

**Murrells Inlet – Garden City Fire District
Board of Directors Meeting
May 18, 2020**

Board Members Present: Gene Connell, Pat Walsh, Kay Benton, Alison Burns, Beth Ward, Steven Sellers.

Others Present: Assistant Chief Haney.

The meeting was called to order 6:00 p.m.

Minutes: Kay Benton made the motion to approve the February meeting minutes. Beth Ward seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The March minutes were not available for review. The April meeting was canceled.

Financials: Kay Benton clarified that the amounts budgeted for payroll expenses had been recalculated and the monthly amount now coincided with the timing of the payroll periods. Kay Benton made the motion to approve the financial statements as presented. Steven Sellers seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Beth Ward asked about the plan for overtime expenses in terms of normal. Chief Haney stated we would drop to one individual on the COVID ambulance on May 15th, and lieutenants would return to their stations. On June 1st, the COVID ambulance would become an unmanned specialty unit, and captains would move from the battalion role back to their regular captain role. The cost to keep the captains on in a battalion chief role would be one lieutenant on each shift. Alison Burns asked for a proposal. Chief Haney said one had been prepared for last budget season and would need to be updated. Steven Sellers stated he believes we are behind the times by not having battalion chiefs now.

Chief Haney stated nine positions remain open. We have received 100+ applications. Sixteen applicants have been invited to testing scheduled on May 28th. Beth Ward would like to discuss FTE's next meeting.

Medical control contract: The contract is with the attorney. Dr. Coradi should be paid for the work he has already done. Beth Ward made the motion to pay Dr. Coradi retroactively from his start date through May. The annual amount is \$8,000. Steven Sellers seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Horry County Ambulance Contract: Chairman Connell suggested the contract negotiations be tabled until next year. Steven Sellers made the motion to table the contract negotiations until next year. Alison Burns seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Mr. Sellers would like to speak to Georgetown County regarding purchasing the rescue building property. He believes it would be a good site for a maintenance area. Chief Haney suggested using the rescue building site as a centralized fitness area, which would have less of a noise impact on the surrounding residential area. Mr. Sellers stated the antique fire truck was stored at that site.

Pat Walsh asked about the Georgetown County EMS Contract. Chief Haney stated that it was tabled until the new County Administrator had been placed.

Mail pick up and check signing: Chief Haney's recommendation is to return the mail pick up to the administrative staff. He appreciated Mr. Sellers and Ms. Ward's time filling in during the hiring process for the Fire Chief. Beth Ward made the motion to return mail pick up to the administrative staff. Alison Burns seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Chief Haney would like to return check signing duties to the Fire Chief, but only after his six-month probationary period has been completed. Kay Benton made the motion to allow the Fire Chief to sign checks beginning October 1st. Beth Ward seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Capital medical equipment: We currently have six stretchers. Stretchers reach their end of life at 12 years, with recommended replacement at 7 years. Our oldest is 20 years old, and the newest is 8 years old. Chief Haney is asking to spend money previously budgeted to purchase three stretchers at \$14,112 each. Stryker will allow us to make monthly payments, interest free. Stryker is a sole source for these power stretchers. Alison Burns made the motion to purchase three power stretchers. Pat Walsh seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Assistant Chief selection process: Beth Ward will send the job description to the board members by email. Steven Sellers would like the board to participate in the process since the Chief is in a probationary period. Hiring process timeline: The Assistant Chief job description emailed to board members, with comment period until Friday, May 22nd at 5:00 p.m. If no objection, allow Chief to search within the department and update the board on the 29th if internal candidates qualify. If so, testing will begin; if not, open to applicants outside of the department. The board will interview the final two candidates at the June 22nd meeting in executive session.

Chairman's Report: We are still working on the COVID-19 crisis and have spent a lot on medical supplies. We have had some personnel quarantined, but none have tested positive. The Chairman has spoken to the legislators regarding expanding the area to include all the 29576 zip code. He is also looking to see if the County will give us some land in that area.

Chief's Report: Chief would like to let the board know that Engineer Bemis, Captain Zimpleman, and the Administrative Assistant have been applying to for many grants. While we have not yet been awarded any funds, we have made it to the last rounds of several of the grants. Chief Haney thanks those individuals for their work. Chairman Connell thanked Chief Haney for the weekly updates.

We currently have 1,479 fire hydrants in the District. Captain Zimpleman has verified the location of 1,200 thus far in Active 911. Volunteers Larry Hopkins, Joe Chmura, and Dennis Brogna are opening and greasing every hydrant in Georgetown County. Chief Haney thanked the entire staff for their work during the COVID-19. Our crews have done better than anybody in our area; they have worked a lot of long hours and a lot of overtime. Alison Burns thanked the volunteers for their work on the hydrants.

Wachesaw Plantation East, and Palm Bay Community of Prince Creek, as well as many other individuals and groups have donated meals to the District during the pandemic. We are out of stationery but are keeping a list to send thank you notes.

Public Comment: Larry Hopkins said everybody thinks highly of Chief Haney and has been positive about what he is doing. He also said many of the staff is burnt out and need help. Chief Haney stated the vacation had been restricted during the pandemic, but one vacation slot was opened on May 15th, and the second will open on June 1st.

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

Approved on 6/22, 2020


