

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 20, 2023 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	(Present)
Keith Willingham	Secretary	(Present)
David Mills	Asst. Treasurer	(Present)

Also in attendance:

Scott Seifert, Fire Chief, Spring Fire Department
Robert Logan, Assistant Fire Chief, Spring Fire Department
Scott Schoonover, Spring FD Deputy Chief
Jeff King, Spring FD Deputy Chief
Landon Churchill, Spring FD Deputy Chief
John Peeler, Coveler & Peeler, District Legal Counsel
Renee Butler, McLennan & Associates, District Bookkeeper
Greg Thrower, Thrower Law, Special Legal Counsel for real estate
Carole Thrower, Thrower Law
Ricardo Martinez, Martinez Architects, LP
Donald May, Spring FD Facilities Manager
Tracee Evans, Spring FD Communications Director **(Present Via-Teleconference)**
Charlie Repka, Spring FD IT Manager
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.

THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 7.

- 7. 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 \$65,627,180.23; investment reports from March to April were reviewed; the property tax collections for the 2022 levy stand at 99.33% of the District budgeted property tax revenue.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the bookkeeper's report as presented and to pay District bills as presented. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 5-0.

THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 8.

- 8. To review, discuss and take action on granting exemptions for 2023.**

Information will be discussed at May's meeting.

THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 9.

- 9. To designate the Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector's Office to prepare the District's No New Revenue Tax Rate and related tax rate calculations for 2023 and authorize the Tax Office and legal counsel to prepare and publish related notices.**

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the Resolution designating the Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector's Office to prepare Tax Rate calculations with Counsel to assist them and prepare the required notices. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 5-0.

[GREG THROWER, SPECIAL LEGAL COUNSEL FOR REAL ESTATE, ENTERED THE MEETING AT 6:39 P.M.]

6:39 p.m. ENTER CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session, the Board convened in Closed Session and included District Legal Counsel John Peeler, Fire Chief Scott Seifert and Assistant Chief Robert Logan for items 3 and 4. Spring FD Facilities Manager Donald May, Special Legal Counsel for real estate Greg Thrower and his legal assistant Carol Thrower were present for item 4.

3. 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.
4. To meet in Closed Session under Government Code §551.072 to deliberate on real estate matters.
5. To meet in Closed Session under Government Code §551.074 to discuss personnel matters.

The Board did not meet in Closed Session under item 5.

7:13 p.m. RECONVENE FROM CLOSED SESSION

6. 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.

Ricardo Martinez with Martinez Architects, LP updated the Board on the status of:

Station 72: Coordination of Schematic Design with Building Committee Completed. The Design Development 50% completion package has been developed and provided to the Building Committee for review. Will submit for Permit in July. Solicit for Bidding in August.

Station 77: A Structural Narrative was provided detailing the specifications and scope of work. Geotechnical evaluation recommends removing the existing foundation and install new. The estimated cost is \$1,750,000.00 - \$2,000,000.00. Commissioner Mills will review the quote with Mr. Martinez.

Training Facility: Early Bid/Construction Package - Facility Entrance / Monument Sign

- Onsite geotechnical evaluation samples have been provided.
- Martinez Architects coordinated documents for permitting.
- Hart Gaugler + Associates to coordinate with MUD 249 for utility.
- SpawGlass intends to solicit bids for the monument sign portion of the project in May with an expected groundbreaking event in June.
- Legal action is needed to exit the current utility district's provider and obtain Harris County MUD 249 for service.

Commissioner Willingham moved to authorize the District President to engage special legal counsel to begin the process to exit the current utility district's provider and obtain services from Harris County MUD 249 to provide water service to the District's Training Facility property. Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 5-0.

Mr. Martinez will continue to provide project updates at future HCESD 7 meetings.
No action taken by the Board.

10. 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 Expenses: A new UTV and Trailer are added totaling \$28,000.00.

District Budget: New categories for station rebuild/repairs consist of: Station 77 Repairs, Spring Campus - Phase 1 and Station 72 Rebuild. Amounts will be added later. New Vehicles and Equipment \$293,000.00. If approved, the amended District Budget is \$29,850,509.44

Operations Budget: Dispatch is currently \$700,000.00. Texas Emergency Communications Center ("TECC"), would like to add a new dispatcher at \$35,000.00 for a full time position. The revised Dispatch amount is \$735,000.00. Internet for Administration \$132,000.00.

If approved, the amended Total Operations Expenses are \$25,041,658.73.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the amended Budget to include the Dispatch and Internet increases as presented. Second by Commissioner Fuller. Motion approved 5-0.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the amended Budget to include the Station Rebuild/Repair Line items and New Vehicles and Equipment. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 5-0.

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

The Board reviewed matters related to the Development Agreement regarding the sale of the District's "Leo Property" And development project on same. Staff presented information regarding the need to grade and seed, as well as permit fees for work on the property. Commissioner Gander moved to approve up to \$22,000.00 to grade, seed and apply for permits as necessary. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 5-0.

Commissioner Gander moved to release the final \$7,045.00 from the escrow account related to the Leo Property project to Invision Investments, LLC. for the water drainage line, pending receipt of the notarized sworn statement of completion. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 5-0.

Chief Seifert and Mr. Peeler reported on an inquiry from North Hampton MUD: in 2001, property in the North Hampton subdivision was apparently deeded in error to HCESD 7. The North Hampton MUD would like the property returned, for its use as a water treatment plant. HCESD 7 has no interest in keeping the property. District Legal Counsel, Mr. Peeler will consult with North Hampton MUD's legal counsel regarding a possible deed to return the property ownership to North Hampton MUD. He will report back at a subsequent meeting.

12. 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.

Assistant Chief Logan reported regarding new Engine 71: a larger cab was left off the original design plans; due to increased thefts of area fire departments' equipment, compartment door locks need to be added to the new design. To add the cab extension and door locks, the cost is \$25,000.00. Commissioner Willingham moved to approve the cab extension and door locks not to exceed \$25,000.00. Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 5-0.

13. To review and act on sales tax matters.

A sales tax report for April was provided for the Board to review monthly sales tax revenue, trends and projections. Sales tax revenue for April is \$1,468,195.69. Staff noted that while March 2023 sales tax revenue was 5.7% lower than March 2022, for the entire first quarter of 2023 revenue is 6.5% higher than the same period in 2022.

No action taken by the Board.

14. To review and act regarding insurance.

No action taken by the Board.

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

Fire Chief Scott Seifert presented information on the following:

- March's Profit and Loss Reports.
- The Department is \$512,307.98 under budget.
- Transaction list of all expenses paid for March.
- Workers Compensation claims include:
 - 1 broken finger
 - 1 shoulder injury
- March's Incident Reports include:
 - Eleven building fires and three vehicle fires.
- Texas CLASS is protected by the State of Texas for the full amount invested. No need to change banks.

Training Facility Site - Donald May reported that a dentist office at the end of the easement has a 1" line coming out of the building to a 3" line with some kind of watery discharge onto District property, causing a muddy ditch nearby.

The HCESD 7 Board unanimously directed HCESD 7 staff to speak with the proper authorities to report the issue.

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

Commissioner Gander moved to accept the Surplus and Salvaged Equipment report as presented and dispose of requested items. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 5-0.

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

No action taken by the Board.

18. Receive ESD committee reports.

Regarding the Texas Legislature - Chief Seifert reported on several bills affecting ESDs that staff and the District's governmental affairs consultants are monitoring.

No action taken by the Board.

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

Chief Seifert informed the Board a Request for Proposal ("RFP") for health and wellness was sent to three companies, and two companies responded: 1st Response Family Clinic was chosen by the health and wellness committee to provide the Department's health screening services. A one year option is available.

Commissioner Mills moved to accept 1st Response Family Clinic's proposal as presented. Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 5-0.

20. To approve a Resolution regarding the delegation of approval of expenses and contract under the approved Budget by the Board to the Fire chief and other District staff.

More information will be available at next month's meeting.

No action taken by the Board.

21. To review and take action on an agreement with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (“CPSE”) to host a training program by CPSE at the District’s Administration building, including the related requirements for the same.

Chief Churchill updated the Board on the Center for Public Safety Excellence corporation and presented an agreement for the District to host a training program, if the Board approves. After discussion:

Commissioner Gander moved to pursue national accreditation. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 5-0.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the Agreement to host educational activity events with the Center for Public Safety Excellence. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 5-0.

Commissioner Gander moved to seek certification through the Texas Fire Chiefs Association. Motion approved 5-0.

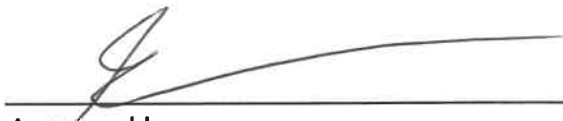
22. To review and approve minutes of prior meetings.

Commissioner Fuller moved to approve the March 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 5-0.

23. 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 18, 2023 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 9:00 p.m.



Approved by



Shannon Taylor, Preparer