

**BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Tuesday, July 19, 2016  
Bluffton Fire Station #35, Headquarters**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Mike Raymond, Joe Paolo, Thomas Mike, Ed Olsen, Elaine Lust, Paul Hamilton  
**Absent:** Louise Haaker

**Members Present:** John Thompson, Paul Boulware, Dan Wiltse, Terry Sheriff, Steve McKinley, Bob Payne, Joe Helms, Pete Reid, Derek Franks, Aaron Angel, Matt Baker, Nancy Hyer, Leslie Jones Hart

**VIA Video Conferencing:** Jerry Piccoili, Charles Eaton, Alex Elliott, Mike McComas, Jeff Smith, Donald Boyd, Jason Carle, Anthony Pavidonis, Austin Williams, TJ McCullion, Jeff Kuehn, John Roe, Dave Adams, Whitney Brady, Dwane Wilkinson, Marcos Farr, Tim Smith, Andrei Turner, Perry Granat, Brian Brock, Paul Woods, Carson Stone, Jeff Meyer, Todd Shisler, Roberto Cuevas, Jason Brahm, Alex Sanchez, Greg Linacre

**Community Members:** Doug Volk

**Meeting called to order at 4:03 PM by Chairman Raymond.**

**Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer**

**Board of Directors Roll Call**

- **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.
- **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:** The new fleet parade and wet down ceremony were well received by the community as well as others from around the state that attended. Carter Jones called BTFD the "cream of the crop" in the state of South Carolina as far as fire departments. Chairman Raymond was also glad to see that fire stations security will be addressed during today's meeting. Director Lust also complimented the department on their quick and attentive response to a friend's lightning strike and fire call recently. The community knows we will be there doing all we can to help them in their hour of need.
- **JUNE BOARD MEETING MINUTES:** Director Paolo motioned and Director Olsen seconded that minutes of the June 21, 2016 Board of Directors meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously.
- **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Chief Thompson and Chief Boulware presented Financial Administrator Nancy Hyer with a Certificate of Achievement Excellence of Financial Reporting for FY 2015. This is the fifth year for this award. Ms. Nancy also earned the Government Finance Office Association of United States and Canada's Award of Financial Achievement, a very high honor and well deserved. Chief Thompson thanked her and Chief Boulware for their hard work.  
Chief Boulware reported that we are 100% through our FY 2016 budget year, with expenditures reporting at 96.5% for the year. All departments were below budget for the year. Those numbers may change slightly after the audit which begins in September. County Council passed the FY 2017 budget without questions. We have received payment of \$412,000 for the old fleet. It was lower than originally expected however as one truck was retained as a reserve engine. Chief Thompson hopes the oldest truck will be donated to the high school for use with the CATE program. As of June 29, the fire impact fee account

balance is \$1,746,990. It was explained that any funds from our budget that we do not use are rolled over into the next budget year as our fund balance. This helps maintain our emergency operating funds at or near a 2-months operating level. Director Paolo moved and Director Lust seconded that the Financial Report be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

- **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:**

- **Fire Prevention Statistics:** Chief Wiltse reported the Prevention office performed 186 Fire and Life Safety Inspections in the month of June. Development plans throughout the district include homes, businesses, school changes, amenity centers, and street and road changes. Public Education participated in 21 events, including ESOL camp with FF Baez, and 27 smoke alarms installations. There were 15 CPR classes held with 108 students taught. Ms. Julie is well on her way of reaching her goal of training 1,600 people in CPR for 2016. Several developments were discussed regarding issues with having only one entrance/exit and the potential for citizens being cut off from emergency services if the access is blocked.
- **Training Report:** Chief Sheriff reported there were 8 courses held with 19 personnel in attendance, 1 course was cancelled, and 4 personnel were denied courses. Training highlights include Active Shooter exercise using new SOG implementation and new apparatus familiarization. The new apparatus have also been called frequently due to the many lightning strikes and storms. Medical training focused on drowning victims. We have already had lots of water incidents so far this year. Director Lust asked for help in setting up an Active Shooter response for her house of worship. Chief Sheriff, Captain Hunter, and Lt. Levesque will provide assistance to her. It was also suggested she contact Scott Johnson with Beaufort County Sheriff's office. Law enforcement would secure the area and BTFD would provide medical coverage.
- **Operations Report:** In Chief Cramer's absence, Chief Thompson reported the monthly statistics of 515 calls last month, the highest number ever recorded. Call volume through the end of June was 2,680 calls. The average response time was 6:23 minutes, with the yearly average of 6:29 minutes. Colleton River Station 36 may show some delay in call response as the truck is housed at the opposite end of a maintenance building.
- **Maintenance Update:** Chief McKinley thanked everyone for all the help with readying the new fleet for the parade and wet down ceremony, including those who volunteered to detail the trucks prior to the events. Everyone seems to enjoy the new fleet events. The Fire District created 65% of the work orders for the month of June, 25% for Bluffton Police Department, and 10% for the Town of Bluffton. BTFD work orders should decrease with the new fleet, but they may pick up job requests from other agencies.
- **Chaplains' Update:** Pastor Hamilton stated he and the other Chaplains enjoyed the ceremony. Most of the Chaplains are finishing vacations and they will then be a full staff and ready to assist the department when needed.
- **Construction Projects Updates:**
  1. Fire Engine Fleet Replacement – Eight trucks have been transitioned into the system and the two reserves need a few additional pieces of equipment. The final inspections by Spartan have been completed for the most part.
  2. Maintenance Building Update/Training Facility Construction – Chief McKinley reported all doors and windows are installed, drywall is in, restrooms are tiled and grouted, the mezzanine is finished, propane is in, and cabinets have been installed. Permanent power should be turned on this week and sprinkler system is in.
  3. There is no additional information on the Training Facility at this time.

- **OLD BUSINESS:**
  - ***Colleton River Fire Station Agreement:*** Chief Thompson met with Colleton River on July 1 and agreements are ready to be signed. The contract for construction should be ironed out by August 1 and it will then be submitted to County. Approval should take place by early September. Engineers have completed the borings and we should receive results within the next few weeks. There should be no issues with the easement road.
  
- **NEW BUSINESS:**
  - ***Fire Station Security:*** Chief Thompson reported that events in the world and locally have forced us to think differently about the safety of our employees and our citizens. A vulnerability assessment of all stations showed we need to take immediate action for the safety of our employees. There are a few who have made threats and taken threatening action against some of our crew. We don't know when events will escalate and put our people in harm's way. Therefore, several options were discussed to secure stations. Chief Cramer and Chief Harvey, who researched various systems, recommended that proximity swipe cards be installed. Chief Thompson also recommended securing the foyer at Station 35, similar to the secured vestibules at Stations 30 and 33. Securing all stations would cost approximately \$30,000, and securing the foyer would be an additional \$15,000. After much discussion, Director Mike moved and Director Paolo seconded that we use \$45,000 of capital funds to pay for the added security swipe cards and securing the foyer. The motion passed unanimously.
  
  - ***Vehicle Replacement Plan:*** Due to the age of several of our staff vehicles, Chief Thompson will be presenting a detailed Vehicle Replacement Plan at next meeting. Because each vehicle would cost less than \$100,000, impact fee funds cannot be used. Therefore, leftover bonding proceeds could fund these vehicles.
  
  - ***Fire Chief's Goals and Objectives FY 17:*** Chief Thompson handed out his Goals and Objectives for FY 17. No discussion or action took place.
  
  - ***Other:*** Director Paolo asked about setting up another workshop to discuss issues in a more casual setting. Some crew members have questions regarding retirement insurance and seem to be hesitant to speak up. Chief Thompson reminded everyone that each Chief has an open door policy. If they have concerns, they need to follow the chain of command. An Executive Session will be added to next month's meeting agenda to discuss what steps need to be taken to ensure staff concerns be heard.
  
- **ADJOURNMENT:** Director Mike made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Director Olsen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25.