



# Legislative Action Report

06/29/2009

It has been a busy few months making the rounds. AJ and Fred have jumped in with both feet. First, we have to thank the membership for all the support. Before we even had a chance to tell if the water was cold; we were thrown in! "Your going to Tallahassee... and I need you to get resolutions from every city council possible." Well we did not do to bad for our first few months.

Eleven city councils have passed resolutions supporting the Surtax. The Firefighter Safety and Diversified Funding Act (AKA Senate bill 1000) was signed by the governor on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009. And the real work is about to start! We are going to need everyone for the 2010 election cycle (roughly August to November). That is when we are working towards getting the Surtax on the ballot.

## **LOCAL SCENE:**

**Jupiter:** Palm Beach County Fire Rescue is working towards signing a new agreement/contract with the Town. Chief Brice does not need help as of now.

**Juno:** Signed off on the Resolution supporting The Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act.

**NPB:** Just opened contract negotiations. No news... we will be scheduling rounds with DVP Anthony Giarrusso and Council.

**Palm Beach Gardens:** We have made the rounds with DVP Ed Morjon. The Council was receptive to The Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act. The Council has concerns about the PBG budget. It is getting really tight and they foresee future declines in large commercial property values in the 2011 fiscal year. Their concerns lead to the Union floating the idea of possibly merging services with PBCFR. Subsequently, we had a two night meeting with the PBGFR members reference their support for such a merger. From the members in attendance there was overwhelming support. Thanks to the Crews from Station 68 for the great hospitality of the PBG members and Union officers. DVP Ed Morjon is working his tail off and has a good crew of guys helping. Great Work guys!

**Riviera:** DVP Maria Gonzalez is busy these days. We have met with the Riviera Council several times in reference to signing a contract. So far we do not have an agreement but we have been successful. Only two articles are open on the contract... but they are the big ones. PAY & Pension. On the Pension we have

been successful in adding a DROP to the pension. We are working towards having 175 share accounts also. On the Pay... we are working to keep the 5% step. The Chief has been extremely helpful. We are using the cities numbers to show that they can afford the step plan for 2009.

The city has begun the 2010 budget planning. The budget does not look good. There are several options... and one of them calls for 21 firefighters to be laid off. 2011 does not look any better. With this in mind we have floated the idea of merging the services. We are going to work towards a cost analysis and see if this is a solution to the budget problems.

**WPB:** There has not been any movement on the contract negotiations as of this time.

**Lantana:** Going to make rounds with council about Surtax. Initial meeting with City Mgr went good. But action has been slow.

**Lake Worth:** Passed a Supporting Resolution for the Fire Rescue Diversified Funding Act. Awaiting October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

**Palm Springs:** Testing... Testing... and Re-testing. Never seen anything like it. We are awaiting October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

**Greenacres:** Coming onto the dispatch October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

**Unincorporated PBC:** President Mayo and Chief Beesley have made rounds several times reference Surtax and Millage Roll-Back (Roll-up). It does appear there is support to keep funding the same. Overtime is becoming issue in news. Please try your best to not respond to any newsprint articles.

**Palm Beach:** Looking to start relationships with Town. It is my understanding that PB Civic Association meetings do not start-up again until season.

**Wellington:** Councilwoman Lizbeth Benacquisto has announced she is running for Florida Senate District 27. She has been a good friend and lined up a string of Firefighter Friends as her supporters. We have not endorsed in this race as of yet. There will be 3 seats up for election in Wellington this coming March. If you hear of anyone interested do not hesitate to give us a call.

**RPB/Loxahatchee Groves/Acreage/Belle Glade/Pahokee/South Bay:** With the exception of Belle Glade and Royal Palm Beach all cities have passed a Supporting Resolution. Belle Glade and RPB are in the works and we do not anticipate any problems.

**West Delray:** Fred was honored to attend the 70<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary for Ros and Murray Kalish. Murray is a long time friend of the firefighters and known as the South County Godfather. He also is the President of the Lake

Worth Drainage District. In attendance were many political friends including Congressman Wexler, Senator Aronberg and Commissioners Burt Aaronson and Shelley Vana. Congrats to Murray and his beautiful bride Ros.

**City of Delray Beach:** Setting up with DVP Jim Tabeek to make rounds on the contract and Surtax.

**Charity Donations:** We have been supporting various charities that help with politics in the area. All are 501 c3 designated.

Riviera Beach Maritime Academy  
Palm Beach Country Estates Twisty Pines Playground  
Beacon Cove PTA  
DOT Success Academy (early reading)  
Jazz After Dark

**Chambers:**

**West Palm Beach:** Re-joined the chamber. We have attended two breakfast events with great success.

**Northern Palm Beach Chamber:** We joined this Chamber and sponsored the Installation GALA with a table for 10 and some of our signage. At our table were VIP guest Riviera Beach Council Chair Dawn Pardo, Jennifer Sardone (Jupiter Maltz Theater), and Sheila Atwater Prieschl (Marine Exhaust Systems). The other seats were filled with officers from the local.

**Delray Beach Chamber:** We are starting this one off right... we are the premier sponsor at the Leadership Awards Dinner. We have asked the Delray City Council to be our guest. The entire council has accepted our invitation with the exception of the Mayor. In addition, we are working with the chamber to make the St. Patty's Day Parade even better for firefighters. A special thanks to Capt. John Fischer for taking on this project. If you are interested in helping on the Parade give John a call at 561.883.7763

**FPF Convention:** In June we attended the FPF Annual Convention. Thirteen executive board members attended the convention. Many for the first time so it was a good learning experience.

In recent years, the panhandle has been successful in out voting the largest unions in the state by organizing with each other on issues. This year South Florida Firefighters merged together to have their voices heard. And the message was a loud one.

Prior to the convention we made rounds with some of the North Central Florida Local Unions such as Alachua County and the Gator Council to introduce them to the Surtax and share some information. This was well received.

Some of the Highlights of the convention were; The FPF endorsed Alex Sink for Governor 2010 (NOT PBC FIRE UNION). PBCFR's own Capt. Armand Nault was given Emeritus DVP status. By unanimous vote Chief Ron Beesley became the FPF 4<sup>th</sup> District Vice President. There was a full day of classes that were attended by most everyone who came. The classes ranged from web site management to Work Comp. issues. The biggest news of the convention was FPF President Bob Carver announcing that he would NOT run for re-election. He has been the FPF President for more than 20 years. We have approx 2000 votes in the FPF election and we are going to be working with our friends across the state to have a unified candidate for the Presidency who will be more attentive to our voices. We will keep you posted.

**Fire Unions Across the State:** We are reaching out to our brothers and sisters around the state that have like causes and sharing information. Much of this is an educational process. This will help us be more effective within the Florida Professional Firefighters (FPF) organization.

Currently we have made contact with City of Tallahassee, Alachua County, St. Johns County, Indian River County, Metro Dade County, Broward County, Metro Broward Local 3080, Orange County and several others.

To our north we are working to establish a Treasure Coast Council. This would also include St. Lucie County, Okeechobee, Indian River, Martin, and Brevard.

KUDOS to YOU! The squawk in the hallways was that Local 2928 was extremely organized and had the best showing by its members for campaigns around the state. Let's keep the pressure on with a good showing in the coming elections. Remember, 2010 will be a big year. We will need everyone out.

**STATE:** Firefighter Safety and Diversified Funding Act (Senate Bill 1000) was signed into law by Gov. Crist on June 16<sup>th</sup>. We are now preparing for the referendum (vote) that will take place Nov. 2010 General Election.