

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 **November 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.** at the following location in the District, **Spring Fire Department Administration, 656 East Louetta Road, Spring, Texas 77373.**

Melanie Gander	President	(Present)
Gayle Fuller	Vice-President	(Present)
Todd Anderson	Treasurer	(Absent)
Keith Willingham	Secretary	(Present)
David Mills	Asst. Treasurer	(Absent)

Also in attendance:

Scott Seifert, Fire Chief, Spring Fire Department
Robert Logan, Assistant Fire Chief, Spring FD - **(Present Via Tele-Conference)**
Jerod Davenport, Spring FD Deputy Chief
Scott Schoonover, Spring FD Deputy Chief
Jeff King, Spring FD Deputy Chief
John Peeler, Coveler & Peeler, District Legal Counsel
Renee Butler, McLennan & Associates, District Bookkeeper
Dr. Ron Welch, Municipal Information Services
Steve Schoonover, Spring FD Sr. Captain - **(Present Via Tele-Conference)**
Donald May, Spring FD Facilities Manager
Tracee Evans, Spring FD Communications Director
Charlie Repka, Spring FD IT Manager
Damaris Rolon, Spring FD Administrative Support Specialist
Shannon Taylor, HCESD7 Administrator

1. Call meeting to order.

Commissioner Melanie Gander called the meeting to **ORDER** at 6:30 p.m.

2. To receive public comment.

No public comments were offered.

- 3. To receive a report from Municipal Information Services, including but not limited to information on District property tax, District development, and District growth.**

Dr. Welch discussed his in-depth report consisting of: Certified value and revenue, population and real estate, employment, appraised values, tax revenue, aggregation of MUDs by census tracts, construction of taxable improvements in the ESD, estimated and projected taxable values and future growth.

No action taken by the Board.

6:42 p.m. CLOSED SESSION

Closed Sessions, the Board included District Legal counsel John Peeler, Fire Chief Scott Seifert and Assistant Fire Chief Robert Logan for items 4, 5 and 6.

- 4. To meet in Closed Session under 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 under Government Code §551.072 to deliberate on real estate matters.**
- 6. To meet in Closed Session under Government Code §551.074 to discuss personnel matters.**

6:54 p.m. RECONVENE FROM CLOSED SESSION

- 7. To review and take any action regarding construction, improvements, repairs renovations to real property, facilities and stations, including construction payments, change orders, permits, engaging architects(s) or engineers(s), and selecting contractor(s), including but not limited to administrative or maintenance facilities, training facilities and stations.**

Training Facility: Chief Seifert presented cost estimate "Option Three" from Abercrombie as comparison to Options One and Two presented at last month's meeting:

Option 3 - Logistics / Residence / Apartment Building / Site Development / Indirect Costs, estimated at \$47,951,364. Phase 1 includes infrastructure (roads, sewer, lighting) for the entire campus.

Commissioner Fuller moved to approve Option Three in order to move forward with the project. Second by Commissioner Gander. Commissioner Willingham abstained from voting, stating he would prefer all five HCESD 7 Commissioners were present to vote on the project. Motion approved 2-0-1.

Station 72: Donald May reported that the Construction Committee has met with Martinez Architects regarding the project. Mr. Peeler recommended the AIA contract which he reviewed but was marked “draft” be executed as soon as Mr. Martinez provides the final contract form based upon the Board’s prior approval of engaging him. The Board unanimously authorized the Board President to execute the contract as soon as available.

Station 77: A second (“RFQ”) Request for Qualifications for architects to design and manage the repair project are set for newspaper publication. Responses are due before the December meeting.

8. 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 \$43,463,145.14; investment reports from October to November were reviewed; the property tax collections for the 2021 levy stand at 102.06%. Commissioner Gander moved to approve the bookkeeper’s report as presented and to pay District bills as presented. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 3-0. The Board asked Ms. Butler to separate the \$10M in Training Field Project loan funds from the general fund balance in future reports.

9. To review and act on amendments to District budgets.

Chief Seifert presented amendments to the 2023 Budget for review and action by the Board:

Capital Budget: Add three Deputy Chief vehicle replacements totaling \$165,000.00, they are not available to order till October 2023. Changes to Operating budget and Capital budget total \$28,803,002.64.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the revised Budget as presented. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 3-0

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

No action taken by the Board.

- 11. To review and act on matters related to financing, payment and acquisition of capital items, including equipment and vehicles, and action on acquisition/construction financing of same, including retiring or incurring financing for the construction of District facilities or acquisition of vehicles and equipment.**

Regarding future loans: Chief Seifert informed the Board the U.S. Federal Reserve is expected to raise interest rates on December 14, 2022 and potentially again in early 2023. Chief Seifert spoke with Landon Newton with Government Capital Corporation who advises if the Board would like to move forward with securing a \$10,000,000.00 tax exempt bank qualified loan, Mr. Newton could lock in the rate before December 14. Mr. Newton is concerned it may be four to five years before interest rates are this low again. The Board members generally discussed how they would like to have the next meeting on December 13, and all HCESD 7 commissioners present to vote on the loan.

The Board unanimously approved designating Government Capital Corporation as placement agent to secure proposals for tax exempt loans in the amount of \$10,000,000 to be secured by a pledge of ad valorem taxes to finance construction of the Training Field Project.

- 12. To review and act on sales tax matters.**

A sales tax report for November was provided for the Board to review monthly sales tax revenue, trends and projections. Chief Seifert stated, Shannon Taylor HCESD7 Administrator, can now log in to obtain non-confidential sales tax information.

No action taken by the Board.

- 13. To review and take action on the ratification of a continuing Contract with a private law firm pursuant to §6.30 of the Tax Code for the collection of delinquent District ad valorem property taxes and providing for the payment of up to 20% of the delinquent taxes, penalties, and interest which are collected by the attorney under said Contract.**
- 14. To discuss and take action on the imposition of additional penalty on delinquent taxes pursuant to §33.07 of the Tax Code and adoption of a Resolution regarding same for taxes.**
- 15. To discuss and take action on the imposition of additional penalty on delinquent taxes to defray costs of collection by the District's delinquent tax attorney, pursuant to §33.08 of the Tax Code and adoption of a Resolution regarding same.**
- 16. To discuss and take action on the imposition of early additional penalty for collection costs for taxes imposed on personal property on delinquent taxes pursuant to §33.11 of the Tax Code and adoption of a Resolution regarding same.**

Mr. Peeler presented information on items 13 through 16 together. He presented a resolution which would indicate that the Board has retained its delinquent tax collection counsel and fund payment of counsel through the imposition of penalties under Tax Code sections 33.07, 33.08 and 33.11. Commissioner Gander moved to approve the Resolution presented by counsel on the imposition of additional penalty on delinquent taxes pursuant section §33.07 of the Tax Code, section §33.08 of the Tax Code and section §33.11 of the Tax Code. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 3-0.

17. To review and act regarding insurance.

No action taken by the Board.

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

Fire Chief Scott Seifert presented information on the following:

- October's Profit and Loss Reports. The Department is \$3,875,806.36 under budget.
- Transaction list of all expenses paid for October.
- No Workers Compensation claims to report.
- Engine 71 had mechanical issues. To purchase a new engine for the pumper is \$33,000.00 which includes a 5-year, 50,000 mile warranty if the installation is done through an authorized dealer/company. Engine 71 was included as a trade in when the Department purchased a new apparatus. The Department is moving forward with the emergency purchase.
- October's Incident Reports include:
 - A cooking fire at Spring Baptist Church.
 - A garage fire.
- Chief Seifert introduced new Deputy Chief of Training, Jeff King to the Board. Mr. King gave a short bio about himself.

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

Commissioner Willingham moved to accept the Surplus and Salvaged Equipment report as presented by Deputy Chief Schoonover and to authorize disposing of items, items for scrap, and donating items to the Texas A&M Forest Service Helping Hands Program, as presented. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 3-0.

20. To review and act on matters related to communications, dispatching, or traffic preemption, including interlocal agreements, contracts or purchasing equipment.

Chief Schoonover stated invoices for the CenterPoint Project were sent out to the participating departments.

No action taken by the Board.

21. To review, discuss and take action regarding the District executing the Texas Emergency Communications Center Interlocal Agreement.

Chief Seifert and counsel presented the final Interlocal Agreement between the districts regarding the funding and operation of the TECC. Motion by Commissioner Willingham to approve as presented, with a second by Commissioner Fuller. The Board voted unanimously to approve the agreement, and Commissioner Gander signed the document.

22. Receive ESD committee reports.

No action taken by the Board.

23. 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.

Chief Seifert advised the Board, new Deputy Chief Landon Churchill, will start his position mid January.

Chief Seifert presented a contract with F.I.R.S.T. chaplain and counseling services which will provide counseling to Department staff, including at traumatic fire and rescue scenes for \$9,050 for 2023 which is in the Budget. Motion by Commissioner Willingham to approve the contract as presented, with a second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion was approved 3 to 0.

No action taken by the Board.

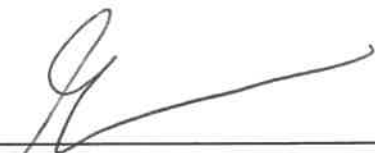
24. To review and approve minutes of prior meetings.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the October 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 3-0.

25. 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 Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

There being no further business brought before the Board, or any further public comment. Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Gander. The meeting is adjourned at 7:48 p.m.



Approved by
Shannon Taylor

Shannon Taylor, Preparer