

NBCA Membership Minutes

July 18, 2024

Las Brisas Condos

Board of Directors (all present)

Ron Graban (Pres), Dolores Vela (VP), Michael Kennedy (Treas), Carrie Meyer (Sec), Bob Catalano, Manny Portillo, Tracy Jackson, Lynn Frazier (Alternate), Barb Johnson (Alternate)

Treasurer's Report and Minutes - Both are included in agenda packet. Shelly Krumkow makes motion to approve, Barb Johnson 2nds – motion passes

GUESTS: Ron introduces two candidates in attendance: **Eli McKay & Solomon Ortiz Jr.** **Ortiz** is running for Texas State Representative District 34 (for the seat previously held by Abel Herrero) and says that he is willing to help with the changes brought by the Harbor Bridge. Eli said that she ran in 2020 for City Council District 1 and that she is running again this year.

SPEAKER: Michael Kennedy reads bio for **Fire Chief Brandon Wade**, who is here with Assistant Fire Chiefs Kenny Erben and Doug Matthijetz. Wade said that he and his wife have 8 kids. He says that CC is a great place to work and live. Introduced his 2 assistant chiefs. City has increased staffing, 455 firefighters. We still need more. We want to reach national standards where we have 4 firefighters on every fire engine. City has 18 stations, 22 fire apparatus (engines, trucks, hazmat vehicles, etc), 14 medic units (2 paramedics in each ambulance). Just about every single firefighter is also a paramedic. They can assist the ambulances on site. They handle about 60,000 calls a year.

Question: What kinds of calls do you respond to?

Chief: Structure fire, grass fire, vehicle accident (jaws of life to remove patient safely), medical calls, wire arcing, etc.

Ivy Young: I noticed Fire Dept was helping during Tropical Storm Alberto

Chief: Because of the potential for tidal surge on NB, they called in the State of Texas Urban Search & Rescue Team with boats. They knocked on every door, asking if anyone wanted to evacuate.

Chuck Anderson: What station services us and what size would we need to be to get a fire station here?

Chief: Right now we use Station 1, but the Harbor Bridge will change that. Looks like Station 5 on Leopard and Station 3 off Morgan will be used for NB because of the access to the new bridge. It will add response time.

Assistant Chief – North Beach is divided into 2 sections - Burleson 1001 on the north and south of Burleson is 1002. Last 5 years have had an average of 372 calls (237 calls north of Burleson, 135 south of Burleson). He used to work on Station 1.

Chief: We can't put a fire station on every corner. Are we meeting our response time?

Chief Doug – When we expect the bridge to freeze or if we have a big event like July 4th, we station trucks here.

Lynn Frazier – What's your clearance on your engines?

Chief Doug: Our tallest is 10'8"

Deb Ware – Las Brisas is affected by the new fire code requirements.

Chief: Yes, the ordinance is for buildings 75 feet and greater up to 120. Over 120 feet, you *have* to put a sprinkler – not options. Fire Code got adopted last year for the unsprinklered high-rise buildings. When you have an incident with a fire in those it usually makes the national news. Last year the city adopted a change to the fire code where, if a building doesn't have enclosed stairwells and sprinklers, you have to have a plan that says "We're going to address it." And it has to be done by 2035. If you enclose the stairwells, you are allowed to not have sprinklers (for now). Most people in high rise fires die from the smoke. And smoke will go through cracks, seams, small gaps. Best way to prevent a fire is to use a sprinkler system.

Marion Elder – How are you associated with the Fire Marshall?

Chief: His staff interviews plans for buildings. They respond to safety issues that people call in about. He's an expert in fire code.

Carrie – How does the Fire Dept deal with blighted buildings?

Chief – Code Enforcement will deal with free standing, dilapidated buildings. When those buildings catch on fire, we go and often determine that "This is a safety hazard" and issue an emergency demolition order. We have been successful in doing that in many instances.

Nox Box – This is a system where we're able to access a business without breaking doors.

Chief Doug – NoxBox is a good item to have at the condos. It's good to have a master key for every condo that a maintenance guy could open for us so we can minimize damage.

Ron Graban – Insurance companies often determine their premiums based upon compliance to any new codes..

Question: How much would installing sprinklers cost?

Chief: Back in 2015, there was a 17 story building that cost \$4 million to install sprinklers.

Question: Any discussion about a fire annex building on North Beach?

Chief Doug: Jeff Blackard discussed a police, fire, community building when they were proposing the Navigable Canal but nothing since then..

Carrie: City Manager Angel Escobar 15 years ago was planning a fire station at Kiwanis Park but the project got pulled.

Carrie: There is a stark difference between how the city handled the burned out Crack House under the Harbor Bridge that took 1.5 years to demolish and the Knights Inn after it burned and was demolished right away. In fact, I think the new city ordinance allowing the city to require demolition after an emergency event was crafted as a direct result of the Knights Inn fire.

Chief: We look at a burned out building as not just an eyesore but a public safety hazard.

Michael: I went through a 12-week Citizens Fire Academy course

Word of praise: A firefighter came to our door at The Breakers and moved all the motorcycles out of the standing saltwater up to higher ground for us.

Chief: Y'all are our customers and that's why we come to work.