

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 **April 16, 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	(Absent)
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)
Joel Crenshaw, 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)
Donald May, Spring FD Facilities Coordinator - (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.

6:34 p.m. ENTER CLOSED SESSION

For the Closed Sessions, the Board included Chief Seifert and Legal Counsel John Peeler for items 3, 4, and 5 and included real estate consultants Terry Lynch, Andy Lynch and Jeff Lynch for item 4.

- 3. 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.**
- 4. To meet in Closed Session pursuant to Government Code §551.072 to deliberate regarding real estate matters.**
- 5. To meet in Closed Session pursuant to Government Code §551.074 to discuss personnel matters.**

7:22 p.m. RECONVENE FROM CLOSED SESSION

To review and take any action regarding real estate, including sale, purchase, lease, platting, utilities, encumbrances and legal actions related to real estate.

Attorney Greg Thrower provided documents by email regarding the sale of the District's James C. Leo property: The Second Amendment to Commercial Contract – Unimproved Property and Addendum to Commercial Contract – Unimproved Property (the "Second Amendment") which extends Feasibility Period for 60 days to June 16, 2020. Commissioner Schmanski made a motion to approve the Second Amendment to the contract on the James C. Leo property, which will extend the feasibility period for sixty days. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

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

Commissioners Bob Schmanski and Keith Willingham with Spring Fire Dept. Command Staff met with Tommie Abercrombie of Abercrombie Planning + Design, to discuss production of civil documents and schematics of the proposed training facility. An estimated \$750,000.00 includes planning and schematic drawings of the entire project. A phased approach includes infrastructure and a logistics building. Additional phases include a training field, fire props and educational building. Commissioner Willingham motioned to authorize Abercrombie Planning + Design to develop the schematic documentation and civil package of the project, subject to the approval of the Board. Second by Commissioner Schmanski. 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 \$26,183,864.36, as well as investment reports from March to April, Director's fees and bills. Brokerage fees to JT Lynch Co., LLC and Promissory Note to DAC, Ltd. are paid in full. Ms. Butler confirmed set up of a new Operating account and Payroll account at Amegy bank. Funds will transfer from the Operations account to the Payroll account each pay period, paying employees and zeroing out the payroll account. Motion by Commissioner Willingham to approve the bookkeepers report and pay bills as presented, second by Commissioner Schmanski. Motion approved 4-0.

To review and act on granting exemptions for 2020.

District Legal Counsel John Peeler gave an overview of the process, including information on the 2019 property exemptions and the resulting savings to taxpayers granted by the Board: Disability exemption applied to 738 properties, Over 65 exemption applied to 6,250 properties. Commissioner Schmanski motioned to continue granting exemptions: Homestead - 0, Over 65 - \$160,000.00 and Disability \$160,000.00. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

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

This item will be discussed at May's meeting. 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.

Commissioner Schmanski consulted with Landon Newton with Government Capital Corporation to inquire if money is available to fund the Training Facility project. An interest rate of 1.9% is possible, more information will be available at May's meeting.

To review and take action on sales tax matters.

Fire Chief Scott Seifert discussed sales tax for April 2020 vs. April 2019, as retail sales are down across the country. Commissioner Schmanski will reach out to HdL Companies (formerly Sales Tax Assurance), to confirm the forecast details.

To review and take action regarding insurance.

Chief Seifert reported the Treasurer bonds are in place for him and Assistant Fire Chief, Robert Logan to sign checks, if needed.

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.

Facilities Coordinator Donald May informed the Board he is in the process of updating vendors and permits with the name Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7. Legal Counsel, John Peeler stated official documents should read Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7 and signs on department owned fire stations/facilities, will continue using Spring Fire Department. Mr. Peeler also suggested the Board should sign all contracts moving forward. Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to authorize Spring Volunteer Fire Association and/or Spring Fire Department as respects to the name change to Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Commissioner Schmanski abstained from the vote, motion approved 3-0.

Fire Department report on activities, including current and long-range information exchange.

Chief Seifert presented: 1) The Profit & Loss report, stating the department is \$105,000.00 over budget due to a third payroll in March. 2) Fire reports - EMS calls are slightly down. 3) Employees will be able to transition from part time status to full time status, resulting in less overtime hours and more experienced staff on hand. The budget will allow full time transitions and not stretch funds. 4) Three Captains are due for promotion. 5) Three fire fighters had possible exposure to COVID-19, two while working for another department and one had contact with a neighbor. All three followed the 14 day home quarantine practice, all tested negative for COVID-19 and should return to SFD soon. There are no internal exposures at Spring Fire Department.

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

No action taken by the Board.

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

No action taken by the Board.

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) Deputy Chief Scott Schoonover stated the radio tower project on the north side is moving along. The east side tower has been in service for two months with no complaints.
- 2) Assistant Chief Robert Logan updated the Board on the emergency traffic signal preemption transmitters: Phase I is complete with 260 county intersections activated, 20 TXDOT intersections remain to be activated. Phase II is in progress for all new added intersections. Chief Logan is waiting for confirmation of Cypress Creek EMS to agree to 50% responsibility with every intersection.

To review and act regarding communication and outreach to District residents regarding District activities.

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 act on any issues related to the District's transition to become the direct provider of fire protection services, including: financial issues; acquisition of assets.

Commissioner Schmanski moved to allow, to the fullest extent allowed by law, the Board to delegate and authorize Fire Chief Scott Seifert, to make payment for operations of the department from the Operations account, not to exceed the amounts in the approved budget for day to day operations of the department, including management of maintenance contracts. The motion was second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

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.

Commissioner Schmanski moved to allow, to the fullest extent allowed by law, the Board to delegate and authorize Fire Chief Scott Seifert to oversee all personnel matters including but not limited to hiring, firing, discipline, payroll, benefits and appoint all District employees, including supervisory and command staff. The motion was second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

To review and approve minutes of prior meetings.

Regarding the Minutes from March 19, 2020 - Commissioner Schmanski requested to strike the sentence "*Commissioner Schmanski requested to retain this item open*", from the Fire Chief's report. Motion by Commissioner Schmanski to approve the amended March 19, 2020 regular meeting Minutes and March 30, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

To review and act to schedule the next regular monthly meeting date as well as any items that need to be on the next meeting agenda.

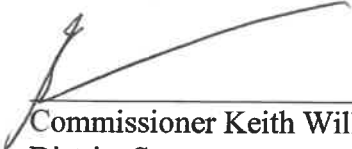
The next meeting is May 21, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

To review and act on matters related to COVID-19, including but not limited to meeting procedures, emergency expenditures and continuity of functions per Government Code Chapter 418.

No action taken by the Board.

Adjourn.

There being no further business brought before the Board, or any further public comment. Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Gander, second by Commissioner Anderson. The meeting is adjourned at 8:36p.m.



Commissioner Keith Willingham
District Secretary



Shannon Taylor, Preparer