

**BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS WORKSHOP  
Thursday, July 25, 2019  
Bluffton Fire District Headquarters  
MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Mike Raymond, Paul Hamilton, Louis Poindexter, Joe Paolo, Elaine Lust, Thomas Mike, Sr.

**Absent:** Ed Olsen, Rick Cramer

**Members Present:** John Thompson, Rhett Livingston, Paul Boulware, Steve McKinley, Derek Franks, Todd Harvey, Robert Payne, Terry Sheriff, Dan Wiltse, Pete Reid, Linda Burton

**Meeting called to order at 10:07 am by Chairman Raymond.**

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by Chairman Raymond

**Board of Directors Roll Call**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:** Chairman Raymond thanked the Directors for coming in for this morning's meeting and recognized the District for how much time and effort went into this project over the past two years, and that the Board is looking forward to hearing about the District's perspective and how the Standard of Cover dovetails into the accreditation process and strategic planning.

**PRESENTATION OF THE 2019 - 2023 STANDARDS OF COVER DOCUMENT – CHIEF THOMPSON, CHIEF CRAMER, LT. LIVINGSTON:** Chief Thompson began by explaining that Lieutenant Livingston is the Accreditation Manager, is going to explain how the Strategic Planning, Standard of Cover, and FESSAM come together to develop the guiding documents as to how the District operates. There has been a tremendous amount of work and input from all departments, and the reason for presenting this to the Board for approval is because this document is setting the benchmarks and the standards for responses for our goals for the next five years.

Lieutenant Livingston began by explaining that it is a process not a project. He presented a slideshow showing the three main components that overlap – the Strategic Plan, the Standards of Cover – which is the document being discussed today, and the FESSAM (Fire and Emergency Service Self Assessment Manual) put out by CPSE.

The Strategic Plan is the roadmap that provides the District with goals for the next five years and objectives that is interconnected with the Standards of Cover. Public feedback plays a critical

*This document is presented in draft format for immediate public review and is not considered approved until action has been taken by the Fire Commission during their next scheduled meeting.*

role in public expectation of the services provided by the District. The Standards of Cover is a document that will always be reviewed and improved.

The Standards of Cover is a document that is performance based. Evaluations have been made on things such as the call types, how long it takes dispatch to respond, how long it takes us to get dressed, how many trucks we are sending, how many people we are sending, etc., and based upon that, examining if we are able to meet the community's expectations. If we are not currently able to meet the public's expectations, the FESSAM is where the District is documenting all of the changes we are planning on making.

Dispatch is the one place where County involvement is required, but it is not mandated. We are pursuing accreditation because we want to be the best fire district that we can be.

Lieutenant Livingston presented a slideshow to the Board members, and began by reviewing the following:

Legal Basis – It is a County Ordinance that gives the District the authority to operate at a Fire District. He also briefly reviewed its legal duties and responsibilities.

Financial Basis – Discusses how we collect taxes within the district, and it lets them know that we are legally chartered to be a Fire District or Fire Department, and that we have a funding source.

Community Characteristics – This discusses what is unique to Bluffton that might make us have to respond to situations differently than other communities.

Critical Infrastructure – Describes basic transportation, communication, utilities, and critical buildings in the area.

Service Milestones: Lieutenant Livingston described a historical look of how the department has progressed from its beginnings as a volunteer fire station to the current day Fire District.

Community Characteristics, Critical Infrastructure, and Services Milestones; i.e. going from a volunteer fire station to where we are today were also discussed.

Lieutenant Livingston explained the Service Delivery Programs that are identified within the Standards of Cover, and include fire suppression, EMS, and hazardous material. The Risk Assessment was developed using a tool by Chief Payne with the Fireworks software system. There are approximately 18 categories that are analyzed.

The NFPA Standard Benchmarks are the ultimate goal of the District. Slides were shown depicting the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of where we currently are, as well as where we want to be. As a result of the analysis, an issue has been identified with Dispatch. It is an external relationship, and there were areas that were identified that needed improvement. The slideshow showed the current 90<sup>th</sup> percentile times of arrival to the scene of a particular type of incident (there were

*This document is presented in draft format for immediate public review and is not considered approved until action has been taken by the Fire Commission during their next scheduled meeting.*

many examples), and the new 80<sup>th</sup> percentile benchmark. 80% was chosen because it was believed to be achievable. Once that goal is met then it will be reset to reduce time once again.

Chairman Raymond questioned if speed to the fire was the most important aspect. He also said that fighting the fire and the actual performance of the firefighters was something that should be seriously focused upon as well. He stated that he thought that the assets saved vs. assets lost graph on page 29 was one of the most critical pieces of information of the document. Lieutenant Livingston stated that the FESSAM dives into those tactical questions to make sure that the firefighters are receiving the proper training.

One improvement that has already been implemented relative to reducing the time it takes to get to a call is that in each of the station's dining rooms, the televisions have the dispatch CAD information right on the screen so that they can be on route quickly which will improve performance.

Ms. Lust recommended that each Board member speak to their Council person regarding the issues with dispatch in order to improve the situation. Chairman Raymond recommended that all of the other districts come together to address the issue together. Chief Thompson will provide the Board members with a list of the Chairpersons of the other districts so they can pursue the matter.

Chairman Raymond questioned how we can improve our response time when traffic continues to increase in the area. Lieutenant Livingston responded that by improving our turnout time and alarm handling time, we have decreased our overall response time. Also, the addition of Station 38 will decrease the response times. The data and information in the Standards of Cover will be continually analyzed, and therefore any issues that stand out will be identified and addressed appropriately.

Lieutenant Livingston requested that the Board of Directors adopt the 2018 Community Risk Assessment Standards of Cover.

Director Lust asked about the conclusions. Lieutenant Livingston spoke about the plan of actions that were being worked on, which included improved accuracy when information is being entered into the RMS through the CAD. Chief Sheriff and Chief Cramer have a committee that are analyzing how we input data and code into the system to ensure consistency. There will be training to standardize the process to increase the integrity of the data.

The district will adopt a new methodology for assessing values to identify property value versus property saved. We are currently doing it subjectively, but will begin using the Assessor's office's valuation to identify the value of the building. In addition, we would like to develop relationships with the insurance adjustors for their input as well.

Chairman Raymond inquired about the benefit of accreditation to the residents. Specifically, if there would be price break on homeowner's insurance. Chief Thompson responded that the biggest benefit is that we are spending every tax dollar the best that we can, we are getting to the calls quicker, the fires are smaller, keeping the residents safer, and saving life and property.

*This document is presented in draft format for immediate public review and is not considered approved until action has been taken by the Fire Commission during their next scheduled meeting.*

Commissioner Paolo asked for a definition of all of the abbreviations mentioned at today's meeting be documented for the August Board meeting. He also asked for all of the equipment we have be included in the document, including the backup truck.

This process forces the District to assess ourselves and to prove everything that we say. The District has advanced from an applicant agency to a candidate agency. A team will be assigned shortly to review the FESSAM, and if there are any questions, they will let Lieutenant Livingston know. The District's mentor, Chief Donohue, has been working with Lieutenant Livingston, and once all of the questions have been addressed, a site visit from the team will be arranged to discuss the FESSAM with the District's Department heads, who have all contributed to the content of the FESSAM. The final step will be the Commission hearings that will be held early next year.

The workshop concluded at 12:14 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Burton  
7/30/19

*This document is presented in draft format for immediate public review and is not considered approved until action has been taken by the Fire Commission during their next scheduled meeting.*