

BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Tuesday, September 18, 2018 Bluffton Fire District Headquarters MINUTES

Board Members Present: Mike Raymond, Joe Paolo, Ed Olsen, Paul Hamilton, Louis Poindexter, Thomas Mike, Sr.

Board Members Absent: Elaine Lust

Members Present: John Thompson, Paul Boulware, Rick Cramer, Dan Wiltse, Steve McKinley, Bob Payne, Derek Church, Terry Sheriff, Pete Reid, Rhett Livingston, Nancy Hyer, Linda Burton

VIA Video Conferencing: Phillip Horton, Jacob Walsh, Theodore Lange, Derek Beeler, Taylor Kamp, Guillermo Holzmann, Andrew Redhead, Jayme Beach, Warren McGarvey, David Romine, Joseph Dembeck, Jason Williams, Melissa Keller

Community Members: Doug Volk

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

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Commissioner Hamilton

Board of Directors Roll Call

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS: Chairman Raymond mentioned that right after this afternoon's board meeting will be the meeting with Sheriff P.J. Tanner. He added that although we dodged the bullet with Hurricane Florence this past week, he wanted to recognize all of the hard work that was done by the Bluffton Township Fire District even though the storm didn't hit here.

AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES: Director Mike motioned and Director Paolo seconded that the minutes of the August 21, 2018 Board of Directors meeting be approved. Unanimous approval. (YEAS –Hamilton, Raymond, Olsen, Poindexter. NAYS – None.)

FINANCIAL REPORT: Chief Boulware reported that we are through 16.67% of the current fiscal year, and our total expenditures this year are 17.93%. We are 1.266% over budget. Administration is at 24.30% of its budget; Operations is at 17.50% of its budget; Training is at 16.46%; Fire Prevention is at 16.68%; and Maintenance is reporting at 15.90% of its budget. The reason the Administration budget is high is because the Station 38 design fees are being prepaid out of our operating account until the bonds are sold. Once the bonds are sold, the general fund account will be reimbursed that month from bond proceeds. The amount to date is \$46,736.00. The Administration is also paying for the SAFER grants. An issue arose where the bank account was hacked, and a new account number had to be established. Therefore, they had not been collecting their grant funds for the people, and had been being paying them out of pocket. That was just reimbursed yesterday, and a check was received for \$61,358.00 that will be going back into the account. Mr. Olsen asked if we lost anything during the hacking, and it was determined that we lost approximately \$2,000.00 which was reimbursed by South State Bank. The hacker was stealing checks out of mailboxes on Persimmon Street and was making bogus checks. Steps have been taken to rectify the situation. Revenue requested year to date is \$2,602,162.16; 17.40% of our \$14,952,403 budget. Total of

all expenditures for July was \$1,140,717.25; Station 38 Design Fees for \$46,000; monthly workers compensation payment \$22,554; Firefighter required annual physicals \$36,385; SCBA equipment for new hires \$6,821; no impact fee expenditures. Fire impact fee balance as of August 31 is \$442,960. Mr. Olsen asked about food purchase for Hurricane Florence. Chief Boulware explained that an order had been placed with Sam's Club for approximately \$7,000 worth of food, but when it was determined that the storm was not going to come our way, the order was cut way down and the food was not taken out of the store, and the cost was approximately \$1,900.00 to prepare for Friday and Saturday, not knowing what kind of conditions we would have. Director Paolo motioned and Director Olsen seconded August 2018 Finance Report be approved. Unanimous approval. (YEAS – Hamilton, Raymond, Poindexter, Mike. NAYS – None.)

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL: The Consent Agenda was approved by general consensus. No vote was taken.

Director Paolo asked about agencies the maintenance division is now serving. Chief McKinley reported that the maintenance division has picked up the University of South Carolina Beaufort Campus which includes a couple of vehicles and some golf carts. They have also picked up Colleton River Plantation security.

▪ **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:**

Development Plans Review and Approvals: Chief Wiltse reported that Carolina Car Wash, which will be going in next to Bojangles on Buckwalter is in the Final Development Plan process.

-Cypress Ridge Phase 16 is in the Preliminary Development Plan for 57 homes.

-Heritage at New Riverside Phase 4 is in the Final Development Plan for 39 homes.

-Extended Stay America is in the Final Development Plan for a 120 room, 4 story hotel in Sea Grass Station.

-Pops Place for a Preliminary Development Plan for a 5 unit bungalow development off of Wharf Street.

-Cypress Ridge Phase 12 is for 36 homes.

-Washington Square is across from Woodbridge and is an infrastructure for commercial development. Grand Oaks is a new neighborhood near Lake Pointe Drive and Stoney Crossing and will extend Innovation Drive that will include 50 new homes. -Taylor's Quality Landscape will be building a new 7,000 sq. ft. building -BMW of Hilton Head will be remodeling

-Next Loft – Suburban Lodge is trying to change their use from a long stay hotel into lower income housing. There was some concern regarding access to the north side of the building fire lane, but the fire lane has been reestablished.

- **Public Education:** There were 54 outreach events conducted in August. 42 smoke alarms were installed in 13 homes, and 6 car seats were installed. An important program being implemented in the schools at the moment is called the "Stop the Bleed" program.

Director Olsen expressed concern with the growth coming from Margaritaville and the issue that will be arising from a traffic standpoint.

- **Operations Report:** Chief Cramer stated that there were 504 calls in the month of August, for a total of 4,148 year to date, which are 80 more calls than the same time last year. Average response time for August was

6:04, with the yearly average of 6:30.

- **Accreditation Status:** Chief Thompson began by giving an update on the accreditation progress. We are getting ready to become an applicant agency under the 18 month timeframe to get it finished up. The Strategic Plan Workshop went very well, with 44 people from the community attending, and then 3 days of taking the feedback from the community to work on a strategic plan with the consultants. A draft of the document has just been received, which is now being reviewed. On Monday, as much of the team as possible will be reassembled to go through the document to be sure that everything that was said at the meeting is in the document, and to verify the contents of the document. Once that it is completed, they will go back to the consultants to continue to work on it and have it ready to present to the Board at the December 18, 2018 Board meeting. The areas that the community sees as the most important issues are firstly EMS, then a strong fire response. Community response was very positive towards the fire department. Chief Thompson explained that although the accreditation is internal to us, it is important to build relationships with other departments to be able to fix gaps, and improve communications. There would also be processes that would be looked at internally for improvement. There are only approximately 300 stations in the world that have been able to earn this accreditation. Director Hamilton asked how much weight from EMS fire and rescue should carry. Chief Thompson stated that the Fire Department and EMS is a vital response, and a first response. Criteria from the Fire and Emergency Services Self Assessment Manual (FESSAM) will be completed by the beginning of February, and the CPSE group will come in and do a site validation between April 1, 2019 and June 30, 2019 and spend 4-5 days going through everything and asking personnel questions as well. After that they will make a determination regarding accreditation or deferral. The Fire & Rescue International Conference is August 7-10, 2019 in Atlanta, GA, and whoever the Board/Chairperson is, is requested to attend the presentation to the CFAI Board, along with the Fire Chief, Accreditation Manager, and any other Board Members that would like to attend. If approved, we have to perform, and prove ourselves to strive to improve, and have to repeat the process in five years.
- **Compensation and Classification Study Implementation Progress Update** On May 19, 2018, the compensation portion was approved. Personnel meetings were held, and the pay plan was implemented on July 27, 2018. The educational tracks were finalized and presented to all personnel. There are several expanded educational tracks. This upcoming week Chief Sheriff and Captain Reid will discuss with each person, and some people will be moving up in pay. There was an appeals process in the event that they did not agree with what came from the consultant, and the appeals process runs through Captain Reid, who then forwards the information to the consultant, and then all of the information comes back and a decision is made as to how to move forward. If a decision cannot be reached, then there would be an internal grievance procedure that would take place. The consultant is working on the new position descriptions and performance evaluation instrument through this September and October, and the new items will be brought to the Board at the January 2019 meeting.
- **Fire Station 38 Progress Update:** Chief Thompson reported that we have the first cost estimates and advertising for contractors and bidding should take place in November/early December, with awarding of a contract by January 2019. The EOC portion may have to be put into Phase 2, but they are continuing to work on that.
- **Fire Station 32 Progress Update:** The renovation is moving along at the same timeframe as Station 38. The SRT review for this project will be internal due to the small scope. They will be looking for contractors and bidders in November/December. The goal is to be able to bid both stations 38 and 32 as a package.

- **Fire Station 37 Progress Update:** Foundations were poured this week, and the new construction is permitted and the slabs have been poured, and the project should be complete by January 1, 2019.
- **Fire/EMS Station 31:** Regarding Station 31, Chief Thompson reported that this is too far down the road to bid out. He got some good news on Station 31 today regarding the First Amendment to the planned unit development where the property is located. Mr. Wood and Mr. O'Donoghue of Palmetto Bluff had some meetings with the town and found out that there will not have to be a formal First Amendment, but that it will be a staff change. Due to the current cost of \$4.5 million, the wish list will need to be brought down to a needs which aligns with the budget for the project. The project scheduled completion date is February of 2020.

The issue of the bond sale will be taken up on September 24, 2018, which is a public hearing and third and final reading of the ordinance by Beaufort County Council. They will have the permission to sell. Ratings calls will occur within the next two weeks after that, and then the sale will occur around the end of October.

- **OLD BUSINESS:** None

- **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Bluffton Firefighter's Foundation – Captain Pete Reid and the department have been raising funds for various charitable causes, and Chief Thompson and Captain Reid have established a South Carolina tax exempt organization registered with the Secretary of State called the Bluffton Firefighter's Foundation, Incorporated, which is a non-profit 501c 3 with the IRS. It includes the Fire Auxillary, Cooking Team, Explorer's Post, Cancer Walk, and to also establish a Benevolent Fund. They will also be trying to establish a scholarship fund. The Cancer Walk has raised over \$90K over the last 6 years. The Siller Cup has been won once again this year by the running team! Pancake Breakfast raised \$1400 for the Siller fund in 2018. Stop the Bleed program provides anti-bleed and tourniquets to each classroom in Bluffton. The cost is \$45.00 each, and they need 500 kits for every classroom, which equals to \$22,000.00 that needs to be raised. There will soon be a link from the Bluffton Township Fire District's website to the Bluffton Firefighter's Foundation website to make donations.

Director Olsen stressed that that the way that this is presented to the public must be dignified and professional.

- **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

- **ADJOURNMENT:** Director Paolo motioned and Director Hamilton seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:00. (YEAS – Raymond, Olsen, Mike, Poindexter. NAYS – None.)

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Burton 9/20/2018