**Fire Commission Meeting**

**Immokalee Fire Control District**

**Board Meeting**

March 12, 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, Keen and Olesky; Chief Paul Anderson, Board Attorney Kenneth Thompson, Leo Rodgers, Paul Devan, Alma R. Valladares, Tom Cunningham and Members of the Public.

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:05pm by Commission Chair Goodnight

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Lead by Commissioner Goodnight

1. **Moment of Silence**

Lead by Commissioner Goodnight

1. **Proof of Publication**

Copy of publication confirmation included in Commission packet

1. **Establish a Quorum**

Quorum established by Commissioner Goodnight

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Keen motioned to approve the Agenda and Seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Motion carries unanimously.

1. **Approval of the minutes of the following meeting:**
   * 1. **February 19, 2015 Regular Board Meeting**

Commissioner Anderson motioned to approve the minutes and seconded by Commissioner Keen. Motion carries unanimously.

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

Commissioner Anderson motioned to approve the Treasurer’s Report and seconded by Commissioner Keen. Motion carries unanimously.

1. **Consent Agenda**
   * 1. **Fire Marshal’s Report**

No comment by Board

* + 1. **Chief’s Report**

No comment by Board

* + 1. **Status on Current Contracts**
       1. **Greater Naples Fire District, Mechanic MOU, expires September 30, 2015**
       2. **Mabry Brothers, Generator Maintenance, expires September 30, 2015**
       3. **Grounds Force PM, Lawn Maintenance, expires September 30, 2015**
       4. **Accent Business Products, copy machine, expires September 30, 2015**
       5. **Breathing Air systems, breathing air compressor and cascade system maintenance, expires**

**March 30, 2016**

* + - 1. **Seminole Tribe of Florida, Immokalee Reservation Fire Protection, expires September 30, 2016**

Commissioner Anderson asked about the crash rescue apparatus for the Airport. Chief Anderson mentioned if we are incorporated in getting a ladder truck for Station 30, we can do that with a crash rescue truck for the airport. Seminole Tribe has a G7 commuter jet that flies in people from overseas, Ft. Lauderdale, Hollywood into Immokalee for the Seminole Casino. One of the considerations is possibly to get a crash truck and use Impact Fee money and link it to the growth of the Casino and the hotel. Quint would stay at Station 30 and the crash truck would be stored at the Immokalee Airport or here. If they can extend the runway there would be federal funding to put a fire station out at the Airport property. We could put it inside the fence and use this facility as our main station. We would be totally paid for by federal funding and we could sell this property.

**Commissioner Anderson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda and seconded by Commissioner Keen. Motion carries unanimously.**

1. **Union Report**

Tom Cunningham, President mentioned that their contract is coming up and it’s fully open. We can negotiate the whole contract and it would be good for 3 years. We have reestablish our fire union to merge our locals together with North Collier. We are in discussion with them and moving forward. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that it’s a good choice. Tom Cunningham mentioned that their financial situation took a $10,000 hit with the arbitration. They feel that going with North Collier is their best bet.

1. Business of the District
2. **Old Business**
3. **Status of Fire Code Official’s Office**

Chief Anderson mentioned that the Fire Code Official’s Office hasn’t changed. They put in a proposal to occupy the building. Right now, they are pulling money out of the reserves to pay their monthly bills and they still have to pay Immokalee 6%. Attorney Thompson is asking the board to have a Special Meeting in April. He passed out a copy of a dispute resolution between and among the counties, principalities and local government. He wants the board to read it before we meet to deal with the issues as to what we need to do. He mentioned that Greater Naples is using this to help themselves and benefit their association. It’s a pre-litigation to make sure what we are asking for and who the proper parties are and how the board would like to do it. We need to send a certified letter and have a mediation with them and bring this to a head with them because we have been drifting for about 4 to 5 months already. We can give them a pre-lawsuit through this resolution but would ask for a hearing sometime early in April so, we can discuss this in detail. Chief Anderson mentioned that we can have a Special Workshop on **April 16th** at 6:00pm and the regular meeting at 7:00pm. Attorney Thompson asked if we could start at **5:30pm** and have the meeting at 6:00pm. He is also asking the board that he needs $2,000 for retainer fees.

Commissioner Olesky is asking if he knows how much this will cost us. Attorney Thompson mentioned that he doesn’t know. We are basing it on the plat value of real property which is $400,000 in reserves currently. Chief Anderson mentioned that his goal is to settle all this without all the lawsuit. Have a mediation and come up with some kind of an agreement on how we are going to divide up the assets and tell them that Immokalee will be out for $100,000. To write us a check and we will be done. Also, mentioned that we need to force closure to this thing and if they get the building in the end, that’s fine. It doesn’t matter to us, we have no use for that building. Part of it belongs to us so, we should have our share of it. In the end, if we get $100,000 or even if we get $50,000, at least it done and over with and we can move on and take care of our own plans review. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that we need to let Greater Naples know that they can no longer kick us around. Legally we are in the right because we are the only ones that haven’t pulled out. Attorney Thompson mentioned that this forces them to do it through a legal proceeding and says if you do not do this, we have the right to go to court ask for a plea to determine our rights. He doesn’t think that East Naples follows the law but they will use the law against you. Commissioner Olesky mentioned that he just doesn’t want us to spend a lot of money for nothing. Chief Anderson mentioned that it will be the first item on the Agenda and that way we don’t have to advertise for a Special Meeting. Commissioner Goodnight agreed.

* 1. **Public comment**

None

**Commissioner Olesky motioned to give Attorney Thompson a $2,000 retainer fee up front and seconded by Commissioner Keen. Motion carries unanimously.**

1. **Property for Fire Station 32**

Chief Anderson mentioned that he has no progress on that. We will schedule a meeting with Barron Collier. Leo Rodgers talked to Mr. Jenson and mentioned that they were open to a counter offer for the cost of the property. His suggestion is to give them a counter offer of what they are paying taxes on.

The tax laws indicate that property should be taxed no less than 80% of the fair market value; which is $3/Sq. Ft. for both parcels. The one on Pope John Paul and the one by the convenient store. He also mentioned that Sweet Sparkman is looking at the building and we have 2 plans that we are looking at right now. One is a single story and one is a two story building. So, he requested to have two cost estimates, one with an elevator and one with a chair lift on the stairs. We don’t necessarily need an elevator.

* 1. **Public comment**

None

1. **Addition to Fire Station 32 Apparatus Bay**

Chief Anderson mentioned that he had Sweet Sparkman give us a quote and he was board approved to spend up to $10,000 but they want $47,000 to build the addition. He has a meeting scheduled with them on some things. They were going to use Better Buildings and they wanted $28,800 for a 9ft extension. He was looking at some steel buildings that would cost $7,000 to $10,000. He wants to table this until next time. For right now, we will put the Tower 32 at Station 31 until we determine what we are doing. Commissioner Goodnight suggested to meet with them and bring it back to the board and maybe he should talk to Jackie Williams or Ralph Strader for that. Leo Rodgers mentioned that Ralph Strader build the steel frames extension for Station 31. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned to table this and bring it back.

* 1. **Public comment**

None

1. **New Business**
2. **County RFP for provision of fire and rescue services to dependent district and MSTU areas**

Chief Anderson mentioned that the county has decided to accept proposals from each of the independent fire districts, as well as their county staff for providing fire protection within the 4 dependent districts in the county. These MSTU’s are: Isla Capri, Ochopee, Goodland and District One. There is a packet with all the information we need with the Ad Valorem millage rates, the revenues generated. There are 4 MSTU’s that they collect the millage from but out of those MSTU’s, they don’t produce enough revenue to provide fire protection that they currently provide. Ochopee and Isla Capri provide fire services to all 4 of those MSTU’s. The county subsidizes that fire protection currently out of their general fund. There are funds budgeted that shows they paid the county back for services. The county is looking for a savings in the fire protection and they are willing to give it away to do that.

The only reason we would want to look at this is if it would benefit Immokalee; if it generated a revenue for us. They are willing to look at proposals that call for increasing the millage rates. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that we look at, or if there is any way we could work with the eastern part. There are firefighters that are already stationed there and there is a station that is being built by the state off of Alligator Alley. It would be worth looking into to see if there’s a possibility of us expanding. Chief Anderson mentioned that we have the option to submit a proposal for Ochopee, District One and Mile Marker 63 Station. Commissioner Anderson is asking who pays for the staffs’ salary on the Interstate. Chief Anderson mentioned that it’s funded through toll money. Tom Cunningham, Union President mentioned that there would be an additional cost to our district because their salaries are not the same. We would be taking firefighters from another district that are in a different pay scale that is quite substantial. Station Six in Everglades City has been remodeled. Port of the Islands has a hotel room and Station Sixty One on US41 is a steel building that they use for storage. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that working out the salary is something that this fire district is going to do anyhow. We are going to work out the differences. When we do move forward, the first thing that she is going to push is to increase the employees’ salaries; to where, we don’t lose any of the guys. We want the guys to stay here. We don’t want to train our guys to have to lose them later. That’s what the Immokalee Water & Sewer District did. We are going to get the money to do that because of the growth that’s here.

The more Ad Valorem tax money the more we are able to do all this. She sees this not as a power grab but seeing this as looking at the future. Tom Cunningham mentioned that it is a great idea and see if we could get it.

Commissioner Anderson asked if we need to have a Workshop or a Special Meeting prior to the meeting. Chief Anderson mentioned that this has to be submitted by April 16th so, we need a meeting before then. Commissioner Anderson mentioned that whatever date we pick, he would like to invite them here. He would like to get their input on how well they would be willing to work with us on a daily basis. Commissioner Olesky asked what the millage rate was for Ochopee. Chief Anderson mentioned that Tom Cunningham was correct that, Ochopee’s firefighters are making more than our guys. Chief Anderson mentioned that Ochopee is 4 mills and District One is 2 mills and Goodland is 1.27 mills. Also, that District one is West of State Rd 29 and North of Tamiami Trail and almost to CR 951. It goes all the way to Golden Gate. Commissioner Anderson mentioned that he is in agreement with at least Ochopee. Chief Anderson mentioned that Ochopee is already a 4 mills just for fire protection and doesn’t know if there can fund the current level of service without subsidizing it from District One. If we are submitting a proposal for Ochopee, we need to include District One. Commissioner Goodnight agrees with that. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that we need to have a **Special Meeting on March 31st at 6:30pm**.

* 1. **Public comment**

**Commissioner Keen motions for Special Meeting for March 31, 2015 at 6:30pm and Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.**

1. **Purchase of Fire-Rescue boat**

Chief Anderson mentioned that we don’t have any information on that so, we will table this until next month. Commissioner Goodnight agreed.

* 1. **Public comment**

None

1. **Concerns of Commissioners**

Chief Anderson mentioned that he gave everyone a letter from Marco Island merger. To look at the list of data before the thought of any merger or consolidation can take place. No action has been taken. We are trying to push them to gather data so people can look at it in an unbiased way on both sides. He wants to get the board’s approval to send the letter and each of the board members to sign it.

**Commissioner Anderson motions to approve for the board to sign the letter and send it and Commissioner Olesky seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.**

Commissioner Goodnight asked about the letter from the Collier County Sports Complex that was in their boxes. Chief Anderson mentioned that he is just giving them some information of some improvements that they are making to it. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that there has been an uproar on the conditions of the exercise room. Several people have taken some pictures and voiced their concerns about this. Also, that they received a letter from Commissioner Heath resigning from the Fire District. She doesn’t know what the procedures are. Chief Anderson mentioned that we have to advertise for a vacancy and then the board accepts applications of the interested parties and then one has to be selected at a Special Board Meeting. Chief Anderson mentioned that we will advertise for two weeks. Commissioner Goodnight mentions that she sees this as a real loss. She has been trying to reach him but he hasn’t returned her calls. She has talked to several people and can’ understand how someone can run for office and then just quit.

**Commissioner Olesky motions to accept Commissioner Heath’s resignation from the Immokalee Fire Control District board and Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.**

1. **Public Comment**

Tom Cunningham, Union President mentioned that Terry Heath’s resignation shouldn’t mare his dedication and extra ordinary service to the community of Immokalee. From a firefighter’s standpoint. He was a fire fighter and he is mentioning this on behalf of Immokalee Fire Fighters. Commissioner Anderson mentioned that it caught us all by surprise.

Tom Cunningham mentioned that when he saw the email, he was surprised. When Commissioner Heath was on the line with them, he hated going out on public with him because he’s the “mayor of the town” and everywhere we went, he had to talk to 75 different people. Even now, his dedication to this town. Chief Anderson mentioned that he is going to put together a certificate of appreciate and we will get that to him.

Commissioner Keen wanted to commend our Chairman for the letter she wrote to Greater Naples Fire District. For their treatment of Commissioner Anderson and our Fire Chief Anderson. She thought that was pretty awesome. She doesn’t expect a response because they don’t do things in a proper manner. So, if you haven’t read it, please do. Also, she wanted to see if Greg Smith could come back out to Station 30. Tom Cunningham mentioned that he was on a call. Commissioner Keen would like to tell you guys and him; that she has always know how important their work is. She has never doubted that for an instant. She was on the other side of it the other day and she they were very professional and the guys took really good care of her. She greatly appreciates them. Their care, between them, God and the hospital; She’s a walking Miracle.

Tom Cunningham mentioned that he is glad that she is doing much better. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that we are thankful for that. Attorney Thompson said that the letters of interest have to be filed by the 9th, a week before the meeting. Chief Anderson mentioned that if we could advertise now we could set the deadline for April 3rd. We will make it for **April 8th at 5:00pm**. Commissioner Anderson asked if we had gotten a vehicle from Bonita Fire Station. Chief Anderson mentioned that we did. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that she would like to thank the guys for giving her a tour and teaching her of what she needed to know about fire vehicles and equipment. That was very informative. She thanked them. Paul Devan, Captain mentioned that he was glad that she had a care and concerned for that. Commissioner Goodnight mentioned that it’s very difficult to talk to the public when you don’t know what you are talking about. Commissioner Anderson mentioned to go on a ride along and go in that small back seat.

1. **Adjourn Meeting**

Meeting adjourned at 7:32pm

**Next Scheduled Meeting(s):**

**Next Regular Board Meeting: April 16, 2015, 6 p.m.; Ave Maria Stewardship Development District, Ave Maria Master Association Office, 5076 Annunciation Circle, Suite 103, Ave Maria, FL 34142**