

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 17, 2011**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Marcia Andrews, Zeke McDonald, Joe Miklavcic, Roy Wildeman and Chief Richard Pepper. Also, Atty Robert Pitt. Commissioner Anders was absent with notice.

ISLANDERS PRESENT: Firefighter Jon Bickel, Sue Ann Cousar, new homeowner Bill Fry, Asst. Chief Bob Kinniry, Dick Lewis, Arthur Mason, Deputy Chief Tim Higgins, Dave Tompkins, EMT Andrea Pepper

GUESTS: Architect Jason Tramonte and Construction Manager, Jerry Wallace

1) CALL TO ORDER: Chairman McDonald called the meeting to order at 11:04 and welcomed Mr. Fry. The Board agreed to begin the meeting with Agenda item 6 and guests Tremonte and Wallace.

6) OLD BUSINESS:

A. Building Plans – Architect Tramonte reported on a meeting with Lee County’s chief building official, Bobby Stewart, Chief Pepper, Jerry Wallace and others involved in design and engineering of the planned firehouse addition. The gist of the meeting was to lower the hazard rating of the building and the cost of construction, without breaking county rules.

A roster of possible changes was discussed and identified as useful or not:

* Change to eliminate bays/walls under building is NOT useful – does not affect the fire suppression system. (Relates to talk of re-zoning to residential.)

* Removal of ground-level walls NOT useful – expands buffer zone requirements.

* New wood piling and bracing plan IS useful for potential elimination of concrete piling system and retention of 16' building with 14' doors.

* Chief Pepper’s proposal to combine existing water sources for fire suppression system IS useful to eliminate extra pumps, wells and electrical service.

In summary, the next round is not just subtraction. Architect and engineers were asked to rework plans with new guidelines for * Pilings, * Slab, * Sprinklers and * Electrical. The board acknowledged that the work will generate new charges and stated that the new guidelines do not involve anything illegal or immoral that would reflect on the people who accomplish the redesign.

Tramonte estimated that drawing new plans would take until 1/7/2012 and calculating new numbers another 30 days (to 2/7).

Some Commissioners learned that Mr. Stewart has 20-plus years’ experience in his field and a personal knowledge of Upper Captiva, where he vacations.

In public comment, Dick Lewis asked whether the re-work was "just getting what they can deliver. Or are the contractors shooting for a number?" Answer: aim is for the best/most economical solutions. Lewis added that the District should be careful about the slab/foundation. Getting the cheapest can seriously compromise safety. Arthur Mason noted that the District is assuming the sprinkler device is for the life of the building.

B. Finance – The Treasurer has provided, for discussion, examples of financing costs for station-addition buildings at four estimated project prices. They’re based on a leasing 2 proposal dated 7/11/11 and referring to Fishkind Associates Assessment Methodology Report dated 8/20/11.

Atty. Pitt described a process to involve and inform the public: A non-binding referendum could be run without the Supervisor of Elections, involving all island owners. Then use a follow-up election with the regular November ballot or a more timely mail ballot –a referendum for a special assessment. The assessment would be voted upon by registered voters (142, by recent estimate).

Discussion included the ongoing lack of a firm construction-cost estimate and the fact that speculation about a high number causes a bad reaction by owners. The catch: An assessment on each owner's annual tax bill is low impact (about \$170 per property for 15 years) because it's shared by lot owners and homeowners. And it's finite. An ad valorem tax increase would be higher, even four-times the cost for large homes. But, the District must resolve a maximum cost before putting the question to the public. The talk moved toward starting the information meetings while owners are here for the season.

Miklavcic **moved** to have the attorney draw up the referendum papers and start the process. Wildeman seconded the motion. **All voted aye and the motion passed.**

Chairman McDonald outlined steps for a communications plan: Explain the process of meeting standards. Get out information about meeting dates. Define the funding process in clear points. The Board has done the due diligence and should get it out to the people who vote.

C. Public Meetings: Two public meetings and a hearing. Invite other islanders to participate – provide counterpoint, as did Carol Tarrier in the spring meeting.

D. Referendum: Consider a mail ballot to get started ahead of the ongoing work toward a better construction price. Board agreed to table the setting of dates, though a reasonable goal is before Easter.

2) MINUTES:

Minutes of the regular meeting, October 15, 2011. Wildeman moved, McDonald seconded and all voted to accept the minutes of the October meeting as submitted. (There was no November meeting, for lack of a quorum.)

3) TREASURER'S REPORT: The first of the new fiscal year's tax revenue has been received and December will bring a substantial part of the remainder of the District's revenue. Islander's tend to pay promptly and avoid the extra fees.

Wildeman reported that the auditor's system is better, but there still are entry anomalies. One notable entry, the \$11,000 that was mis-assigned has been properly moved to the fire station project category. The accountant has been asked to re-enter the budget numbers because many categories fluctuate with our business cycle. The government fund accounting agreement that commissioners signed (Gov. Services Accounting) is prompting the careful watch and frequent revisions of data entry. Since the revenue/expense summaries show no spending swings, it's mostly about the treasurer policing precise labeling of entries for GSA and for clarity to the Board.

Andrews **moved**, Miklavcic seconded and **all voted aye** to accept the November Treasurer's Report as submitted.

The October Treasurer's Report was untabled and the question resolved. Andrews moved, Miklavcic seconded and **all voted aye** to accept the October Treasurer's report, as explained.

4) CHIEF'S REPORT: There have been 83 calls to date.

* Hose tests were dramatic as (under pressure) four hoses failed in several sections and must be replaced at \$150 per section.

* The fire engine has had a break on the manifold. 10-8 will use an epoxy-based seal as a temporary fix. The \$15,000 in repairs uses all of the \$14,000 budgeted.

* The medical mule axle broke -- \$2500 to fix.

Board questioned value of fixing the 25-year-old engine. Chief says the engine will come back certified, and the vehicle is well outfitted for the island – but the pump compartment will be next, and replacement should be planned. Miklavcic ask for two-year projection of equipment costs. Miiklavcic **moved** that the Chief and Deputy Chief Higgins present an assessment of equipment needs and budgeting. Andrews seconded, and after discussion **all voted aye**.

* The firehouse reporting system is in use (see previous minutes) standardizing reports to Lee County Dispatch.

* Personnel evaluation forms will be reviewed at the January meeting, for completion by the February meeting.

* AC function is impaired by copper tubing failure.

* Enter into the record a letter of support for the UCF&RD – with emphasis on appreciation for staff's readiness and handling of "catastrophic medical issues." Letter from Ann and Gene Murphy attached.

5) COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

A. Line of credit – Bank absorbed a protested \$750 fee. Pritt still checking, but thinks tax-exempt status is applied to all appropriate accounts.

B. Landing Zone lights – Lee County Air EMS says lights are available to install; GPA application is due for testing after first of the year. System activates for emergency helicopter operation only.

7) NEW BUSINESS:

A. Road trimming – Chairman expressed appreciation for help from the UCCA with last-season's grant.

From the public: UCCA secretary, Sue Ann Cougar suggested that road trimming be expanded to having contractor kill pepper with some hacking and Garlon poison treatment. Miklavcic raised question of UCCA taking responsibility for road trimming. McDonald added that UCCA could delegate.

From the Public: UCCA president, Arthur Mason added that if the District is handing off the job, then give the Association the request. Also, Mason urged that the fire board study the NCIC Marina proposal. The Board confirmed that the Chief would maintain standards to NFPA303 while monitoring the project as Fire Chief.

B. Advanced Life Support Services – In response to constituents' questions about more comprehensive medical emergency services, the Board asked for preliminary research: Chief Pepper told of the major facility, equipment and personnel cost differences between ALS services and the Basic Life Support services the UCF&RD is now licensed to provide. (BLS stabilizes a patient for transport to the EMS helicopter paramedics.) He noted that the fire chief on south Captiva just upgraded that department to independent ALS. A very rough estimate of \$175,000 to \$200,000, annual, would get us to 24/7 coverage by an independent medic – a protocol set by state and federal mandate. A major portion is the required licensing through a medical director's contract at \$25,000 to \$30,000 annual.

For a less costly, more inventive solution, the District is asking Lee County to consider new ways to put our department on the duty rotation for their medics. Challenges include requirement that medics in any location work under one medical license. Our part-time staff, some of them medics, have specific supervising physicians and can't perform medical procedures here. Housing for a visiting medic and space for pharmaceutical storage and medical equipment are a consideration.

C. 4520 Hodgepodge Ln. – A commissioner and the chief looked at the house across the lane from the station, as alternative staff housing. It did not appear suitable for occupancy nor a remodel to approach code for a publicly owned facility. The purchase, tear down and construction on that lot, versus the District-owned lot, offers no economies.

8) PUBLIC COMMENT: (See above)

9) NEXT MEETING DATE: January 21, 2012 at 10am

10) ADJOURN: Miklavcic **moved**, Andrews seconded and **all voted aye** to adjourn at 1:15pm

Respectfully submitted

Marcia Andrews
Secretary