

Murrells Inlet – Garden City Fire District
Public Hearing &
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes of December 14, 2015

Board Members Present: Al Hitchcock, Booty Shelley, George Oldroyd, Kay Benton, and Moe Wells. Also in Attendance: Chief Knight, Assistant Chief Haney, Jerry Howerton, and Pat Walsh.

Budget: The public hearing of the budget was held at 5:30. Chief Knight presented a report comparing this year's budget to the previous year's budget. Wendy Swindell stated she would like to see the District be above the neighboring departments in salaries, not just keeping up with them. Moe Wells said he believes the district does very good in comparison to others with the current millage rate. Chairman Hitchcock believes the working conditions are better than that of the county. Kay Benton remarked the vacation buyback is not available to county employees. George Oldroyd pointed out another measure the board needs to be aware of is where the salaries fit in with other professions in the community and the cost of living in the community.

At 6:00 p.m. Chairman Hitchcock called the board of directors meeting to order.

Public Comment: Wendy Swindell complimented the district on the new website. She remarked it was user friendly and really looks nice. She also asked those present to invite their neighbors to attend meetings so the board can hear what the community is saying. Jerry Fancher thinks the community has outgrown the board. He stated the board should be elected, rather than appointed.

Station Four: Chairman Hitchcock introduced the architect, Felix Ayers, who had spoken to the contractor regarding the revised figures for the value engineered items. Chairman Hitchcock asked if some of the decisions could be made during construction. Mr. Ayers stated a change order could be issued for any changes made to the contract. Chairman Hitchcock said he was comfortable entering into a contract. Kay Benton made the motion to agree to enter into a contract with Hanco for the construction of Station Four, and to continue the review of line items on the deducts given and the final number will be decided on the contract amount when a decision is made on those deducts. The motion was seconded by George Oldroyd, and the motion carried unanimously.

Budget: The third reading of the budget was held. Chairman Hitchcock thanked everyone for their time. George Oldroyd asked Chief Knight how the current year's expenses compared to the budget. Chief Knight referred to the financials included in the packet which show expenses through November being less than were budgeted for the period. George Oldroyd made a motion to approve the third reading of the budget as presented, which was seconded by Kay Benton. The motion carried unanimously.

Moe Wells asked to discuss insurance recovery. It was discussed last spring, but set aside. Mr. Wells pointed out this would reduce the financial burden of the district. Only the "at fault" driver's insurance is responsible for payment. The "at fault" driver's insurance rate should not go up any more than it would by being at fault. The responding firefighter will complete a report which will go to an in-house quality assurance person. A third party will bill the insurance, and there will be no pursuit if not paid. The fee for billing is 25%, with an \$800 average recovery. It is estimated the first year will see a recovery of \$81,000 for the district. George Oldroyd asked if a contract was involved. Moe Wells said there is an agreement. Brian Hollifield said there is a monthly fee per iPad used, which he believes will be waived, and the service can be dropped at any time if not satisfied.

George Oldroyd moved to accept the proposal from the InnovaPad cost recovery program pending an examination of their service contract. Kay Benton seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chief's Report: Chief Knight had nothing additional to report.

Firefighter's Report: Pat Walsh thanked the board for the Christmas Party. He talked briefly about being a firefighter as an employee. He doesn't feel the public really knows what a firefighter actually does. He would like to see the Fire District take opportunities to make the public aware with activities like sponsoring a ride along or putting a story in the newspaper.

Minutes: The minutes of the special meetings for the budget and Station Four; and the minutes of the November 23rd board of directors meeting were discussed. Chief Knight pointed out that he was omitted from those listed in attendance of November's meeting. Chairman Hitchcock asked Barbara to make a note and correct. Kay Benton made a motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting and the meetings for the budget and Station Four. George Oldroyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Financials: The financials for November were discussed. Booty Shelley made a motion to approve the November financial statements which was seconded by Kay Benton. The motion carried unanimously.

Assistant Chief's Report: Assistant Chief Haney presented the 2016 Georgetown County EMS budget.

EMS Report: Captain Jerry Howerton stated the year's run tally shows a steady increase over 2014.

Chairman's Report: Next year will mark fifty years of service for the Murrells Inlet – Garden City Fire District. Thank you to people like Mr. Wesley Gordon for getting the ball rolling. Chairman Hitchcock presented the 2016 meeting schedule. Kay Benton made a motion to approve the schedule as presented. George Oldroyd seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

There being no further business, Kay Benton made the motion to adjourn, seconded by George Oldroyd. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved on 2-5-16, 2016



Al Hitchcock, Chairman