

**BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Tuesday, April 12, 2022
Bluffton Fire District Headquarters
MINUTES**

Board Members Present: Joe Walsh, Elaine Lust, Joe Paolo, Louis Poindexter, Paul Hamilton, Rick Krob, Dana Marsh

Absent: None

Members Present: John Thompson, Paul Boulware, Derek Church, Dan Wiltse, Tracy Walling, Joe Helms, Robert Payne, Amanda Cazenave, Nancy Hyer, Terry Sheriff

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

BOARD MEMBER ROLL CALL

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA: Director Krob motioned and Director Hamilton seconded to accept the agenda. Motion passed unanimously. (YEAS –Lust, Paolo, Poindexter, Hamilton, Krob, Marsh) (NAYS – None)

CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS: Chairman Poindexter stated that the impact fee ordinance was repealed at County Council last night.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

SWEARING IN CEREMONY FOR NEW BOARD MEMBER: Chairman Poindexter swore in Ms. Dana Marsh as a new Director of the Bluffton Fire District Board.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES: Director Hamilton motioned, and Director Krob seconded the minutes of the March 15, 2022 Board of Directors meeting be approved. Motion passed. (YEAS –Lust, Paolo, Poindexter, Hamilton, Krob, Marsh) (NAYS – None)

Director Hamilton motioned, and Director Krob seconded the minutes of the March 22, 2022 Budget Workshop meeting be approved. (YEAS - Paolo, Poindexter, Hamilton, Krob, Marsh) (NAYS – None) (ABSTAIN – Lust)

FINANCIAL REPORT: Chief Boulware reviewed the Finance Report for the month of March 2022. We have completed 75% of the current fiscal year budget, and the total expenditures year to date are at 75.35%. The revenue requested year to date from the county was \$12,485,773, which is 74.49% of our \$16,761,722 budget. The fire impact fee balance as of March 31st is \$1,098,106.

Approved by the Fire Commission 5/17/2022.

Director Paolo motioned and Director Hamilton seconded that the March 2022 Financial Report be approved as submitted. Motion passed. (YEAS –Lust, Paolo, Poindexter, Hamilton, Krob, Marsh) (NAYS – None)

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL:

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

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

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Receipt of Operations Update:** Chief Church reviewed the Operations Report, stating that the call volume was up 26 calls last month and the average response time was down 7 seconds. Chief Thompson asked that we also include data showing the entire call processing time rather than just the travel time. Chairman Poindexter asked about Station 35's reliability figures and if Truck 335 or Rescue 335 respond to calls when Engine 335 is on a call. Chief Payne stated that if both units reside in the same District, then it would not be considered a simultaneous call.

- ***Project Updates:***

Accreditation Update: To date, fourteen (14) of the 19 objectives are complete (73%). The remaining objectives are in process and on schedule. The projected date to achieve all recommendation is May 1, 2022. The continuity of operations plan (COOP) will take an additional 18 months to accomplish.

Strategic Plan Implementation Progress: Chief Sheriff presented the Strategic Plan update. Included in the update is research regarding a Community Paramedicine Program that could aide in the lift and assist calls, as well as IT improvements to keep us at industry standards. He also highlighted a Response Time study in Station 38's District showing an improvement of 1 min 18 seconds in response times with the addition of Station 38. Director Lust asked about our community outreach and recruiting. We have an Explorer Program and Tracy Walling shared about the career fairs that we have been a part of. We are growing our recruiting board and are considering some radio advertising. Director Marsh suggested connecting with the military bases.

Fire Station 34/Sun City Renovation: Earthquake drains were recommended by an engineering group and the County is discussing whether they plan to add them to the plans or not. The construction trailer and initial equipment has arrived at the site. They estimate the project to take 6 months to complete.

Approved by the Fire Commission 5/17/2022.

Fire Station 39/Sun City Property Acquisition: The County is working with Sun City's legal to craft the lease language. Staff is awaiting the first draft of the lease and will bring it forward once it is received from County.

- **COVID-19 Response Update:** Chief Thompson stated that COVID has decreased significantly and the District currently has zero employees out due to COVID.
- **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):** On March 28th County Council voted to approve the ordinance including special pay for the individuals employed by the County during the pandemic up to \$3000. The ordinance also includes funding for the project providing a state-of-the-art, countywide fire and EMS station alerting system. Vendors for this project are being considered.
- **Beaufort County Fire Impact Fee Study:** Chief Thompson explained the new impact fee analysis based on the property's equivalent dwelling units (EDU's). Each EDU would be \$953. This project is now in process and working its way through county council. On February 22nd, the matter was presented to the County's Finance Committee where it was voted on and forwarded to the full Council. On February 28th it passed the first reading of the new fee ordinance. On March 14th there was much discussion regarding inter-governmental agreements with the municipalities. At the County Council meeting on March 28th, a subsequent motion was made, seconded, and passed to repeal all impact fees. This was the first reading of the new ordinance, and it will be brought up for second reading at the next Council meeting for further discussion.
- **FY2022 Budget Process:** Chief Boulware stated that we received the projections from County with a mil value at 745,586, roughly 2% higher than what we were predicting. The County listed the CPI factor at 4.7% and the growth factor 2.16%, making the total mil rate cap increase 6.86%. County Council agreed to give County employees a 5% increase and the District would like to do that as well. The District would like to increase the operations millage rate to 25.6 and the debt millage rate to remain the same at 1.50 for a total millage rate of 27.10. This is a 1.4 increase would remain below the 1.6 cap. Director Paolo motioned and Director Hamilton seconded that the FY2023 budget be approved as submitted. Motion passed. (YEAS –Lust, Paolo, Poindexter, Hamilton, Krob, Marsh) (NAYS – None)

NEW BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Director Hamilton motioned, and Director Krob seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM. (YEAS –Lust, Paolo, Poindexter, Hamilton, Krob, Marsh) (NAYS – None)

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda Cazenave
4-14-2022

Approved by the Fire Commission 5/17/2022.