

Murrells Inlet – Garden City Fire District  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Minutes of January 27, 2020

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

**Others Present:** Interim Chief Haney.

**Minutes:** Kay Benton made the motion to accept the December minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Steven Sellers and the motion carried.

**Financials:** Kay Benton said our expenses were on target and we should be able to see how the taxes are in March. Steven Sellers made the motion to approve the financial statements. Kay Benton seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**2019 Budget:** Steven Sellers asked if the budget needed to be adjusted. Kay Benton spoke to the accountant, who advised all adjustments should be made before year end. Mr. Sellers asked to table the budget until next meeting.

**EMS Contract:** As of now, there has been no continuation of service with Dr. Gibson for medical control. Interim Chief Haney believes the best direction for the District would be to add \$8,000 to the annual expense for a medical control director, and negotiate a contract with Dr. Carotti. Mr. Sellers would like to have an attorney review the contract. Ms. Benton clarified that the contract was a 12 month term with a review.

**Selling of Vehicles:** Mr. Sellers stated an ambulance was sold earlier this year without prior board approval and he thought the board should vote on the sale of vehicles. Interim Chief Haney reviewed the purchasing policy in regarding to the sale of assets. Ms. Benton suggested the board review the current purchasing policy and discuss at the next meeting. Ms. Ward clarified that we had followed our current policy in the past sale transactions.

**Impact Fees:** Interim Chief Haney had received feedback regarding the increased impact fees. Someone had applied for a permit in December 2019 and picked up the permit in January. He did not realize the impact fee would double, and is looking for relief. He could not attend the meeting due to the flu. The fee was \$4,000 and increased to \$8,000. Steven Sellers said he was in the Georgetown County office to apply for a permit on December 4, 2019 and saw a notice posted regarding the proposed increase. Beth Ward made the motion that there was notification, process and procedure was followed, and that he has to pay the fees as they were published. Steven Sellers seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Election of Officers:** Ms. Ward made the motion to leave the officers as they are. Steven Sellers seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Chief's Report:**

- The Fireman's Fund Expense Report has been prepared showing how the one percent funds were spent last year and is ready for the board's signature.
- The Fire Impact Fee Administrative Manual has been prepared, as approved at last meeting and is ready for signatures. Ms. Benton asked to clarify if the fees can be used for EMS expenses.

- The purchase of the ambulance was tabled until this meeting so that Mr. Sellers could review the specifications. Mr. Sellers made the motion to purchase the ambulance. Pat Walsh seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- The Dodge pickup has been ordered and will be ready in about 12 weeks.
- The South Carolina Special Purpose District membership invoice has received and needs approval. Pat Walsh made the motion to paying the dues. Beth Ward seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- The 2020 meeting needs to be approved. Steven Sellers asked about the current staffing. We are down nine employees. We picked up one employee in January. Steven Sellers asked if the Assistant Chief was now getting the Chief's emails.
- Two medic units are down; otherwise there is the usual ebb and flow of repairs.

**Chairman's Report:** The Chairman has been working on increasing our coverage area by statute. Representative Russell Fry would like to pass this on to the legislature. Steven Sellers would like to have a fourth medic unit beforehand. Steven Sellers made the motion to allow Gene Connell to tell Representative Fry to increase the coverage area subject to putting on a fourth medic unit. Beth Ward seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The Chairman is waiting to see who the new Georgetown County attorney will be in order to talk about the Medical Control contract. That should be sometime this month. He is trying to get the bond attorney to come to the next meeting to discuss the bond issue. Kay Benton made the motion to approve the life membership for Chief Knight. Beth Ward seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Chief Knight's retirement party has been scheduled for February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The estimated cost is \$3,500 - \$4,000. Ms. Benton asked if there were sufficient funds in the Fireman's Donation fund. Beth Ward made the motion to approve \$4,461 from the Fireman's Donation fund for the Chief's party. Steven Sellers seconded the motion and the motion carried.

A Vice Chairman needs to be appointed. Steven Sellers made the motion to appoint Pat Walsh as Vice Chairman. Someone seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**New Business:** Pat Walsh asked about the problem solving procedure. Interim Chief Haney reviewed the process, including the form used to speak to the board, and the section of the employee handbook (the "Blue Book").

**Public Comment:** Engineer Rollin Carver asked the board if the local IAFF was approached by the board for a poll as to whether the Chief position should be advertised inside or out. Chairman Connell explained that he did not commission a poll from them. This is a public entity and everyone has a right to speak. Mr. Carver stated the union did not represent the majority. He advocated for the process to be fair. Captain Charles Petrella spoke to the board on behalf of the Assistant Chief and for the internal selection process. Larry Hopkins and Captain Kosto both spoke up in agreement.

**Job Descriptions:** Beth Ward and Alison Burns worked on the job descriptions and distributed copies for review. Steven Sellers would like the job requirement to include a geographical location. The job description will include the Chief will be required to live within ten miles from the center of the District. Steven Sellers made the motion to approve the Fire Chief job description as written. Pat Walsh seconded the motion and the motion carried. Steven Sellers mad the motion to advertise the Fire Chief position both internally and externally. Beth Ward seconded the motion and the motion carried. The job will be posted tomorrow and will close in fifteen days on February 12<sup>th</sup>. It will be posted on the

District website, the SC Firefighters Association website and the SC Fire Academy website. Resumes will be sent directly to the Chairman and then distributed to the board members after February 12<sup>th</sup>. The resumes will be narrowed down to no more than three qualified candidates during executive session during the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Interviews will be held on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. A special meeting will be held on March 4<sup>th</sup> to vote.

Beth Ward made the motion to approve the 2020 board meeting schedule. Steven Sellers seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Pat Walsh made the motion to pay Chief Knight for his accrued sick leave, a sum of \$11,841.89. Kay Benton seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Beth Ward made the motion to adjourn. Steven Sellers seconded the motion and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Approved on 2/24 2020

