

**BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, December 20, 2016
Bluffton Fire Station #35, Headquarters**

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Mike Raymond, Joe Paolo, Louise Haaker, Thomas Mike, Elaine Lust, Paul Hamilton, Ed Olsen (by phone)

Members Present: John Thompson, Paul Boulware, Rick Cramer, Dan Wiltse, Terry Sheriff, Bob Payne, Pete Reid, Joe Helms, Todd Harvey, Chris Garniewicz, Doug Favors, Don Matchette, Matt Henne, Clay Daley, Shawn Fitzpatrick, Mark Eiden, Andrew De La Cruz, Nancy Hyer, Leslie Jones Hart

VIA Video Conferencing: Dustin Brown, Keegan Alcock, Matt Garnes, Rod Oates, Dan Connelly, Mike McComas, Brett Phillips, Walt Cooler, Walt Arlt, Stephen Jansen, Joe Dembeck, Mike Tuten, Duke Novak, Brandon Stevenson, Brendon Long, Nick Thompson, Tim Walsh, Dave Adams, Cam Terio, Mike Rehill, Jeff Smith, Joel Martin

Community Members: Doug Volk, Lisa Wechsler

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

Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer: Chaplain Hamilton led today's prayer.

Board of Directors Roll Call

- **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:** Chairman Raymond proclaimed that it has been quite a year! Two major projects, the new fleet and the maintenance and training facility, were years in the making. Thanks to former Director Bob Rogers' persistence, both are now in operation. Many staff members also put in countless hours on these projects. We have also had a substantial increase in payroll due to these projects that help keep our community safe. Chairman Raymond sees our continued success in the future.

- **NEW BUSINESS:** With the consent of the Board, New Business was moved so that Auditor Lisa Wechsler could present her Financial Report findings.

- **Presentation of FY2016 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report:** Auditor Lisa Wechsler summarized the annual report after passing out copies to each Director. Our total net position as of 6/30/2016 was \$1,021,408. We have seen a decrease due to the capital projects (new fleet and maintenance/training facility) of which the first bond payment has been made. However we have also seen an increase with the post employee benefits being eliminated as of 6/30/2016 and retirees are no longer funded. We have also seen an increase in the impact fees fund balance and the 1% fund. Lisa was positive in her financial assessment of the District. She sees no obstacles

in our achieving the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting award as we have in past years. Chief Thompson noted that we are now ahead of schedule in fund balance reserves. We currently have a little over 2 months of funds in reserve.

- **NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES:** Director Lust motioned and Director Hamilton seconded the minutes of the November 17, 2016 Board of Directors meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously.
- **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Chief Boulware reported that we are 41.67% through the FY 2017 budget year, with expenditures reporting at 40.88%. Most departments are currently under budget. A large quarterly Workers Compensation payment was made which put Administration over budget. The current impact fee account balance is now over \$2 million. Director Mike motioned and Director Haaker seconded that we accept the financial report. The motion passed.
- **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:**
 - **Fire Prevention Statistics:** Chief Wiltse reported the Prevention office performed 211 Fire and Life Safety Inspections in the month of October. Development plans throughout the district include nearly 200 home sites and several commercial projects. Last month Director Olsen requested a total of square footage of new commercial space in the past year. Chief Wiltse reported that the town of Bluffton has over 650,000 sf of new commercial space. These numbers do not include any new commercial sites in the County as those numbers were not available. This new growth greatly increases our impacts fees funding. It was noted that this number did not include residential growth. Public Education participation included outreach 31 events which included Beaufort County CERTS, Bluffton Library, Savannah State University, T4T, and the Sun City Shalom Club. There were 16 CPR classes held with 208 students taught. Many of those taking CPR were May River High School students. While we did not charge them this year, they will be charged a reduced fee next year in order to pay for the cost of the certificates. Chief Thompson noted that we may need to begin Station 38 very soon due to the growth in the Hampton Lake region. It is a mixed use area with commercial site at Buckwalter Plaza and other locations and residential sites in Hampton Lake, Lawton Station, and others. The cost of the new station will be approximately \$2 million and will take about 18 months to build. Chairman Raymond agreed that now is the time to start the process. Director Lust was told that we would be looking again at adding service vehicles to lower the cost of medical and service calls.
 - **Training Report:** Chief Sheriff reported there were 2 courses held with 4 personnel in attendance, one course was cancelled, and 0 personnel were denied courses. Much of November was spent on the promotional process for both firefighters and officers. Line personnel and officers take different written examinations and practical skills evaluations. Sixty-four members will promote at the January Board of Directors meeting. Other training highlights include OB/GYN skills and the second wellness committee evaluations.
 - **Operations Report:** Chief Cramer reported the monthly statistics of 484 calls last month, with 5,255 calls since January 1. We are tracking at 630 additional calls for the first 11 months of the year. If the trend continues, this will be more than a 10% increase in calls over 2015. The average response time was 6:07 minutes, quite a decrease in what is normally reported. The yearly average response time was 6:25 minutes.
 - **Maintenance Update:** Chief Boulware reported for Chief McKinley who is out sick today. He stated the Maintenance Division had 111 work orders for the month of November, 78 for

BTFD, 20 for Bluffton Police Department, and 13 for the Town of Bluffton. They are currently waiting on bids for tree removal of trees that are leaning over the Bark Shack as a result of Hurricane Matthew. The estimated cost is \$9,500. One staff vehicle has been placed on govedeals.com to be sold. Others will stay in the fleet but only used locally due to the high miles. Station projects continue but at a slower pace due to the holidays. Station 30 hurricane screen damage has been repaired. All pumpers are in service and one reserve pumper is being used as the Santa truck for the neighborhood visits.

- ***Chaplains' Update:*** Chaplain Hamilton stated the Chaplains are moving along in their attempt to get to know the crews and areas. They are not as yet on the notification list for large calls. They would like to see that happen. The station visits will continue to take place.
- ***Construction Projects Updates:***
 1. Maintenance Building Construction Close-out and Move-in: The building contractor and subcontractor continue to work on the punch list for the maintenance facility. The generator needs to be hooked up as well as electrical connections. The main entrance sign is up but does not as yet have lettering. Some landscaping needs to be replaced after Hurricane Matthew.
 2. Training Facility Construction: Chief Sheriff reported the slab will be poured next week and will cure for 14 days. The tower will be complete approximately 3 months after construction begins. When asked, the Board was told that an independent company who has knowledge with these specialty buildings inspects the slab before the building process begins.
- **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - ***Colleton River Fire Station Agreement:*** Chief Thompson said the base agreement has been signed. There is a meeting today with a new engineer. The plan is to move to Ward Edwards as we have worked with them before and they are familiar with the County permitting process. The previous engineer from Savannah has not moved forward with plans. Permits should take about 6 months and then we can break ground.
 - ***Hurricane Matthew Reimbursement Process:***

A meeting was held with FEMA crew leaders who shared what we needed to submit and in what format for reimbursement of hurricane costs. All materials should be submitted by the end of January and will include cost of supplies, food, personnel, etc. The total cost will be \$250,000 - \$300,000. A crew of 4 plus a truck was also sent upstate to Table Rock to help with the wild fires in November. Those costs will be submitted to Anderson County. They will pay us and then submit their expenses to FEMA for reimbursement.
- **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Chief Thompson requested the Board go into Executive Session to discuss possible litigation matters. Director Lust motioned and Director Haaker seconded the Board go into Executive Session. The motion passed and the Board went into Executive Session at 5:20.
- The Board of Directors returned from Executive Session at 5:38. No vote or action was taken during that time.
- **ADJOURNMENT:** Director Mike motioned and Director Hamilton seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:39.