

Pace Fire Rescue District

Regular Meeting

August 25, 2025

1. Meeting Called to Order

Present: Chairman Nick Gradia, Vice-Chairman Daniel Mills,
Secretary Jeremy Johnston, and Commissioner Lynn Garrett
Excused Absent: Treasurer Felix Hernandez

- a. Chairman Nick Gradia called the meeting to order at approximately 5:10 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

- a. Chairman Nick Gradia led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Moment of Silence

- a. A moment of silence was observed.

4. Public Form

- a. The Board acknowledges the public who were attending the meeting to inquire about their "Proposed Tax Bill" and wanted to know if their taxes were going to go up this year. Chairman Gradia stated, "No, there would not be an increase. Chief Whitfield proposed no increased and it was approved by the Board." They also asked where Station 2 was located. Chief Whitfield told them it was located behind the mini warehouses on Woodbine Road at Five Points. Chairman Gradia explained that it was not a "working" station, they basically use it for storage right now.

5. Minutes from the previous meeting

- a. Chief Whitfield pointed out we have June's and July's minutes to review. Commissioner Garrett pointed out a typo in the July Emergency minutes and suggested adding the discussion was a lengthy discussion.
- b. On June's meeting minutes a Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes was 1st made by Commissioner Garrett and 2nd by Vice-Chairman Mills. On July's meeting minutes a Motion to Approve with the changes was 1st made by Commissioner Garrett and 2nd by Secretary Johnston.
- c. Motion passed, unanimously.

6. Financial Report (Written report attached)

- a. Commissioner Garrett asked what the "Miscellaneous Line" would include, Accountant Connell gave some examples.

- b. A Motion to approve the Financial Report was 1st made by Vice-Chairman Mills and 2nd by Commissioner Garrett.
- c. Motion passed, unanimously.

7. Chief's Report (Written report attached)

- a. Secretary Johnston asked why July's Annual Inspections were lower than usual. Chief Whitfield explained we were short one Inspector.
- b. Informational purposes only, no action is needed.

8. Station 4 Construction Update

- a. Chief Whitfield turned it over to Derek Pratt. Mr. Pratt informed the Board of the remaining work that needed to be completed. Chairman Gradia asked for the projected completion date. Mr. Pratt and Chief Whitfield said probably the end of September. Secretary Johnston asked for the original completion date and Chief Whitfield said, "it should've been towards the end of July. The delay was due to a state department change in the middle of the project. It doesn't go to the county for approval; it now goes to Tallahassee. We will know more Wednesday."
- b. Informational purposes only, no action is needed.

9. Station 1 Generator Grant Update

- a. Chief Whitfield informed the Board we had not been cut from the grant funding; it was in the Environmental Department at the Governor's office. There are three tiers, and we were in the third tier, hopefully we will not be cut. Hopefully there will be some grant money left when they get to the third tier. If there's not enough, we'll take from the Impact Fees or Reserves.
- b. The discussion was for information purposes; no action needed at this time.

10. PERC Election Results for Firefighters

- a. Chief Whitfield gave the Board information on the Tally of Ballots. They discussed the eligibility votes, how many want it and how many do not it. Chairman Gradia asked what's the next step. Chief Whitfield said the Lieutenants are voting now and then we move forward. Chairman Gradia asked when is the voting concluded? The Union President Andrew Adcox stated, "September 11th."
- b. Informational purposes only, no action is needed.

11. Insurance Premium Tax Dollars Retirement

- a. Chief Whitfield informed the Board we would be getting \$227,393.02 for the Retirement Plan. Once he receives this it will be deposited into the Retirement Plan.
- b. Informational purposes only, no action is needed.

12. Additions

- a. Commissioner Johnston asked about the status of the HR position. Chief Whitfield informed him that we did interviews today for Assistant Chief and he wants that person on board to help with that selection process for the HR. Chief Whitfield explained to the Board that there was a misunderstanding on HR position as far as the independent insurance companies, Aflac, Colonial, Globe, we have nothing to do with those insurances. As a courtesy, we are a collection point for the employee to forward their payment to these companies. We don't get involved in any changes, etc that the employee might have. If they have an issue, it is up to them to contact that insurance company. The HR person will not be handling this. Chief Whitfield again stated, "the Assistant Chief applicants were interviewed today. Chairman Gradia asked Chief Whitfield the status on the interviews and Chief Whitfield said, "he hadn't finished processing the interview scores." Chairman asked how many was interviewed and Chief Whitfield said, "seven". Chairman Gradia asked if this was all or were there more interviews to come. Chief Whitfield said, "there might be an additional interview for two of them". Chairman Gradia asked Chief Whitfield, "once everything is completed to bring the results and his recommendations to the Board to discuss it before Chief Whitfield notifies the applicant. It's ultimately Chief Whitfield's decision". Chief Whitfield asked if he wanted it done at a Special Meeting or Individually? Vice-Chairman Mills would like for it done at a Special Meeting.
- b. Chief Whitfield stated the first budget meeting will be on September 15th at 5:00 p.m. After this meeting Chairman Gradia would like to get the suggestions, Chief Whitfield has for the Assistant Chief. The second budget meeting will be on September 29th at 5:00 pm.
- c. Chairman Gradia asked about Station 4 personnel, what was the status on hiring and the parking lot area? Chief Whitfield explained the personnel count and the parking lot area which will be the fenced in gravel parking lot for the firefighters stationed there. Another question was about information on Station 2 and the ownership. Chief Whitfield stated, "he had found some paperwork on the property which stated the fire department bought it and that we could do whatever we wanted to, even sell it." As of right now, Chief Whitfield would like to keep it for storage.
- d. Chairman Gradia asked, "if there was a problem with the AC on one of the trucks?" Chief Whitfield said, "he was not aware of any work orders on an AC not working on one of the trucks."
- e. Commissioner Garrett asked about the Hydrant Crew as to who maintained the hydrants, etc. Chief Whitfield informed him that we now have two hydrant people on the crew. We maintain them but if they find one not working, they complete a work order and send it to Pace Water System or Chumuckla Water. Commissioner Garrett asked if we do reclaimed and private hydrants. Chief Whitfield stated "yes".

- f. Chief Whitfield informed the Board that there was going to be a meeting tomorrow with Senator Gates, himself, Chairman Gradia, and other Chief's in Crestview. A lengthy discussion was held on what the meeting would be about. Chief Whitfield said he would send them a summary of the meeting.

13. Motion to Adjourn

- a. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:47 p.m.
- b. Motion to Adjourn was 1st made by Vice-Chairman Mills and 2nd by Commissioner Garrett.
- c. Motion passed, unanimously.

Approved this 15th day of September 2025.



Nick Gradia, Chairman