

SPRING HILL FIRE RESCUE
Commission Meeting
April 27, 2005
7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Panozzo, Commissioner Jacobs, Commissioner Raborn,
Commissioner Biro, Chief Morrison, Attorney Iurato

Excused: Commissioner Perreira, Assistant Chief Davies, Attorney Salzman

Call to Order

Chairman Panozzo called the Commission Meeting to Order at 7:10 p.m.

Chief's Report

Chief Morrison stated that he needed to bring up a few things that were not on the Agenda.

EXCERPT:

A. Shared Purchase of Fit Testing Equipment

Chief Morrison stated that the air-packs in which the firefighters use are now required to be fit tested to the individual. The mask comes in a variety of sizes and needs to be fitted properly to the employee. The Department currently is using a mask that meets the minimum requirements. Emergency Management looked at a variety of different models and selected one that at a cost of \$10,000. Emergency Management recommended that this purchase be shared between the Department and other entities alike. The Department's portion would be \$1,450, which will give them the equipment indefinitely. The purchase will be shared between Haz Mat, the County's Fire Department, County Facilities, County Utilities, Sheriff's Office and Brooksville's Fire Department. Emergency Management will store the equipment in Brooksville and when Spring Hire Fire Rescue hires a new employee Emergency Management said they will fit test the employee. The money will come out of the Unencumbered Capital Equipment Line, being it is more than \$1000.

Motion

Commissioner Raborn made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Jacobs seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

B. Budget Update

Chief Morrison requested that the Board set an exclusive Budget Workshop.

The Board agreed on May 5th, at 6:00 for the budget Workshop.

Chief Morrison stated that the Relay for Life was held last weekend and the attendance was twice as much as in the past. They raised a lot of money for a good cause. Three of the Commissioners stopped by and it was great to see them there.

Chief Morrison stated that with the rain last night the building's roof sprung a leak in the Communications Center. The roof was built with what was called a built-up tar and gravel roof, which no longer qualify by code. He feels this qualifies as an emergency because there is water dripping in the Communications Center. The roof cannot be fixed, it has to be replaced. The roof has been budgeted to be re shingled. The Department received a bid from the company that was awarded the bid to replace the roof at station-4. The company estimated a cost of \$17,000 to replace the flat roof at Headquarters. If they re shingle the rest of the roof at the same time, the entire cost would be \$20,000, of which \$17,000 is an emergency purchase. He is getting a quote from another roofing company. Unless the other company gives them a better price, he would like to move forward with replacing the roof.

Commissioner Biro asked if they had to go out for bids?

Chief Morrison said no, because this is an emergency purchase. There is money in the current budget for Headquarters renovation, therefore, this will not entail taking money out of the Emergency Fund.

Commissioner Jacobs asked when will the project start?

Chief Morrison stated that the company told him it would take 4-weeks, but he felt that was unacceptable, therefore, the company will get back to him tomorrow.

Commissioner Raborn asked if a rubber roof was discussed?

Chief Morrison stated that he believes that is what the company will be using.

Attorney Iurate asked the Chief if he was provided a warranty from the company?

Chief Morrison said he does not believe he received it with the paperwork. He will check the terms of

the warranty.

Motion

Commissioner Jacobs made a Motion to authorize the Chief to move forward with the emergency purchase to save the Department's emergency dispatch equipment.

Commissioner Biro seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Invocation

Rev. Clemons gave the invocation.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Panozzo asked if there were any questions regarding the Consent Agenda.

Motion

Commissioner Jacobs made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Raborn seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Report of Counsel

There was nothing to report.

Chief's Report

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Motion

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Commissioner Biro seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Chief Morrison stated that a year ago the Department purchased new medical billing software from Pinpoint Technology, which is now called Zoll Data Systems. The Department purchased laptop computers from Zoll for the Units, which are compatible with the medical billing software. Unfortunately, Zoll does not have a Fire Dispatch system, because Zoll has strictly been EMS. Two-years ago Zoll started to create a Fire Dispatch System and has asked for some help from the Department to show them some of the needs of a Fire Dispatch System. He was contacted by Zoll because they are ready for a critical evaluation of what they have put together so far. The company is the process of holding a training summit in Boulder Colorado. The company offered to fly him to Colorado in order to take a look at the new product for any problems he may find. If the product works, eventually the Department would look into the Fire Dispatch system that integrates with medical billing and the laptops. By attending the summit, he feels it would benefit the Department in the long run.

Commissioner Raborn asked if the company understands that the Department is under no obligation to purchase the equipment?

Chief Morrison said absolutely.

Chairman Panozzo asked how long would he be in Colorado?

Chief Morrison said 2-days. The summit will be held on May 11th, however, this is the day the Board meets for the Workshop. He suggested moving the Workshop to another day so that he will be able to attend the Workshop.

Motion

Commissioner Jacobs made a Motion to change the Workshop to May 9th, at 7:00 p.m. in lei of the May 11th, Workshop.

Commissioner Biro seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Unfinished Business

A. Dispatch Consolidation

Chief Morrison stated that with the Board's direction, a committee was put together to investigate the possibility of consolidating the Department's Communication Center with the County's. He acted as

the facilitator for the Dispatch Consolidation Committee, which consisted of; Assistant Chief Davies, Lieutenant Edmisten, Communication Supervisor Foshey and Jeff Hollander. The committee setup a list of priorities for Dispatch with the number-one priority being the “level of service.” The second priority is the “physical impact” on the Department. The third priority is the “impact on the Department Operation” as a whole. The Dispatch Consolidation Committee sat through a presentation given by Sheriff Nugent on the concept of consolidation and some of the problems and solutions. The committee also did an evaluation of Pasco and Citrus County’s Dispatch System. Per the committee’s request, he contacted other Fire Chiefs that consolidated Law Enforcement and EMS. There were a lot of positives and negatives to consolidation. The committee is coming before the Board for further direction. First he would like to go over some of the findings that led to the committee’s conclusion. The average Communication Officer has an average of 11-years experience of EMS and Fire Dispatching. Unfortunately, in a consolidated Communication Center that number would decrease significantly.

Commissioner Raborn asked why would the number change if they are using Spring Hill employees?

Chief Morrison stated that the concept of Consolidated Dispatch is that the Spring Hill employees will be trained in Law Enforcement Dispatch and the County’s employee’s will be trained in Fire Dispatch.

Commissioner Raborn said there should be a Fire and Police side.

Chief Morrison stated that’s how Pasco County has their Consolidated Dispatch Center setup.

Commissioner Biro stated that when this issue was first conceived by the County, he was led to believe the Spring Hill employees would only be doing Fire Dispatching because of their knowledge.

Chief Morrison said just for clarification, this issue was originally initiated by a former County Administrator not by the Sheriff’s Office. He was not led to believe that when the Department dispatch’s went over to the County , they would solely do Fire Dispatching. When the employees are dispatching, it will be for just Fire, but when they are call taking it will be Law Enforcement, EMS and Fire.

The Board further discussed Consolidation Dispatching.

Commissioner Biro stated that the Department’s employees are experts in what they are doing because they know the Spring Hill area and the dispatching system. Therefore, he feels it would make more sense for the County to use the Department’s employees for Fire Dispatching and possibly train the employees for Law Enforcement to use as an overflow.

Chief Morrison agreed. One of the benefits of a Consolidated Dispatch Center is to acknowledge any fiscal savings for the taxpayers. The call rate at night for the Department and the County is low, perhaps when the two are combined it will decrease the total number of man hours.

Commissioner Biro asked what would be the savings?

Chief Morrison said if he could, he would like to continue on the subject. The point of tonight's discussion was to try and develop a dialog to have the Board direct the Consolidation Dispatch Committee further. One issue that was discussed with the Sheriff's Office was that they were uncomfortable with the Department's Dispatch Supervisor going over to the new Dispatch as a Supervisor because that person is not trained in the Law Enforcement side.

Commissioner Biro stated that with all the expertise the Department's Dispatch Supervisor has, he feels the Sheriff's office is leaning toward the Law Enforcement side if they do not want the Department's Dispatch Supervisor training the County's employees.

Chief Morrison said he didn't say that. If the Board chooses to consolidate, the County is under no obligation to hire the Department's employees. The Sheriff said he would hire every full time dispatch employee at their current rate of pay.

Chairman Panozzo asked what makes the supervisors at the Sheriff's Office more superior then the Department's?

Chief Morrison said the Sheriff never said that.

Chairman Panozzo said that's how it sounds to him. If the Sheriff's office will not accept the Department's Dispatch Supervisor's for Law Enforcement, but Law Enforcement Supervisor's will be accepted for Fire Dispatch.

Chief Morrison said try to understand Mr. Kicklighter's position, the software, equipment, schedule and policy manual are different then our Department's, that is why Mr. Kicklighter was reluctant. There was never a final answer.

Commissioner Raborn stated that is why there should be a Fire Dispatch side and a Law Enforcement Dispatch side.

Chief Morrison stated if there was a Fire Dispatch side and a Law Enforcement dispatch side there would be not benefit of a consolidation.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that Chief Morrison should fight hard to make sure he is on equal footing.

Chief Morrison stated that in a meeting with the Dispatch Committee and the Sheriff's Command staff, Sheriff Nugent made it clear that life and public safety is the priority. The Sheriff would not run a Consolidated Dispatch Center that favored Law Enforcement over EMS.

Commissioner Biro asked the Chief if he can see any benefits to consolidation with the County? Chief Morrison said he has a list of a few positive points, but he would rather keep his opinion out of it. He would like to continue with the Committee's findings. The Consolidation Dispatch Committee's recommendation is to take the wait and see approach, but there are disadvantages to that approach.

The Board further discussed Dispatch Consolidation.

Chief Morrison stated if the Board retains the Department's Dispatch Center and the County goes to the Sheriff's office, the Department would have to layoff one or two employees. Looking at the recommendations from the Dispatch Consolidation Committee, as the Fire Chief, he feels consolidating Spring Hill Fire Rescue is not in the best interest of the District.

The Board further discussed Dispatch Consolidation.

Commissioner Raborn stated that he originally was for consolidation if it was going to be a two-part system, but he does not agree with a one part system. He asked if any of the dispatcher's in the audience had something to say. He would like to hear their view of consolidation.

Scott Edmisten, Vice President of Local 2794, stated that he did not hear of any dispatch employee wanting to consolidate. His impression of the Sheriff's wording was to offer employment to the Department's employees not a guarantee of employment the day the EOC opens.

Chief Morrison stated that the Sheriff's Office suggested an offer of employment, which was not a guarantee of employment. In discussions with the Sheriff, all of the Department's employees would have to qualify through the application process by the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Biro stated he originally thought consolidating was a good idea because he also thought it was a two-part system.

Chairman Panozzo stated that he does not like the idea the Department's supervisors will no longer be supervisors.

Chief Morrison said that issue was not thought about, so it was not final.

Commissioner Biro stated that he feels the Department's operation is working fine, the system is not broke, lets leave it alone.

Firefighter Troy Hager, stated that the employees do not need to think about the stipulation of looking at consolidation in a year. If the Department is not going to consolidation now, don't go back to it in a

year from now.

Motion

Commissioner Raborn made a Motion to keep the Department's Dispatch Center in operation and not consolidate.

Commissioner Biro seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0)

New Business

A. Purchase of Rescue-4 - finance

Chief Morrison gave the Board a copy of the proposal from Leasing-2 for Rescue-4. He stated that the Board has already approved the purchase of the replacement Rescue Unit, but the financing has to be approved. Currently, the budget has \$50,000 for the down payment on the vehicle. Leasing-2 has done the last four leases for the Department and the Lease Rate for this vehicle is 4.74%. The County's Finance Department thought that was a good rate for only financing \$86,000, which is a small lease.

Motion

Commissioner Biro made a Motion to accept the leasing agreement from Leasing-2.

Commissioner Raborn seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

B. Shared Purchase of Fit Testing Equipment

Chief Morrison stated that the air-packs in which the firefighters use are now required to be fit tested to the individual. The mask comes in a variety of sizes and needs to be fitted properly to the employee. The Department currently is using a mask that meets the minimum requirements. Emergency Management looked at a variety of different models and selected one that at a cost of \$10,000. Emergency Management recommended that this purchase be shared between the Department and other entities alike. The Department's portion would be \$1,450, which will give them the equipment indefinitely. The purchase will be shared between Haz Mat, the County's Fire Department, County Facilities, County Utilities, Sheriff's Office and Brooksville's Fire Department. Emergency Management will store the equipment in Brooksville and when

Spring Hire Fire Rescue hires a new employee Emergency Management said they will fit test the employee. The money will come out of the Unencumbered Capital Equipment Line, being it is more than \$1000.

Motion

Commissioner Raborn made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Jacobs seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

C. Request of Address - Association of EMS Providers

Chief Morrison stated that the goal of the EMS Provides Association is to represent the interest of the EMS Providers to the State Agency. The Association is made up of Fire Chiefs, Rescue Chiefs and is a nonprofit organization. The Association has no physical address, currently, the Florida College of Emergency Physicians is letting the Association use their address for a cost of more then \$700 a year. The Association does not receive a lot of mail and suggested that the Department allow the Association to use Headquarter address. He spoke with Attorney Salzman and he suggested that there should be some consideration. He suggested an agreement be written up between the two entities, whereas, a fee of \$25.00 a year and postage be paid to the Department.

Commissioner Raborn asked if for any reason somebody was to go after that organization, would the Fire Department be held as a copartner?

Attorney Iurato said no.

Commissioner Jacobs asked would there be any liability problems?

Attorney Iurato stated that there will be some indemnification clauses prepared in the agreement.

Chief Morrison stated that there will no cost to the Department.

Motion

Commissioner Jacobs made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation and help the Association with letting them use the Department's address.

Commissioner Biro seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Comments of Commission

Chairman Panozzo stated that the ceiling panels on the Smoke House were wrinkled and looks like someone took them down and put them back up. If the panels cannot be put back the right way, he would like to get a price from Registered Cheverlot to reset the panels. There was also a big black spot on the carpet of the Smoke House and he would hate to replace the carpet.

Chief Morrison stated that he will take a look at the Smoke House.

Commissioner Raborn stated that he had a good time last weekend representing the Fire District at the Relay for Life and thanked the Chief. He felt there should have been more people participating in the event, but it was good that the community seen Spring Hill Fire Rescue there. Next year he would like to saw the Smoke House there.

Commissioner Biro asked for an update on the mobile trailer for the office staff.

Chief Morrison stated that they are moving as fast as they can. They are in the middle of the permitting process and he is going to ask the County to wavier the permitting fee.

Commissioner Biro asked if they are waiting for the County on the Station-3 project?

Chief Morrison said no, the Assistant Chief has a meeting next week with the mechanical and electrical engineer along with the representative from the engineering firm. After the meeting he expects a set of plans that will allow them to go out to bid.

Commissioner Raborn asked if there is any movement on the land for Station-5?

Chief Morrison asked Commissioner Raborn to come by the office to discuss this issue.

Commissioner Jacobs asked what is the update on the ladder truck?

Chief Morrison stated that he is in the process of figuring out how to fund that item out of the budget.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that he had a good time last weekend at the Relay for Life event and it was good to see a lot of children there.

Open Forum

Scott Edmisten, Vice President Local 2794, stated that he would like to clarify that the Relay for Life

was a joint function.

Chief Morrison thanked Local 2794 for all of their time and effort at the event.

Commissioner Raborn stated that it was good to see the Union at the event, which he feels boosts the moral for both the community and the Department.

Motion

Commissioner Raborn made a Motion to adjourn the Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Jacobs seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Chairman Panozzo adjourned the Commission Meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Gene Panozzo, Chairman

Joan E. Chiofalo, Board Secretary

