



City of Flagler Beach

P.O. Box 70 • 105 South 2nd Street
Flagler Beach, Florida 32136
Phone (386) 517-2000

May 11, 2026

Chief Stephen Cox
Fire Chief, City of Flagler Beach

Chief Cox:

Please be advised that you are being terminated from your service as the Fire Chief of the City of Flagler Beach, effective immediately (9:00 AM, May 11, 2026).

As indicated in the City's Personnel Policy, Section I.1, Generally:

(c) All employees are at-will and serve at the pleasure of the city and no employee shall have any vested rights in his or her employment or in the practices and procedures set forth in these personnel policies except only by a specific written contract. It is the intent of the city to have a mutually beneficial relationship with each employee. Each employee should endeavor to improve his/her performance and skills to enable the city to offer quality service to the public and provide opportunities for advancement of employees.

Your termination is related to the loss of confidence expressed in the resignations of several members of the Fire Department and in the attached correspondence signed by the remaining members of the Fire Department. Given those conditions, I do not believe that you can effectively lead the City of Flagler Beach Fire Department.

At your option, within five business days, you may request an exit interview and a 'name clearing hearing' with myself and Ms. Liz Mathis, Human Resources Director, to respond to your termination.

Thank you for your service to the City of Flagler Beach. I wish you well in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dale L. Martin".

Dale L. Martin
City Manager

Cc: City Commission
Ms. L. Mathis, Human Resources Director

No confidence

This letter serves as a formal declaration of no confidence in the Fire Chief due to ongoing concerns that have significantly impacted the organization's effectiveness, employee well-being, and overall trust in administration.

There is a consistent pattern of behavior that has contributed to a hostile work environment. Employees across the organization have expressed concerns regarding communication practices that are perceived as misleading, inconsistent, or lacking transparency. Additionally, there are concerns about the use of pressure or undue influence in decision-making processes, particularly in situations where employees may feel compelled to agree or refrain from voicing concerns due to fear of negative consequences. These conditions have diminished trust, limited open communication, and contributed to a measurable decline in morale throughout the department. The severity of these issues is further evidenced by recent leadership turnover, including the resignation of the Deputy Fire Chief and two senior members of the department at the lieutenant rank.

In addition, there are serious concerns regarding a breach of ethical standards and a lack of transparency in actions taken by the Fire Chief. Decisions that directly impact personnel and operations have been made without clear communication, sufficient justification, or appropriate inclusion of relevant stakeholders. This has eroded confidence in leadership and created ongoing uncertainty within the workforce.

Deficiencies in leadership have also been evident in the failure of the Fire Chief to effectively manage personnel, address concerns, and maintain accountability. Rather than fostering a culture of professionalism, cohesion, and trust, the current approach has contributed to division, disengagement, and a continued decline in confidence among staff.

Further concerns have been raised regarding financial oversight and management practices under the Fire Chief. A lack of transparency and accountability in financial decision-making has created legitimate questions about resource allocation and stewardship. This directly impacts the department's ability to operate efficiently and maintain public trust.

Lastly, there is a growing perception of neglect of duty in key responsibilities of the Fire Chief. This includes a failure to address known issues, provide appropriate support to personnel, and uphold the standards expected of the position. These shortcomings have compounded existing concerns and continue to negatively affect the organization.


For these reasons, we formally express no confidence in the Fire Chief. It is our position that meaningful change is necessary to restore trust, improve morale, and ensure the department can effectively serve both its personnel and the community.

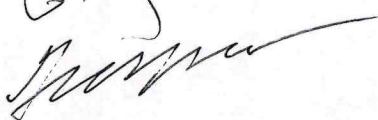
See attached for signatures of employees

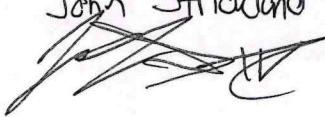
Signatures for no confidence document:


Morgan Rainey


Trey Pereira


Bruce Adams


Greg Evans


John Strickland


Jamal Prince


Kayla Mullen
