

St. Clair Fire Protection Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes

Date: 02/11/2025

Present

Board of Directors: Stephanie Butenhoff, Tiffany Burton, Andrew Branscum

Office Assistant: Kim Schuchmann

Chief: Timothy Wideman

Fire Fighters: T Ware, J Schultz, B Williams, J Hinson, A Hansel, C Carroll, T Myers, C Berry

Guests: C. Butenhoff, Meaghan Villhard, Martin Ghafoori, Sarah Straatmann, Ion Decuseara, M Darcy, Jeff Pabst, Clayton Koch, Chris Douglas, Courtney Smith, David Smith, Chris Jensen

The meeting was called to order by Director Butenhoff at 6:00 p.m.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Motion was made by Director Butenhoff to accept the agenda.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Motion was made by Director Burton to accept the Secretary's report for the meeting minutes from January 14th, 2025.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Motion was made by Director Burton to accept the Secretary's report for the executive meeting minutes from January 14th, 2025.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Comments from the public:

Chris Douglas with the Hamilton Creek Estates Subdivision came to the board asking for help with the developer to get the road wider in the subdivision. He states that the road is very narrow and that it is unsafe. If there was an emergency that rescue vehicles could not pass each other on the road. Chief Wideman wrote a letter to the developer stating what the 2018 IFC international fire code Chapter 5 Section 503 appendix D reads asking the developer to please meet the recommended guidelines in his first letter. The second letter he wrote to the developer he expressed that there was only one pull off big enough for a pumper that the others would need to be larger. He asked of the developer what plans he had to widen the road and make the pull offs larger with a timeline. The developer responded to the second letter. Chief for the safety concern had a pumper drive into the subdivision and turn around at the Cul de sac to make sure that they could get firetrucks in if needed. It was expressed to the homeowners that the fire district does not inspect private subdivision roads. That they would need to talk to Planning and zoning at Franklin County. Mr. Douglas said that they have a very unsafe subdivision and he feels that our government officials should stand up for the people they are here to serve. That the newly built subdivision does not meet the minimum safety standards, after the letters to the developer he stated it would be too expensive to move and widen the road. He feels that Chief should push the issue and issue fines to the developer. He said that there is enough to go to court for his family's safety. Chief again stated that we do not issue fines for private roads that are not inspected by the fire district we go by what planning and zoning has put out for the road. Mr. Douglas asked if the

developer had any influence carrying weight in our decision. The board and Chief answered that no one knows the developer so no they would not have any influence in the decisions. Another home owner asked if we had any suggestions on what to do because a culvert pipe washed out and they could not get to work for several days and the safety of their families is the most important concern. Chief said he does not have any suggestions at this time. Mr. Douglas asked again if the district could fine the builder for making unsafe subdivisions. Chief explained that we do not inspect a subdivision road and this is the first time we have ever been approached for this situation. Mr. Douglas asked that instead of finding reasons why we cannot that maybe we should put our heads together and find reasons we can. The district attorney Chris Jensen stated that this is not an issue for the fire district that Franklin County has exclusive jurisdiction to determine what the requirements are for subdivision roads. There is some language in our fire codes that we used as a suggestion to then help guide with planning and zoning and the building department and everyone at the county level as to what we think is necessary for there to be safe subdivisions development does not mean that the district should or has the power to do anything about the road. The district is about fire safety the chief has taken a truck out there to determine that he believes that they can fight a fire if there is a fire at a residence. Mr. Douglas stated that the chief changed his mind. Chief said that after the first letter and the road washed away that the culvert pipe was replaced and now they have about 2 feet on each side of the truck when they are crossing. Mr. Jensen said it is the duty and responsibility of the people of the district to fight fires not to have conversations about the roads or subdivisions. That is the county or municipality that the subdivisions are built in responsibility. Mr. Douglas asked if it would be the district's responsibility if it was a building. Mr. Douglas expressed that nothing changed besides the culvert. Everything else is the same. He wished that we could try and figure out a path forward to hold the developer accountable. He believes that Franklin County also needs to help he does not want to take this to court and drag the district and everyone in to court. Another homeowner asked of the Fire district could interact with the county. The Chief answered the only thing he can do is ask them to widen the road. He has not interacted with the county officials because they should have inspected the road when they inspected the homes as they were being built. The homeowner said that they do not they only look at what they come out for specifically like electric, foundations or things like that. Mr. Douglas asked if there is a builder that is building a commercial building and the sprinkler heads do not work, what do we do then? Chief answered they wouldn't be able to occupy it. Mr. Douglas says he feels like we could follow the same steps to make this developer accountable. Another homeowner asked if we had ever had a scenario like this? Chief answered no that the district never has had a scenario like this. She asked like where you cannot pass another car or truck. Chief said that he can show them several roads in the district like that. She stated that the plans that were submitted to the county are not what the road looks like now. It had more turn arounds and the road was wider and that is not how it exists. The builder said that he would do it and it has not happened. C Butenhoff said that they need to go to planning and zoning that they are the code enforcement for that and if they approved the plans and he has not done that then it is between the builder and that county. Mr. Douglas said that they have contacted them too and it has just been back and forth that no one what is to do anything. Another homeowner stated the commissioner's office sent them to the fire district. Director Butenhoff said she was sorry but they were misled and were directed to someone that can only give guidance and not fines. That the people they need to talk to are planning and zoning or the commissioner that there is not much more we can do. Mr. Douglas stated he does not know why the district cannot enforce fines. Director Burton stated we do not have fines for such things as roads. Another citizen said that they are also working with planning and zoning and the commissioner. So, the district is not the only one they are trying to push. They seen we had a board meeting so they came looking for help in the situation. Mr. Douglas asked the attorney that if it does go to court and they have to sue St. Clair Fire District for failing to enforce its rules. That this is what it is coming to. Mr. Jensen said that when they speak with a licensed attorney that practices in the state of Missouri, ask them what sovereign immunity means. Because that case will be dismissed due to sovereign immunity, you do not get to sue the government for not doing their job. They decide what their job is and how they will run their government. That is just the reality. If the County says the road is sufficient. The County is in charge of the roads. He recommended to lobby for a new presiding commissioner for someone e that will take some action with regard to the issue that they have. He stated that he is not minimizing their issue but they bought the property and there is a recorded plat and he didn't build pursuant to the recorded plat that was submitted to the county. It was not submitted to the fire district for approval, it was submitted to the county. That they

need to take it up with the governmental agency that controls this issue. Mr. Douglas said that he thinks that what Mr. Jensen is failing to understand that he is aware of who he should be talking to. He knows the ins and outs of courtroom proceedings and how things should go when there is safety violations involved. That does rely on us he knows because he is a police officer in St. Louis County. When there are safety issues and how to bring them up and how they need to be documented. He has documented everything for this case very well. Mr. Jensen stated again that the chief has determined that it is not a safety issue that fights fires, save lives, and saves property in the event there is a fire. Another homeowner said that it is a big assumption since they have not had a fire in there and if they did and the fire district was not able to who would be held accountable. Mr. Jensen said Nobody, Mr. Douglas said that this is an issue that could be fixed but no one wants to help but they will keep fighting. That it will get fixed one way or another. Director Butenhoff thanked them for bringing this to the board and stated it would need to be a different conversation or more conversations later. Another homeowner said that they had a meeting with the government of franklin county and they brought different people in the meeting and they were told that the fire district had the ability to issue fines. Mr. Jensen said Franklin County government represented to you that they did not have ethe ability as the biggest piece of government in the county to then fine the developer for not doing what he said he was going to do? The homeowner said that they said the fire chief could. Mr. Jensen asked if that made any sense? The country who they submitted the plans to and gave the approval of the development would not have the ability to do anything. The homeowner said that's why they came because the county told them to that they didn't come to waste our time for nothing. Mr. Douglas stated that in the future that franklin county government could come up with a standard that a minor subdivision needs to be inspected by the fire chief. So, this is something that could be fixed.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for audit and pay bills in the amount of \$259,527.41 for 02/10/2025.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for audit and pay bills in the amount of \$40,646.71 for 02/11/2025.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Motion to approve payroll and taxes in the amount of \$ 46,164.07 for the 1/23/2025 payroll.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Motion to approve payroll and taxes in the amount of \$43,577.73 for the 02/06/2025 payroll.

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Old Business:

Martin with Stieffel came with a bond update. There is a rating and questionnaire call on the 14th. Will receive rating on Marth 5th and final approval setting on March 18th with funding on April 1st.

Jeff Pabst was present with Lagers he went over the resolution.

Director Butenhoff read over the resolution 25-001 and made a motion to accept the resolution to participate in the Lagers L-7 benefit plan with 100% buy back for prior service.

Director Branscum seconded the motion

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye
Director Burton: Aye

Only one bid was submitted for the structural engineer

Arch images

House 1 - \$8,500.00

House 2- \$7,500.00

It does not include a test for mold so that would have to be done by another party.

New Business:

Ordered 6 sets of turn out gear from Dinges.

They are who we currently have but got quotes from others to

Banner- \$21,576

McQueen- \$21,297.18

Dinges- \$21,299.70

Looking into upgrading the internet at House 1

Policy change was made for Job related injury/Light duty policy

Director Butenhoff made a motion to accept the change

Director Branscum seconded the motion

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton : Aye

Moving \$45,000 to the emergency fund to avoid the account to go dormant and being charged a monthly fee.

Vehicle Maintenance:

97- Relief valve was sticking

21- gauges froze and had to be replaced

21 enforcer- new front tires

Station Maintenance:

Station 1- Air Compressor motor replaced, lever on bay door replaced

Station 3- Bay door is not releasing, Insulation in the doors is cracked. Would like to get bids on new doors and openers since they are 31 years old.

Other Business

Officers: none

2665: none

Items for Directors:

Motion made to move into Executive Session at 7:01pm

Director Butenhoff: Aye

Director Branscum: Aye

Director Burton: Aye

Meeting back in session at 7:39 with 0 Votes being taken.

Motion made by Director to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm.

Director Butenhoff: Aye
Director Branscum: Aye
Director Burton: Aye

Stephanie Butenhoff
President

Andrew Branscum
Treasurer

Tiffany Burton
Secretary

The above-Board Meeting minutes will be formally accepted at the next scheduled Board Meeting

APPROVED TB 02/11/2025