

SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITIES FIRE PROTECTION, INC
d/b/a CHATHAM EMERGENCY SERVICES

Board Meeting Minutes

From: November 16, 2022

LOCATION: Headquarters- 1399 Dean Forest Road, Savannah, Georgia 31405

MEMBERS PRESENT: Blanco, Cheshire, Futrell, Marlin, Moore, Rowe, Teel, Trower and Washington

MEMBERS ABSENT: Crosby, Egan, Harris and Whitely

OTHERS PRESENT: CEO Chuck Kearns and COO Phil Koster

1. CALL TO ORDER:

President Blanco called the meeting to order. Ms. Washington gave the invocation. CEO Kearns recited our Mission, Vision and Values statement and Compliance Hotline information.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

President Blanco asked if the Board accepted the October 2022 minutes as submitted. Mr. Rowe made the motion and motion was seconded by Chief Futrell. The minutes were approved unanimously with no abstentions.

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Mr. Teel stated that the Fire payments that were in arrears by the County have been paid. President Blanco wanted to note that a recommendation made by the former Finance Director that in good governance, the Board of Directors should have an Audit Committee. This has been addressed by the Board in the past. The Audit Committee already exists as an Ad Hoc Committee under the Finance Committee.
- **BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE:** Mr. Rowe stated the following major purchasing decisions were made in the month of November:
 - Rebuilt the septic drain fields at Stations 8 and 14.
 - Ground down, sealed, and painted the Shop Mechanics floor.
- **401(k) INVESTMENT COMMITTEE:** Chief Kearns stated that our CPA Danny Mahfet's firm is reentering the 401k audit business. Our current 401k audit firm has increased in fees over the last two years and Chief Kearns will seek some price quotes for next year's 401k audit.

- **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:** Mr. Moore plans to speak with Jon Hart regarding his status the Corporate Counsel for CES. President Blanco charged the Personnel Committee with presenting the Board of Directors with a road map of what the transition to a new attorney for CES would look like and have an intentional process that we go through as not to disrupt our operations.

- **CEO REPORT – FOR OCTOBER ACTIVITIES:**
 - Three Days of HR and Legal Training scheduled for all supervisory personnel.
 - 12 Firefighters graduated Rookie School.
 - Seven EMTs Graduated EMT school.
 - 19 Firefighters for next recruit academy-November 7, 2022.
 - 17 EMT students started our Academy in late October.
 - CMS 8.7% Ambulance Inflation Factor (AIF) increase due on January 1, 2023.
 - Scheduled Savannah Bananas game for 400 for next year; \$25 each.
 - Neonate Agreement extended to 12/31/2022.
 - Engaged next 401k audit; Price went up again.
 - GEMA Grant funding request submitted \$27k PPE.
 - Billed County \$1,175,389.11 for September and got letter from County on handling future payments.
 - Quarterly report for Fire delivered to the County on 10/20/2022.
 - Rebuilt Septic fields at Station 14 and Station 8.
 - Painted and Sealed the Shop Floor.
 - Drive cams with A.I. being installed in Fire fleet.
 - Get Well Cards mailed to Mr. Crosby, along with his badge.
 - Exchange Club Awards for Firefighter, Vol. Firefighter, Rookie Firefighter and Paramedic of the Year.
 - 40 Fire Fee Reimbursement Letters sent to Volunteers and Retirees.
 - 36 Employees Documented Hiring Referrals for \$1,000 referral fee so far.

- 4. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Chief Koster gave a review of the new CES Strategic Plan for the next 3-5 years. Staff requested the Strategic Plan to be adopted and approved by the Board of Directors. The motion was made by Mr. Teel and seconded by Mr. Trower. The motion was approved unanimously with no abstentions.

Chief Kearns gave the Board members event details about the Annual Awards Banquet. President Blanco encouraged the Board members to attend.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:** President Blanco lead a discussion about the Fire Fee bills. Several Board members have been approached by neighbors regarding the new Fire bills issued by the County. Most are complaints about the charges and structure. The CES Board of Directors have agreed to stand down in response to any questions or inquires regarding the fire bills issued by the County. All inquiries or questions are being directed back to the Chatham County Board of Commissioners.

President Blanco asked Chief Koster for an update on 911 and EMS response times. It is becoming increasing difficult for our area residents to reach the Chatham County 911 center. Chief Koster reported that EMS continues to struggle and wall times are a major issue. Leadership is trying to balance a consistent transport percentage with employee morale in order to retain employees.

6. **ADJOURNMENT:** The next Board Meeting will be held January 18, 2022 at CES Headquarters.

President Blanco asked the Board if he could adjourn the meeting. Motion made to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



**Angela Washington, Secretary
CHATHAM EMERGENCY SERVICES**