

FORT BEND COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 7

Minutes for the regular Meeting of March 19, 2024

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER.** The meeting was called to order at 11:33 AM by Commissioner Lopez at the District Fire Station, 1834 W. Sycamore, Fresno, TX. The Commissioners in attendance were **Freddy Lopez, Sr., Barbara Hamilton, Janet McClain, and Ruston Hughes.** Commissioner **Gregory Linkous** was not in attendance. Additional persons present were: Office Manager Esmeralda Mendez; Assistant Chief Tom Henderson; Battalion Chief Loftin; District Legal Counsel John Peeler of Coveler & Peeler, P.C.; District bookkeeper Carol Morrison of Municipal Accounts and Consulting (attending via telephone); and Maryann Guirguis of Martinez Architects.

2. **TO RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS.** The Board opened the floor for public comment though none was offered.

3. **TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS.** Counsel presented draft minutes for the regular meeting held on February 20, 2024, and the special meeting held on March 3, 2024. After review, motion by Commissioner Hughes and second by Commissioner McClain to approve as presented. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

4. **TO ACT ON FINANCIAL MATTERS, INCLUDING FINANCIAL REPORT, INVOICES/BILLS, INVESTMENTS, INVESTMENT POLICY, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, CREDIT CARDS, REQUIRED REPORTS, AND REVISIONS TO CURRENT BUDGET(S).** The Board reviewed the written monthly report provided by Municipal Accounts and Consulting, and Ms. Morrison noted: the funds available in various District accounts; sales tax collections are lower than the same month in 2023; the 2023 property tax levy is currently 92.95% collected.

Upon completion of the report, a motion was made by Commissioner Hamilton seconded by Commissioner McClain to approve the financial report as presented and to pay the District bills, including the property taxes for the District's property acquired in 2023. The motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

The Board also conducted the annual review of the Investment Policy. Motion by Commissioner Hughes and seconded by Commissioner Hamilton to approve the short resolution keeping the 2020 Investment Policy in place with the same investment officers noted in the 2020 policy until such time as the Board determines that a change in the policy is appropriate. Motion was approved 4 to 0.

5. **TO REVIEW AND ACT ON GRANTING PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR CURRENT YEAR.** After review, motion by Commissioner Hamilton and seconded by Commissioner McClain to grant the following exemptions: 0.00% for Residential Homestead; \$5,000 for over 65; and \$5,000 for disability. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0. The Resolution was executed for delivery to FBCAD and FBC Tax Office.

6. **TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON DISTRICT WEBSITE AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH MATTERS.** Touchstone was not able to send a representative today, but they did provide a written report. Ms. Mendez reported on outreach matters: SAFE-D

shared a photo of the ESD 7 attendees with a link to the ESD 7 website which drove traffic to the website; the District is planning an open house grand opening for the fire station for April 20, 2024.

7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE FIRE CHIEF AND COMMAND STAFF REGARDING FRESNO FIRE & RESCUE OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES, TO REVIEW REQUESTS FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT ON OPERATIONAL EXPENSES.

Assistant Chief Henderson and Battalion Chief Loftin provided a verbal summary to update the Board on current activities and noted: information on recent call volume; the new pumper is close to being completed, with a final inspection planned for the end of April; E-51 is out of service; the Department is migrating computer systems from Google to Microsoft 365. Ms. Mendez notes that Board business cards have arrived. No action taken.

8. TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENTS TO DISTRICT FACILITIES AND REAL PROPERTY, INCLUDING ENGAGEMENT OF DESIGN PROFESSIONALS OR ENGINEERING SERVICES, SELECTION OF BUILDERS/CONTRACTORS AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER COUNTY ENTITIES REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATIONS, INCLUDING ACTION ON CONSTRUCTION FINANCING.

Assistant Chief Henderson and Ms. Guirguis provided information on the development of new Station 52 property with current plans to use 2 acres for the new station; 2 acres for the training facility and 2 acres for onsite stormwater detention; they noted the design team is looking into the use of regional detention with a developer or MUD; Chief Henderson would like to look into possible TIRZ reimbursement for developing the water and sewer lines; the planned detention pond will have a lift station and vertical brick walls rather than sloped natural ground cover. Chief Henderson also noted there is 10% of funds being held back on the payments for this station pending the completion of several remaining items by the contractors.

The Board also addressed item 15 with item 8.

15. TO REVIEW AND ACT ON THE ACQUISITION OF A MODULAR BUILDING TO HOUSE DISTRICT PERSONNEL AT NEW FIRE STATION FACILITIES.

Chief Henderson and Counsel reviewed the RFP process used to solicit proposals. Only Palomars bid, with a total price of \$370,405. Chief Henderson noted the need for some minor modifications to the specifications, and asked for approval of up to \$400,000. The Board and Chief Henderson generally discussed the installation of a modular building at the station 52 site, including the drainage issues and the District costs to develop the access road to the property. Ms. Guirguis said the design team is not anticipating any holdups on drainage from TXDOT. Chief Henderson noted that we are still awaiting additional borings and geotechnical reports for the back portion of the property.

Motion by Commissioner Hamilton and second by Commissioner McClain to authorize the additional geotechnical testing. Motion was approved 4 to 0.

Motion by Commissioner Hamilton and second by Commissioner McClain to accept the Palomar proposal but not to authorize down payment, pending the geotechnical testing. Motion was approved 4 to 0.

9. TO ACT ON REAL ESTATE, INCLUDING SALES, PURCHASES, LEASES, PERMITS, ENCUMBRANCES, PLATTING, SURVEYING, UTILITIES AND ACQUISITION FINANCING. Chief Henderson noted that the re-platting process is in progress though there is no hard due date for the mylar application materials to be produced yet.

10. TO REVIEW AND ACT ON AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT TO HOUSE FORT BEND EMS AT THE DISTRICT FIRE STATION. Mr. Peeler presented a draft agreement to address the County EMS being stationed at the Fire Station. The Board and staff stated they need time to review the draft and will act at a later date.

11. TO REVIEW AND ACT ON AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH FORT BEND COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES REGARDING THE DISTRICT ACTING AS AN EMS FIRST RESPONDER ORGANIZATION FOR FORT BEND COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES. Counsel and staff noted that they are still reviewing questions from FBC EMS.

12. TO REVIEW AND ACT TO APPROVE REVISED PURCHASING POLICY. Counsel reported that he is still reviewing the policy.

13. TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON THE ACQUISITION OF EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES, INCLUDING APPROVAL OF ACQUISITION FINANCING FOR SAME AND TO DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION FOR THE SALE OR DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS AND/OR SALVAGE OF AND OTHER PROPERTY PURSUANT TO TEXAS HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE §775.0735. No action was taken on this item.

14. TO REVIEW AND ACT ON AN AGREEMENT FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR SERVICES. Staff and counsel will continue to develop information on this issue for the Board in order to issue an RFP at a later date.

16. TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVT. CODE §551.071 TO CONSULT WITH LEGAL COUNSEL ON LITIGATION, SETTLEMENTS OR CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS UNDER TEXAS BAR RULES. The Board and counsel met in closed session from 12:39 – 12:50 PM. Commissioner Hamilton did not participate in the closed session.

17. TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO SECTION 551.072, ON REAL ESTATE MATTERS. No closed session was held under Section 551.072.

18. CLOSED SESSION UNDER SECTION 551.074, ON PERSONNEL MATTERS. No closed session was held under Section 551.074.

19. TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON PERSONNEL MATTERS, INCLUDING

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF, FIRE SUPPRESSION STAFF, COMMAND STAFF AND FIRE CHIEF, INCLUDING COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, JOB DUTIES, SCHEDULE, HIRING AND RETENTION. No action taken.

20. TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING DESIGNATION OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE AND REVISED NOTICE FOR SAME UNDER HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE 775.036(f). The Board noted that this was addressed in a prior month.

21. TO DISCUSS FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SET THE FUTURE MEETING DATES. The Board noted that the next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2024 but may need to be moved to April 23, 2024. The Board approved a special meeting on April 20, 2024 to conduct an open house for the public to see the new fire station.

22. ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business brought before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:57 PM.

Janet McClain, Secretary