

Meeting Minutes
Harris County Emergency Services District No. 7

The Board of Commissioners of **HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 7** held a special meeting on **March 20, 2025, at 6:30 PM** at the following location in the District, **Spring Fire Department Administration Building, 656 East Louetta Road, Spring, Texas 77373.**

Melanie Gander	President	(Present)
Keith Willingham	Secretary	(Present)
Bob Schmanski	Assistant Treasurer	(Present)
David Mills	Treasurer	(Absent)

Also in attendance:

Scott Seifert, Fire Chief, Spring Fire Department
Michelle Jahr, Finance Director, Spring Fire Department
Landon Churchill, Deputy Chief, Spring Fire Department
Donald May, Facilities Director, Spring Fire Department
Shannon Taylor, Finance Assistant, Spring Fire Department
Jerod Davenport, Deputy Chief, Spring Fire Department
Alex Bregenzer, Risk Reduction Director, Spring Fire Department
Scott Schoonover, Deputy Chief, Spring Fire Department
Steve Schoonover, Quality Assurance, Spring Fire Department
Ricardo Martinez, Martinez Architects
John Peeler, Coveler & Peeler, District Legal Counsel
Jessica Adkins, Coveler & Peeler
Joe Mendyk, Project Executive, SpawGlass

Item 1 – Call meeting to order.

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

Item 2 – To receive public comment.

No public comment was forthcoming.

Item 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.

The Board met in Closed Session under item 3 with the following in attendance: Board members present at the meeting, Chief Seifert, legal counsel John Peeler, and Jessica Adkins. Closed session began at 6:31.

Item 4 – To meet in Closed Session under Government Code §551.072 to deliberate on real estate matters.

No closed session was held under Item 4 of the agenda.

Item 5 – To meet in Closed Session under Government Code §551.074 to discuss personnel matters.

No closed session was held under Item 5 of the agenda.

Closed Session ended at 6:41pm, and the Board reconvened in Open Session.

Item 6 – Consent Agenda – The following items are considered routine by the Board and will be enacted by one motion. No separate discussion will occur on these items unless a commissioner so requests, in which event, the item will be removed and placed on the Non-Consent agenda:

A. Approve the minutes of prior meeting.

i. January 23, 2025, February 18, 2025, and February 20, 2025, meeting minutes

Commissioner Schmanski noted corrections for January 23, 2025, February 18, 2025, and February 20, 2025, meeting minutes.

B. Listing of Bills Paid

C. Payroll Disbursements

D. Budget to Actual Reports

E. Bank and Investment Summary

F. Sales Tax Report

G. Surplus and Salvage Property

H. Worker’s Comp Claims

A motion was made by Commissioners Willingham, seconded by Commissioner Schmanski, to approve all items on the Consent Agenda, with the noted corrections to the January 23, 2025, February 18, 2025, and February 20, 2025, meeting minutes. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 7 – Non-Consent Agenda

B. Items removed from the Consent Agenda

i. No items were placed on the Non-Consent agenda.

Item 8 – Pre-Plan RFP

Chief Davenport presented information on this item. He noted that Image Trend submitted a proposal for software, which was not what the District is looking for at this time, and another company submitted a “no-bid” due to time constraints. After review and discussion with Chief Schoonover and Chief Logan, Chief Davenport recommended Pre-Fire to utilize them for the District’s pre-plan service needs. Commissioner Schmanski inquired if this was someone they have used in the past, and Chief Davenport said they have been used and they had no issues or concerns with the company. Commissioner Willingham inquired about the price and Chief Davenport stated that currently they have \$70,000 budgeted for this item. A motion was made by Commissioner Schmanski, seconded by Commissioner Willingham, to approve the Pre-Fire proposal, move forward with the pre-plan services and authorize Chief Seifert to sign necessary documents. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 9 – Proposal for Political Boundary Map Project

Chief Churchill presented information on this item. He noted that he talked with several surveyors and only Weisser Engineering does this type of work in the region. Weisser will review all the documents and prepare a shapefile map with validated boundaries. The cost estimate is \$8,325. A motion was made by Commissioner Willingham, seconded by Commissioner Schmanski, to approve the proposal as presented. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 10 – Orbit Media Proposal

Chief Churchill presented information on this item. He noted that as part of the strategic plan from 2024, external communication was a goal for the District and part of that was revamping their digital media presence externally. The District website is currently on a platform that is more than 5 years old and needs to be migrated to a new updated platform to have better functionality and be more user friendly. \$20,000 was budgeted for this item, but the cost is \$30,000 so they will make a budget adjustment somewhere else to cover the cost. A motion was made by Commissioner Gander, seconded by Commissioner Willingham, to approve the proposal by Orbit as presented. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 11 – Fire Incident Reporting Software

Chief Davenport presented information on this item. He noted that after Committee Review, the committee chose Emergency Networking System. The cost is \$24,747 and it will be split with Harris County ESD 29. A motion was made by Commissioner Schmanski, seconded by Commissioner Willingham, to approve the agreement as presented and authorize Chief Seifert to sign necessary documents. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 12 – Real Estate

There was no action taken on this agenda item.

Item 13 –To review and take any action regarding construction, improvements, repairs, renovations, maintenance of/to any District real property and improvements, buildings, facilities and stations, including change orders, permits, engaging architect(s) or engineer(s), and contractor(s).

Ricardo Martinez gave updates on construction. There was also some discussion on Raba Kistner issues. District Counsel John Peeler noted that the invoice could be reviewed during closed session at the meeting in April if necessary. There was also some discussion by the Board about access to the invoices and other documents not being easy to review. A motion was made by Commissioner Gander, seconded by Commissioner Willingham, to approve the reports and pay all the applications as presented. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 14 – Financing of Capital Items

Finance Director Jahr presented information on exploring opportunities for a \$10,000,000 loan for additional construction of the District Training Facility. After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Gander, seconded by Commissioner Willingham, to authorize Finance Director Jahr to explore the different options. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 15 – To review and take action on granting exemptions for 2025.

Jessica Adkins and District Counsel John Peeler presented information on this item. After a short discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Gander, seconded by Commissioner Willingham, to keep the exemptions the same as the previous year: Homestead 5.00%, Over 65 \$160,000 and Disability \$160,000. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 16 – Policy and Procedure for preparing Meeting Agenda Notices.

District Counsel John Peeler presented information on this item. The Board discussed the different options and agreed on the policy as presented by counsel allowing that any one Commissioner could add an agenda item to a meeting agenda notice, and two commissioners could remove an agenda item. A motion was made by Commissioner Schmanski, seconded by Commissioner Gander, to approve the policy as discussed. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 17 – To review and act to adopt a new Resolution on Commissioner Compensation under Health and Safety Code section 775.038

The Board generally discussed that they have not approved increasing Commissioner compensation to the current maximum level allowed by law. After discussion, the Board chose to take no action on this item, thereby leaving the existing policy in place.

Item 18 – Fire Department Report on Activities.

Chief Seifert and staff reported on Fire Department activities. He noted that a staff member had surgery and will be out for several weeks, Engine 78 will be in service soon, they are working on a Battery Disposal Program and a Citizen Emergency Response Team. He also discussed the planning and development for Phase Two of the Training Center construction.

Item 19 – Community Risk Reduction: Smoke Alarm Program and New Fall Prevention Program.

Alex Bregenzer presented information on this item. It was noted that the Fall Prevention Program is intended to reduce calls for the Fire Department, thereby saving District resources over time. A motion was made by Commissioner Willingham, seconded by Commissioner Gander, to approve the program and costs as presented as a measure to reduce Fire Department calls based upon falls by vulnerable members of the District community. With a vote of 3 to 0, the motion carried.

Item 20 – To review, discuss and take action on the District’s Investment Policy.

There was no action on this item.

Item 21 – Receive ESD Committee reports, including Legislative and Governmental Relations matters.

There was no action on this item.

Item 22 – To review and act regarding insurance.

There was no action on this item.

Item 23 – To review and act on personnel matters, including policies, scheduling, evaluations, benefits, compensations, hiring, retention and evaluation of District employees, including District Fire Chief, command staff, administrative staff, and suppression personnel.

No action was taken on this item.

Item 24 – To review and act to schedule the next regular monthly meeting date and discuss the addition of items to be placed on the agenda.

The next meeting will be on April 17, 2025, at 6:30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.


District Secretary


Jessica Adkins, Coveler & Peeler P.C., Preparer