

**\*DRAFT\***

**Bonnet Shores Fire District**

Bonnet Shores Fire District Council Monthly Meeting  
Saturday, March 8, 2025  
9:00 am

**Meeting Minutes**

Call to Order

Council Chair Carol O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 9:02 am pm, led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for a Moment of Silence for deceased members of the community. In attendance were council members Leslie McKnight, Jane Duran, Faith LaSalle, Steve Danuszar and Anthony Girardi. Also in attendance were District Manager Mark Gillooly and Treasurer Laurie McCarthy. Council member John Chereskin was absent.

Urgent Business

None.

Announcements

C. O'Donnell announced that the meeting was accessible via Zoom, but that there would be no participation via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

L. McKnight **moved**, seconded by A. Girardi, to amend and approve the February 18, 2025 meeting minutes to incorporate two suggested amendments from F. LaSalle regarding the Land Trust and Public Comment. The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Committee Reports

*Treasurer (L. McCarthy):* L. McCarthy stated that because the meeting was being held earlier in the month (March 8) than usual, she did not have a full financial report. She reported that the grant reimbursement check from FEMA had arrived.

*Tax Collector:* None.

*Land Trust (J. Fandetti):* Joan Fandetti stated that she was working on causeway signage and that the Land Trust was hosting Dr. Ruhren for a walk of the new trail on March 21, 2025 at Noon.

*District Manager and Harbor (M. Gillooly):* M. Gillooly stated that he updated the website regarding Summer Camp and Kelly Beach information. Camp prices will not go up from last year. He thanked J. Duran for the effectiveness of the website.

*Social:* F. LaSalle reported that a meeting of the committee will be held in the near future.

### New and Ongoing Business

#### *BSFD Handbook*

- L. McCarthy provided the council with a draft of the BSFD Handbook and stated that she included feedback from District Manager M. Gillooly in the draft. She emphasized the importance of including references to state law for employment issues.

#### *Suggested Changes to Charter Other Than Voting Franchise*

- F. LaSalle revisited the recommendation to place a cap on year-to-year spending of four percent (4%). L. McCarthy stated that such a cap may be too restrictive for the Fire District and emphasized that the mill rate of 7 would allow an increase of our budget to nearly \$8 million. She stated that the mill rate of 7 should be lowered. Several council members expressed support for requiring voter approval for expenditures over \$50,000.00. The council members also discussed setting aside money for a capital reserve fund and grants. C. O'Donnell reminded the council members that the actuals can vary from the budget and cited the nearly \$62,000 spent last year over a six-week period because of major storms.

#### *Charter Committee Update & Discussion and Consideration of Charter Committee's Conclusion*

- F. LaSalle read a report from the Charter Committee. She stated that the committee held six meetings and four of the five committee members attended the meetings. The council had appointed Bob Patterson to the Charter Committee but neither he nor any plaintiff from the original lawsuit chose to participate as a Charter Committee member, despite the fact that the council had set aside a seat for one former plaintiff. F. LaSalle reported that the council looked in-depth at four proposals, briefly characterized as the following: (1) the existing voter list, based on the August 22, 2024 court decision, (2) the "one person per unit" proposal, which would allow each Bonnet Shores Beach Club condominium unit to vote as a unit, (3) providing a Fire District Council seat to the Bonnet Shores Beach Club, but removal of the Beach Club condominium unit owners from the voter list and (4) allowing the Bonnet Shores Beach Club to have eleven percent (11%) of the vote at an Annual Meeting. None of these four proposals received majority support from the Committee. J. Duran stated that she sought a compromise and attended a recent Bonnet Shores Beach Club board of directors meeting to make the case for a compromise. At that meeting, she stated that Beach Club board members indicated that compromise was not possible because the plaintiffs have put forward no proposed compromise and have refused to participate in this new Charter Committee. C. O'Donnell thanked the Charter Committee for its openness and commitment. She stated that the Charter Committee report(s) would be placed on the Fire District website and the council would hold a Special Council Meeting to further discuss the issue.

### Public Comment

- Elayne Casey thanked the Charter Committee for its work and asked about Annual Meeting planning.

- Robert Patterson stated that the old Charter Commission and the new Charter Committee should meet.

Adjournment:

L. McKnight **moved**, seconded by J. Duran, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was **approved** unanimously. The meeting adjourned 10:24 am.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Matthew M. Mannix  
Bonnet Shores Fire District Clerk

\*Ratified \_\_\_\_\_\*