

**BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Tuesday, April 20, 2021
Bluffton Fire District Headquarters
MINUTES**

Board Members Present: Mike Raymond, Louis Poindexter, Joseph Paolo, Edwin Olsen, Elaine Lust

Absent: Paul Hamilton, Thomas Mike Sr.

Members Present: John Thompson, Paul Boulware, Derek Church, Dan Wiltse, Robert Payne, Steve McKinley, Terry Sheriff, Randy Hunter, Rhett Livingston, Veronica Gutierrez, Joe Helms, Amanda Cazenave, Nancy Hyer

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 4:01 pm by Chairman Raymond.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

BOARD MEMBER ROLL CALL

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

CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

PROMOTION CEREMONY:

- **Firefighter 3 Veronica Gutierrez to Staff Lieutenant: Community Risk Reduction Officer**
Lt. Gutierrez is the first female officer in the Bluffton Township Fire District’s history.
- **Battalion Chief Derek Church to Deputy Fire Chief of Operations**

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES: Director Poindexter motioned, and Director Olsen seconded the minutes of the March 16, 2021 Board of Directors meeting be approved. Motion passed. (YEAS –Raymond, Poindexter, Paolo, Lust, Olsen) (NAYS – None)

FINANCIAL REPORT: Chief Boulware reviewed the Finance Report for the month of March 2021. We have completed 75% of the current fiscal year budget, and the total expenditures year to date are at 73.55%. The revenue requested year to date from the county was \$11,435,527, which is 71.93% of our \$15,898,353 budget. The fire impact fee balance as of March 31st is \$1,353,058.

Approved by the Fire Board 5-18-21

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

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL:

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

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

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

- ***Project Updates:***

Accreditation Update: Chief Thompson stated 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. The District began receiving EMS times on April 1st and will be able to provide the first report to EMS at the end of April. The BCEMS medical control physician, Dr. Raymond, is too busy to take us on. We are pursuing Dr. Baxley who is a colleague of Dr. Raymond.

Strategic Plan Implementation Progress: The strategic plan update for the 1st Quarter was delivered to the board. To date, staff has completed 51% of the objectives contained within the Strategic Plan.

Fire Station 32/Callawassie Progress Update: Chief Boulware stated that the CO was achieved today. The crew will not be living in the new renovated space until the touch ups are done and the furniture and equipment is all in place.

Fire Station 31/New Riverside: The contractor continues to make good progress. The roads and pads are in and the exterior siding and painting are well underway. The interior work is ongoing and they are making good progress. The substantial completion date is July 21, 2021.

Fire Station 34/Sun City: On April 8th, the District received an updated cost for the facility at \$1,169,206, however this figure does not include a fire sprinkler system. The County has approved an MOU with a 50%/50% cost share between BTFD and BCEMS. District and County are now waiting on the architect to come back with a new cost estimate with the sprinkler system included. The cost increase will cause a strain on the impact fund. An alternative option discussed for financing this project would be a bond.

Approved by the Fire Board 5-18-21

Fire Station 39/Sun City Property Acquisition: District staff was made aware that the property for the station has a BJWSA sewer line going directly under where the living quarters would be. They will be re-siting the property and adjusting the position of the building. On May 5th Chief Thompson will be meeting with the Sun City Board to update them on the project.

OLD BUSINESS:

- ***COVID-19 Response Update:*** Chief Thompson stated that the District has 1 employee out due to COVID-19. The District lifted the mask mandates in place following the Town of Bluffton and Beaufort County's decisions to do the same. Chief Thompson is going to be meeting with a team within Beaufort County regarding the funds that will be received for COVID-19 relief.
- ***Life and Assist:*** On average 10% of all fire and EMS service call volume across the country is for lift and assists. The BTFD is in line with that figure thus far in 2021. Unfortunately, there are no definitive solutions to the problem. Few agencies charge for the service for private residences and independent living facilities. Many organizations do charge a fee to licensed care facilities for lift and assist services. Over the last few weeks staff has been exploring the options locally. The plan involves multiple agencies and creating partnerships to achieve the best results for the citizen. Chairman Raymond recommend pursuing an ordinance to allow us the option to charge a fee in the future.
- ***Old Fire Station 31 Future Use:*** The staff located the original deed stating that if there was a change in the use of this property the Grantor retains a purchase option at the original price of \$2804.00. As recommended, the station will continue to be used by the District for office space.
- ***Special Board Workshop Date Discussion:*** The date of May 18th at 2pm was decided to discuss the FY2022 budget proposal as well as other proposed projects.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Director Paolo motioned, and Director Poindexter seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM. (YEAS –Raymond, Poindexter, Paolo, Lust, Olsen) (NAYS – None)

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda Cazenave
4-21-2021

Approved by the Fire Board 5-18-21