



**MINUTES  
GREATER NAPLES FIRE RESCUE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
April 13, 2021**

**I. MEETING OPENED**

Chairman Gerrity called to order the regular meeting of the Greater Naples Fire Rescue District's Board of Fire Commissioners at 5:30 p.m., on April 13, 2021 at Administrative Headquarters. Present were Commissioners Duffy, Biondo, Cottiers, Stedman, and Gerrity. Staff in attendance: Nicole Chesser, Jamie Popiol, Kevin Nelmes, Brian Bower, Joey Brown, Christian Tobin, Tim Sims, Emanuel Arroyo, Vaughan Palmateer, Rusty Godette, Erin Gill, Brian Hennessy, Scott Jacob, Brian Mading, Kevin Schoch, Brian Heath, Charles Heweker, Justin Beasley, Jesus Padilla, James West, Mercedes Carrillo, and Judy Schleiffer. Public in attendance: EMS Chief Tabatha Butcher, George Danz. Others attended meeting but did not sign in.

**A. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation**

Commissioner Gerrity opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Invocation by Commissioner Stedman.

**B. Consent Agenda**

1. Treasurer Report

*Commissioner Stedman moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.  
Commissioner Cottiers seconded. Motion passed 5-0.*

**C. Approval, Additions and Deletions to the Agenda**

*Commissioner Cottiers moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Stedman seconded.  
Motion passed 5-0.*

**D. Approval of the GNFD Board Minutes for February 9, 2021**

*Commissioner Stedman moved to approve the GNFD Board minutes as presented.  
Commissioner Biondo seconded. Motion passed 5-0.*

**E. Fire Chief's Report**

Fire Chief Sapp presented his report as submitted. Fire Chief Sapp announced the promotions of Kevin Schoch and Brian Heath to Battalion Chief. Civilian Employee of the Year was presented to Maria Mercedes Carrillo. Commissioner Gerrity requested operating costs for Ochopee. Fire Chief Sapp advised James West, Finance Manager and Charlotte Johnson, Accountant are in process of providing this information.

**F. Chapter 175 Firefighters' Pension Plan**

Chairman Tim Sims gave a verbal report on the pension plan performance. The final copy of the report will be posted on the website. Commissioner Cottiers inquired how to bring the overfunded amount down. Chairman Tim Sims advised more benefits or pay for benefits. Next regular meeting for May 13, 2021 will be posted.

**G. Local 2396 Report**

President Joey Brown gave a verbal report noting testing and grievances were covered by Fire Chief Sapp. He informed the Board the Union is pursuing the Foundation lawsuit and they have completed collective bargaining for the mechanics.



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**II. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. AIW – Vacant Land Update – Fire Chief Sapp**

Fire Chief Sapp presented update and opportunities on the three vacant land properties owned by the District. There was discussion on selling the Sabal Palm Drive property. Commissioner Stedman questioned selling appreciating property if there is not a need for the money. Commissioner Duffy suggested using the money for the development of the White Lake property or new engine purchase. Commissioner Gerrity pointed out that the District will need a station in the area of the Lake Park property and the District should hold onto it unless there is another opportunity in that area. There was consensus to not list the Outer Dr. and Lake Park Blvd. properties at this time.

*Commissioner Duffy made a motion to sell the Sabal Palm Rd. property. Commissioner Biondo seconded. Motion passed 4-1 (Stedman).*

**B. AIW – White Lake Property Financing – Fire Chief Sapp**

Fire Chief Sapp presented information regarding documents to be executed by the Board for the financing of the White Lake property.

*Commissioner Cottiers made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2021-03, authorizing a loan in the amount of \$4,000,000 for the acquisition of the White Lake Property, the Loan Agreement and Note between Greater Naples Fire District and First Horizon TE1, LLC, and the Sunshine Certificate as to public meetings and no conflict of interest and granting GNFD's counsel to make any technical non-substantive revisions to the loan documents, if necessary. Commissioner Stedman seconded. Motion passed 4-1 (Biondo).*

**C. Aerial Operations – Chief Sapp**

Fire Chief Sapp advised there has been no further action in regards to moving the ladder truck.

**D. Greater Naples Fire Foundation Update – Fire Chief Sapp**

Fire Chief Sapp advised the State Attorney General will not give an opinion on this matter due to pending litigation. Commissioner Biondo inquired about the need for an attorney to protect the District's interests. Assistant Chief Chris Tobin provided verbal summary and clarified the legal mediation process for this case and suggested the District have legal representation for the mediation.

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. AIW– Administrative Handbook/Command Structure – Fire Chief Sapp**

Commissioner Duffy requested to have the Administrative Handbook reviewed by Attorney. *Commissioner Duffy moved to have the Administrative Handbook reviewed by an Attorney. Commissioner Biondo seconded. Motion was amended to include the job descriptions. Motion passed 5-0.*

*Commissioner Stedman moved to adopt wages presented in the handbook. Commissioner Cottiers seconded.*

*Motion was amended to only include those who previously did not receive a raise.*

*Commissioner Stedman rescinded motion and Commissioner Cottiers rescinded seconded.*



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*Commissioner Stedman moved to address raises for the people who were previously passed over. Motion was amended to exclude the three who received a raise and adopt the pay scale presented for everyone else.*

*Commissioner Cottiers seconded.*

*Motion passed 5-0.*

*Commissioner Stedman motioned to approve the Organizational Chart. Commissioner Duffy seconded.*

Commissioners Biondo and Cottiers expressed they want to see the EMS Division to be on its own. Fire Chief Sapp is working on it.

*Motion passed 5-0.*

*Commissioner Duffy moved to approve Fire Chief Sapp's salary to be made retroactive back to December 9, 2020 when he took command. Commissioner Stedman seconded. Motion passed 5-0.*

**B. AIW – Associate Medical Director Agreement – Fire Chief Sapp**

EMS Chief Tabatha Butcher addressed the Board to clarify that Dr. Tober was the District Physician and is still the Medical Director and he needs to approve the contract.

*Commissioner Cottiers moved to approve entering into contract with James J. Augustine MD as the District's Associate Medical Director. Commissioner Gerrity seconded.*

*Motion passed 5-0.*

**C. ALS Interlocal Agreement – Fire Chief Sapp**

Fire Chief Sapp advised the way the District has been operating under the ALS Interlocal Agreement is not allowed per State Statute according to legal counsel and discussed intent for the District to apply for its own COPCN. EMS Chief Tabatha Butcher mentioned a memorandum from attorney Laura Donaldson to Fire Chief Orly Stolts from 2015 giving the opinion that the agreement is legal; she also provided opinion from Manatee County in 2017 giving the recommendation to change their ordinance. She also noted when EMS renews their COPCN, they receive permits to put on District apparatus.

*Commissioner Biondo made a motion to look into it with the attorney and see how to make the agreement legal. Commissioner Cottiers seconded.*

*Commissioner Biondo amended the motion to pursue a COPCN and renegotiate the agreement. Commissioner Cottiers seconded. Motion passed 5-0.*

**D. AIW – Recognition Time in Service Policy – Fire Chief Sapp**

*Commissioner Cottiers motioned to approve the policy as presented. Commissioner Stedman seconded. Motion passed 5-0.*

**E. AIW – Apparatus Lease/Purchase – Chief McLaughlin**

Chief McLaughlin presented background on Apparatus for the District.

*Commissioner Cottiers motioned to approve lease agreement for five engines from Ten-8.*

*Commissioner Stedman seconded. Motion passed 5-0.*

Commissioner Gerrity mentioned the District should not have to pay for the two engines for Ochopee. Commissioner Duffy suggested using the two trucks as reserve until Ochopee has



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been officially annexed. Fire Chief Sapp will work with County Officials to take care of the funding of apparatus needed for the Ochopee stations.

*Commissioner Stedman moved to approve the purchase of a single reserve truck immediately. Commissioner Cottiers seconded. Motion passed 4 – 1. (Biondo)*

**F. AIW – Boat 90 Dock Repair – Chief McLaughlin**

*Commissioner Stedman moved to approve Boat 90 Dock repair. Commissioner Duffy seconded. Motion passed 5-0.*

**G. Public Comments items not listed on the Agenda**

George Danz questioned Commissioners approving an Organizational Chart with eight Chief Officers and the fiscal impact.

**H. Comments by Commissioners**

Commissioner Biondo asked about the 3 years’ prior records previously requested and wants to see hands on training. He questioned if separated employees were paid accrued leave.

Commissioner Cottier questioned if the District is providing Paramedic training and stated he doesn’t understand why Chief Nelmes is not being promoted immediately.

Commissioner Duffy stated we do not have adequate staff for training. He stated the District needs to look into what Station 63 is costing.

Commissioner Gerrity requested solid data on the cost of operating Ochopee. He noted Fire Chief Sapp has been in position for a month and has done miraculous work, and his team is working on changes.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

*Commissioner Stedman made a motion to adjourn at 8:11 p.m. Commissioner Duffy seconded. Motion passed 5-0, meeting adjourned.*

Duly passed with a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and adopted in session on the 11<sup>th</sup> day May 2021.

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**Chairman Kevin Gerrity**

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**Commissioner Al Duffy**

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**Commissioner Charles Cottiers**

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**Commissioner David Stedman**

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**Commissioner Nick Biondo**



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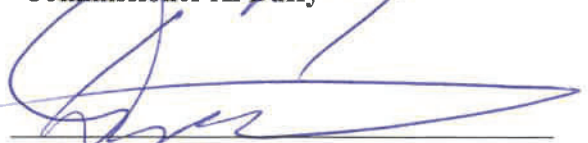
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