IONA MCGREGOR FIRE PROTECTION AND RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

DATE: August 19, 2026

6:00 P.M.

6061 SOUTH POINTE BOULEVARD

FORT MYERS, FL 33919

NOTE: THE BOARD MEETING IS BEING RECORDED AND ALL STATEMENTS MADE DURING THE BOARD MEETING ARE SUBJECT TO BEING MADE AVAILABLE TO OTHERS AS A PART OF THE BOARD MEETING PUBLIC RECORD.

NOTE: ALL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES MUST BE PUT ON THE SILENT MODE PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE BOARD MEETING AND REMAIN ON SILENT MODE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE BOARD MEETING UNTIL ADJOURNMENT.

Meeting Called to Order

Roll Call of Commissioners: Chair James Andersen (Present), Vice Chair Steve Barbosa (Present – Commissioner Andersen, 'Let the records show Commissioner Barbosa is few minutes late and is on his way.' Arrived at 6:08pm), Treasurer Paul Louwers (Present), Secretary Jason McCoy (Present), Commissioner Stephen Allen Sr. (Present)

Opening Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

Recognitions: None.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda, Including Amendment: A motion to 'Adopt Meeting Agenda, Including Amendments' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy** …Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye.

Approval of Previous July 15, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes: A motion to approve 'July 15, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **Andersen**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye.

Approval of Financial Report July 2026: Chief Financial Officer Winzenread opens the floor to questions, discussion ensues.

Commissioner Allen has questions regarding charging services and the available balances. Commissioner Allen discusses capital outlay budgeting items for the remainder of the fiscal year with the Chief Financial Officer.

A motion to approve 'July Financial Report' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **Louwers** …Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye.

Chief's Report: Fire Chief Comer discusses the Strategic Plan Annual Update, and its accepted recommendation by the accreditation authority commission with gratitude towards Deputy Chief Guzman's efforts on the Strategic Plan Annual update, then opens the floor to questions and discussion ensues.

A motion to approve the 'Chief's Report' was made by Commissioner **Andersen**, seconded by Commissioner **Allen**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye.

Attorney's Report: Attorney Pringle advises that Commissioner Allen and himself have an appointment scheduled to discuss the agreement with Wright Construction tomorrow.

DVP's Reports: DVP Jason Martin reports waiting to begin negotiations.

DVP Todd Manke reports District 7 completed their third negotiation meeting and Engineer Jon Lockwood is spearheading the Annual Memorial Stair Climb event. DVP Manke shares that this is a leading event for our county that continues to grow.

DVP Manke reports a vote was conducted on the question, 'do you support selection of Chief Guzman as fire chief without a process?'. The results of the vote were (61) sixty-one voted no and (11) eleven voted yes. Commissioner Andersen thanks DVP Manke for conducting the vote, sharing that it was at his request.

DVP Manke addressed the Board, making a statement, regarding recent discussions with District personnel concerning future District leadership. He stated that he met with personnel across all three shifts and summarized feedback received regarding a recent membership vote, communication, transparency, employee-administration relations, and leadership.

He stated that the membership vote addressed whether to support the appointment of Chief Guzman through succession or a selection process involving multiple qualified applicants. He acknowledged differing views among the membership and stated that the majority supported a selection process.

DVP Manke also recognized Chief Comer's contributions to the District and discussed the organization's upcoming leadership transition. He stated that personnel recognize the potential for difficult organizational decisions and expressed support for leadership that promotes communication, transparency, accountability, and consideration of employee perspectives.

He concluded by expressing the membership's desire for a successful leadership transition and a positive working relationship between administration and District personnel.

Commissioner Louwers commented on respect, organizational culture, communication, and the recent membership poll regarding the selection of the next Fire Chief. He expressed support for conducting a formal selection process and discussed the importance of considering differing perspectives.

He also addressed concerns that had been communicated to him regarding past personnel matters and interactions between District personnel and leadership. He stated that he had reviewed the matters raised and emphasized the importance of respectful communication and continued opportunities for personnel to provide input.

Commissioner Louwers concluded by stating that the Board would carefully consider the selection of the next Fire Chief, follow a process, and continue its efforts to provide District personnel with the resources and support necessary for success.

Public Input on Business Agenda Items [Note: Prior to Board action being taken on each of the Business Agenda Items below, members of the public will have up to three (3) minutes per person to make public comment on each of the Business Agenda Items after the Commissioners have had their discussion.]

Business Agenda Items

1. Possible Merger of Fort Myers Beach Fire District and Iona McGregor Fire District
   a. Discussion of Agenda Item
      Attorney Pringle advises there are no items to discuss currently on this topic. Commissioner Andersen requests to revise the wording of the recurring agenda item to more accurately reflect the proposed boundary modification and continue the item on next month's agenda.

   b. Public Input
      Public comment.

   c. Board Action
      None, no action.

2. Strategic Plan Annual Update
   a. Discussion of Agenda Item
      Deputy Chief Guzman presented the 2026 Strategic Plan Annual Update and reviewed the District's progress over the current five-year planning cycle. He discussed the community-driven development of the plan and its seven strategic priorities, including internal communications, personnel resources, community relations, training, physical resources, organizational guidance, and accreditation. He highlighted accomplishments achieved through the plan and discussed its role in guiding District operations, budgeting, accreditation, compliance, and long-range planning.

      Deputy Chief Guzman stated that the District is nearing completion of the current five-year cycle and will carry forward remaining objectives and lessons learned into the next planning cycle. He advised that the District plans to develop a new strategic plan with continued community and organizational input.

Board discussion included internal communication, participation in the strategic planning process, and development of the next five-year plan. Deputy Chief Guzman stated that Board input could be incorporated into future planning efforts.

b. Public Input
No public comment.

c. Board Action
A motion to adopt the 'Strategic Plan 2026 Annual Update' was made by Commissioner **Andersen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye.

3. Fire Chief Selection
   a. Discussion of Agenda Item
   The Board began discussion regarding the process for selecting the next Fire Chief, including consideration of internal candidates, minimum qualifications, and potential methods for evaluating interested employees.

   During discussion, the Board temporarily suspended this item to consider the Fire Chief Job Description as a separately added agenda item. Following action on the job description, the Board resumed discussion of the Fire Chief selection process.

   Upon resuming, the Board discussed the effect of the amended minimum experience requirement on the pool of qualified employees and the process for identifying those meeting the minimum qualifications. Discussion also included conducting individual meetings with employees prior to establishing a formal selection process, potential application and interview procedures, standardized interview questions, and the timing of the selection process.

   Following further discussion, the Board approved conducting one-on-one conversations with all Chief Officers**,** regardless of whether they currently meet all qualifications contained in the Fire Chief job description. Public comment was received regarding the qualifications contained in the job description.

   The Board further approved scheduling a special meeting, following completion of the one-on-one conversations, on a date to be determined by District Counsel, the Board Chair, and the Fire Chief, to further discuss the Fire Chief job description and selection process. There was no public comment on the motion, and the motion carried.

   The Board subsequently voted to table the Fire Chief Selection agenda item until the special meeting. There was no public comment, and the motion carried.

b. Public Input

Public input on amending the agenda to 'include a Modification of the Fire Chief Job Description', public comment from Ethan Langford suggesting opening up the Fire Position to more people.

Public input on the motion to 'conduct one-on-one conversations with employees meeting the minimum qualifications for Fire Chief', public comment from Steve Salter, retired IMFD employee, regarding the Fire Chief qualifications, noting that some Chief Officers may not meet all minimum requirements of the current job description and therefore may not be eligible for consideration.

Public input on the amended motion to 'conduct one-on-one conversations with all Chief Officers, regardless of whether they currently meet the minimum qualifications for Fire Chief', public comment from Public comment Troy Likens provided public comment, suggesting the Board consider a previous version of the Fire Chief job description as an alternative means of broadening eligibility among Chief Officers and Ethan Langford regarding the Fire Chief qualifications, suggesting the Board consider designating Fire Officer 4 as a preferred rather than required qualification to potentially broaden eligibility among Chief Officers.

c. Board Action

A motion to amend the agenda 'to include a Modification of the Fire Chief Job Description' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy**…Motion carried. Upon the motion being put to a roll call vote, the vote outcome was as follows: Chair James Andersen, yes; Vice Chair Steve Barbosa, yes; Treasurer Paul Louwers, no; Secretary Jason McCoy, yes; Commissioner Stephen Allen, yes. Motion Passed 4-1. Public input on amending the agenda to 'include a Modification of the Fire Chief Job Description', public comment from Ethan Langford suggesting opening up the Fire Position to more people.

Commissioner Andersen tables the original agenda item 'Fire Chief Selection', requests public input and opens the new agenda item for fire chief's job description.

Commissioner Andersen resumes business agenda item #3, 'Fire Chief Selection'.

A motion 'conduct one-on-one conversations with employees meeting the minimum qualifications for Fire Chief' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **Barbosa**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public comment. Call and question, all in favor aye. Public comment from Steve Salter, retired IMFD employee, regarding the Fire Chief qualifications,

noting that some Chief Officers may not meet all minimum requirements of the current job description and therefore may not be eligible for consideration.

A motion to amend the previous motion to rephrase to 'conduct one-on-one conversations with all Chief Officers, regardless of whether they currently meet the minimum qualifications for Fire Chief' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. Public comment Troy Likens provided public comment, suggesting the Board consider a previous version of the Fire Chief job description as an alternative means of broadening eligibility among Chief Officers. Public comment Ethan Langford regarding the Fire Chief qualifications, suggesting the Board consider designating Fire Officer 4 as a preferred rather than required qualification to potentially broaden eligibility among Chief Officers.

A motion that 'that after the one-on-one with the chief officers are complete, we schedule a special meeting on a date to be determined by council and the board chair and the chief to go over and discuss the chief's job description and the chief selection process' was made by Commissioner **Andersen**, seconded by Commissioner **Allen**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public comment. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public input.

A motion to 'table the Fire Chief Selection item to be rediscussed at the special meeting once scheduled' was made by Commissioner **Andersen**, seconded by Commissioner **Barbosa**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public comment. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public input.

4. Include a Modification of the Fire Chief Job Description
   a. Discussion of Agenda Item

      The Board discussed the minimum experience and preferred qualifications contained in the Fire Chief job description. Following discussion with District Counsel and Chief Comer regarding the applicable qualifications, Commissioner Allen moved to amend the minimum experience requirement from three years as a Division Chief Officer to a minimum of three years as a Chief Officer**.** The motion was seconded and carried.

      The Board also discussed the preferred Executive Fire Officer (EFO) qualification and the distinction between required and preferred qualifications. District Counsel advised that minimum qualifications must be met, while preferred qualifications may be considered at the Board's discretion as part of the overall selection process. A motion to remove the EFO designation from the preferred qualifications was made and seconded; the motion was defeated.

The Board briefly discussed additional certification requirements within the job description. No further changes were proposed, and discussion of the Fire Chief job description concluded.

b. Public Input
No public input.

c. Board Action
A motion 'a motion to change the fire chief job description education experience required from three years as a division chief officer to battalion chief and above' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public comment.

A motion to amend the previous motion to rephrase to 'minimum of three years as chief officer, period' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public comment.

A motion to, 'strike executive fire officer nfa-efo from the Fire Chief job description' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy**…Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public comment.

A motion to defeat, 'strike executive fire officer nfa-efo from the Fire Chief job description' was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **McCoy**…Motion defeated. Call and question, all in favor aye. No public comment.

Commissioner Andersen resumes business agenda item #3, 'Fire Chief Selection'.

Public Comments on Non-Business Agenda Items [Note: Any member of the public will have up to three (3) minutes to make public comments on any non-business agenda item topics.]: No public comment.

Commissioner Comments on Non-Business Agenda Items: Commissioner McCoy thanked District personnel for attending the meeting and expressed appreciation for their work and participation.

Commissioner Allen discussed communication between District personnel and members of the Board. He emphasized the importance of employees being able to communicate with Commissioners while recognizing the appropriate use of the chain of command for operational matters. He also discussed the importance of open communication and ensuring employees feel comfortable participating in the Fire Chief selection process.

Chairman Andersen thanked District personnel for attending and expressed appreciation for their professionalism, dedication, and service to the community. He discussed the Board's

responsibility to make decisions based on the information available and encouraged continued communication between personnel, their chain of command, and the Board.

Public comment from Marc Mascerelli to the Board and Citizens of the district and fellow firefighters, saying thank you for approving the process again, thank you for bringing it back and making this department great again.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner **Allen**, seconded by Commissioner **Barbosa** …Motion carried. Call and question, all in favor aye. **08:34** PM.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____