

**BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Tuesday, February 21, 2017
Bluffton Fire Station #35, Headquarters**

MINUTES

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

Members Present: John Thompson, Paul Boulware, Rick Cramer, Dan Wiltse, Terry Sheriff, Steve McKinley, Bob Payne, Todd Harvey, Pete Reid, Joe Helms, Brian Cleland, Nancy Hyer, Tim Walsh, David Adams, Charlie Schramm, Tyler Griffin, Sean Hyde, Melissa Keller, Rick Peavey, Scott Smith, Kaleb Spears, Matthew Wallett, Leslie Jones Hart

VIA Video Conferencing: Trey Fludd, Don Matchette, Matt Garnes, Keegan Alcock, Rod Oates, Dan Connelly, Brett Phillips, Andrew De La Cruz, Walt Cooler, Walt Arlt, Steve Jansen, Adam Corn, Brendan Long, Roberto Cuevas, Duke Novak, Brandon Stevenson, Dustin Brown, Tyler Marion, Doug Favors, Matt Henne, Cam Terio, Mike Rehill, Joel Martin, Jeff Smith, Chris Garniewicz, Shawn Fitzpatrick, Mark Eiden, Clay Daley

Community Members: Doug Volk, Chaplain Fred Freeman, Norm Berard, Richard Kearns

Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM by Chairman Raymond.

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

Board of Directors Roll Call

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS: Chairman Raymond congratulated everyone on a great job with the Maintenance and Training Facility dedication, held Wednesday, February 15, 2017. He was encouraged to see so many people from Bluffton Police Department, the Town of Bluffton, and Beaufort County personnel as well as the general public. Director Lust echoed his comments of a job well done. Chairman Raymond was also happy to see the progress on the training tower.

- **PRESENTATION OF NEW HIRES:** Chief Sheriff introduced the new recruits hired by Bluffton Township Fire District as follows: Tyler Griffin, Sean Hyde, Melissa Keller, Rick Peavey, Scott Smith, Kaleb Spears, and Matthew Wallett. They are among a group of 17 who will graduate from recruit school March 17. When asked, Chief Sheriff explained that we are being compensated by other fire and rescue departments for the students they have enrolled. Welcome to BTFD! We look forward to your continued success!
- **DECEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES:** Director Lust motioned and Director Mike seconded the minutes of the January 17, 2017 Board of Directors meeting be approved. The motion passed.

- **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Chief Boulware reported that we are 58.33% through the FY 2017 budget year, with expenditures reporting at 58.45%. The third payroll of December has been posted and all final hurricane expenses are included in this reporting. We hope to see a recovery of all hurricane expenses, including operations, food, insurance costs, etc., with FEMA paying 75% of the costs and the State of South Carolina paying the remaining 25%. Administration is currently over budget due to maintenance and tech support fees for its financial software as well as business insurance 3rd quarter payments. Our health insurance provider invoice will be reduced by \$500 each month for removal of a compliance fee. The updated impact fee account balance is \$1,965,311, with \$96,000 being paid to Beaufort County School District for the Raider Drive (future fire station 38 site) infrastructure. The Board was told the Bluffton/County TIF was coming off by FY 2018 with an anticipated increase in revenues to the Fire District of approximately \$125,000 annually going forward. Chief Thompson asked for a budget workshop before the next meeting. The workshop is scheduled for March 14, 10:00 – 12:00. Director Olsen motioned and Director Hamilton seconded that we accept the financial report. The motion passed.

- **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:**

 - **Fire Prevention Statistics:** Chief Wiltse reported the Prevention office performed 208 Fire and Life Safety Inspections in January. Development plans throughout the district include golf maintenance facility, an amenity center, a 46,000 sf rehabilitation hospital, and several other residential and commercial projects. Public Education participation included 28 outreach events, included several schools, BJSWA, and neighborhood POA meetings. There were 21 CPR classes held in January, with 153 students taught. A few months prior, Director Olsen asked for values of property based on square footages that were permitted during 2016. Chief Wiltse shared that in the Town of Bluffton only the commercial value of the newly permitted properties was \$55 million while the residential value was \$282 million.

 - **Training Report:** Chief Sheriff reported there were 6 courses held with 21 personnel in attendance, and one course was cancelled. Training included behavioral emergencies special relations, and online medical training. BTFD held joint pump drills with Hardeeville Fire and Rescue and ongoing mutual aid training. These reviews became very important when we aided Hardeeville Fire and Rescue at the paper mill fire last week. The first Company Officers retreat was held on January 31 at Sgt. Jasper Park. Everyone seemed to enjoy the time and learning experiences. Recruit School graduation will take place on Friday, March 17, 10:00 at the new Maintenance and Training Facility. Everyone is invited.

 - **Operations Report:** Chief Cramer reported the monthly statistics of 506 calls last month, an increase of 72 calls from January of 2016. The average response time was 6:28 minutes while last January's average response time was 6:26 minutes.

 - **Maintenance Update:** Chief McKinley thanked everyone who helped make the dedication ceremony a great success. He appreciated the staff putting in the extra hours to pull it all together and was happy to see so many representing the Town and the County. The Maintenance Division completed 115 work orders for January, 96 for BTFD, 15 for Bluffton Police Department, and 4 for the Town of Bluffton. Crystal has been assisting with computer input for maintenance. Brian Cleland has been reassigned to the IT division to better represent his work with communications, radios, laptops, etc. A year-end review was distributed to all Board members. It was reported that \$49,000 was billed to BPD and \$22,000 to the Town for service work on their vehicles. It was estimated that we cleared \$45,000 for that work this year. All hurricane damaged trees have been cut down, with costs being covered by property and casualty insurance. Station 30 has removed all hurricane debris. Station 31 has installed a new fence and some yard work to improve the curb appeal. Annual pump testing has begun and will continue into March. Higher

mileage engines will be rotated to stations that have lower call volumes. The security door project has begun and is slowly making progress. Several doors at Headquarters will be used as prototypes. We hope to finish these first few doors by the end of the week.

- **Chaplains' Update:** Chaplain Hamilton reported that the new uniforms have increased morale and helped in identifying the Chaplains when they visit stations and assist at calls. They will attend a CPR class in March. Chaplain Freeman, who is assigned to Station 30, visited the station and also spoke with the Recruits.
- **Training Facility Construction:** Chief Sheriff reported all the sides and floor decks are installed. The construction crew will soon move inside to finish the building. The tower should be complete in approximately 2 months.
- **Colleton River Fire Station Agreement:** Chief Thompson said the SRT (Staff Review Team) has approved the plans with a few changes regarding trees. The permit review will take 45-60 days. All setbacks and buffers have been approved. Ward Edwards, the project engineer, is familiar with the County permitting process, so this may speed things along. Permits should take about 6 months and we continue to push forward.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **New Hampton Parkway Fire Station #38:** Chief Thompson has had informal conversations with the architects at Court-Atkins who designed Station 30 on Burnt Church Road. A letter was also sent for a formal request of the construction cost for Station 38. Other meetings have provided information such as large set backs on all sides. We will work with the County zoning department to see what options we have. When asked about the legalities of not putting the process out to bid, Chief Thompson stated he would check with our attorneys. Since the plan has already been approved once, we would save money and time if we used the same architect.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Moss Creek Emergency Access Road to Colleton River:** This gate would be for emergency access from Colleton River Station 36 to the back of Moss Creek. The response time for homes in the back of Moss Creek would be reduced from 7+ minutes to 4 minutes. The fire district has been asked to help pay for the \$77,000 cost. Currently there is no precedence for the District paying a portion of the cost. Ward Edwards Engineers would design an electronically controlled gate with brick pavers as the surface. This gate would also free up Moss Creek Station 33 for other calls. It was decided to revisit this idea at the March 14 Budget Workshop.
- **Bluffton Township/Hardeeville Fire Department Automatic Aid Agreement:** This is a renewal of a 3-year contract that we have with Hardeeville for mutual aid. There are no charges or fees and the agreement is beneficial to both parties. Currently the Hardeeville Argent Road Station covers Oldfield so we don't have to build a station near the development. The agreement covered structure fires only and not motor vehicle accidents.
- **Other:** This is the last meeting for Director Haaker as she is moving to the Greenville area. We wish her continued success in her next endeavors and thank her for her dedication and service. Best of luck, Director Haaker!

- **ADJOURNMENT:** Director Olsen motioned and Director Paolo seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:30.