

BLACKMAN FIRE DISTRICT MEETING

DATE: 09 January 2025

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

(X) REGULARLY SCHEDULED

() EMERGENCY

() WORKSHOP

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Commissioner Steve Lawson	(X) Yes	() No
Chairperson Larry Cunningham	(X) Yes	() No
Commissioner Holley Cook	(X) Yes	() No
Commissioner Wade Merritt	(X) Yes	() No
Commissioner Ronnie Miller	(X) Yes	() No

Welcome/Call Meeting to Order at 7:00pm
Pledge of Allegiance

- 1) Discussion and Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes from December 12, 2024.

Motion: Steve Lawson 2nd: Holley Cook Motion Passed

- 2) Discussion and Approval of the Financial Report from December 31, 2024.

Cash

- Unrestricted Cash
 - Petty Cash \$ 188.84
 - General Checking \$ 74,510.66
 - General Savings \$ 46,006.74
 - Total Unrestricted Cash \$120,706.24
- Restricted Cash
 - Impact Fees \$ 7,042.78
 - Total Restricted Cash \$ 7,042.78
- Total Cash \$127,749.02

Motion: Steve Lawson 2nd: Holley Cook Motion Passed

- 3) 2025 Board Position Assignments

Current Assignments:

Chairman -	Larry Cunningham
Treasurer -	None Assigned
Secretary -	None Assigned
Inventory -	Wade Merritt
Facilities -	Steven Lawson
Fleet -	Ronnie Miller

New Assignments:

Chairman -	<u>Larry Cunningham</u>
Treasurer -	<u>Holley Cook</u>
Secretary -	<u>Wade Merritt</u>
Facilities -	<u>Steven Lawson</u>
Fleet -	<u>Ronald Miller</u>

Motion: Steve Lawson 2nd: Ronnie Miller Motion Passed

- 4) Chief's Report (*See attached report*)

- Total Calls for Service = 13
 - 13 - Medical Calls

OLD BUSINESS

5) Grants Report - Applications Outstanding *(Presented by Lt. Miranda Sargent)*

Grantor	Project	App Amount	Match %	Match	Award
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) 4734 Hurricane Idalia	Generator Acquisition, 3-Phase & Gas Transition	\$61,306.92	25%	\$15,326.73	Under Review
Florida Cancer Decontamination Grant	Vehicle Exhaust Capture System	\$45,000.00	25%	\$11,250.00	Under Review

6) Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant Award (100%) *(Presented by Lt. Miranda Sargent)*

Discussion and approval of the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant, from our local Firehouse Subs restaurant in Crestview, FL, awarding us a \$11,835.00 grant for a Brute Force Combination Rescue Tool to increase our lifesaving capabilities.

Motion: [Steve Lawson](#) 2nd: [Wade Merritt](#) **Motion Passed**

7) Cancer Decontamination Grant Application Update *(Presented by Lt. Miranda Sargent)*

Discussion on the Florida Cancer Decontamination application adjustments. The application submitted last year was stalled due to an error at the state level. We have been working with Patricia Moreno at the state since the online application system they were utilizing was found to have dropped applications submitted by several agencies. Due to this error, we were advised that they will be putting our application at the top of their list. They requested we get an updated quote with shipping and installation segmented out due to those not being covered under the grant award. Our total cost will be 25% of the system plus shipping and installation, with our costs being \$33,939.25. **Recommendation due to high cost to the department is to not apply for this grant at this time. Motion was made not to proceed with this grant opportunity.**

Motion: [Wade Merritt](#) 2nd: [Steve Lawson](#) **Motion Passed**

8) Easement Update *(Presented by Wade Merritt)*

Update on researching a possible easement with the Clay family and the Smith family to create a new back access to the department from Highway 189 N.

Commissioner Merritt advised he is still looking into this easement possibility.

NEW BUSINESS

9) Spring Portrait Event Approval - Blackman Volunteer Association *(Presented by Lt. Miranda Sargent)*

Discussion and approval of allowing the volunteers to host a Spring 2025 Family Portrait Fundraiser for the community. We did one and had many families participate and acknowledge that they have missed being able to get family portraits since digital technology has taken over.

Discussion was held on this fundraising opportunity. A request was made to advertise more to get the word out. Another request was to plan for the portraits so that they do not interfere with the school spring break holiday.

Motion: [Steve Lawson](#) 2nd: [Holley Cook](#) **Motion Passed**

10) **Station Generator** (Presented by Lt. Miranda Sargent)

Discussion on the station generator issues recently identified. The generator was not putting out power to the station as it normally does. A technician from Casey Electric came by and happened to be the same technician that installed our generator. He advised that he found a main component in the generator had been damaged by a probable lightning strike due to seeing melting over the components. He advised that parts for this generator will be hard to come by. Florida Forestry has advised that they have two like generators at the Blackwater Division that may be salvageable for parts.

Discussion was held on the current issues we are having with the loaned generator. Florida Forestry advised that we may attempt to salvage parts. We also have on staff someone that used to work on these types of generators. She will take a look at it and see what she can do.

11) **Florida Forest Service - Cooperative Equipment Loan Agreement** (Presented by Lt. Miranda Sargent)

Discussion and approval of the continued agreement with Florida Forestry's Cooperative Equipment Loan Program.

Discussion on the Cooperative Equipment Loan Agreement Program resulted in an agreement to sign the loan paperwork and continue this program.

Motion: Ronnie Miller

2nd: Steve Lawson

Motion Passed

12) **Administrative Policy and Standard Operating Guidelines Update** (Presented by Lt. Miranda Sargent)

Discussion and approval of Resolution 2025-0001 adopting the addition to the policy manual to include an updated Table of Contents, Administrative Organizational Chart, and Impact Fee Collection Policy.

A review of the documents added and changed in the policy manual resulted in an agreement to approve these additions.

Motion: Steve Lawson

2nd: Holley Cook

Motion Passed

13) **Impact Fee Update** (Presented by Wade Merritt)

Discussion on increases to Impact Fees within the fire district in order to address the anticipated growth within the 32531 zip code. According to the Inspire Study Final Report, Okaloosa County has not followed their own Comprehensive Strategic Plan to prevent urban sprawl and therefore is currently seeing elevated growth rates in Northern Okaloosa County areas. Jurisdictions West of Yellow River have already begun the process of increasing Impact Fees. The average impact fee rate for residential in Florida is currently \$3.83 per square foot. We will need two public workshops scheduled to support public input in this process.

A discussion took place on the option to increase impact fees within the fire district. Information from the Inspire Study was referenced and state impact fee averages discussed. Current district rates were discussed in relation to other neighboring communities. As part of the process, two workshops available to the public will need to be held and two dates were selected. These workshops will assist the department in determining the best step forward on impact fees.

Workshops:

Public Workshop #1 - January 23, 2025

Public Workshop #2 - January 30, 2025

Current Rates:

Residential \$0.20 per square foot

Commercial \$0.30 per square foot

Industrial _____

Proposed Rates:

Residential _____

Commercial _____

Industrial _____

Motion: Steve Lawson

2nd: Holley Cook

Motion Passed

14) **Annual Assessment Fee Review** (Presented by Wade Merritt)

Discussion on annual increases to assessment fees at the 6.67% rate and the removal of the \$50.00 max on acreage.

Discussion on annual assessment fees was conducted. A deeper discussion on the maximum condition on acreage occurred. It was decided that further attention would need to be made in relation to the max condition and this item was tabled until we can have workshops on this item.

Current rates are as follows:

Property Type	Current Rates	Expected Rates if Increase Approved
09AC/Land unimproved:	\$ 5.55 per acre w/ \$50.00 maximum	\$ 5.92 per acre Remove Max?
09RS/Imp.SFR	\$111.10 per SFR *Bldg. up to 150 acres*	\$118.51 per SFR *Bldg. up to 150 acres*
09CM/Comm.	\$166.64 Business (per bldg.)	\$177.75 Business (per bldg.)
09EX/Exempt	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00

NOTE: 09RS >150 acres include second special tax rate code 09AC on line 2 with remaining acres as number of units

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Tabled pending future workshops.

Upcoming Events & Training

- 01/09/2025 - Blackman Fire District Business Meeting
- 01/10/2025 - Blackman Community Potluck Dinner
- 01/11/2025 - Landing Zone & Origis Training in Wing, AL
- 01/28/2025 - Special Election

15) Chainsaws for Apparatus

Discussion and approval of purchasing two additional chainsaws for apparatus that may be responded to downed trees after storms.

Discussion on adding these items to apparatus was conducted. Quotes were provided and reviewed. The board chose to use Parish in Crestview to purchase two chainsaws and two extra chains for the apparatus.

Motion: Steve Lawson 2nd: Holley Cook Motion Passed

16) Record Request for Baker FD Impact Fees for 2024

Discussion and approval on getting a list of impact fees and the address paid for through 2024 from Baker Fire District as part of an audit we are conducting.

Recently an impact fee was paid to Baker Fire District for a residence in our district. The fire department nor the county permitting office caught the error. It is the wish of the board to do a public records request for all impact fees and addresses that were paid to Baker Fire District in 2024 to verify no other errors occurred. It was further discussed that in an effort to do a comprehensive review of the tax rolls, we will do a record request to Okaloosa County Permitting office on all permits processed for our fire district in 2024.

Motion: Steve Lawson 2nd: Holley Cook Motion Passed

PUBLIC COMMENT

Open the floor to public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment of meeting at **8:52pm**

Motion: Steve Lawson 2nd: Ronnie Miller Motion Passed

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING February 13, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

These minutes were approved and accepted as read this date _____

Larry Cunningham, Chairman

Other Authorized Board Member

