

MALABAR TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING
January 21, 2014 7:00 PM

This meeting of the Malabar Town Council was held at the Malabar Fire Station, 1840 Malabar Road, Malabar, Florida.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Steve Rivet. P&P were waived and attendees are listed:

B. COUNCIL:

CHAIR:	STEVE RIVET
MAYOR/VICE-CHAIR:	CARL BEATTY
COUNCIL MEMBERS:	JIM MILUCKY
	WAYNE ABARE
	DICK KORN, excused
	MARISA ACQUAVIVA
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:	BONILYN WILBANKS
TOWN CLERK/TREASURER:	DEBBY FRANKLIN
DEPUTY CLERK	CINDI KELLEY
TOWN ATTORNEY	KARL BOHNE, excused

Also present: Fire Chief Christopher Robinson and Asst Fire Chief Dan Welton, Lts. Hooker, Fuller, Barkley and Aliano.

C. WORKSHOP ACTION:

Chair asked Chief to start by introducing the Fire Dept personnel. CM Jim thanked the fire fighters present and said he would also like introductions. Jamie Ames, Malabar resident, FF, member for 7 months, will be an EMT; John Lindsey, Malabar resident, FF/EMT member for 1 year; Russell Myers, FF/EMT, will be Paramedic, member for 4 years; Dan Welton, Malabar resident, Asst Chief, member for 10 years; Joseph Hooker, Lt., volunteer for 2 years, paid Lt., for 4 years; Paul Aliano, Lt., from Indian River County, paid Lt. for 3 years; Grant Fuller, started at 15 as Explorer and is now 21, paid Lt. for 2 years, is finishing Paramedic schooling; Scott Rodefer, FF/EMT.

Chief stated he is learning from Fire Dept personnel what is working and what is not and has made adjustments accordingly. He went over vehicles:

Engine 1 is the primary truck, a 1997 American Eagle E1, has 3739 hours on it and has been in shop more than it is in service. Palm Bay Fleet Services does maintenance. It was in an accident at some time and bent the frame and wears tires out. It needs front right tires.

The reserve Engine is a 1991 E1 Hush which failed the pump test last year so they did not get it tested this year because they knew it would fail again so it is not certified. It is still a useable vehicle.

Ladder truck is running but has pump issues. It has 101,347 miles and 123,237 hours on it. Chief wanted to have this first WS in order to review the equipment, building, assets and staffing at the Fire Dept. He hopes they can have another workshop in February to further discuss options. He has heard the concerns about sending the ladder truck to a medical call and understands their question but it has to be run and operated daily to remain serviceable. But he has directed personnel it is not to be the first choice for medical calls. It can be run separately as need to keep it operational.

Squad 99 is a 2007 and has 24,000 miles and 1500 hours. It is a primary piece to send out for medical calls and accidents. It is in good condition, has a small tank and pump. It could just use a tune up.

Chief explained that EVOC training is required in order to operate certain emergency vehicles. EVOC is emergency vehicles operation course. His perspective is to have personnel start on the smaller vehicles and get proficient and then move up to larger vehicles. He does not want to force them to drive large

equipment they are not comfortable but also doesn't want to let the unfamiliar persons that are eager to drive the large vehicles before they are completely proficient on all the operational steps.

Chief said the big white vehicle is a water tanker. It is not a new vehicle; it is a 2009 and has 9451 miles and 511 hours. It is the most versatile vehicle as it can respond to accidents, brush fires, and emergency calls.

The brush trucks in the annex building are a 1962 and a 1973. They are critical to fighting brush fires and are in need of replacing. They can work with DOF. These trucks require trained personnel. He has seen Palm Bay's brush trucks and they could perhaps get one of their brush trucks when they buy new ones.

Brush 99 is a 550. It has 8000 miles and 500 hours. Currently it has no issues. Chief's vehicle is a 2000 Jeep and it is running good. The Crown Victoria has 102,000 miles. TA said this vehicle does not really fit the Malabar terrain. It should not be replaced with similar vehicle. Need something suitable for this terrain.

Chief said they need to remove the vehicles that are not serviceable. If they replace primary and secondary responders they should not keep the old ones; sell them. Chief explained that a new fire truck, suitable to our terrain, with the outside compartments for gear and half the weight would cost half of what was spent on the ladder truck. TA asked Chief to explain why gear should be kept in compartment instead of cab. Chief explained that the gear should be cleaned after every fire and have the carbons extracted. They have been found to be carcinogenic and if carried in cab then FF is breathing in that. Chief is proposing to look for a grant that will get them their own extractor machine to wash the gear, one set at a time so they don't have to ship it out like they do now.

CM Jim said we just did a similar analysis for the purchase of the used dump truck. It wasn't brand new but it was much newer than what we were using. CM Marisa regarding the trucks being moved in and out of the bays; she understands the need to operate them. Chief agreed that the ladder truck does not need to be sent to a medical call. But it still has to be operated so it can be relied upon when needed. It can't sit idle. Its presence is why we have the ISO rating that we have. CM Jim asked if we are keeping track of maintenance costs. Chief said all the vehicles except the brush trucks are maintained by Palm Bay Fleet Services. Brian Vail takes care of the brush trucks to keep them operational.

Asst Chief Dan said they have to keep the vehicles in a state of readiness. Having them sit idle until needed and then they don't work is not acceptable. They need to be ready when the Department is toned out. CM Jim asked if they also train on the hose, pulling it, directing it, etc. Yes they do; it is nozzle training.

Chief: re: gear he has gone through the records and most of the gear is past the NFPA expiration of 10 years for use in structure fires. Some others are 7, 8, and 9 years old. Repairs/replacement and maintenance program can help it last but it has to exist. We can use the old jackets for the new guys to train or do extractions but not structure fires. He showed a new jacket and one that is 13 years old. They need to have the on hand volunteer personnel and Lts. with certified gear to respond to structure fires. Chief asked Lt. Aliano to get his jacket from locker. It is 13 years old. He is a Lt but could not enter a structure fire with this gear. Chief explained that uncleaned and out of service gear is actually like a match and actually can become the combustible material.

CM Steve asked how much a full set of gear would cost. Chief deferred to Asst Chief Dan who said \$600-\$2000.00. Chief said he has been checking and we can piggy back on contracts other counties have and get a better price for the type of gear we need. We need to be budgeting for 5 sets a year and not doing bulk purchases as it will all expire at same time. If we planned for 5 sets each year then after 5 years they would only need to maintain what was expiring and they could use the older stuff for training. Chief said Town could apply for financing or apply for a grant or just budget for the replacements over time.

Chief then explained about the Scott Packs (self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)). They were bought with grant funds in bulk and have all now are in need of replacing. When they train on air, they then have to take pack out of service and send out to fill and recertify. If they could get equipment here so they could refill themselves then they wouldn't be out of service. Ours are from stone age. He circulated a jacket for audience to feel weight; then a scot pack and then said they weight of the hose on top of that. He said if they had composite bottles they would be much much lighter. But all the ones the Town has have reached expiration of 15 years. The aluminum bottles are very heavy and when used have to go out of service until refilled and recertified.

Someone asked how many complete sets of gear the Fire Dept had that was in service? Lt Fuller said we have 8 full sets. Chief's goal is to suggest they budget to buy 5 sets a year. For the bottles, they could skip one year of gear purchase and buy some bottles, but don't buy in bulk. They need to do pre-planning and project their needs and then communicate that to Council. Chief is looking for a grant to get a new extractor tool. He passed around the extractor they are using and Council got to feel how heavy it was. Consider that weight on top of the gear and the scott pack. He would like them to be able to clean their equipment here in house and save the shipping costs. TA asked what composite bottles cost new: \$600-\$1000.00 each. TA explained to Council that up until the economy went south they would budget 20K for grant matches for items the Fire Dept needed.

Chief said the Malabar Fire Dept provides a service to the Town and with no intent to cause fear, they are one incident from a critical response. The Council needs to give him their expectations so he can provide suggestions on how to meet those expectations starting with staffing and equipment.

Chief said that in a typical volunteer fire dept there is no one at the station and when the alert goes out the volunteers respond to the fire house and jump on the equipment. At Malabar it is more like a combo paid/volunteer department as we have a career oriented staffed department. The Volunteers have put in a combined 21,000 hours of volunteer hours. Malabar provides R1 response. They know the brush trucks and how to fight wild fires. They could easily step up to BLS or ALS, but do we need that? The County and Palm Bay are both ALS (Advanced Life Support) meaning they can dispense medications. The County does all the transport. Malabar as 1st Responders can do vitals and assessments and stay with patient and do pre-care until County ambulance arrives. ALS requires that the Department have 24/7 coverage with two paramedics/FF. Both County and Palm Bay will respond to mutual aid. The Malabar Fire Dept is really a Fire and Rescue Department. They respond to more accidents, extrications, medical calls than fire calls. These folks are ready to go.

Chief said in Council's consideration keep in mind that if they choose to go with the County or Palm Bay they will be giving up local control. After they take over they could just as easily decide they don't want to use this fire house and move the department elsewhere. Re: buying used equipment that CM Jim suggested; he supports that but acknowledges that when you do that you are buying someone else's problems. Chief said they can get a new, lighter truck, better equipped for Malabar's needs at a fraction of the cost of the ladder truck we bought. He reiterated that they all have to work together to get it done but if Council gives him their expectations, he will give them options on how to accomplish them. Chief said at his first staff meeting he heard of building permits for two new homes of 9,000sf each being submitted. Do you want one guy on an old truck responding? He told a structure fire statistic that states that a house fire will double in size every two minutes. He wants to protect the FF so they can protect the Town. He agrees with downsizing and reducing the amount of vehicles. Chief said that he will have the End-of-Year Report at the Council meeting on Feb 3 and will give him the opportunity to go over the staffing and equipment needs they have.

Chair said the idea of maintaining the current equipment is not an option. Council needs to know what is needed. They need to know how much they need over the operating budget to get there. Council needs to decide on expectations and then commit to meeting them. CM Jim said the Chief will provide inventory of vehicles and equipment with age, expiration terms, NFPA requirements, etc. Chief said yes, he has already started working on that.

Chief relayed the recent accident on Hwy 1. FF Ames had just come off probation and would have been alone at station but Lt. Aliano decided to stay with him. They were able to respond quickly and efficiently and professionally.

Chair said the Fire Dept is so much more professional than in years past and it continues to get better and better. Chief is working with the training schools to get our name out there. As our volunteers move into fulltime paid positions they can then speak well of Malabar on how well they are treated and how much they learned. In that manner he would hope to have ten good guys for two each before they move on. It is the nature of a hybrid department. Chief will rebuild the local community and try and get more local volunteers. He will be suggesting raising the stipend amount and/or adding another person. He also has stopped the policy of chasing out those volunteers that can't commit to 48 hours a month. This is a volunteer position. People have jobs and families and responsibilities. He would rather have a volunteer that can give him a consistent ten hours a week to having no one.

CM Marisa suggested Chief also prioritize the list. He will have it. He has been working on it since he started.

Mayor said that he was here way back when they paid Palm Bay to provide us coverage in Malabar. Then went to County and then Malabar decided to form their own Volunteer Fire Dept. It started out with just Malabar residents, mostly husband and wife teams. He recalls sometimes the women would respond in high heels and jump into their gear. He has also seen these volunteers driving the Harbor City Volunteer Ambulance when it was operating. Chief said he will try and get back to local volunteers and capitalize on what we have here.

CM Jim said for the Feb 3 meeting could Chief also include the LOS (level of service) required in order to respond to an accident, a brush fire and what training is required to handle a structure fire.

TA also said that Council had said that Chief didn't need to attend Council meeting, just submit a written report. The Chief wants to attend or have Asst Chief attend. TA said that is the opportunity to have questions answered directly.

CM Marisa had to be excused – leaving town in early morning. 8:36PM.

CM Wayne asked for picture of Lts, Asst Chief and Chief. They asked to defer until they could all be in their Class B uniforms. CM Wayne also asked that he had posed a number of questions in his report to Council on the assessment he did on fire coverage. Could Chief provide answer to those questions as well for the next meeting? Yes.

Mayor said he would support the purchase of the machine so they could clean the gear after each fire. Chief said once we have the minimum, they may consider skipping a year of replacing gear and put that money towards a new Hirsh tool. Without any further discussion the workshop was adjourned.

D. ADJOURNMENT at 8:40PM

BY:

Mayor Carl A. Beatty

ATTEST BY:



Debby K. Franklin, Town Clerk/Treasurer

2/3/14
Date Approved