

SPRING HILL FIRE RESCUE
Commission Meeting
September 28, 2005
7:00 p.m.

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

Excused: Attorney Salzman

Call to Order

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

Invocation

Chairman Panozzo gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Panozzo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda

Motion

Commissioner Jacobs made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda

Commissioner Raborn seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Report of Counsel

There was no report

Chief's Report

A. Update on Health Insurance

Chief Morrison stated that at the last meeting the Board gave consensus to approve a 1-month extension on the current health insurance, which the Board just approved on the Consent Agenda. There have been ongoing discussions with the Union pertaining to the health insurance policy, but a decision has not been made. He invited President Rampino to come up to the podium to speak on this subject.

Mike Rampino, Union President stated that currently he is still trying to educate the membership. It is a change in coverage and a lot of the doctors are not in that particular plan so the provider network is weak.

Commissioner Raborn asked how many doctors are not in the plan?

Mike Rampino said some of the bigger doctors, for example, All Children's is not a provider on the plan. All Children's hospital is a provider for Blue Cross Blue Shield, but is not a provider in the current plan that has been offered. He feels it would take salespeople from the insurance company to present the plan to the doctors who are not currently in the plan. He has more than 100 members to try and educate on the changes. There will be a Union meeting on Tuesday and he will have a much better grasp on which direction to go in.

Commissioner Biro stated that he understands that most doctors who accept Blue Cross Blue Shield will fill out an application to make the switch. He suggested that the employee call their doctor to let them know what type of plan it is.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that just because a doctor says he will make the switch does not mean he will. If it's not in writing, it really does not mean much because the doctor can always change his mind. Time is running short on this issue, what is the alternative?

Chief Morrison stated that the Union has a meeting Tuesday and Mike Rampino told him (Chief Morrison) that he will have an answer on Wednesday morning. If there is going to be a change in the policy, he would like to set up a meeting with the Board for next Thursday just to vote on that issue.

Commissioner Jacobs said he would not be available. He asked if Blue Cross Blue Shield gave any indication or time frame for a provider list?

Mike Rampino stated that Blue Cross Blue Shield has representatives that go out in the field to try and sign doctors up for the plan. The Department's insurance agent told him that Blue Cross Blue Shield likes this plan better because it doesn't pay the doctors as much. Therefore, he doesn't know how enthusiastic a doctor is going to be to sign up for a plan that doesn't pay as much.

Commissioner Jacobs said hopefully, there is an alternative plan.

Chief Morrison informed the Board that the alternative would be to stay with the current plan. He would like to have a voting meeting on Thursday so the Board can vote on either renewing the current plan or to switch plans.

Commissioner Perreira said she is unavailable for that date.

Commissioner Jacobs said he will be unavailable.

The Board further discussed the health insurance plan.

Chief Morrison said he would like to arrange a meeting with Commissioner Raborn and Commissioner Perreira and then notify the rest of the Board on a date for a voting meeting.

The Board agreed.

B. Update on Station-3 Project

Assistant Chief Davies stated that he spoke with Mr. Dean of Altelier today and he has not received the paperwork back from the County. However, Mr. Dean feels the Department will be able to go out to bid with the package they currently have. He found a local drafting firm that is willing to hold one set of plans and make copies for the bidders as needed.

Commissioner Biro asked how long will the bidding be open?

Assistant Chief Davies said for a month, at least.

Chief Morrison stated that the Assistant Chief will meet with County Purchasing so they can announce the bid, which should be advertised within a week.

Assistant Chief Davies stated that he made some phone calls to the County on the temporary housing, Unfortunately, he has been unsuccessful in getting a response.

Chief Morrison said the Building Department is overwhelmed because of the explosion of growth in the County. As soon as they get an answer from the Building Department, he will notify the Board with the firm plan on the temporary housing.

Commissioner Biro said, being the Department is part of the County now is there anyway this issue can be put on a fast track?

Chief Morrison said the Assistant Chief has a call into the Director of the Building Department and he will let the Director know the problems the Department is facing.

C. Update on the Cardiac Monitor

Chief Morrison stated that the paperwork on this item was submitted to County Purchasing for a purchase order, but because of the grant amount this item has to be presented to the Board of County Commission. This item was unable to get on the County's agenda by October 1st, in order to get a discount from the vendor, so there will be no discount from the vendor. He asked the vendor to give a re quote on the item and He (Chief Morrison) will come back to the Board with the information.

The Board further discussed the new Cardiac Monitors.

D. AED Program

Chief Morrison stated that the Department has been approached by the Health Department to help organize an AED program between the County and the Health Department. He will be meeting with the Health Department and a representative of the County's Fire Department along with the person who is running the AED program for Pasco Fire Rescue. They are hoping to come up with a mechanism to catalog all the AED purchases in the County. Hopefully, this will bring to light the importance of AED's in the community. At the next Workshop, he will give the Board his report on how the meeting went.

Commissioner Jacobs said just for clarification, what does AED stand for?

Chief Morrison stated that AED stands for Automatic External Defibrillator, which is used when somebody's heart stops beating. CPR is a wonderful thing, but research has proven that electricity is the key to saving lives. Getting a shock to a heart that stopped within six minutes is critical to saving a life.

The Departments Medical Director was in the audience and Chief Morrison asked Dr. Blackburn if he would like to address the Board.

Dr. Blackburn stated that he has been out of town and missed some of the previous meetings the Board had, but he has a lot of things to report. On June 20th, the State Inspector was at his office reviewing the medication log and the proper handling of the medication and received a very good report. On June 30th, Dr. Michael Higgins, a Board Certified Spinal Surgeon gave a lecture on spinal trauma and long bone fractures at the County Board of Commission Chambers in Brooksville. In addition to that, there was an update on infectious diseases, which was very informative. There will be an upcoming lecture given by Dr. Deborah Tracy, a pain management specialist, in Hernando County on IV Port excess. There will also be an upcoming lecture on chest trauma. On July 20th, he did some ride time with Station-2 with Lieutenant Regis and his crew from 1:30pm-9:30pm. The Department can be proud of their EMS and Paramedics, because they demonstrated their upmost skills and were very professional during the course of the ride and when entering the patient's home. He had multiple

conversations with physicians in the community regarding the new stroke protocol. He is happy to report the Florida Department of Health has approved Spring Hill Fire Rescue's trauma transport protocols. The Department has met the requirements of Chapter-395-4045 of the Florida Statute and Section-64E-2.015, the Florida Administrator Code through State Approval. Spring Hill Fire Rescue is on the cutting-edge and is on the top of the game in Hernando County because they are lucky enough to have Bayflight within 4-7 minutes of every call. He reported that there will be a meeting tomorrow from 1:00-4:00 p.m. regarding the Countywide EMS Draft Protocols right here at Headquarters. He reported that last weekend was the grand opening of Brooksville Regional Hospital and he was most impressed with the operating room and emergency room. It is a magnificent hospital.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that a case of the West Nile Virus is in Pasco County. Is Hernando County doing anything, as far as, any type of prevention against this virus?

Dr. Blackburn stated that there is no way to prevent the virus, but early detection and diagnosis will help. There will be a Countywide study on the virus, whereas, mosquitoes are caught and then determined whether they are infected or not.

Commissioner Raborn asked with the growth in the area, is there any talk about a trauma hospital in the area?

Dr. Blackburn reported that a lot of those trauma designations are mandated by the State and the hospital would have to apply to become a trauma center and show that everything the State mandates are in place. One problem is having the personnel to receive the patients.

Commissioner Perreira stated that the hospitals in the County are not ready to provide 24-hour service, which is needed for a trauma hospital. To have a trauma hospital, there are a lot of requirements.

Dr. Blackburn stated that he feels with the new hospital it will attract a wide variety of specialist, whereas, before they may have never considered coming into the area.

Commissioner Raborn stated that he understands it takes a lot to become a trauma hospital. He feels that it can be a heartbreak sometimes to the citizens of the community when a family member is flown out of the area and the family to drive to Tampa. Hopefully, in the near future a trauma hospital can open up in the area so they don't have to Bayflight people out of the area.

Chief Morrison stated that in discussions with administration of the two different hospitals in the area, the hospitals have been expanding and looking at a level-2 trauma center.

Commissioner Raborn stated that this would be an vested interest to the community.

The Board further discussed trauma hospitals.

The Board thanked Dr. Blackburn for his report.

E. Report on Hurricane Response

Chief Morrison informed the Board that the Department sent a Shift Commander and 2-Paramedics with an ambulance to the Hurricane Response in Louisiana and Mississippi for 1-week. There have been no additional requests for help. A Department Lieutenant who works at a local hospital as a Supervisor on his days off went with a team of nurses to the Louisiana area, which was good for him to work in that arena. All went well, and the Department is going through the paperwork to recover any expenditures through FEMA. He will inform the Board once he gets everything together.

Chairman Panozzo asked where did the employees stay once they arrived in Louisiana?

Chief Morrison stated that the first night the employees were in army tents and then sent to Gulfport and worked out of the fire station. When the employees came back they said it was an experience and it opened up their eyes to the devastation that can occur.

Commissioner Perreira said the Department also did a Boot Drive.

Chief Morrison said yes, the Union raised approximately \$8,700 for the Hurricane Relief.

Unfinished Business

A. Vote on Station-2 Project

Assistant Chief Davies informed the Board that they will be voting to approve the pre designed feasibility study for Station-2. The Board's decision for the architectural firm was Fleischman Garcia. According to the contract, at the end of a 60-day period the Department will have a blueprint for the station with a total cost of \$16,405 which will be for the first phase.

Motion

Commissioner Perreira made a Motion to move forward with the Station-2 project as Assistant Chief Davies described.

Commissioner Biro seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (5-0)

B. Vote on Health Insurance

Chief Morrison stated as explained earlier in the report, this item will be discussed next week at the Union meeting and then a time will be determined for a Board vote.

New Business

A. Capital Purchases - New Fiscal Year

Chief Morrison stated that at the Board's next Workshop, Staff will approach the Board with requisitions for Capital Purchases, which the Board has already outlined in the upcoming budget.

Comments of Commission

Commissioner Raborn had no comments.

Commissioner Biro stated that the issue of the ladder truck was in the newspapers and he wants to know if the Department is still moving forward with the purchase of a ladder truck?

Chief Morrison said yes, the Department is moving forward on the project. He informed the Board that he asked Commissioner Raborn to join the Truck Committee because of his experience. The Truck Committee is in the process of setting up a trip to visit Emergency-One's facility in Ocala. The Truck Committee will then present him (Chief Morrison) with a recommendation, hopefully, in the near future.

Commissioner Biro stated that at the last meeting they discussed Dr. Blackburn's contract, will that be presented to the Board?

Chief Morrison said yes, and reminded the Board that they directed Attorney Salzman to meet with Dr. Blackburn to discuss the contract. After Attorney Salzman meets with Dr. Blackburn he will come back to the Board with a recommendation.

Commissioner Perreira had no comments.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that there are a lot of people who are experts and well versed on the Department's need for a ladder trucks, but those people are not firefighters. It's interesting for him to see articles in the newspaper from these experts claiming what is good and not good for the Department. It would be nice if those experts would come to a Board meeting and bring some of their personal knowledge before the Board. He is curious, because the article he read, which was written on September 17th, and was so detailed that it sounded like the rest of the United States wasted their money all these years on purchasing ladder trucks.

Commissioner Raborn stated that he felt the article was well written, but he didn't think it was very well thought out. He would debate anybody on the issue of a ladder truck, because he has seen what a ladder truck can and cannot do. A ladder truck will save lives and property, which is what Spring Hill Fire Rescue is about. It's just an opinion of the person who wrote the article. It's Spring Hill Fire Rescue's job to make sure the community is safe.

Chairman Panozzo stated that he would like to straighten out something that was written in the newspaper, whereas, the Spring Hill Fire Rescue District lowered the milage to 2.65 not the County.

Open Forum

There were no comments.

Motion

Commissioner Raborn made a Motion to adjourn the Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Biro seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Chairman Panozzo adjourned the Commission Meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Gene Panozzo, Chairman

Joan E. Chiofalo, Board Secretary