

SPRING HILL FIRE RESCUE
Commission Meeting
July 24, 2002

Present: Chairman Kanner, Commissioner Hollander, Commissioner Panozzo,
Commissioner Martin, Commissioner Marasciullo, Assistant Chief Davies,
Attorney Cobbs

Excused: Chief Morrison, Attorney Salzman

Call to Order

Chairman Kanner called the Commission Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Invocation

Rev. Clemons gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Kanner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda

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

Motion

Commissioner Hollander made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Marasciullo seconded the Motion

The Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Report of Counsel

Attorney Cobbs had nothing to report.

Chief's Report

A. Budget Amendments

Assistant Chief Davies gave the Board copies of the Budget Amendments to review.

Chairman Kanner asked the Board if they had any questions regarding Budget Amendment #02-17?

There were no questions.

Motion

Commissioner Hollander made a Motion to accept Budget Amendment #02-17.

Commissioner Marasciullo seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Motion

Commissioner Hollander made a Motion to accept Budget Amendment #02-18 thru and including #02-22.

Commissioner Panozzo seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

B. Storm Shutters

Assistant Chief Davies gave the Board copies of estimates for the storm shutters. The prices range from \$2,200 up to \$17,500 depending on the type of shutter. There are three different types, large rolling shutters, accordion style, and panels, which are the least expensive. To do all the windows on the administration building, except for the two large windows in the Commission room, would cost \$2,156. Two companies are looking for better options for the two large windows. The third company, Pasco Window & Doors, estimated an additional \$1,572 to put panels on the large windows, or \$3,174 for a permanent Lexan panel.

Chairman Kanner asked instead of the Lexan, can a less expensive panel be used?

Assistant Chief Davies stated one of the options is to use section panels, which was estimated at \$1,572.

Commissioner Hollander stated therefore, the cost to do the whole building with panels would be around \$3,700 to \$3,800.

Chairman Kanner stated two years ago, he dealt with a company called Rolladin. If the Board agrees, he would like to direct Assistant Chief to get an estimate from Rolladin.

Assistant Chief Davies stated he will call Rolladin for an estimate. He asked the Board if they wanted shutters for one or two of the stations, since the estimates are inexpensive.

Chairman Kanner stated that will defeat the purpose, unless they have hurricane garage doors on the stations.

The Board further discussed storm shutters.

Commissioner Panozzo suggested leaving the panels up permanently.

Assistant Chief Davies stated that would require panels that go with the esthetics of the building.

Chairman Kanner stated that the panels can be painted to match the building.

Commissioner Martin stated that Lexan should not be put on the large commission room windows, because insects could get behind them.

Assistant Chief Davies stated that Lexan has not been rated either.

Chairman Kanner asked Attorney Cobbs if there would be a problem with the department doing business with a company he previously purchased products from?

Attorney Cobbs stated it would not be a problem.

Unfinished Business

A. Review/Update Status of Projects

Motion

Commissioner Hollander made a Motion to Table this item, because Chief Morrison was not present.

Chairman Kanner asked Assistant Chief Davies if he had any answers regarding the status of projects?

Assistant Chief Davies stated that Commissioner Martin has already met with Chief Morrison regarding this issue. The Board received a copy of the list in their packets, which was updated July 18th.

Commissioner Panozzo seconded the Motion.

B. Policy and Procedure for Fire Commissioners

Assistant Chief Davies reported that the Board received an excerpt of the language out of Palm Harbor's Policy and Procedure in their packets (copy attached).

Chairman Kanner stated that he does not mind having a policy in place, but he feels the language is too strict. If they were to put it in motion, they would be punishing the volunteers who want to service their community, in not allowing them to apply for a job. He understood what happened in the past, with a former Commissioner, however, he would not have a problem if it was worded differently. Such as, "The Board would not accept an application from a Commissioner as long as they are on the Board." They would have to resign from their position before they can submit an application. If someone was elected Fire Commissioner, and after one year they wanted to apply for a job, just because they wanted to do a volunteer position they would be punished for three years. The policy states, (1) year from the date of the last day of their term, and the term runs for four years.

Commissioner Hollander stated that he agrees, but there is a problem, because the Board took an oath for four years, and the people elected them based on the oath. In his mind, it is not right to entice or encourage a Commissioner by creating a policy, in which Chairman Kanner just mentioned, to be able to step down from the Board and walk into another position. They were elected as a Commissioner, volunteer or not, they were elected to do the job for their term in office.

Commissioner Panozzo stated he agrees with the Board, however, if he had a choice, he would like it to state, "(1) day after the term expires" instead of (1) year. That would prevent Commissioners getting off the Board in the middle of their term for a job opening.

Commissioner Martin stated that a Commissioner and the oath they took to serve the community, if they were still going to be within the organization in serving and contributing, he does not think that would be a problem, maybe in an isolated case this could be an issue. Nevertheless, he agrees, any active Commissioner should not apply for a position, although, he does not see a problem if they resign from their position. However, there is no guarantee they will be hired, and there is no guarantee the position has to be filled. A Commissioner would be taking a risk if they decided to vacate their seat.

Commissioner Panozzo stated if a Commissioner gives up his seat, and applies for a position, and is not hired, they could apply for the seat at the next election.

Chairman Kanner stated that cannot be prevented, that is their Constitutional right.

Commissioner Panozzo stated that could be prevented if they put a policy in place.

The Board further discussed the wording for Policy and Procedure.

Commissioner Marasciullo stated he agrees with (1) year after they step down from their full

term.

Commissioner Hollander stated that would prevent an impulsive step down from their position on the Board to apply for a job.

Commissioner Marasciullo stated instead of (1) year from the date of their term, it would be (1) year from the date they stepped down.

Commissioner Hollander stated it does not matter when their term expires, it would be the last day of their Commission.

Commissioner Martin stated it is going to take some time to figure the wording out.

Attorney Cobbs stated she feels the Board is concerned with the duty of loyalty which is not being fulfilled, and Commissioners are terminating their position prior to the end of the term in order to secure an employment position.

Chairman Kanner reported that has only happened once since 1973.

Attorney Cobbs stated that it is a rare case, but if the person serves their full term, they fulfilled their duties, at that point, in policy, should be free to apply for a job.

Chairman Kanner asked Attorney Cobbs if that means once a Commissioners full term of four years is up they can apply for a job the day after?

Attorney Cobbs stated that is a policy decision.

The Board further discussed the issue of (1) year.

Chairman Kanner stated the Policy should read, "If a Commissioner fulfills their obligation they are entitled to submit a job application, however, if a Commissioner resign prematurely, then they have a (1) year waiting period from the time a Commissioner steps down from the Board.

Commissioner Martin stated he would like to add a Disclaimer for the person that completes their term. If a Commissioner is going to apply for a position that was discussed, negotiated or planned while they were on the Board, they will not be eligible for the position.

The Board further discussed applying for a position.

Chairman Kanner asked the Board to Table this issue until the next Regular meeting, to bring back to the Board with their own version of what the Policy should read?

Commissioner Marasciullo stated in order to move forward, he would like to put something

together at this meeting.

Chairman Kanner stated to put in a disclaimer as to, “ In the event a Commissioner who is sitting on the Board, and a position is created, a Commissioner would not be able file an application for that position for (1) year.”

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to change the Policy to read, “ No Commissioner can be hired as a paid employee of the District until (1) year after a Commissioner is off the Board, then they can apply for a position.

Commissioner Hollander seconded the Motion.

Chairman Kanner stated that means when a Commissioners four year term is up, and has fulfilled their obligation, they would still have to wait another year to apply for a position.

The Motion carried unanimously (4-1).

Chairman Kanner stated that he does not feel someone should be punished after four, eight or even twelve years of being a volunteer.

New Business

Chairman Kanner stated he wanted to bring something to the Board and then agenda this issue at the next Regular meeting. He spoke to Sheriff Nugent regarding old Station #1 regarding having his Deputies use half of the station for an office. Because when it rains the Deputies on patrol with motorcycles, usually have to ride back to Brooksville, or find an underpass until the rain stops. The Deputies would be able to park their motorcycles in old Station #1 instead, and their vehicles parked outside in order for them to continue their tour of duty. When the rain stops they could go back to the station and pick up their motorcycle. They can set-up a desk and telephone for the Deputies to use for their reports.

Commissioner Marasciullo asked if their liability would to cover that?

Chairman Kanner stated that Counsel would have to sign off on the liability with a disclaimer, and have it put on the Sheriff's insurance.

Commissioner Panozzo asked if there was enough room, because the Hydrant and Supply staff are in old Station #1?

Assistant Chief Davies stated if the Hydrant and Supply vehicles are in there, he does not think there is enough room to fit two motorcycles.

Chairman Kanner stated it would only be temporary until the rain stops. This would be good for the community, because the Deputies would always be in the area to protect the community.

Commissioner Panozzo stated that he would hate to see their vehicles parked outside because two motorcycles are parked inside due to the rain.

Chairman Kanner stated he spoke to Chief Morrison, he felt there was enough room to fit two motorcycles. However, this issue will be on the agenda, but he just wanted the Board to think about it so they can discuss it at the next Regular meeting.

Assistant Chief Davies stated they may have to put in another back door for the Deputy's, this could be an extra expense.

Chairman Kanner stated that because the Deputy's would be using their station, it would be at the Sheriff's expense. Therefore, he would like the Board to consider this issue.

Comments of Commission

Commissioner Hollander had nothing to report.

Commissioner Marasciullo regarding Independence, where do they stand?

Chairman Kanner stated that he met with Commissioner Robinson and the County Attorney, to discuss putting the Resolution together for Independence. He reminded them that it has been six weeks since they said it would be placed on the County's agenda. They assured him it would be put on the agenda immediately. If it is not on the County's next agenda, he will remind them again until they get it done.

Commissioner Panozzo stated he received mail from Hernando Today regarding a questionnaire for candidates. One question they asked, he did not like, because he did not know where the newspaper got the information from. The question read, "members of the Fire District believe they no longer need to have a separate position for Medical Director and Department Physician." He does not remember the Board discussing this issue and tying the two together. It also stated "the Fire District believes one person can handle both jobs, supervising EMT's, Paramedic's and the Department physicals." "Would saving money compromise Paramedic's safety and Taxpayers ultimately be shortchanged?" He said even if they did combine the two, where would they be saving money? There is no such thing as saving money if they combine the two positions.

Chairman Kanner stated that he cannot tell Commissioner Panozzo what to do, but if he was running for the position again he would put N/A (not applicable), because it has not been discussed.

Commissioner Panozzo stated that evidently, this was discussed with somebody.

Chairman Kanner stated that the newspaper keeps writing the same thing, and they keep telling the newspaper it is not factual, but they continue to write the same thing.

Commissioner Panozzo stated if they combine the two positions, it certainly is not because they are saving money.

Chairman Kanner stated it is up to Commissioner Panozzo to answer the questionnaire on how he feels, but the Board has not made a decision on combining the two positions.

Commissioner Martin had nothing to report.

Commissioner Marasciullo stated he had paperwork come across his desk regarding mandatory drug testing, however, nothing has been discussed regarding this issue.

Commissioner Martin stated it is on the Unfinished Project List to start-up in October 2002.

Commissioner Marasciullo stated it has been a year since then, and nothing has been discussed.

Assistant Chief Davies stated that he and Chief Morrison met with Lieutenant Ferriero, and they just have to work out how to proceed with this issue, but the start-up will be in October.

Commissioner Martin asked why is it going to take that long?

Commissioner Panozzo stated that is what the agreement was in their contract.

Commissioner Marasciullo stated maybe a memo should be sent out to refresh everybody's memory who is employed by the Spring Hill Fire Rescue District. He is not saying there is a problem with any of their employees, but just to let them know a random drug test will be starting.

Lt. Ferriero stated that the random drug testing is in their contract and everyone is aware of that. The contract states that he and Chief Morrison will agree on the methodology of what type of random testing. They have agreed to start the testing October 1st.

Commissioner Martin stated if somebody is currently using a substance, at any point, if they were to get involved in an accident or injury, they could be tested. Therefore, why would anyone want to compromise their career by using an illegal drug.

Lt. Ferriero stated that the Department never had a drug test come out positive on any of their employees.

Open Forum

There were no comments.

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to adjourn meeting.

Commissioner Martin seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Adjourn

Chairman Kanner adjourned the Commission Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Robert Kanner, Chairman

Joan E. Chiofalo, Board Secretary