

MALABAR TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING
MARCH 11, 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:

MAYOR/VICE-CHAIR:

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

STEVE RIVET

CARL BEATTY

JIM MILUCKY

WAYNE ABARE

DICK KORN

MARISA ACQUAVIVA

BONILYN WILBANKS

DEBBY FRANKLIN, excused

CINDI KELLEY

KARL BOHNE, excused

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

TOWN CLERK/TREASURER:

DEPUTY CLERK

TOWN ATTORNEY

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

C. WORKSHOP ACTION:

1. Follow-up on Review of Fire Department Assets and Coverage Capabilities

Rivet advised Council that this is an informal session to go over the Fire Department's assets and coverage capabilities. Chief Robinson gave an overview of the stats and number of calls at this time. He stated that everyone at the Fire Department is going above and beyond for coverage.

Chief Robinson went over the fleet and the over-all condition of the equipment. There is a major issue with Engine 299 and the Ladder truck. He gave the recommendations for each piece of equipment. These two pieces of apparatus are at a point where you will spend a lot of money or cut the losses and replace them. Since Palm Bay Fleet has taken over the maintenance of the equipment, we have a better understanding of the conditions of each piece. Wilbanks stated that we started the contract with Palm Bay in April of 2012. Korn asked how Council knows what piece of equipment goes with what figures. Chief Robinson gave a brief description of how he marked the equipment and costs.

At this time, it was asked what CPM means; Chief Robinson stated he didn't know what this is and he would have to find out and advise Council. Korn asked if the emergency lights had been replaced. Chief Robinson advised Council that they have been but there are continuous issues with the replacements as water is continuing to get to the connectors and causing erosion conditions. We will be going to LED light systems and it will stop occurring again. Once water gets back into the sockets, the lights continue to short. Abare stated that the maintenance items seem to be thousands of dollars. He asked what was budgeted for maintenance. Wilbanks stated she thought it was \$20,000; Chief stated it's about \$15,000. Wilbanks excused herself to get her budget book from her office. Upon returning to Council Chambers, she reported it is \$15,000 that was budgeted.

The discussion turned to the structural fire fighting gear. Chief Robinson stated that the standards have changed and he will need to do more research on this. Anything 10 years old or older must be retired. Anything over this time cannot be used on interior structure fires. Abare asked if it could be used for outside fires. Chief Robinson stated that over 10 years is not good because there is no protection for the fire fighters. Korn stated that 2008 was the last time gear was purchased. Wilbanks stated that we had grant funds coming in. We have received a grant this year but we need to pay our match portion. This

will be presented to Council at the next RTCM. Chief Robinson stated that the safety of the fire fighters should be paramount; should not allow 7 or 8 years to go by without purchasing gear ever again. We should be ordering 5 sets each year along with the Scot bottles. If we can do the match soon, we can go for another grant before fiscal year 2014. In fiscal year 2014, we will have 5 sets in the budget. We hope to be out of the 10 years or older and have the equipment to replace the guys with the qualifications. Then we will outfit the new guys as they come in. Korn stated that a friend in New York; has same type of fire department, they purchase new gear every 3 years. Abare stated that if there is a need, we do have the funds in reserves. Rivet asked about the safety issue of the equipment on the sheet. If it is at the point of hazard, we will try to get them newer equipment. We will keep moving forward until we correct all the actions; we are going forward from here. We don't have any equipment that is better than fair. Another expenditure is the cost of cleaning the gear because we don't have the means to do it ourselves. He went to a trade show where they were asking for old gear to be donated and using the equipment to be recycled into other equipment. Wilbanks stated that the old equipment will be brought to Council as surplus equipment as we just can't get rid of it.

Acquaviva asked about the cleaning of the equipment. Are they getting cleaned like they should be? Chief gave a brief overview of the cleaning process. An extractor would cost \$9,000; this would be an expenditure that could come to Council because we don't have the means to clean the equipment that is in fair condition. The guys would be safer health wise if we could get it cleaned regularly. This will be in fiscal year 2014's budget. By the time we begin buying new gear, it will be fiscal year 2014. Wilbanks stated that they have the numbers; Welton stated that each set of gear is sent out for repair and it must be cleaned before any repairs can be done because the people on the receiving end cannot be exposed to the carsonigents. This should be done once a year and after every structure fire. Acquaviva stated that the Town could get into purchasing the gear and then it not be taken care of; if this happens, it defeats the purpose; Wilbanks stated it affects the warranty as well. Wilbanks gave information about a washer/dryer set purchased for cleaning the equipment. It turns out, it was a very good price but it was not the correct equipment to take care of the equipment as it was a household set.

Mayor Beatty asked about the gear and what it would take to get it up to speed. Chief, again, gave an overview of the condition of the gear and what would need to take place. Rivet stated that we would purchase 5, 5 and 5 which was described when the Chief started speaking to this. Chief Robinson stated the grant is for 5 but if we budget for 5, we could get 10 sets. Welton is good with applying for grants. Wilbanks stated that a response to a grant application was received within 36 hours and it was approved. Korn asked the Chief what makes the gear lose its life. Chief Robinson and Welton gave an overview of the gear lifespan.

The discussion turned to the SCBA bottles. Chief Robinson stated that the aluminum bottles have no expiration date as long as they pass the hydro testing. The composite bottles have to be decommissioned after 15 years. We will be digging deep to get a grant to get back up to what is needed. Milucky asked about the weight difference between the aluminum bottle and the composite bottle; which it is very heavy. If the bottles are not cleaned regularly, it can be very dangerous as the carsongenes will get absorbed into the skin. At some point, you become a match stick if the gear isn't cleaned regularly. Milucky asked where the bottles get refilled at. Welton stated that Hatt's Diving does this with inspections to make sure the bottles are good. With the bottles out of service, it means there are people out of service until they are refilled. If we can get a larger grant, the question would be who else we could service with our equipment at the fire house. We could go in with three or four departments and use the same grant. It is very tough with limited man power during the week to get the bottles refilled. Korn asked if there is a requirement for people to take the bottles to be filled; meaning could citizens of the Town take them to Palm Bay to assist the personnel at the fire house. Mayor Beatty asked if the bottles are interchangeable with the aluminum and the composite bottles. Chief Robinson stated that in fiscal year 2014, the budget will have three bottles budgeted to get the program started. Then when we have everything up to date, we will be able to trade them out. Rivet asked how many hours of air the bottles hold. Chief Robinson stated that it ranges from a half hour to an hour; depends on the person using the bottle.

Chief Robinson stated he provided information with the end of the year report. He is working on the man hours for each incident so he can account for what is being done at each scene. We service the taxpayer however they need and worry about it later. The question was asked as to how much more will be needed with an ALF. Chief Robinson stated that the fire department is not really a fire department; it is becoming a service department. When a call is received, the guys go out and assist as needed. It was asked if the fire personnel have had to go out for non-emergency calls. Chief stated that this has happened; they assist the residents and then explain to them they will help but this was not an emergency. We don't have "frequent flyers". Lt. Hooker stated that if a resident were to call the station and ask that they be assisted with grocery shopping or any such activity, the guys will be happy to help them but when they are not on shift. This type of activity would be done on off hours for the residents.

The in-depth graph of incident stats by the hour of the day can be reviewed by Council. This graph will show when the peak times for calls are. In 2013, we had 23,493.37 volunteer hours; the time fluctuates. While the Chief is getting his certifications, he can be a set of hands. We need to figure out the best case; the most efficient way to have 24/7 coverage at the station. Milucky stated that while you are looking at the surrounding areas for this information; don't use Satellite Beach as a benchmark. The budget for the fire department is \$300,000; Chief stated it is \$250,000. We need to look at the additional funds to have a workable, intelligent plan for the equipment up to \$300,000. He doesn't know the amount of the cost of the trucks; research was done to get a comparison at a base level. We can replace the equipment we have with the right equipment and downsize and still keep our ISO rating as we have it.

Council Member Acquaviva left the meeting at 8:15 pm.

If we can get the department to have 24/7 coverage, it will be cheaper for the Town. We will not have to deal with Kelly days. We will bring more people in and get some type of even flow going. We will increase the overall participation of the volunteers. If we can't do this, we will look at adding per diem people. Rivet asked what Kelly days are. Chief Robinson stated that in order to avoid paying a Kelly day; it is a comp day, you get paid 176 hours per month for fire and police. It is not based on a 40 hour work week. You pay the person to be off for 8 hours; one 8 hour day will fall into the 176 hours.

Chief Robinson stated that the Lts. are preparing their resumes and evaluations to get ready for the interview process with him and one other person. They are moving forward with the potential of this program coming forth. They will have a clear expectation of what is coming and their responsibilities and their responsibilities will also be fine-tuned. Abare stated he likes the idea of 24/7 coverage with a Lt. being on shift. Chief Robinson stated that they will be moving forward with leadership programs and management trainings. He hopes to pull in more volunteers; it will not be a "free for all".

Milucky stated that he is very supportive of having the fire department; he is really pleased with the process and the amount of information that has been provided to Council. Korn stated that he shares Milucky's concerns for the Town and for the maintenance of the equipment. It is a very important part of the community. Korn also asked that the Lts. be introduced since he was not at the first workshop. Chief Robinson introduced Lt. Hooker, Lt. Fuller and Lt. Barkley; Lt. Aliano had another obligation to attend to tonight. Korn stated that he would like to see the community get involved; why not have an auxiliary of people who could go and get the bottles filled and help with an HVAC. Chief Robinson stated that they are attempting to rebuild around the community. They will also be trying to bring in a training program for schooling at the fire house at a reduced cost. They are looking to rebuild the organization.

Milucky stated that he has a request for staff. He would like staff, in a backwards way, back-flush the figures into the budget to see what the mileage rate would have had to be to accommodate all the needs of the fire department. Wilbanks stated that there was a referendum question asked of the voters and it was very clear that the people want their own fire department**.

****NOTE:** AT CM Milucky's request the Clerk researched the statement made by the Town Administrator re: referendum. It was determined that it was a resident survey with 26 questions that the Town put out in August 2011 to gauge the citizens concerns/interests of the Town from budget, Fire Dept, Roads and Drainage and parks. Out of the 123 responses received, 85 rated keeping the fire department as a priority. This was not a referendum question.

D. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss; **MOTION: Milucky/Abare to adjourn meeting.**

VOTE: All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at **8:45PM.**

BY: Steve Rivet

Steve Rivet, Chair

TRANSCRIBED BY:

Cynthia D. Kelley
Cynthia D. Kelley, Deputy Town Clerk

ATTEST BY:

Debby K. Franklin
Debby K. Franklin, Town Clerk/Treasurer

4/2/14
Date Approved