

Matlacha/Pine Island Fire Control District
Minutes for Workshop
January 23, 2023

Call to Order: Commissioner Player called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Invocation: Commissioner DeLacey led everyone in the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner Player led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Commissioner Player, Cammick, DeLacey and Price were present. Chief Mickuleit, Assistant Chief Davis, Assistant Chief Allen, Administrative Assistant Miles.

Public: Bill Burges, Joe Hernandez, and John Pine.

Business:

1. **Open Board Seat Interviews:**

Bill Burges: Mr. Burges introduces himself, a long-time resident of Bokeelia. He explains his extensive financial background. He believes that the District has done a great job preparing financially, however given the financial strain that the next few years will bring with the reduction in taxable value, there will need to be a more significant focus on the District's finances in the current year.

Joe Hernandez: Mr. Hernandez introduced himself, a resident of Saint James City. He briefly reviews his work history and extensive fire service/rescue experience with the Board. Mr. Hernandez feels that his extensive knowledge of the fire service would be useful to the District.

John Pine: Mr. Pine introduces himself, a newer resident of Saint James City. He told the Board of his extensive career in the fire service. He has held just about every position from Firefighter to Chief. He believes that his background gives him good insight into the needs and budgeting of the District.

Commissioner DeLacey had questions for each of the applicants about if they felt that anything should change with the way things are currently being run. All three applicants felt that there were no needs for major changes and that the current board has done a great job.

Commissioner Price asked the three applicants "why is the fire district one of the largest portions on your property tax bill?" Mr. Burges responded that the main reason is that the expenses of the District are what they are and given the rural population there are less tax payers to share the cost. Mr. Hernandez responded by explaining that given the significant amount of property on the island that is agriculture and the small amount of commercial property that the District's taxable property value is significantly less than those of other districts. Mr. Pine agreed with both responses and added that there is only so much that you can do to reduce costs without reducing the level of service.

Commissioner Cammick asked each of the applicants why they didn't run in the most recent election. Mr. Pine just recently moved to the island in June of 2022, therefore he was unable to run. Mr. Burges and Mr. Hernandez were both just unprepared to run at the time of the election.

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Commissioner Player thanked the applicants and explained that a decision would be made at Wednesday's regularly scheduled meeting.

2. Hurricane Ian Update:

The Chief gave a quick update on the status of the Station repairs and will provide more info in Wednesday's meeting.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Price moved to adjourn. Motion seconded by Commissioner DeLacey.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Miles
District Administrative Assistant

Board Secretary