

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 15, 2021 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 status of COVID-19 in the County, some people appeared via teleconference.

Bob Schmanski	President	(Present Via Tele-Conference)
Melanie Gander	Vice-President	(Present at the meeting location)
Keith Willingham	Secretary	(Listened Via telephone, but not counted as present or participating in voting)
Todd Anderson	Treasurer	(Present at the meeting location)
Gayle Fuller	Asst. Secretary/Treasurer	(Present at the meeting location)

Also in attendance:

Scott Seifert, Fire Chief, Spring Fire Department - **(Present at the meeting location)**
Jerod Davenport, Spring FD Deputy Chief - **(Present Via Tele-Conference)**
Scott Schoonover, Spring FD Deputy Chief - **(Present at the meeting location)**
John Peeler, Coveler & Peeler, District Legal Counsel - **(Present at the meeting location)**
Renee Butler, McLennan & Associates, District Bookkeeper - **(Present at the meeting location)**
Terry Lynch, JT Lynch Company, LLC - **(Present at the meeting location)**
Andy Lynch, JT Lynch Company, LLC - **(Present at the meeting location)**
Greg Thrower, Special Legal Counsel for real estate - **(Present Via Tele-Conference)**
Donald May, Spring FD Facilities Maintenance Coordinator **(Present at the meeting location)**
Greg Monroe, Spring FD Captain - **(Present Via Tele-Conference)**
Steve Schoonover, Spring FD Sr. Captain - **(Present Via Tele-Conference)**
Tracee Evans, Spring FD Communications Director - **(Present Via Tele-Conference)**
Damaris Rolon, Spring FD Administrative Support Specialist - **(Present at the meeting location)**
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 Melanie Gander acted as the presiding officer and called the meeting to **ORDER** at 6:31 p.m.

To receive public comment.

No public comment was made.

6:31 p.m. ENTER CLOSED SESSION

Closed Sessions, the Board included Legal Counsel John Peeler (in person), Fire Chief Scott Seifert, Deputy Chief Scott Schoonover, and Deputy Chief Jerod Davenport for items 3, 4, and 5. Item 4 included real estate consultants Terry and Andy Lynch, and legal counsel for real estate, Greg Thrower.

- 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.**

7:07 p.m. RECONVENE FROM CLOSED SESSION

The Board agreed to take items out of order as posted on the agenda.

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

Mr. Thrower presented the Sixth Amendment to Commercial Contract - Unimproved Property and Addendum to Commercial Contract - Unimproved Property (the "Sixth Amendment") which extends the Feasibility Period to May 31, 2021. Commissioner Gander moved to approve the Sixth Amendment to the contract on the James C. Leo property, which will extend the feasibility period 60 days. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 4-0.

Commissioner Gander moved to allow the buyers of the James C. Leo property to remove the additional requested trees along Cypresswood, after special legal counsel, Greg Thrower completes the Indemnity Agreement between all parties. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 3-0.

Commissioner Gander moved to allow Tom Lankford to oversee the construction of the detention pond for a proposed fee of \$3,000. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 3-0.

Commissioner Gander moved to allow A & R Engineering to complete three 20 ft. borings, at the price of \$2,100.00 Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 3-0.

6. To review and act on financial matters including, financial report, investments, depository institutions, depository security agreements, audits, Investment Policy, and District bills.

District bookkeeper, Renee Butler presented the monthly District financial reports, including the following items of note: General Fund Current balance is \$31,054,722.76 cash and investment reports from March to April were reviewed.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the bookkeeper's report as presented and to pay District bills as presented. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 3-0

7. To review and act on granting exemptions for 2021.

District legal counsel, John Peeler discussed information on 2020 property exemptions and the resulting savings to taxpayers granted by the Board.

Commissioner Gander moved to keep 2021 exemptions the same as 2020: Homestead - 0, Over 65 - \$160,000.00 and Disability \$160,000.00. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 4-0.

8. To review and take any action regarding construction, improvements, repairs renovations to real property, facilities 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, training facilities and all emergency services stations.

Spring FD Facilities Maintenance Coordinator, Donald May reported at the Kuykendahl tower, a tree was cut and fell on a telephone pole that supplies power to the antenna tower. The onsite generator is running to supply power.

Commissioner Schmanski and Chief Seifert recently met with Tommy Abercrombie. Mr. Abercrombie recommends doing an RFQ for the first phase of Training Field project. The recommendation is to break down the project in phases - Infrastructure (streets, paving, water) Logistics and one Class A burn prop.

Commissioner Schmanski authorized Tommy Abercrombie to finalize details to find a CMAR for the first phase of the project, including overall project cost estimating with a preliminary budget of \$22,000,000.00. Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 4-0.

10. To review, discuss and act on District budget(s).

Commissioner Schmanski and Chief Seifert presented information about the plans and costs for new dispatching system, including the “dooms day” backup project whereby Harris County ESD 9 would provide backup dispatching services. They noted that currently several districts and their providers are involved in plans to develop a new dispatching center, including Harris County ESD 7/Spring Fire Department, Harris County ESD 28/Ponderosa Fire Department, Harris County ESD 29/Champions ESD, Harris County ESD 16/Klein Fire Department, and Harris County ESD 13/Cypress Creek Fire Department, noting that some of the districts are direct providers and some still contract with a not for profit fire department. They noted that preliminary paperwork has been filed to form a non-profit organization, Texas Emergency Communications Center (“TECC”) which will manage the dispatch project/center for the five districts. They went on to state that the five ESDs will equally own and share in capital expenses to build a temporary dispatch facility at Klein Administration, with a permanent dispatch center forthcoming.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve amending the District 2021 Budget to add a line item to approve the initial \$400,000.00 for the TECC dispatch center project and the Cy-Fair emergency backup dispatch project and to approve dispersing the \$400,000 as needed to move the project forward. Second by Commissioner Schmanski. Motion approved 4-0.

7:29 p.m. BREAK

7:35 p.m. RESUME

12. To review and act on sales tax matters.

No action taken by the Board.

13. To review and act regarding insurance.

No action taken by the Board.

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

Fire Chief Scott Seifert presented information on the following:

- Profit and Loss Reports. The Department is currently \$1.6 million under budget.
- The CenterPoint Tower agreement is ready for signature.
- The Training Field (Lexington property) had a homeless camp, which has been removed.
- Station 75 has a homeless camp nearby, the Harris County Fire Marshal’s office is investigating the issue.

- The new Rehab truck final inspection will be in May and truck delivered in July or August
- The new Rescue truck should arrive in late September or early October.
- A transaction list of all expenses will be provided prior to each meeting.

No action taken by the Board.

15. To review, discuss and take action on mutual aid or interlocal agreements, including those regarding emergency services or disaster operations.

No action taken by the Board

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

Commissioner Gander moved to approve for disposal as garbage the damaged and end of useful life list from the IT department as presented. The Board generally discussed how disposing of the items is a cost effective solution rather than trying to sell damaged and obsolete items. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 4-0.

Chief Schoonover stated the Texas A&M Forest Service ("TAMUFS") Helping Hands Program is not accepting donations at this time due to its warehouse being full. He noted that TAMUFS is allowing the transfer of the Districts old SCBA equipment to Aldine Fire Department and Ponderosa Fire Department directly through the Helping Hands program in order to maintain the liability waivers provided by that program. He noted that SFD will do the flow testing and then donate the units that pass to Aldine and Ponderosa fire departments. The Board approved this without new action, noting that they have previously approved disposition of the old SCBA units through the TAMUFS Helping Hands program.

17. To review and act on matters related to communications, dispatching, or traffic preemption, including approving interlocal agreements, contracts regarding dispatch services or purchasing equipment.

As noted with Agenda item 10, above, the Board approved the funding of \$400,000.00 for the TECC dispatch center project and the Cy-Fair emergency backup dispatch project.

Chief Schoonover explained that the new CenterPoint tower will replace the Plum Creek tower which has been irreparably damaged, and the five year contract with CenterPoint is ready for approval. Legal counsel, John Peeler has reviewed the agreement and noted only a couple of the technical specification exhibits are yet to be finalized. Commissioner Gander moved to authorize the execution of the CenterPoint tower contract, pending addition of the aforementioned technical exhibits. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 4-0.

18. Receive ESD committee reports.

No action taken by the Board.

19. To review and act regarding municipal actions affecting the District.

No action taken by the Board.

20. 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.

No action taken by the Board.

21. To review and act 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.

No action taken by the Board.

22. To review and take action on Records Management and Records Retention matters, including updates to designation of records officer(s), records policies, retention schedules, and to approve Records Disposition Log(s).

No action taken by the Board.

23. To review and approve minutes of prior meetings.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the March 18, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Commissioner Schmanski abstained from voting. Motion approved 3-0.


24. 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 regular meeting is May 20, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

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

No action taken by the Board.

There being no further business brought before the Board, or any further public comment. Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Fuller. Second by Commissioner Gander. The meeting is adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



Commissioner Keith Willingham
District Secretary



Shannon Taylor, Preparer