

**Murrells Inlet – Garden City Fire District
Board of Directors Meeting
March 22, 2021**

Called to order at 6:00 p.m., this meeting was held by video conference due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

Members in attendance: Gene Connell, Kay Benton, Alison Burns, Beth Ward, Pat Walsh.

Also in attendance: Chief Haney, Assistant Chief Kosto.

Minutes: Kay Benton made the motion to accept the February minutes as written. Pat Walsh seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Financials: Kay Benton pointed out the Year-to-Date Profit & Loss report reflected activity through March rather than through February. Chief Haney noted a large one-time annual payment for fire reporting software that stands out on the Previous Year Comparison report. This payment is due to our Firehouse reporting software no longer being supported at the end of the year. It will be replaced by ESO Suite. It will also include fire inspection and fire hydrant maintenance software. Kay Benton made the motion to accept the financials as presented. Beth Ward seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman shared Post and Courier articles recently published regarding special purpose districts. He has received several phone calls regarding our district and whether our board members have credit cards, etc. He said MIGCFD does not have any of the processes described in the articles going on in the district. He shared the articles so other members could be away of the growing concern around the state and they may receive phone calls. Kay Benton referred to the article's description of the election in Clear Spring and said our board members are scrutinized by the legislative delegation and appointed by the Governor.

Mr. Connell passed along that he received a very nice letter written from a citizen regarding the wonderful ambulance service their wife received. There has been some discussion this week regarding receiving a piece of property for a new station. The Chairman has also been in contact with Horry County regarding county owned property that could be used in the future for a new fire station.

Pat Walsh stated he had read the Post & Courier articles and said the board is not compensated at all. He said the board needed to keep up to date with what is going on legislatively. Kay Benton pointed out we have a quarterly oversight provided by a CPA firm. Mr. Connell said there will be a review by various reporters on how small towns and districts conduct business. There is a question whether the board members are subject to the State Ethics Commission disclosure requirements. The Chairman will write for an official opinion from the Ethics Commission Counsel and ask whether anyone from the District is required to file that in the future.

Chief's Report: We are currently at five openings, and AFC Kosto has an interview with a paramedic scheduled for Friday. He is optimistic that we will continue to move towards full staffing. The jet ski is back in service. We sent three employees to extrication school in Darlington. We are at one of our lower COVID numbers since the beginning of the pandemic. We are looking at opening the fire station

to public access and bringing back the volunteers in the coming weeks. We hope to have an in-person board meeting in April to review the quarterly financials. All our personnel have done an outstanding job keeping COVID-19 at bay.

Kay Benton asked what type of positions were open at this time. Assistant Chief Kosto stated over the last 30 days we have added one EMT and two paramedics. At this time, all EMT slots are filled, and we are working to fill five paramedic slots. Advertising blitzes are working well and bringing in several applicants each time. Chief Haney added that quite a few are not qualified, but we have been able to pick up some exceptional personnel with this last group.

Chief Berube said personnel are currently training for the TXA and RSI programs. Medication administered with the TXA program will help bleeding patients have a better outcome. April 19 – 23 several staff members will be attending a tactical medic course in Myrtle Beach. Chief Berube would like to have a tactical EMS team in the department. Alison Burns commends the department for being involved in the pilot TXA program.

Lieutenant Niemann is heading up our high-water vehicle program. He would like to instruct our personnel on high water vehicle training and hurricane rescue technician and will go to Texas to get this training. This will put us as one of the first departments on the east coast to have high water certified technicians. Hurricane Response Technicians are trained in how to navigate flood water post-hurricane.

Old Business: None.

New Business: The Chairman thinks it would be a good idea to renew the membership in the SC Association of Special Purpose Districts so we can understand what is going on around us. Alison Burns agreed. Pat Walsh said it would be a good idea. Kay Benton also agreed. Chief Haney will notify the board of the cost.

Chief Haney asked about setting up department emails for each board member. Chairman Connell said that would be a good idea. Kay Benton, Alison Burns, and Beth Ward each agreed.

Public Comment: None.

Next meeting is April 26, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjourn: Kay Benton made the motion to adjourn. Alison Burns seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Approved on _____, 2021

