

MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP
THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
CEDAR HAMMOCK FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT

September 8, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 09:00 a.m. The following commissioners were present: Beth Byron-Reasoner, William M. Espy, Steve Litschauer, Marnie E. Matarese, and John H. Stevens.

QUORUM

Chief Falcone confirmed there was a quorum. The meeting was properly advertised.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

- **Discuss the annual evaluation process for the Fire Chief.**

Commissioner Byron-Reasoner initiated the conversation and discussed the process of an annual evaluation of the Fire Chief. She presented a draft Fire Chief evaluation form for the group to review. Her original intent was for each Commissioner to complete an annual evaluation of the Fire Chief to outline goals and objectives for the next fiscal year. The evaluation period would be September through August annually. She continued that this was a new process that was being initiated because of the requirements of Chief Falcone's employment agreement.

Chief Falcone explained the current annual evaluation process including that all CHFR employees receive evaluations annually in December by their immediate supervisor. Division heads review all evaluations and submit completed documents to the Fire Chief for review before final retention in the employee's personnel file. Chief Falcone recommended that staff update the current policies of the District to meet any new directions from the Board.

Chief Falcone continued to explain that if each commissioner completed an evaluation for him, he would be able to meet with each commissioner individually to review the evaluation prior to the public meeting where the evaluation and goals and objectives would be approved by the entire Board.

Commissioner Litschauer asked about numerical scale of 0-3 versus 0-5. All commissioners agreed that a point system could be used as part of the evaluation system numerical scale. They discussed the importance of point values. The discussion led to the understanding that on a scale of 0-3 that a score of 2 would be consistent with the Chief meeting the job description.

The general discussion proceeded to cover the workings of the evaluations itself. With commissioners using their past experiences to suggest ideas to be brought together to make an effective evaluation.

Commissioner Stevens mentioned the possibility of holding future workshops to work as a group. The group then discussed the legal process of holding public meetings in the “Sunshine” versus holding meetings in the “Shade” The board agreed that legal counsel would be a good resource for direction on working with each other and the Fire Chief through the evaluation process. The board mentioned that they would ultimately vote on the evaluation. The vote and the evaluation document would be public records.

Chief Falcone discussed the scheduling for the evaluation meetings that would not interfere with a busy meeting schedule during the Public Hearing required during the month of September.

General discussion on how the Commissioners would obtain perspective on the Fire Chief’s performance. Commissioner Litschauer mentioned the importance of being aware of the District’s business and how that will provide valuable information throughout the year. Additionally, Commissioners would be able to engage with stakeholders to discuss the Chief’s performance. Chief Falcone confirmed that Commissioners could speak to District employees as long as they did not create a supervisor subordinate environment and reminded the Commissioners that they only directly supervise the Fire Chief.

Discussion ensued on how Chief Falcone would know what the results of the board’s evaluations were and what goals and objectives he was to follow. One solution could be that the Chairman of the Board complete the final evaluation and goals and objectives based on the feedback of the other Commissioners. This single evaluation, including goals and objectives for the next fiscal year would be brought before the Board for consideration and final vote at the August Board meeting. This evaluation would be what goes into the Fire Chief’s personnel file and what he would be held responsible for.

- **Establish goals and objectives for the Fire Chief.**

The group reviewed the document presented by Commissioner Byron-Reasoner to create the Goals and Objectives. Per Chief Falcone’s employment agreement needs to be completed 30 days after the agreement went into effect on August 22, 2025, unless otherwise determined by the Board and the Fire Chief.

Through general discussion opinions differed on what these goals and objectives could potentially look like. One thing that was agreed upon was four major topics that the goals and objectives would be relevant to: infrastructure, personnel, financial management, and personal improvement.

Chief Falcone shared his draft goals and objectives relating to infrastructure, personnel, and financial management. The Chief explained how the goals and objectives are tied directly into the duties and responsibilities of the Chief as well as the yearly regular objectives of the District. The group discussed them but could not come to an agreement.

The Board discussed the review of the Fire Chief’s job description as part of the evaluation process and the development of the goals and objectives.

Commissioner Espy requested digital copies of the draft documents presented so that he could work on a revised draft to present to the Board. Chief Falcone advised that he would disseminate all documents with each of the Commissioners individually via email.

Commissioner Litschauer asked if staff could create a date line for annual tasks such as audits, budgets, taxes, etc. Chief Falcone acknowledged the request and advised that staff would start

working on it.

Commissioner Byron-Reasoner expressed the need to extend the 30-day window. She mentioned that it would possibly need to be extended to 90 days. The 90-day time frame would take the Board through the November 20 Board meeting. She also discussed naming Commissioner Espy as a potential liaison for the Board to work with Chief Falcone through this process.

No decisions were made and the Board agreed to discuss it further at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. No further discussion was had on the subject.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Byron-Reasoner-N/A

Commissioner Stevens-Chief Falcone is doing a good job.

Commissioner Matarese-N/A

Commissioner Litschauer-mentioned that the workshop produced healthy discussions, and he appreciates the work done by Commissioner Byron-Reasoner and Chief Falcone.

Commissioner Espy- N/A

NEXT MEETING DATE

September 18, 2025 – Public Hearings

ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION: Commissioner Litschauer moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:00p.m.
Commissioner Matarese seconded the motion. The motion passed
unanimously (5 - 0).**

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED

Vice Chairman Marnie Matarese

