



# SOUTHERN MANATEE FIRE RESCUE DISTRICT

## Interoffice Memorandum

**TO:** The Southern Manatee Board of Fire Commissioners  
**FROM:** Robert Bounds, Fire Chief  
**RE:** **Chief's Report (Feb & March)**  
**DATE:** March 17, 2021

**NOTE:** From this point forward until, an unspecified time, we are going to generate a separate report regarding all COVID-19 issues, to include personnel updates, cumulative numbers, vaccine administration, the latest updates from CDC, etc. This report will be an addendum to the "Chief's" report.

Additionally, Chief Blanco will include all information related to the construction of station 2 as a separate item, including change orders, time schedules, etc.

**February 22, 2022** – With our upcoming hiring process we emailed invitations to approximately 20 FF/EMT and 10 FF/Medic. We will be conducting the written test and practical test here at admin on March 9<sup>th</sup> and March 12<sup>th</sup> respectively. I plan on extending conditional job offers on Monday the 14<sup>th</sup>, with an approximate starting date of March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Deputy Fire Marshal Meola met with Manatee County officials, and the Board of University Park County Club regarding emergency gates. We previously sent a letter to UPCC Board stating that SMFR would abide by the County's decision as the Gate Ordinance is part of the Manatee County Land Development Code. DFM Meola said the meeting went well and UPCC may have to do an amended site plan.

**February 28, 2022** – We received a notice that SMFR as a special district would be required to do a stormwater 20-year analysis. I contacted several agencies at both the local and state levels to get more information on this as I did not believe it was applicable to us. After a couple of weeks I finally got confirmation that SMFR is exempt from this requirement.

**March 1, 2022** – We had our annual review today with Preferred Government Insurance Trust (PGIT). All things considered it was a good year for claims and we should have a minimal impact regarding our rates.

**March 2, 2022** – I had a Zoom meeting with Ian Womack from Fitch & Associates who are conducting a analysis of the Manatee County EMS Master Plan. As one of the advanced life support agencies we are part of the plan. At the conclusion of the meeting, I asked Ian if he knew of any firms that were qualified, under law, to conduct the “performance review” as outlined in HB 1103 and 1890695, F.S. He reported that his firm has in fact conducted these “audits” previously. I am bringing the firms name to the next Manatee County Fire Chiefs Association meeting to see if we can all agree to look at this firm and possibly retain them as a group in order to minimize the costs, since we are all required to comply with this audit. The audit itself is quite exhaustive and will take a couple of months to complete. I will keep you apprised of the progress. The results of the audit are due to be submitted to the State by June 2023.

**March 3, 2022** – The proposed County Interlocal Agreement regarding Emergency Dispatch Services is still in progress. Maggie Mooney has reviewed it and there are a couple of changes needed to the document. Once the “final draft” is complete I will have it added to your upcoming commission packet for review.

**March 8, 2022** – We had Inspector Larry Betts’ disability hearing today with our pension attorney Glenn Thomas in attendance via “gotomeeting”. As Inspector Betts is one of the Trustees we only had four (4) members in attendance. The case was presented and the Trustees voted unanimously to award the permanent disability, effective April 1, 2022.

The Florida League of Cities (FLC) was contacted and informed of the decision and immediately developed a retirement calculation, which was given to Inspector Betts.

Myself, Asst. Chief Blanco and Training Chief Thayer conducted the oral interviews with both candidates for the Logistic Officers position. I will make the announcement of who was selected by March 15, 2022, with a start date of March 28, 2022. Due to this promotion Steve Hodges, who scored second (2<sup>nd</sup>) on January’s Lieutenant test will be promoted to fill the vacancy.

**March 9, 2022** – Today we held the written testing for new hires. We had twenty-one (21) candidates attend. We will be holding the practical tests on Saturday March 12, 2022. Executive staff will meet on Monday with all of the results and the selected candidates will be contacted to come to admin and be presented with conditional job offers. The projected start date will be March 28, 2022.

**March 10, 2022** – With the retirement of Inspector Larry Betts we have offered the vacated Inspector position to Paul Wojcik, who tested second (2<sup>nd</sup>) in January due to the early retirement of Inspector Ken Reed. Paul Wojcik will be starting on March 28, 2022. This will put our inspection bureau back to four (4) members.

**March 12, 2022** – We conducted the practical testing for our future hires. We sent twenty (20) invitations, and all showed. This was an extremely impressive group composed of both paramedics and EMTs. We had a dozen SMFR employees, both lieutenants and firefighters assist with the process in order to have a bigger pool of evaluators and everything went very well. We will have a final virtual interview with the candidates on Monday/Tuesday and on Wednesday we will extend conditional job offers to those who are selected.