

**BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Tuesday, March 16, 2021  
Bluffton Fire District Headquarters  
MINUTES**

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

**Board Members Present via Zoom:** Ed Olsen

**Absent:** None

**Members Present:** John Thompson, Paul Boulware, Rick Cramer, Dan Wiltse, Robert Payne, Pete Reid, Steve McKinley, Terry Sheriff, Joe Helms, Amanda Cazenave, Nancy Hyer, Derek Church

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 4:00 pm by Chairman Raymond.**

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**BOARD MEMBER ROLL CALL**

**ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA:** Director Lust motioned, and Director Hamilton seconded to accept the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously. (YEAS –Raymond, Poindexter, Paolo, Mike, Lust, Hamilton, Olsen) (NAYS – None)

**CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS:** Chairman Raymond commented on the increase in structure fires recently.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**CITIZEN HEROISM RECOGNITIONS:** Chief Thompson and Chairman Raymond recognized the following citizens for their heroism in assisting the District on emergency calls and presented each of them with a certificate. Mark Byars assisted the District on a water rescue by offering his boat and transporting responders to the location of the patient. Adrienne Brown, a local postal worker, notified authorities when a resident hadn’t picked up her mail. The resident was found with a medical issue and was rescued because of Ms. Brown’s assistance. A team at Home Depot, including Scott Found, Eric Losik, Bill Towler, Alondra Carrion and Samantha Smith, jumped into action performing CPR and using an AED on a customer that went into cardiac arrest. When Fire and EMS arrived, the customer had a pulse. Thank you to all of these amazing citizens for stepping in to help save lives.

**APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES:** Director Poindexter motioned, and Director Paolo seconded the minutes of the February 16, 2021 Board of Directors meeting be *Approved by the Fire Commission on 4/20/21.*

approved. Motion passed. (YEAS –Raymond, Poindexter, Paolo, Mike, Lust, Hamilton, Olsen)  
(NAYS – None)

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Chief Boulware reviewed the Finance Report for the month of February 2021. We have completed 66.67% of the current fiscal year budget, and the total expenditures year to date are at 65.37%. The revenue requested year to date from the county was \$10,158,180, which is 63.89% of our \$15,898,353 budget.

Director Paolo motioned and Director Poindexter seconded that the February 2021 Financial Report be approved as submitted. Motion passed. (YEAS –Raymond, Poindexter, Paolo, Mike, Lust, Hamilton, Olsen) (NAYS – None)

#### **CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL:**

- **Receipt of Training Update**
- **Receipt of Maintenance Update**
- **Receipt of Fire Prevention Update**
- **Receipt of Operations Update**

Chief Thompson stated that we have seen a 16% increase in calls over previous years.

Director Hamilton motioned and Director Poindexter seconded that the consent agenda be accepted. Motion passed. (YEAS –Raymond, Poindexter, Paolo, Mike, Hamilton, Olsen) (NAYS – None)

#### **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:**

- ***Project Updates:***

***Accreditation Update:*** Chief Thompson stated that the accreditation stickers have arrived and will be put on all the trucks. Five (5) of the 19 objectives are complete (26%). The MOU with Beaufort County EMS for the sharing of call response time data has been signed and is now in force. Now we can more accurately track the performance of the medical response system.

***Strategic Plan Implementation Progress:*** The strategic plan update for the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter will be delivered at the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. To date, staff has completed 51% of the objectives contained within the Strategic Plan.

***Fire Station 32/Callawassie Progress Update:*** Chief Boulware stated that painting has been completed and the flooring will go down on Monday. The electricians are completing their work and the plumbers will be in the following week. The 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April we are scheduled for the CofC and CO.

*Approved by the Fire Commission on 4/20/21.*

***Fire Station 31/New Riverside:*** Exterior siding and brick work is underway. The sheetrock and interior work are ongoing and they are making good progress. The substantial completion date is July 21, 2021.

***Fire Station 34/Sun City:*** This project went to the Public Facilities Committee for the County yesterday to get permission to enter into an MOU. District and County are still waiting on the architect to come back with a new cost estimate.

***Fire Station 39/Sun City Property Acquisition:*** District staff is awaiting the final tree and topographic survey of the proposed site to be completed by Sun City. They then want to conduct a town hall meeting to present the project to the residents of the community.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- ***COVID-19 Response Update:*** Chief Thompson stated that the District has had 34 employees meeting the criteria for COVID-19 testing with 25 of those tests being positive. Currently there are no employees out due to COVID-19. Chairman Raymond expressed concern that nearly 70% of our personnel have not been vaccinated. The Board discussed their concerns and questions with the Beaufort County legal department regarding the District's liability. They also discussed the perception of the public, and the potential service impact or undue costs as a result of a non-vaccinated employee contracting COVID-19. The District continues to follow CDC guidance and is maintaining compliance with mask mandates in place through the Town of Bluffton and Beaufort County.
- ***Life and Assist:*** Chief Thompson is still conducting research on the topic and he will be bringing his results to the Board to find a solution.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Director Paolo proposed a workshop to further discuss additional items that have been brought up before and have not been fully addressed.
- April 1<sup>st</sup> we will be starting back CPR classes and the Explorer Program.
- Chief Cramer and Captain Scott Cochran will be retiring this month. Also, Chief Reid will be leaving the District to move out of town and pursue another opportunity. The processes are underway to fill these positions and for recruit firefighters.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Director Paolo motioned, and Director Poindexter seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM. (YEAS –Raymond, Poindexter, Paolo, Mike, Hamilton, Olsen) (NAYS – None)

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amanda Cazenave

*Approved by the Fire Commission on 4/20/21.*

3-17-2021

*Approved by the Fire Commission on 4/20/21.*