

**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 18, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.** at the following location in the District, **Spring Fire Department Administration Building, 656 East Louetta Road, Spring, Texas 77373.**

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

**Also in attendance:**

Scott Seifert, Fire Chief, Spring Fire Department  
Jeffery King, 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  
Richardo Martinez, Martinez Architects, LP  
Steve Schoonover, Spring FD Quality Assurance Analyst  
Michelle Jahr, Spring FD Finance Director  
Donald May, Spring FD Facilities Manager  
Tracee Evans, Spring FD Communications Director  
Larry Wilkinson, Spring FD Captain  
Daniel McCune, Spring FD Captain  
Damaris Rolon, Spring FD Accounting Specialist  
Shannon Taylor, Spring FD Administrative Specialist

**Call meeting to order.**

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

**2. To receive public comment.**

No public comment was made.

Introductions of: Michelle Jahr, HCESD 7's new Finance Director, HCESD 7 Commissioners, John Peeler, Legal Counsel, Renee Butler, Bookkeeper, as well as attendees listed above.

***6:32 p.m. ENTER CLOSED SESSION***

Closed Session, the Board convened in Closed Session and included District Legal Counsel, John Peeler, real estate counsel, Greg Thrower, Carole Thrower and Fire Chief Scott Seifert.

- 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.**

***6:50 p.m. RECONVENE FROM CLOSED SESSION***

***THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 9.***

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

Special Counsel Greg Thrower presented the mylar plat application document for the District's 60 acre training facility land. Motion by Commissioner Gander and second by Commissioner Willingham to approve the application as presented and authorize execution by District officers. After discussion the motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

***THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 6.***

- 6. To review and take any action regarding construction, improvements, repairs, renovations maintenance of/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 emergency services stations.**

The Board received information from Ricardo Martinez with Martinez Architects, LP and acted on the following matters:

Station 72 - Rain has delayed some progress. Completed activities include installation of underground utilities, drilled piers. Current activities include installation of building utilities (underground slab utilities), and building foundation pad (to be framed and rebar set after under slab utilities in building). Chief Seifert exercised his approved authority to authorize stabilization soil at \$16,511.00, to move the project forward.

Station 77 - Both Architectural and Civil permits have been approved and are awaiting payment. A meeting between Masters, Building Committee and Design Team will take place once the contract is approved. Awaiting MEP "Issue for Bid" drawings from Stanton Engineering for GMP evaluation. CMAR (Construction Manager at Risk) Contract - Awaiting contract approval before moving into meeting and coordination with Construction Masters.

Training Center - Mr. Martinez discussed the inquiry from Liberty Mutual about the status of the project. The form will be completed and returned to Liberty Mutual. He also presented the notice from SpawGlass regarding the extension of the date for substantial completion due to permitting delays beyond their control. The Board, Mr. Martinez, staff and counsel generally discussed the issue of such delays and noted no objection to the notice.

Construction activities include: Civil monument permit is approved. Site grading. Owner representative to approve location of privacy fence on site. Contractor coordinating open items with CenterPoint Energy.

Donald May Spring FD Facilities Manager updated the Board on:

Station 72 - Northampton MUD will split the cost 50/50 with the District regarding the proposal from C&J Outdoor Services for a cedar picket fence.

Discussions of another fence separating a mechanic shop and Station 72's property. No action taken from the Board.

Station 74 - LDF Construction reached out to BRW Architects regarding a quote to paint the bay doors. Chief Seifert will follow up on the status of the request.

Commissioner Gander moved to accept the Addendum to the Abercrombie Design Contract for Phase I of the Training Facility project. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 4-0.

A Memorandum from Schwartz, Page and Harding, L.L.P. between HCESD 7 and Harris County M.U.D 249, regarding the annexation of a portion of the Training Facilities 51.7 acre land tract was presented. Commissioner Willingham moved to approve the preliminary proposal of M.U.D 249's plan to provide water to the Training Facility, per the Memorandum. Second by Commissioner Anderson. During discussion, Mr. Peeler noted that approval would result in some legal fees being charged by MUD 249. Motion approved 4-0.

The Board unanimously approved payment of the SpawGlass pay application number 3 for the Training Facility Logistics and Burn Building project in the amount of \$1,076,758.18.

The Board unanimously approved payment of the LDF Construction pay application 5 for the Station 72 project in the amount of \$554,369.37.

**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 \$83,632,163.47; investment reports from March to April were reviewed; the property tax collections for the 2023 levy stand at 91.65%.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the bookkeeper's report and pay District bills as presented. Second by Commissioner Willingham. Motion approved 4-0.

An invoice from Municipal Information Services for Dr. Ron Welch's in-depth district report was presented. Commissioner Willingham moved to approve the invoice for \$4,625.00. Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 4-0.

Spring FD Finance Director Michelle Jahr presented the Profit and Loss financial reports from the Operations Account and discussed her ideas of combining the General Fund and Operations accounts in one file. Mrs. Jahr spoke of Cassel, a new software program she would like to convert to.

Chief Seifert discussed BLX Group LLC monitoring arbitrage reduction. Ms. Jahr and Chief Seifert reported they are working with BLX on the arbitrage reduction measures approved by the Board. The Board by unanimous consent authorized Chief Seifert and Ms. Jahr to work with BLX to set up the SLUG accounts and move the funds as recommended by BLX, and for Board officers to execute related documents for same.

***THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 15.***

**15. To review and act on employee management and access to District financial information and accounts.**

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the Resolution presented by legal counsel which authorizes the District's Finance Director Michelle Jahr and Fire Chief Scott Seifert authority to access financial statements, move funds between District accounts and report such actions to the Board as needed to conduct the District's daily business. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 4-0.

***THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 8.***

**8. To review and act on amendments to District budgets.**

No action taken by the Board.

***THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 10.***

**10. To review and act on interlocal agreements, with other emergency services districts regarding the use or lease of facilities and maintenance of same.**

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.**

Chief Seifert reported the approved three new Ford F150 trucks and three new Chevrolet Tahoes have been delivered to the District.

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

A sales tax report for April was presented for the Board to review monthly sales tax revenue, trends and projections. Sales tax revenue for April is \$1,587,614.60.

**13. To review and act on tax exemptions for 2024.**

District legal counsel John Peeler presented information on the 2023 property exemptions, the resulting savings to taxpayers granted by the Board and 2024 projections based upon the currently available information.

Commissioner Mills moved to grant exemptions for 2024 at the same levels as 2023:

Homestead - 5%, Over 65 - \$160,000.00 and Disability \$160,000.00.

Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 4-0.

**14. To review and act on a District Purchasing Policy.**

The District's Finance Director Michelle Jahr, discussed a new district purchasing policy. The new policy will allow Fire Chief Scott Seifert and staff authority to conduct daily business while ensuring compliance with applicable federal and State law.

Commissioner Gander moved to approve the District's Purchasing Policy as presented. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved 4-0.

***THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO SKIP TO AGENDA ITEM 16.***

**16. To review and act regarding insurance.**

No action taken by the Board.

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

Chief Seifert presented information on the following:

- March's Profit and Loss Reports.
- The Department is \$302,783.48 under budget.
- Transaction list of all expenses paid for March.
- No Workers Compensation claims.
- March's Incident Reports include 447 incidents.
  
- Chief Seifert will keep the Board updated regarding the protest filed by MUD 26 against the Houston Housing Authority granting tax exempt status to the apartment complex at 3400 Louetta Rd. District legal counsel John Peeler will follow up with Klein ISD.
- 2023 Annual Report is available next month.
- The Ironman Triathlon is April 27, the District is assisting in mutual service.
- Volunteer GIS Analyst Mark Leander, is working with Chief Churchill.
- Safer Grant Submittal.

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

Commissioner Willingham moved to approve the Surplus and Salvaged Equipment list as presented authorizing disposing of items as allowed by the Health and Safety Code and donating items to the Texas A&M Forestry Service Helping Hands where applicable and using an online auction service for other items. Second by Commissioner Gander. Motion approved 4-0.

Motion by Commissioner Willingham and second by Commissioner Gander to approve the revised contract with online auction service Renee Bates. Motion approved 4-0.

**19. 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.

**20. Receive ESD committee reports, including Legislative and Governmental Relations matters.**

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 Fire Chief, command staff, administrative staff, and suppression personnel.**

No action taken by the Board.

**22. To review and approve minutes of prior meetings.**

Motion by Commissioner Gander to approve the March 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes as presented and accept an Edit 2 option with correction to spelling "design." Second by Commissioner Mills. Motion approved 4-0.

**23. To review and act to schedule the next regular monthly meeting date and discuss the addition of items to place on the next meeting agenda.**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2024.

There being no further business brought before the Board, or any further public comment. Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Gander. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

  
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District Secretary

*Shannon Taylor*  
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Shannon Taylor, Preparer