



**Fire Rescue Advisory Committee
City of Fort Lauderdale
August 21, 2023, 3pm
Fire Station #2
528 NW 2 St
Fort Lauderdale Fla. 33311**

Committee Members	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance 3/2023-2/2024	
		Present	Absent
William Brown, Chair	P	4	0
George Farrell	P	3	1
Arlon Kennedy Sr.	A	0	3
Carlos Lang	P	4	0
Jacquelyn Scott	P	4	0

City Staff

Stephen Gollan, Fire Chief
Garrett Pingol, Administrative Chief
Robert Bacic, Deputy Fire Chief, Committee Liaison
Fire Marshal Jeff Lucas
Chaplin Ron Perkins
Carla Blair, Prototype, Recording Secretary

COMMUNICATION TO THE CITY COMMISSION

None

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Roll was called and a quorum was determined to be present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 19, 2023

Motion by Ms. Scott, seconded by Mr. Lang to approve the minutes of the Committee's June 19, 2023 meeting. In a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

VICE CHAIR ELECTION

Mr. Lang nominated himself for the Vice Chair position, noting his service in the Fire Rescue Department. Ms. Scott nominated herself for Vice Chair, saying she had an advantage because she had experience working with the public and chairing other boards. Chair Brown wished to table this discussion until the fifth Committee member was appointed.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Countywide AED Program**

A member of the public said she was interested in providing AED training, in conjunction with the American Red Cross. Fire Marshal Lucas explained how the Fire Inspectors would track compliance with the new law. He said inspectors would not track compliance with AED training, only with the units being installed on premises.

Chief Pingol suggested the member of the public contact the Broward County Fire Chiefs' Association and the Fire Inspectors Association of Broward County so she could determine who was trained in Broward County.

Mr. Lang disclosed that he was part owner of an AED company and they hoped to participate in this initiative.

Chief Bacic recalled the Committee discussing getting together with STRATCOM to draft a communication regarding the October 1 start of the new AED law. Fire Marshal Lucas stated they would allow people time to make sure they had the budget to buy the equipment.

Committee members and staff discussed how the public would be alerted to the new ordinance. Chair Brown noted the City now had a City-wide magazine, which should include an article regarding this. Chief Pingol said in addition to the training requirements, every AED owner was required to register the unit with the County, which would allow a 911 call taker to relay the location of an AED in a building and help someone at the location use the device.

- **Response Times and Regional Dispatch**

Chief Pingol had created heat maps in response to the Committee's request at the last meeting. He provided a Power Point presentation, a copy of which is attached to these minutes for the public record.

Chief Pingol stated the area near the Parker Playhouse was one of the biggest challenges. Station 88, which was being built, would help improve these response times. There were also challenges in the southwest area, due to the travel routes. He discussed the fact that except for Oakland Park and Lauderdale, the City's Fire Stations were not built near borders with other municipalities.

Chief Pingol noted how important having nearby AEDs would be, since anyone could use them so much sooner than virtually any responding unit could arrive.

Chair Brown pointed out that in the current budget, there were nine additional personnel. Chief Pingol stated this would add a third person to two rescues, which would increase engine availability and decrease turnaround time. They would then have seven out of 17 rescues with three-person staffing. Chair Brown requested a matrix showing staffing and what must be added each year to get to full apparatus and staffing levels to meet future needs. This would allow the Committee to advocate for the City's future needs.

Regarding Fastest Unit Response, Fire Marshal Lucas stated over time, it was a complete wash, with other municipalities coming into Fort Lauderdale as much as Fort Lauderdale responded to other municipalities. Chief Pingol stated they monitored the impact on the city very closely.

Mr. Lang inquired about retention issues and Chief Pingol said the majority stayed, but they had lost a few to other counties. He said they had recently had 35 vacancies and were only able to fill 24 positions, out of 66 candidates. Chief Pingol said the State had been using the National Registry written exam for the qualifier, which was a challenge because it was so different from the State test. He said they were getting more creative with hiring, including using a third-party hiring company to help recruit statewide and nationwide.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Defining Workload**

Chief Bacic said it had always been a challenge to explain "workload" to the community. Response times did not capture how busy the workload was on a fire unit. There was a lot of work that went into being able to respond and they wanted the Committee to help them better define and explain the workload to the public. Ms. Scott thought people did not consider things such as Fire Station maintenance; they focused on response times. Chief Pingol said there were many things people did not know about that went on behind the scenes. Mr. Lang suggested a media team put out a series of PSAs describing a day in the life of a firefighter or what happened in response to a call.

Chief Gollan said the budget included a dedicated civilian Public Information Officer. He stated they had received great community responses from releasing the monthly numbers and he wanted to continue this. Chief Gollan did not feel that the number of calls was an adequate description of the amount of work that went into those calls. He described how call types contributed to total call times.

Ms. Scott thought it would be helpful to take a "day in the life" video to the Council of Civic Associations and post it on You Tube. Chief Gollan wanted someone from the outside to experience the day in the life of a firefighter so they could communicate to the audience.

Mr. Lang recalled making a video featuring a well-known baseball player living the life of a firefighter, which had been played at a baseball game.

Chair Brown asked that the Chaplain give a presentation at the next meeting to describe the Chaplain program. Mr. Farrell noted that people who had actually used the Fire Rescue Service were their most ardent supporters. Chief Bacic noted that the City population skyrocketed on workdays. There was also the influx of tourists that needed their services. Chief Bacic stated one of drivers of call volume was the homeless population.

COMMUNICATION TO THE CITY COMMISSION

None

COMMITTEE MEMBERS DISCUSSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:39 PM.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.