



Fire Rescue Advisory Committee
City of Fort Lauderdale
January 13, 2025, 3:00 P.M.
Fire Station #2
528 NW 2 Street
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

Committee Members	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance	
		3/2024-2/2025	
		Present	Absent
William Brown, Chair	P	7	0
Dr. Amanda Chalfant	P	1	0
Frederick Nesbitt	P	2	0
Dennis Ulmer, Vice Chair (via Zoom)	P	6	1

City Staff

Stephen Gollan, Fire Chief
 Garrett Pingol, Deputy Fire Chief
 Robert Bacic, Deputy Fire Chief, Liaison
 Jason Miller, Acting Fire Marshal
 Mike Owen, Assistant Fire Chief
 Lesly St. Fleur, Assistant Chief, EMS & MIH

Others

Carlos Lang
 Scott Bayne, Union President L765
 K Cruitt, Prototype, Recording Secretary

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was determined to be present.

Motion made by Mr. Nesbitt, seconded by Dr. Chalfant, to permit Vice Chair Mr. Ulmer to participate in the meeting via Zoom. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 9, 2024

Motion made by Mr. Nesbitt, seconded by Dr. Chalfant, to approve the December 9, 2024 minutes as amended. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chief Basic informed the Committee that an official retirement ceremony had been held for Fire Marshal Lucas that morning and acknowledged his service in the Department for almost 30 years. Further, Chief Jason Miller will be taking on those duties, and the Department is looking forward to the great things he will be bringing to that position. Chair Brown and other members of the Committee then congratulated Chief Miller.

OLD BUSINESS

o AED Data

Lesly St. Fleur, Assistant Chief of EMS & MIH, provided an overview of AED use with ROSC Rates, a copy of which is available in the public record. He began with a brief explanation of the potential impact of AEDs on patient survivability rates and a summary of all ROSC in 2024; it was highlighted that there were 57 cases where crews responded to patients in V-Fib and V-Tac.

Assistant Chief St. Fleur presented data on ROSC Rates going back to 2022. He highlighted the number of times an AED was used each year during that period, the percentage of ROSC achieved, and stressed that public education is vital to success rates when someone is in cardiac arrest in the field.

It was noted that the 2025 data was based on the fiscal year (since October 1, 2024). Assistant Chief St. Fleur stressed that it would be beneficial to educate nursing homes because in some cases an AED had not been used prior to arrival. It was later clarified that there are approximately 59 assisted living facilities in the City, and those with over 100 residents are required to have AEDs. Chief Gollan added that the number of AED applications will likely increase as the level of compliance increases. Chief Pingol suggested looking into how homes that are converted into non-medical assisted living facilities should be factored in; he added that numbers could be skewed by usage in non-skilled living facilities as well as locations that have skilled nursing on only one side, such as Willow Wood. Dr. Chalfant inquired about the reporting modalities for those facilities at which time Chief Pingol provided an overview of the current reporting process and data that is tracked, including at the County level.

Mr. Nesbitt cited an example where an AED was present but had no batteries inserted, and stressed the importance of ensuring that they are maintained on a routine basis; he expressed concern as to whether people knew where there are. Acting Fire Marshal Jason Miller highlighted language in the code that addressed AED location requirements; he acknowledged that while there is a certification process, they had not been opening them up or turning them on and stated that they would look into adding that to the action plan which will be disseminated annually.

Mr. Nesbitt suggested that the Fire Department consider developing a template that would allow condominium associations to insert AED locations which they could post in those buildings, upload to their websites, or distribute via email to help raise awareness. He also suggested that the City Commission designate a week or month for added AED usage and maintenance awareness. Chief Golan added that the

Department could look into the option of tagging on to efforts of organizations such as the American Red Cross.

Other ideas were discussed, including the possibility of developing a City application which would include AED locations within large facilities in the City. Discussion ensued on Pulse Point as a potential resource for medical emergencies. Chief Golan advised that the Department had discontinued use of that application due to a large number of false activations and miscommunications related to the homeless population. He then highlighted the relevant features of the Fort Lauderdale Community Connect program and provided examples of how forward notifications containing dispatch information is being pushed to security or other designated contacts in advance of arrival at large venues such as the Broward Center for Performing Arts and the courthouse, so that teams onsite are begin interventions as soon as possible.

Mr. Ulmer joined the meeting via Zoom at 3:25 p.m.

There was discussion on the available data showing the number of cardiac arrests by location. Chief Gollan clarified that the goal of the Department is to exceed the average national ROSC rate of 30%. He highlighted seeing a higher level of cardiac event survivability with the initial arrival of three-person units, and stated they are trying consistently to track that survivability as it shows the importance of three people on initial runs to administer medications, begin CPR, and secure an airways as compared to having two trucks respond separately; they are utilizing ImageTrend software.

Chair Brown referenced discussion in the minutes of the last meeting on building public awareness through the Public Information Officer.

- **Goal Setting and Strategic Plan for the FRAC in 2025-2026**

Chair Brown stated that the Committee should set a goal to work with Fire Rescue to build a strong AED public awareness campaign, and other programs as deemed necessary.

At 3:22 p.m., further discussion on this topic was temporarily deferred so Assistant Chief La Fleur could present on the Homeless Initiatives due to time constraints; he had a scheduling conflict. Discussion on this topic resumed at 3:44 p.m. as outlined below.

Chief Bacic advised that the strategic planning documents will be published by the first week of February and the Committee will be able to use Department goals and objectives to formulate their strategic plan once it is released.

Chief Gollan briefed Dr. Chalfant on the process behind the five-year strategic plan as it was her first meeting. He included an overview of how information from the strategic

plans of the Budget Advisory Board and City Commission played a role in the process of the Department budget.

Chief Gollan later added that administration of whole blood to further increase survivability from traumatic events is one of the goals for the year.

- **Homeless initiatives**

In response to a previous request by the Committee, Assistant Chief St. Fleur provided an update on efforts by the Department on homeless initiatives. He referenced efforts by Chris Cooper, Acting Assistant City Manager, and his team to develop a strategic plan intended to streamline the way involved agencies work together; the Department will be focusing on a target population within the homeless community so they can evaluate success there before moving on to the next group.

Fire Rescue is developing a plan around a \$500,000 grant through Broward Behavior Health Coalition which will fund a social worker and Ford 15-passenger van; the van will be instrumental in canvassing hot spots in the City and both will facilitate delivery of the social services needed to address addiction. Interviews for the social worker will begin in the short term.

Assistant Chief Le Fleur added that they are in the planning stages with the Opiate Settlement Fund; options currently under consideration include a possible expansion of the existing Community Court.

Chief Gollan stated that while the process appeared slow-moving, he felt they were making progress with the right people in place. Discussion ensued on a range of issues relative to the homeless population, and the unique challenges being faced in Fort Lauderdale. He shared that the old detention facility in North Miami that is being converted into a large homeless processing facility is impressive; Miami-Dade plans to provide medical care; evaluation, and support services with a goal of returning those individuals to the workforce. He added, however, that it is still not operational after 15 years and an investment of hundreds of millions of dollars.

There was discussion on the observed cycle of homeless persons with addictions repeatedly passing through Broward Health; this is exacerbated by people 'working' the system and a shortage of case workers. Chief Gollan said he hoped that the program would enable his staff to be external case workers that can help navigate the solution. Additionally, through the opiate addiction program, they could get help for those that have been non-compliant with their medication through access to Suboxone administration which would help with their recovery and be a more proactive solution than the reactive approach of using Zarcan.

Mr. Nesbit acknowledged what Chief Gollan is trying to do and observed that while many are trying to help, there is frustration due to a lack of coordination and some in the homeless community are refusing support services. Chief Gollan highlighted that there are many reasons for persons being homeless, so there is no one overall treatment that fits everyone; the reason that community court works so well as they help navigate specific solutions for individuals. He reiterated that the multiple hospitals, the jail, and recurring flow of patients are drivers of homelessness, so helping them navigate after they have been in one of those facilities will be key instead of just releasing them.

Chair Brown thanked Chief Gollan and his staff for their hard work and dedication.

○ **Other**

Chair Brown requested an update on the SAFER grant. Chief Gollan stated that the goal is to get trainees into the academy on March 3, 2025, and on shift by mid-May, 2025. They are currently going through the hiring process; a 10-week onboarding will follow and include five weeks of EMS and five weeks of Fire. Chief Gollan added that the Department is looking forward to getting more rescues on the road, and a more balanced workload that is better aligned with where it should be in order to provide the level of service needed.

Chair Brown inquired whether all 28 hires under the grant would be paramedics. Chief Gollan stated that some will be EMTs and on rescues; all of those individuals will be focused towards ambulances, but only the EMTs will be afforded the opportunity to drive or to work in a basic life support role. Chief Gollan added they found a lot of those individuals are already in paramedic school, or have already completed paramedic school.

Dr. Chalfant was given a brief overview of the role of the Committee and current key issues for the Fire Rescue Department by Chief Gollan and Deputy Fire Chief Pingol.

Discussion ensued on general concerns of the Department. This included the ability to continue meeting the needs of the City at the current rate of growth; the need for unified high rise training, and training between Fire and Law Enforcement to handle patient tracking and triaging for large scale emergency incidents. Chief Gollan stated that it is time to allocate funding and resources to ensure they are prepared for those situations as well as unexpected mass casualty events.

There was discussion on the risk of high fatalities as the result of wind-driven high rise fires in the Galt; it was also determined there is opportunity to educate the public and build awareness about the risk of marine fires in light of the recent fires at the 15 Street marina. Chief Gollan stated they are actively communicating and working with the Marine Advisory Board on ways to provide better protection to marinas on the river; this has included discussion on positioning a fire boat that could be utilized by Fire as well as Police to reduce potential loss in that area.

Chair Brown reiterated the importance of educating the public and community, particularly on the benefits they would gain from an EMS tax.

Mr. Ulmer commended Chief Gollan for his leadership as he believes that Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue is well trained and prepared.

It was confirmed that the strategic plan and goal setting would be addressed at the next meeting. Chief Bacic stated that he will ensure the documents are emailed to the Committee prior to the meeting.

Chair Brown suggested Members encourage the public to view Committee meetings via YouTube so they can hear what Members hear from the Department, and they also encourage their neighborhood associations to become involved.

Chief Gollan thanked the Committee for their support over the past 2 years as it enabled the Department to secure additional staffing and hit milestones they had not seen in 20 years.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

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

[Prepared by : K. Cruitt, Prototype, Inc.]