



**MINUTES  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 10, 2012  
7:00 PM**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 19:00. COMMISSIONER SZYMANSKI LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. INVOCATION LED BY COMMISSIONER GORRIS.**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Agenda Item; Approve the minutes from the regular meeting on December 13, 2011.** *Commissioner Isakson made a motion to accept the minutes as written for the December 13, 2011 meeting. Commissioner Eaton seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried.*

Chief Kanzigg took a moment to introduce Mr. Klinginsmith and his daughter. Mr. Klinginsmith's wife was in an auto accident over the weekend. She was entrapped in her vehicle with it sitting on its side. Mr. Klinginsmith shared his appreciation with B shift, who responded to his wife. Chief Kanzigg issued "green sheets" to the responding shift for exemplary service on the call. Mrs. Klingingsmith is home resting and expected to make a full recovery.

Chief Kanzigg also introduced Karen Jones. She is the mother of 17 year old Whitney Jones. Whitney was involved in a serious accident a few months back. A shift responded to the call. Whitney was given very slim chance of survival let along recovery. She spent 8 days in a coma and another month in ICU. Christmas Day, on her way home from the hospital, she was insistent on going to station 37, A shift happened to be working, to thank them for saving her life. Karen shared her immense gratitude for the A shift. She mentioned that this was the first time she or her family had ever used the services of emergency responders and that her daughter would not be alive today were it not for the skill, speedy responses and the paramedic abilities of Midway Fire District.

## ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

**Agenda Item; Treasure's Report.** Commissioner Gorris pointed out that the impact fees brought in to date put us on track to double the amount budgeted which he feels is a great indicator of potential recovery. Commissioner Gorris shared with the audience that Midway Fire District lost \$50,000 in taxable value, per home, when Amendment 1 passed. The district went before the community in 2008 with a referendum asking for a change in the way Midway Fire District is funded; it failed. Cuts were put in place almost immediately including a reduction in staffing by 30%. The total department cuts equaled 30% of the overall budget expenses but the revenue has decreased by 41%, leaving a shortfall. Thankfully, due to the aggressive cuts, the district had reserve funds to pull from. Those reserve funds have been used to balance the budget for the last several years.

Commissioner Gorris shared that the district watches and tracks response time closely. The national standard is 8 minutes. It was noticed that after making the staff reductions, the response times began to tick higher; less staff to share in the tasks. Since, we have struggled to stay within the 7-8 minute response time.

Commissioner Gorris shared that he paid the federal government \$15,000 in 2011 in income taxes and \$1100 in property taxes. Out of the \$1100 paid in property taxes, only \$70 went to Midway Fire District so it made him realize that people's fights may not really be with Midway Fire District, yet Midway Fire District is the only taxing authority in which the community is allowed a vote on taxes. Commissioner Gorris reminded the audience that before Amendment 1, this district was able to pass a referendum which increased the millage by .4 mills in order to obtain Advanced Life Support services, such as Mrs. Klinginsmith received and Whitney Jones received. Firefighter/Medic Josh Ward, who responded to Mrs. Klinginsmith has been nicknamed the Angel by Mrs. Klinginsmith because he was able to climb into her crushed vehicle with her and establish an IV line long before she was freed from the vehicle. EMS personnel (ambulance) can't perform those risky tasks; it is a liability issue for them.

Commissioner Gorris addressed the audience and told them that he shared all of the above to state that he feels that he has earned the trust of the community and deserves the trust of the community. He has served on this board for 10 years and is committed to the safety of this district as well as responsible use of public funds. He informed the audience that in order to cut cost, Chief Kanzigg, in addition to being the Fire Chief and for no additional money, serves as the Battalion Chief for one of the 3 shifts. Every third day he wears a pager at all times and is on call. Many times he has spent most of the night responding to calls and then the following day performing as the Fire Chief. With that being said, Commissioner Gorris is confident that we are as efficient as we can be. Any additional cuts will be catastrophic to this department and could result in losing Advance Life Support service. The ambulances ride with 2 people, one of which will be driving. One medic alone can't perform every task needed to ensure quality care. The

national standard for ALS calls is 2 paramedics and 2 EMTs responding to a call. All but 2 firefighters are paramedics with Midway Fire District's shifts.

On a fire call, there is a federal rule (2in/2out) that states there must be 2 firefighters on the outside standing by before two can be sent in searches or for interior attack strategy, which is the most aggressive response; knock the fire down from inside.

Extrication is another example of areas that further reductions will greatly impact. The tools itself weights 60 lbs. plus the weight of each firefighters gear is about another 40-50 lbs. Most often, it takes an hour or so to free a person from a crushed vehicle. It is a call that is very physically demanding and wears on the guys quickly.

So, Commissioner Gorris feels it all boils down to a trust issue. He added that he felt he has earned and deserved the trust of the community. He has served on this board for ten years. "How do I get the trust?"; by telling his story and the story of the other board members. Chairman Dave Szymanski, at one time, was the President of the Midway Tax Watch group. He ran for election to get on the board because he felt it wasn't being handled correctly. Commissioner Szymanski speaks confidently about the need for the increase.

Commissioner Gorris shared that we have had zero turnover in 5 years and these guys are not getting raises, despite the fact that based on the talent level we have within our team, many of them could leave and make a much higher income elsewhere. That says to this board that they are making the right decisions, that Chief Kanzigg is doing the right things. Commissioner Gorris told the audience that if any of them felt they could do a better job, he would resign immediately and the remaining members could appoint one of them to the board right now.

He wrapped up by thanking the audience for their time and for listening.

*Commissioner Isakson made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report as read.*

*Commissioner Eaton seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.*

**Agenda Item; Election of board positions.** Commissioner Isakson made a motion for all positions on the board remain the same. Commissioner Gorris seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried.

**Chief's report.** Chief Kanzigg discussed the district's December 2011 business.

**Public Comment:**

Questions presented to the board:

One question presented to the board was, “Are you billing insurance companies for responses?” Several of the commissioners shared that would be double billing.

Another question was “why are we a special district?” The answer was that it was formed in the sixties, long before any current board member’s time but the assumption would have to be that there was no government in the south end of the county to attach them to at the time. There was and is a need for a department in the geographical area and the volunteer department of the City of Gulf Breeze would not be available to cover this area.

“How are the surrounding areas funded?” Answer; all are flat rate. The district went before the community in 2008 and asked for a change and it failed.

“If the referendum fails, what will happen?” The answer is not known yet, please come back in February to help.

What is the bottom line that we are asking for increase? Answer, \$.83 for every \$50,000 in taxable value.

**No further items were presented.**

**Commissioner Isakson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Eaton seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 20:17.**

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**Dave Szymanski, Chairman**

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**Date:**

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**William Eaton, Secretary**

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**Date:**