

**Regular Meeting and Public Hearing Minutes of the
Board of Commissioners
Cedar Hammock Fire Control District
August 20, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order by Chairman Litschauer at 6:00 p.m. The following Commissioners were present: Steve Litschauer, Bill Espy, Marnie Matarese, John Stevens and Beth Byron-Reasoner.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pastor Pavkovich led the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

QUORUM

Chairman Litschauer confirmed a physically present quorum for the meeting. The meeting was properly advertised.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Litschauer asked if there was any discussion of the Minutes or the Treasurer's report. There was no discussion.

ACTION: Commissioner Stevens moved to accept the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

SPECIAL BUSINESS

There was no special business.

RECESS REGULAR MEETING-

Chairman Litschauer recessed the regular meeting at 6:04pm. At 6:04pm the Public Hearing was opened.

PUBLIC HEARING 2025/2026 BUDGET AMENDMENT- RESOLUTION 2026-04

Chairman Litschauer called the Public Hearing to order and requested verification of the Public Notice of the Public Hearing. Chief Falcone confirmed the meeting was properly advertised.

Chief Falcone presented 2025-2026 Budget Amendment - Resolution 2026-04 of the Board of Fire Commissioners of The Cedar Hammock Fire Control District of Manatee County, Florida, to Amend the 2025-2026 Financial Budget.

Chairman Litschauer opened the Public Hearing for comments for the 2025/2026 Budget Amendment – Resolution. There were no comments.

Chairman Litschauer closed the public hearing for comments.

ACTION: Commissioner Matarese moved to adopt Resolution 2026-04, 2025-2026 Budget Amendment Resolution as presented. Commissioner Byron-Reasoner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Litschauer adjourned the Public Hearing for the 2025-2026 Budget Amendment - Resolution 2026-04 at 6:08pm.

PUBLIC HEARING / FIRST READING OF THE CEDAR HAMMOCK FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT FIRE PREVENTION CODE- ORDINANCE 2026-05

Chairman Litschauer called the Public Hearing to order and requested verification of the Public Notice of the public hearing. Chief Falcone confirmed the meeting was properly advertised.

Chief Falcone presented the first reading of the Cedar Hammock Fire Control District Fire Prevention Code-Ordinance 2026-05.

Chairman Litschauer opened the Public Hearing for comments for the first reading of the Cedar Hammock Fire Control District Fire Prevention Code. There were no comments.

Chairman Litschauer closed the public hearing for comments.

ACTION: Commissioner Stevens moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-05 Cedar Hammock Fire Control District Fire Prevention Code as presented. Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Litschauer adjourned the Public Hearing for the first reading of the Cedar Hammock Fire Control District Fire Prevention Code at 6:14pm.

Chairman Litschauer reconvened the regular meeting at 6:14pm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments.

OLD BUSINESS

Union Negotiations

Chief Falcone informed the Board that the negotiations have been completed for the 2026-2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement. Staff are putting the Collective Bargaining Agreement together for the Union members. Once received, it will be posted for 7 days for union membership to review before voting. Once the Collective Bargaining Agreement passes the vote, it will be brought to the Board for Ratification at the September 17, 2026, Board of Commissioner's Meeting.

Impact Fee Study Update

Chief Falcone explained to the Board that the company that completed our impact fee study in 2015 is no longer in business. The District has reached out to a second local company but have not been able to connect and will continue to look for additional vendors and update the Board accordingly.

Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Draft 5

Chief Falcone presented draft 5 of the fiscal year 2026-2027 budget. Chief Falcone discussed the Ad Valorem/Non-Ad Valorem revenue and budgeted use of reserves presenting a balanced budget.

TRT 644 Merger

Chief Falcone presented an interlocal agreement to allow Cedar Hammock Fire Control District to join TRT Team 636. The agreement goes into effect October 1, 2026. Chief Falcone continued that Cedar Hammock will remain in control of State asset TRT 644 until the integration is completed. Once the transition is complete then Chief Falcone will bring recommendations forward on the next steps for TRT 644.

ACTION: Commissioner Matarese moved to approve the execution of the Interlocal Agreement as presented. Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Commissioner Byron-Reasoner asked “What is the difference in a Fire Control District and a Fire Department or Fire Rescue?”

Chief Falcone explained that it’s a matter of wording in the enabling legislation for each organization and that the functions performed can vary.

Fire Chief Evaluation

Chairman Litschauer presented the completed annual evaluation, August 2025-August 2026, for Chief Falcone for Board consideration and asked for a motion to approve the 2025-2026 annual evaluation as presented. Commissioner Byron-Reasoner discussed that the Board held a workshop to perform the Fire Chief’s Evaluation and was pleased with the results of the evaluation.

ACTION: Commissioner Byron-Reasoner moved to accept the Fire Chief’s Evaluation as presented. Commissioner Matarese seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Goals and Objectives Agreement

Chairman Litschauer presented the 2026-2027 Goals and Objectives Agreement for Board consideration and asked for a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Goals and Objectives Agreement as presented.

ACTION: Commissioner Stevens moved to accept the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Goals and Objectives Agreement. Commissioner Matarese seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

NEW BUSINESS

Fire Code Appeals Board Nomination Ratification Resolution 2026-06

Fire Marshal Massella presented Resolution 2026-06. He informed the Board of two new members who have been approved by the Manatee County Fire Chief’s Association to replace two members who did not seek renewal on the Appeals Board.

ACTION: Commissioner Byron-Reasoner moved to adopt the Fire Code Appeals Board Nomination Ratification Resolution 2026-06 as presented. Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Hurricane Helene DR-4828 Closeout

Chief Falcone presented a document from the Florida Department of Emergency Management closing out Cedar Hammock Fire Rescue's reimbursement request for Hurricane Helene.

Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Financial Audit Engagement Letter

Chief Falcone presented an engagement letter from CS&L CPAs for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 financial audit. Chief Falcone updated the Board on the tentative schedule for the District to begin the preliminary audit of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 in October. The District anticipates a January audit schedule with a final report being presented to the Board before the June 30, 2027 deadline. Chief Falcone spoke about the working relationship the District has with CS&L. Chief appreciates their availability throughout the year. Chief Falcone asked the Board to approve the engagement letter and allow the District to utilize CS&L CPAs for the upcoming audit and to allow the Fire Chief to execute the document.

ACTION: Commissioner Espy moved to approve the engagement letter to utilize CS&L CPAs for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Audit and authorize the Fire Chief to execute the document. Commissioner Stevens seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Project

Chief Falcone presented two documents from FDOT with expected work on US 41 from the Bowlee's Creek Bridge to Edwards Drive.

Chief Falcone thanked the Board for their support and collaboration in ensuring the crews have adequate access to southbound traffic in front of Station 4. This type of action is a great representation of how the Board can support the District in the day-to-day operations.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Falcone presented the July report.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Matarese spoke about the citizens who spoke at our July Board of Commissioners Meeting also spoke at the Manatee County Commissioner's Meeting and expressed their concerns about short-term rentals. Chief Falcone spoke about Fire Marshal Massella reaching out to Manatee County to become involved in the potential Manatee County Ordinance regarding short term rentals in the District and setting up a meeting to discuss.

Commissioner Byron-Reasoner asked, "Is there a Fire District in Florida that is not dependent on Ad Valorem?" Chief Falcone stated that "locally, West Manatee is a fire district that is not dependent on Ad Valorem taxation and others in the State are 100 percent funded through Ad Valorem taxation".

Commissioner Stevens "Congratulations to Fire Marshal Massella and Administrative Chief Smith for completing the tax roll review. Chief Falcone, keep staying the course. Job well

done.”

Commissioner Byron-Reasoner “Are there any updates to the 9/11 luncheon?” Chief Falcone will be forwarding the information to all Commissioners for the 9/11 luncheon and obtained a headcount of those Commissioners who will be attending.

Chairman Litschauer congratulated Fire Marshal Massella and Administrative Chief Smith for a job well done completing the tax roll review. Congratulated Chief Falcone on successful Union negotiations and work with the budget amendment. Encouraged all staff to continue the good work and make the District proud.

NEXT MEETING DATE

September 3, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

Action: Commissioner Stevens made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Matarese. The motion passed unanimously (5-0). The meeting was adjourned at 6:48pm.

APPROVED

Chairman Steve Litschauer

