

**Pace Fire Rescue District
Regular Meeting
December 16, 2024**

1. Meeting Called to Order

Present: Vice-Chairman Nick Gradia, Secretary Daniel Mills Commissioner Lynn Garrett, and Commissioner Jeremy Johnston.

Vice-Chairman Nick Gradia called the meeting to order at approximately 5:05 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. Moment of Silence

a. Vice-Chairman Nick Gradia led in the opening prayer.

4. Public Forum

a. The Board acknowledges the public but there was no one in attendance.

5. Minutes from the previous meeting

- a. Commissioner Jeremy Johnston asked about the nine people we were hiring. Commissioner Johnston asked, "if we were short these nine people or were they additional hirers for station 4?" Chief Whitfield stated "they were for Station 4, and we have more interviews next week."
- b. The Motion to approve meeting minutes were 1st made by Vice-Chairman Nick Gradia and 2nd by Secretary Daniel Mills.
- c. Motion passed, unanimously.

6. Financial Report (Written report attached)

- a. Vice-Chairman Nick Gradia asked if we had seen a difference in the property tax money and Chief Whitfield told him that they could see a difference from last year to this year. Account Rachel Connell reported that we usually get 80% of the budget on the first roll but we received approximately 20% below last year. Vice-Chairman Nick Gradia asked if we knew of any reason why the difference, but Chief Whitfield and Accountant Rachel Connell could not explain.
- b. The Motion to approve the Financial Report was 1st made Secretary Daniel Mills and 2nd by Commissioner Lynn Garrett.
- c. Motion passed, unanimously.

7. Chief's Report (Written report attached)

- a. Motion to approve the Chief's Report was 1st made by Secretary Daniel Mills and 2nd by Commissioner Jeremy Johnston.

- b. Motion passed, unanimously.

8. Board Organization

- a. Chief Whitfield explained the Board would need to re-elect the different positions on the board since we have new Commissioners. A Motion for Nick Gradia to be Chairman was 1st made by Secretary Daniel Mills, which he accepted, and 2nd by Jeremy Johnston and 3rd by Commissioner Lynn Garrett. Chairman Nick Gradia nominated Daniel Mills to be Vice-Chairman. He also mentioned we still had one position on the Board that needed to be appointed. This position will be filled at the next meeting. Chief Whitfield will forward all applications for the opened position to the Board members once it is closed, which is on December 17, 2024 at 5 p.m.
- b. A discussion was held on waiting to fill those opened positions (Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasure) at the next meeting when we appointed the fifth Commissioner. We have one applicant for the opened position, deadline is tomorrow.
- c. A Motion to retain Daniel Mills as Secretary until the next meeting and waiting on to vote on the positions was made by Chairman Nick Gradia and 2nd by Commissioner Lynn Garrett. Motion passed, unanimously.

9. Salaries Update

- a. Chief Whitfield updated the Board on the status of salaries. Chief Whitfield explained how we were waiting on our Long/Short Term Disability amount is going to be for this year. In this year's budget everyone except for two people has gotten over \$1 increase because they don't have their EMT yet. It's either been applied or will be applied when they get their step increase. Discussion was held as to our firefighter's tenure in the field and why we were losing firefighters. Chief Whitfield said we have only lost one this year.
- b. Information purposes only, no action needed.

10. Station 4 Construction Update

- a. Chief Whitfield informed the board everything was coming along. The brick is here but we're waiting on the mortar. They were asking for a 30-day extension, but Chief Whitfield and Derek Pratt did not agree to it because it is not weather related, it was due to their mistakes. Chairman Nick Gradia asked what was decided on the traffic light." Chief Whitfield said, "the light would be one like the one on Scenic Highway or the one right up the road from the station." Chairman Nick Gradia asked, "who was going to pay for the light". Chief Whitfield said, "we would have to pay for the light. The Zoning Board approved the light but under the assumption we would pay for it." "At this time, we haven't gotten any prices."
- b. Information purposes only, no action needed.

11. Additions/Deletions

- a. Vice-Chairman Nick Gradia asked about the status of the Construction Loan for Station 4. Chief Whitfield said we were not ready to inquire about the loan until

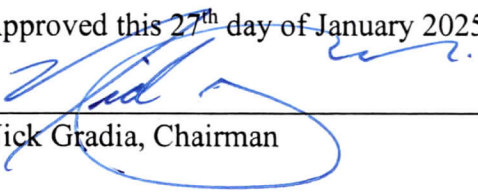
the first of the year in the hopes the interest rates will come down. As of right now the rate is 4.76%.

- b. Commissioner Jeremy Johnston asked about the new \$250.00 Non-Ad Valorem tax. What happens when the citizens don't pay the \$250.00 tax. Chair Nick Gradia corrected Commissioner Jeremy Johnston on the tax amount. The tax is not \$250.00, it is \$150.00, and we were the only County that didn't go to the maximum amount of \$250.00. Chief Whitfield explained the tax is added into the property taxes, therefore if the citizen decided not to pay it there would be a Lien put on their property.
- c. Commissioner Jeremy Johnston asked, "who decides where the fire hydrants go in the neighborhoods, because in some areas don't have any". Chief Whitfield explained, "the Land Development Code dictates that location of fire hydrants".
- d. Commissioner Lynn Garrett asked, "was there a report that tells us what percentage we receive from Impact Fees?" Chief Whitfield explained Impact Fees to include how much it is and how much we receive.
- e. Secretary Daniel Mills asked where we were on the Rescue. Chief Whitfield said it came out of the 2nd coating of paint last week. Chief Whitfield was not sure how much longer it would be before we got the truck. To order a new Engine (truck) it would be 36-38 months turn around. Secretary Daniel Mills asked about how many trucks we have and where they are stationed. The question came up about us having a truck for backup. A discussion was held as to how much one would cost, could we save money if we pre-pay up front for the truck. Chief Whitfield couldn't give an estimated cost due to the prices fluctuating from day to day, but it could be between \$800,000 and \$900,000. This discussion was tabled.
- f. Chairman Nick Gradia encouraged the audience to use the Public Forum for anything they would like to speak on, there would be no sign-in or pre-scheduling procedure.

12. Motion to Adjourn

- a. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:58 p.m.
- b. Motion to Adjourn was 1st made by Secretary Daniel Mills and 2nd by Commissioner Jeremy Johnston.
- c. Motion passed, unanimously.

Approved this 27th day of January 2025.



Nick Gradia, Chairman