

Meeting Minutes
Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7

The Board of Commissioners of **HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 7** held a meeting on **March 19, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.** at the following location in the District, **Spring Fire Department Administration Building, 656 East Louetta Road, Spring, Texas 77373.**

Due to the state of emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the District exercised its authority to hold the meeting via telephone conference call, per Government Code §551.125. The call was broadcast at the meeting location and recorded per the requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Bob Schmanski	President	(Present at the meeting location)
Gayle Fuller	Vice-President	(Present via Tele-Conference)
Keith Willingham	Secretary	(Present at the meeting location)
Todd Anderson	Treasurer	(Present via Tele-Conference)
Melanie Gander	Asst. Treasurer	(Present via Tele-Conference)

Also in attendance:

Scott Seifert, Fire Chief, Spring Fire Department - **(Present at the meeting location)**
Robert Logan, Spring FD Assistant Chief - (Via Tele-Conference)
Scott Schoonover, Spring FD Deputy Chief (Via Tele-Conference)
Renee Butler, McLennan & Associates, District Bookkeeper - (Via Tele-Conference)
John Peeler, Coveler & Peeler, District Legal Counsel - (Via Tele-Conference)
Terry Lynch, JT Lynch Company, LLC - (Via Tele-Conference)
Andy Lynch, JT Lynch Company, LLC - (Via Tele-Conference)
Jeff Lynch, JT Lynch Company, LLC - (Via Tele-Conference)
Tim Burke, Spring FD IT Manager - **(Present at the meeting location)**
Shannon Taylor, HCESD7 Administrator - **(Present at the meeting location)**

Call meeting to order.

Commissioner Schmanski called the meeting to ORDER at 6:30 p.m..

To receive public comment.

No public comment was made.

To review and take action to cancel the election.

No action taken, this item was discussed and finalized at February's meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to take line items 4, 5, 6, and 7 out of order and address them at the end of the meeting and to address line item 9 before item 8, second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

To review and take action on financial matters including, financial report, investments, depository institutions, depository security agreements, Investment Policy, and District bills.

Renee Butler with McLennan & Associates presented the bookkeepers report: the General Fund Current balance is \$27,658,129.03, investment reports from February to March, Director's fees and bills. Ms. Butler's report also included an Amended 2020 District budget based on items approved during the prior months. Motion by Commissioner Willingham to approve the bookkeepers report and pay bills as presented, seconded by Commissioner Anderson. After discussion, Motion approved 4-0.

Deputy Chief Scott Schoonover requested to open FEMA requisition regarding the COVID-19 disaster situation authorizing Commissioner Schmanski to execute documents to reimburse the District and department for expenses related to the COVID-19 disaster. Commissioner Schmanski moved to authorize execution of TDEM or FEMA documents required to seek State or Federal funds related to the COVID-19 disaster, second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 4-0.

To review and take action regarding master plan or site planning for the proposed training facility.

Motion by Commissioner Willingham to authorize Abercrombie Planning + Design to begin the final design phase for the proposed training facility and sign a contract to begin civil design. Second by Commissioner Schmanski. Motion approved 4-0.

To review, discuss and take action on District budget(s).

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action on amendments to Spring Fire Department budget(s) and district funding of same.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action to amend fire protection contract with Spring Fire Department.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action on the payment of operations and capital funding pursuant to service agreement with the Spring Fire Department.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action on matters related to financing, payment and acquisition of capital items, including equipment and vehicles, and action on debt, including retiring debt or incurring debt to finance the construction of District facilities or acquire equipment.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action on sales tax matters.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action regarding insurance.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take any action regarding construction, improvements, repairs renovations to District real property and stations, including construction payments, change orders, permits, engaging architect(s) or engineer(s), and selecting contractor(s), including but not limited to administrative or maintenance facilities and all District and Department stations.

Commissioner Fuller asked about hiring a local architect Mr. Tommie Abercrombie can work with, and the Board generally agreed this would happen later in the project development.

Commissioner Willingham moved to retain engineering services as requested by special counsel. Second by Commissioner Schmanski. Motion approved 5-0.

Fire Chief's Report of Service Provisions and SFD business, including current and long range information exchange.

Chief Seifert presented the Profit & Loss reports and Fire reports. The Board had no questions or concerns.

To review and take action regarding the disposition of surplus and salvage property.

Motion by Commissioner Fuller to approve the Surplus & Salvage Equipment, list provided by the Department second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

To review and act on ISO re-grade and actions necessary regarding water supply.

Chief Seifert advised the Board he received a plaque stating Spring Fire Department is an ISO Class 2, effective June 1, 2020. Chief Seifert would like to order a plaque for all 9 fire stations. Motion for plaques made by Commissioner Willingham, Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 4-0. Chief Seifert said he will recommend a water score regrade at a later date.

To review and take action on mutual aid agreement(s).

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action on matters related to communications, dispatching, or traffic preemption, including approving interlocal agreements or purchasing equipment.

- 1) Assistant Chief Robert Logan updated the Board on the emergency traffic signal preemption transmitter. Chief Logan spoke with Mr. Pate with the Harris County Traffic Engineering Department who reported 70% of the intersections are up and running and the 30% will be up at a later date. The devices will be active by Monday, March 23.
- 2) Deputy Chief Scott Schoonover discussed the Plum Creek radio tower which has been in service for 20 years. An unknown company installed equipment on the tower and damaged the unit. SFD is looking for other locations to place a tower. A site near the Grand Parkway and Spring Woods Village would allow a 360 ft. tower. Seven agencies would share the cost of tower usage. Having additional sites would allow coverage if the Plum Creek tower went down. Discussions with CenterPoint Energy will continue.
- 3) The Board reviewed the Interlocal Agreement between Harris County and Harris County ESD7 for donated mobile radios and safety devices to Harris County ESD7, which should be signed by Commissioner Schmanski. Motion to approve the agreement by Commissioner Schmanski, second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

To review and take action regarding communication and outreach to District residents regarding District activities, including presentation from consultants, action on District technology needs, including equipment, software/licenses and District website.

No action taken by the Board.

Receive ESD committee reports.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action regarding municipal actions affecting the District.

No action taken by the Board.

To review and take action on any issues related to the District's transition to become the direct provider of fire protection services, including: acquisition of necessary assets; employment of fire suppression staff, command staff, and administrative staff; issues related to the coverage of the District territory; and cooperation with neighboring providers.

- 1) Motion by Commissioner Willingham to approve and accept transfer of ownership of assets from Spring Volunteer Fire Association to Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7 and have Commissioner Schmanski sign and execute any related documents/deeds. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 4-0.
- 2) Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to designate Chief Seifert as head of Spring Fire Department and advise Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) by letter. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 4-0.
- 3) Chief Seifert summarized a list of all paid personnel with current rank asking the ESD to hire them at current rate of pay as well as all unpaid volunteers Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to approve bringing over/hiring paid staff at current pay rates, with benefits and TCDRS retirement plan previously approved to Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7, effective April 1, 2020. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0. Chief Seifert reported Department Personnel are working on payroll paperwork, and ending 401K program.
- 4) Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to move insurance policies from SFD to Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7, effective April 1, 2020. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 4-0.
- 5) Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to preliminarily transfer all contracts from SFD to Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7 in order to maintain operations, pending final District approval for each. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 4-0.
- 6) Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to approve Policies, Procedures, Job Descriptions, & Organizational Chart as presented by the Fire Department. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

7:35 p.m. Commissioner Melanie Gander joined the meeting via tele-conference.

- 7) Motion by Commissioner Willingham to approve bank accounts renamed to Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7, effective April 1, 2020. Second by Commissioner Schmanski. Motion approved 5-0.

To review and take action on personnel matters, including policies, scheduling, evaluations, benefits, compensation, hiring, retention and evaluation of District employees, including District command staff, administrative staff, and suppression personnel.

Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to transfer all personnel records and disciplinary history from SFD to Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7 for all current SFD employees/volunteers being hired by the District. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 5-0.

To review and approve minutes of prior meetings.

Motion made by Commissioner Fuller to approve the 2-13-20 regular meeting Minutes and 3-10-20 Special Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 5-0.

To review and take action to schedule the next regular monthly meeting date as well as any items that need to be on the next meeting agenda, discussed with item 30, to review and discuss possible meeting procedural changes due to COVID-10 conditions in Harris County.

John Peeler, District Legal Counsel, suggested continuing future meetings as per section 551.045 if needed.

Line Items: 4, 5, 6 & 7

7. Commissioner Schmanski moved to approve a lease agreement between Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7 and Cypress Creek EMS to house a medic unit at Station 74 as of March 22, 2020. Rent is not due at this time. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 5-0.

7:57 p.m. BREAK

8:05 p.m. RECONVENE AND ENTER CLOSED SESSION

- 4. To meet in Closed Session pursuant to Government Code §551.071 to consult with legal counsel regarding pending or contemplated litigation, settlement offers or on matters which require confidentiality under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas and Tax Code §323.3022 to discuss sales tax matters.**
- 5. To meet in Closed Session pursuant to Government Code §551.072 to deliberate regarding real estate matters.**

6. To meet in Closed Session pursuant to Government Code §551.074 to discuss personnel matters.

For the Closed Sessions, the Board included Chief Seifert and Legal Counsel John Peeler for items 4, 5 and 6, and included real estate consultants Terry Lynch, Andy Lynch and Jeff Lynch for item 5.


8:28 p.m. RECONVENE FROM CLOSED SESSION

Adjourn.

There being no further business brought before the Board, or any further public comment. Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Schmanski, second by Commissioner Fuller.
The meeting is adjourned at 8:31p.m.



Commissioner Keith Willingham
District Secretary



Shannon Taylor, Preparer