performance. It was a consensus of the board for Chief Rigney to come back with options to be considered at next month's meeting.

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief Johnson provided a COVID update. Due to the rising numbers of confirmed cases within our county, he specified internal directive changes on masks and additional changes to help mitigate the contraction and spread of COVID. Highlighting some of Manatee County's statistics and data from their weekly Department of Health publications.

OTHER REPORTS: None

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS: None

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at Administration Headquarters.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Jennis adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary

