

Bonnet Shores Fire District

Bonnet Shores Fire District Council Special Meeting

Wednesday, March 12 2025

6:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Council Chair Carol O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for a Moment of Silence. In attendance were council members Leslie McKnight, Faith LaSalle, Stephen Danuszar, Jane Duran, John Chereskin and Anthony Girardi. Also in attendance were District Manager Mark Gillooly and Treasurer Laurie McCarthy.

Urgent Business None.

Announcements

Jane mentioned that she has received a lot of communication from the community and cannot speak on them, tonight. Close to end of General Assembly "G.A". People generally mentioned the wish from BSFD to do something at this time and BSBC should be included in a limited capacity. Jane also reminded to not respond to emails to the council to avoid OMA issues. Leslie mentioned an email asking to "read a letter" tonight. It is considered public comment and was not read. John mentioned he mistakenly replied to all emails and the majority suggested both charter committees meeting is a good idea. John felt no harm in the 2 groups meeting.

Agenda

Carol made motion to appoint Steve as clerk, Jane seconded, approved unanimously.

New and Ongoing Business

- *Going over scenarios for voting and discuss attached Charter Meeting reports.*
 - Jane mentioned who can and recently did vote back in August 2024 (based on these recently mailed out reports). She mentioned net new voters were 460 and 46 of those voted, back in August, about 6% of total votes. She stated 32%, Beach Club only, voted in 2024. Scenario 1 is the "current state" of voters plus the 460 mentioned which was added by Taft Carter on 8.22.24.
 - Scenario 3, per Faith, is the voters and property owners and 1 seat on the council for the BSBC. Jane mentioned BSFD voters and property owners was 75%. No one with an affiliation for BSFD would be 25%. Actual turnout was 79% v. 21%.
 - Scenario #4. BSFD & Town registered voters & just 1 appointed seat by the BSBC. 951 residents. Still have 2,000 voters, per Jane. Leslie mentioned her

status (voter & owner) is only 10%. Based on that, Faith mentioned adjusting the seats to give this 10% more weight. Jane mentioned there is no way to factualize the percentage of snowbirds. Jane also mentioned tax paying and related dilution, based on that. John mentioned to be sure to verify them by a reliable source.

- Scenario #5. Carol mentioned weighted is not a legal/standard process in a quasi-municipality.
- Faith mentioned there are similar traits with other districts. Senator Demario invited Faith on the 18th, with plaintiffs. The Senator mentioned there was a proposal sent by a non- resident in Florida. She would not introduce the bill, since it was from a former chair of prior committee who sent it in January. It will not be proposed by a member of the public. Faith also mentioned that anyone can sponsor a bill. The steps are: Charter, recommend to Council, support it, then the General Assembly “G.A”, then a community vote. John read that Charter to G.A, seems to be based on the consent order. Faith then responded by saying, it must go through Council then G.A, per the G.A. Jane confirmed what John saw via consent order, but she mentioned G.A will not go through the 2023 scenario again. Steve mentioned we must satisfy the G.A.
- Per Jane, the committee results were: Current state: 1 support – 3 do not. Scenario two, 2 support -2 do not. Scenario four, 1 support -3 do not. Scenario five, 1 support -3 do not.
- Carol asked about 2 proposals going to G.A. Leslie mentioned we must compromise and not eliminate 74% of the vote. She also mentioned the intangible value of the BSBC and the benefits. John asking if ok without a plaintiff on the new committee.....Jane asked legal counsel and Tom said “leave the seat open”. Jane mentioned to John that we should fix the voting process and/or smooth it since people can be in more than one class of voters. Tony questions if it must be shoehorned to the G.A this session. He also mentions some of the BSFD landlords benefit with the shore, and having beach passes.....renters can have a pass.
- Motion to speak to an attorney? Per Carol. Confirm with Tom if ok to be in current state for another year. John mentioned to get non-voting charter changes, to be handled next meeting. Jane makes motion to confer with FD attorney that we are good with continuing with current voting electorate. Carol seconded. 6 yes, Tony did not vote, since he already left the meeting with other commitments.

Adjournment: Jane **moved**, seconded by Carol to adjourn the meeting. The motion was **approved** unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Stephen M. Danuszar
Bonnet Shores Fire District Council

Ratified: April 16, 2025