

Murrells Inlet – Garden City Fire District  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Minutes of December 16, 2019

**Board Members Present:** Kay Benton, Pat Walsh, Steven Sellers, Gene Connell.

**Others Present:** Chief Knight, Assistant Chief Haney.

**Public Hearing of the 2020 Budget:** The third reading of the budget was called to order at 6:00 pm.

An alternate budget report was given to the board for consideration that reflected an increase in impact fees. Gene Connell read a message from Elizabeth Ward that stated she thought the budget should remain the same with no changes. Steven Sellers would like to discuss the impact fee schedule in open meeting before considering an income revision to the budget. Assistant Chief Haney reviewed quotes received for workers compensation coverage. A switch to 7710 Insurance would reduce the budgeted expense to \$118,000. Steven Sellers would like to go over salaries one more time.

**Public Comment:** Maggie Fancher asked about how the budgeted salaries compared to the current year, and how filling the empty positions would affect the budget. Chief Knight explained that the budget was based on a full staff. He also said that buying a new ambulance was not the challenge, that we need people to put in it.

**Call to Order:** After a five-minute intermission, the regular meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Third Reading of the Budget:** Steven Sellers made the motion to increase legal fees to \$10,000. Pat Walsh seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Steven Sellers made the motion to increase base salaries 10% and take overage from reserve to balance the budget. Pat Walsh seconded the motion, and the motion carried, with one no vote from Kay Benton.

Steven Sellers made the motion to accept the 2020 budget. Pat Walsh seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**Medical Control:** Gene Connell introduced Dr. Coradi. Assistant Chief Haney gave an overview of the Georgetown County EMS agreement review and update, and the need to include the ability to choose our own medical control physician. Captain Berube gave a brief history, explaining that Dr. Gibson, the current medical control physician, was stepping down. Dr. Gibson has recommended that each organization have their own medical control physician. Assistant Chief Haney said he would like to get Dr. Coradi on board as soon as possible. Chief Knight said now is the time.

**Minutes:** Kay Benton approved the November meeting minutes. Steven Sellers seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Financials:** Steven Sellers asked about the need to revise the budget as brought up earlier this year. Kay Benton will talk with the accountant and clarify what should be done. Steven Sellers made the motion to

accept the financials as presented. Pat Walsh seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Inspection and Impact Fees:** Captain Zimpleman confirmed with the billing company that the inspection fees billing could begin effective January first. Impact fees would increase to one percent for residential and 2% for commercial. Steven Sellers made the motion to approve the new inspection and impact fee schedules as presented, effective January 1, 2020. Pat Walsh seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Chief's Report:** Chief Knight reported a poll worker was injured. This is the first time an incident has occurred while the station was being used as a polling place. The poll worker has made contact with Georgetown County. Steven Sellers asked what agreement we have with the County? Chief Knight said there is nothing in writing. Steven Sellers would like to contact Georgetown County and have an agreement in place before the next election. Pat Walsh would like someone to call the worker to keep her informed. Gene Connell will write a letter requesting an indemnification agreement.

Chief Knight announced that in October 2019 he had been in the fire service for forty years; thirty-seven as Chief. He said it was time to turn the wheel over to someone else. His last workday will be January 24th. He also thanked the board for providing the extra bonuses provided this year, as well as the party.

**Assistant Chief's Report:** Assistant Chief Haney asked permission to go ahead with ordering a pickup truck and ambulance. Steven Sellers said he wants to go over the ambulance specs himself as a board member. He asked to table the ambulance purchase. Steven Sellers made the motion to purchase the pickup truck. Pat Walsh seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Chairman's Report:** Gene Connell thanked Chief Knight for attending the meeting last month regarding the proposed highway changes. He says the SCDOT will seek input from the department as a result.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** Steven Sellers said with Chief Knight retiring, an interim Chief will need to be appointed. A special meeting to discuss the process is scheduled for January 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Kay Benton asked to table the approval of the 2020 meeting schedule until the January regular meeting.

**Public Comment:** Larry Hopkins thanked the board and the administrative staff for the Christmas party. On behalf of the IAFF, Matt Piontkowski told Chief Knight he hoped he enjoyed his retirement; and he thanked the board for the party. Maggie Fancher shared information with the board about the local radio stations.

Next regular meeting is January 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

**Adjourn:** Pat Walsh made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Steven Sellers and the motion carried.

Approved on 2/24, 2020

