

EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Indian River County (IRC) Emergency Services District Advisory Committee (ESDAC) met on Thursday, September 18, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. in Conference Room B1-501 of the County Administration Building B, 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, Florida.

Present were members: Chairman **Colleen Joy Jeeves**; District 4 Representative; **Joseph McManus**, District 5 Representative; **Charles Martoe** (arrived at 9:35 a.m.), District 1 Representative; **Craig Fletcher**, District 2 Representative; **Toni Teresi** (arrived at 9:40 a.m.), District 3 Representative; Councilmember **Bill Fish**, City of Vero Beach Representative; Council Member **Sal Neglia**, City of Sebastian Representative; **Phil Redstone**, Town of Orchid Representative; .

Absent were members: **Francisco Magana**, City of Fellsmere Representative (unexcused); and Commissioner Liaison, **Gary Wheeler**, (excused).

Also in attendance were IRC staff: John King, Emergency Medical Services (ESD) Director; Ed Prime, Assistant Chief Support Services, Fire and Rescue; Brian Burkeen, Assistant Chief, Emergency Medical Services; and Darcy Vasilas, Commissioner Assistant, District 3. Others Present: Mark Daniels and Wayne Schasane, IRC Fire Rescue.

Call to Order (09:30)

Chairman Jeeves called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Approval of Minutes of May 15, 2008

**ON MOTION BY Council Member Neglia,
SECONDED BY Mr. Fletcher, the members voted
unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes of May
15, 2008 as presented.**

Discussion of Coordinating Efforts Between Ocean Rescue and Emergency Services

Mr. Brian Burkeen, IRC Assistant Chief, Emergency Medical Services, provided a brief history of how this agenda item came into fruition. It was after a

presentation made by Mr. McManus on how Ocean Rescue works together with Emergency Services on incident scenes. It was asked how Ocean Rescue was notified of an incident, how to get them at an incident site in a timely manner, and how do they fit into the entire rescue equation.

Mr. Martoe arrived at 9:35 a.m.

Mr. Burkeen continued the Fire Rescue division had enhanced their abilities to provide rescue and medical services in addition to those provided by Ocean Rescue by use of boats, divers, and a certified dive team for ocean rescue incidents which has been coordinated for operation in that division. In an effort to assist Ocean Rescue in incidents occurring on their beaches, a dispatch channel will be added to the Ocean Lifeguard's radio so they can hear Fire Rescue being dispatched to certain areas of the County. This will increase the notification time from the dispatcher center to the lifeguards.

Mr. Burkeen offered to provide an update to the committee after the radio dispatch channels have been programmed and operational.

Mr. McManus related a recent spinal injury had occurred outside the designated Ocean Rescue area about two weeks ago and they were able to coordinate very well with Fire Rescue in terms of transporting a spinally immobilized patient from outside the area of the beach 300-400 yards down the entranceway to the beach.

Mr. Manus continued with the reconstruction and renovation of many of the county's beaches, access for all terrain vehicles in the case of emergency rescue were now being provided.

Councilmember Fish asked if the improved dispatch channel included the cities as well and how an incident on the beach affected the lifeguard on duty as far as leaving his station. Mr. Burkeen responded there was a mechanism in place where Ocean Rescue was notified when Fire Rescue was responding to an incident and it was at the protocol in place by the Ocean Rescue as to how they responded. Mr. Burkeen also told Councilmember Fish if the City of Vero Beach would direct Fire Rescue as to how they would like notification to take place for ocean rescues, he would be happy to work with them to implement a plan.

Ms. Teresi arrived at 9:40 a.m.

Mr. Fletcher asked who the lead agency would be in cases where both Ocean Rescue and Fire Rescue were working an incident. Mr. Burkeen replied it

would be considered a “unified command system” where both agencies have responsibilities. Depending upon what the resource needs were, it would be with whatever agency would take that resource and apply it.

Mr. Fletcher asked who was the lead agency on unprotected beach areas. Mr. Burkeen responded if there was a 911 call, Fire Rescue would be the lead agency unless there was an additional resource they were unable to provide, the next agency responding would be part of a unified command system. Mr. King added at the end of the lifeguard’s workday, the Fire Rescue group would be the water rescue agency as well.

Chairman Jeeves recognized the loss of one of the veteran lifeguards, Robert Woyshner, on May 13, 2008 during a training exercise at the North County Aquatic Center. Mr. McManus added Mr. Woyshner had a massive heart attack and even with prompt medical attention, Mr. Woyshner was not able to be saved.

Mr. McManus described the paddle out ceremony held in Mr. Woyshner’s honor and the presence of the Fire Department’s Honor Guard.

Mr. Fletcher inquired if there was a physical screening program for employees of Ocean Rescue. Mr. McManus related when he applied for a job with IRC Ocean Rescue, he was not given a physical examination with the exception of having to demonstrate he could lift a 5-pound box. He had put in a suggestion that annual physicals, such as those given to Fire Rescue employees annually, should be instituted for Ocean Rescue as well. A lengthy discussion followed concerning this topic.

ON MOTION BY Mr. Fletcher, SECONDED BY Ms. Teresi, the members voted unanimously (8-0) to make a formal suggestion to the Board of County Commissioners to investigate requiring an annual medical examination for all Indian River County employees responsible for the health, welfare and safety of the public.

Mr. King stated he would investigate this matter with Human Resources.

Hurricane Preparedness for the 2008 Hurricane Season (including NOAA Radios) and How Budget Cuts Could Impact the Plans – Report on How the New Stations Fared After Tropical Storm Fay (09:56:41)

Mr. King reviewed the links found on the IRC website where a ***Disaster Preparedness Information*** booklet can be found. A copy of this booklet is on file in the Commission Office. He explained how the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) radio worked and how weather was tracked.

Mr. King reported as of October 1, 2008 the contract the County had with IRC School Board for videotaping announcements for the Emergency Operations Center will end. He anticipated by the 2009 Hurricane Season he will have equipment in place to put video feeds back on the website.

Chairman Jeeves inquired about the recently vacated Emergency Management Coordinator position. Mr. King responded the County was currently under a hiring freeze due to the poor economic conditions, but he has requested bypassing the freeze to fill the position since it was essential. Mr. King continued in the meantime, current staff will share the duties.

Discussion was held regarding the authorization of calling evacuation orders and the status of generators in major facilities. Mr. King related two Publix grocery stores have installed generators and Walmart has generators that are contained in a semi-truck. Also discussed was a state law enacted in 2007 stating a service station within a certain periphery to an evacuation route had to be pre-wired for generators but the law did not extend to the requirement that a generator had to be onsite.

Mr. McManus asked how generators could be supplied to those service stations. Mr. King explained that was the issue causing the problem – the service station had to provide their own generators.

Mr. King reported there was a proactive effort between the IRC School Board, the Humane Society, and the County to try to make one or two pet shelters. In the past the Humane Society did their best to take care of dogs and pets for Special Needs residents but that separated the owners from their pets. After studies were done following the 2004 hurricanes, many people stated they would not evacuate unless they could take their pets with them. Mr. King was hopeful pet friendly shelters could be available next year.

Mr. King pointed out another finding from the studies conducted after the 2004 hurricanes was to re-evaluate the transportation infrastructure for evacuation which would be to do the evacuations in phases due to the inadequate number of roads.

Discussion Regarding Employment in Fire Rescue regarding Drop, Training & Recruitment (10:20:16)

Mr. Fletcher asked about budget cuts for Emergency Services. Mr. King responded the instructions given to departments for preparing the FY08/09 budget, was a 15% budget cut. He continued the BCC did not cut any jobs within Emergency Services other than one Delivery Agent. He added no new vehicles were included in the budget and the capital replacement allotted was only \$152,000. Mr. King stated this was a very lean budget year with no Cost of Living Adjustment being given.

Mr. King reported Station 9 located at Roseland Road and US 1, had the construction contract approved by the BCC. He continued a station being paid for with the 1-cent sales tax to be built in the Gifford community at 49th Street and 35th Avenue was approved. The anticipated completion date was October, 2009.

Mr. Martoe asked what plans were in the works for the area on CR 512 near Vero Lake Estates (VLE). Mr. King replied he had been working with Commissioner Wesley Davis and City of Fellsmere City Manager, Jason Nunemaker, regarding getting some property east of Interstate 95 along CR 512, and to the best of his knowledge that was still in motion trying to get a developer to donate the land.

Mr. King continued the BCC had indicated the construction of the Gifford station and a station planned at 4th Street and 43rd Avenue. There was also a station to be funded by impact fees in the Capital Improvement Plan, but a site had not yet been determined. He did know VLE was one of the site locations being considered.

Chairman Jeeves inquired about the status of employees retiring in Fire Rescue and the plans for their replacements in the future. Mr. Prime reported there was 30% of the department at the 20+ years of employment milestone. He continued the median age of Fire Rescue was currently at the mid 20's to early 30's.

Chairman Jeeves asked if there were any recruiting efforts currently in place. Mr. Prime responded there were positions posted, a number of the current Fire Rescue employees were teaching at Indian River State College and kept the department updated on potential hires. He added with the IRC hiring freeze in effect, the positions in Fire Rescue were one of the few positions

posted. There were eight total current vacancies, two of those had not been approved yet for posting, but there were six new hires being screened by Human Resources.

Overview – Animal Control Division of Emergency Services (10:33:03)

Mr. King related Animal Control was part of Emergency Services, although not part of the Emergency Services District. He provided history of beginning in the 1930's, the state came out with language there should be some mechanism at the County's government structure to "curb the spread of zoological diseases" because of rabies and distemper. Animal Control resulted from that request.

Mr. King noted the Animal Control Division handled 12,000 animals in 2007, and received 80-100 calls per day. Other statistics were more than 38% of the people in IRC have one or more animals, and an average of 350 dog bites were reported annually.

Mr. King reported there were five employees in Animal Control, and the office was staffed from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. He stated Animal Control Officers were not sworn law enforcement officers.

Chairman's Comments (10:44:25)

Chairman Jeeves related she attended the 9-11 Ceremony at Memorial Island and commended the people putting it on for having a honorable presentation in memory of the people who have lost their lives and to honor those people who everyday put their lives on the line. Mr. Prime offered to have the Fire Honor Guard attend a meeting to make a Presentation of Colors under the direction of Captain Joe Earman.

Chairman Jeeves announced the updated ESDAC binders were available and suggested they be brought to all meetings.

Committee Members Suggestions/Comments (10:46:48)

Mr. Fletcher asked where the non-emergency phone number for the Sheriff's Department could be found. Mr. King provided the number 569-6700.

Councilmember Fish asked for the status of the Oshkosh truck at the Vero Beach Municipal Airport. Mr. Prime responded the first proposals came back and there was an objection by one company so the proposals were pulled. Currently Mr. Prime was working with Mr. Eric Menger, Airport Director, to get the

specifications of another vehicle which should be going out to bid in the next couple of months.

Councilmember Fish stated while there were sidewalks to and from the Wabasso Bridge, there were not any crossing the bridge making it difficult to get across the bridge on foot. Mr. Prime announced a major road project which began September 2, 2008 from US 1 to Hwy A-1-A on the CR 510 Corridor. A walkway would be widened on the bridges.

Councilmember Fish related he had asked Vero Beach City Manager, Jim Gabbard, to look into the Vero Beach Police boat which is not in good repair.

Councilmember Fish asked for feedback from the committee on a topic he had been working on through the Florida League of Cities on the Finance and Taxation Committee, which was charging for emergency services, specifically at an at-fault accident. Mr. Fletcher reported this subject came up periodically but would not work. Mr. King added IRC Emergency Services does not charge unless a patient was transported.

Public Comments

There were none.

Adjournment (10:55:35)

With no further business, Chairman Jeeves asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

ON MOTION BY Councilmember Fish, SECONDED BY Ms. Teresi, the members voted unanimously (8-0) to adjourn the meeting.