

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2021, MEETING
HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 48

A meeting was duly called of Harris County Emergency Services District No. 48, held at the District Administration Building located at 21201 Morton Road, Katy, Texas 77449, on Wednesday, September 15, 2021.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by **Bret Fossum**, Vice President, who announced that a quorum was present. Those Commissioners present were:

Marshall Kramer	Absent
Sam Henderson	Present
Bret Fossum	Present
Russell Solomon	Present
Michael Fleming	Present

Also present at the meeting were District Fire Chief, George McAteer, Assistant Chief of EMS, Eric Bank, Assistant Chief of Suppression, Brett Ellis, Assistant Chief of Administration, Ray Sidwell, Division Chief of Logistics, Machel Richter, Business Manager, Walla Almasri, and Office Manager, Jackie Tobar. Also, present Ira Coveler, the District's legal counsel with the law firm of Coveler & Peeler, and Human Resources Director RaChele Parker with RIT Management.

TO RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT.

No public comment was made.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND TAKE ACTION RELATED TO THE MONTHLY SALES TAX REPORT.

Item tabled.

TO RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE DISTRICT AND TAKE ANY ACTION RELATED THERETO.

Item tabled.

TO PAY THE DISTRICT'S INVOICES AND EXPENSES AND APPROVAL OF ANY WIRE TRANSFERS.

Ms. Tobar presented the Board with the District bills. The Board reviewed and discussed the District bills.

Mr. **Henderson** made a motion to approve the District bills related to expenses incurred by the District since the previous meeting for \$82,207.90. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND TAKE ACTION ON FUNDING THE DISTRICT'S PAYROLL FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER OBLIGATIONS.

Mr. **Henderson** made a motion to approve the District's payroll obligations for August and September. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS.

Mr. Coveler presented Minutes to be signed from July. He informed the Board that all meeting minutes through the end of September will be presented at the regular October meeting of the District.

TO RECEIVE ANY REPORTS FROM FIRE CHIEF GEORGE MCATEER AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION RELATED TO HIS REPORT.

Chief McAteer discussed the following in his report: The TIFMAS deployment and how it has been extended. The preparations and after-effects of Hurricane Nicolas. Station visits with crews were held to discuss the District's pay scale that will take into effect January 1, 2022. Chief McAteer will be revisiting a few job descriptions and policies for the Department.

TO RECEIVE AN EMS DIVISION REPORT FROM ASSISTANT CHIEF ERIC BANK AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION RELATED TO HIS REPORT.

Chief Bank discussed his report. EMS had 999 calls for August 2021. The average response time was six (6) minutes, thirty-six (36) seconds. There were four-hundred fifty-six (456) non-transport/non-emergency calls. Life Flight was utilized three times this month. EMS conducted the following Mutual Aid: seven (7) calls to Westlake FD. The Department is continuing to work at the Hospital Tents and are going through medical supplies very quickly. The Department hired four (4) Paramedics last month, but one (1) has decided to leave us. The Department is in the process of interviewing four (4) more Paramedics. Our call volume has increased 25% of it is due to Covid. The rest of the calls are due to a multitude of factors: motor vehicle accidents, people who have not sought out medical care, the general growth around us, etc.

TO RECEIVE A FIRE DIVISION REPORT FROM ASSISTANT CHIEF BRETT ELLIS AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION RELATED TO HIS REPORT.

Chief Ellis discussed the Fire Report. In August, the total Department calls for Fort Bend ESD No. 1 was five (5) calls. The total Department calls for the District in August were three hundred and sixty-two (362) calls. The average response time was six (6) minutes, forty-four (44) seconds. Suppression conducted the following Mutual Aid: one (1) calls to Flusher FD and one (1) call to Community FD. The Department had two (2) structure fires, a house and a car threatening a structure. The Training Division hosted the TCFP Fire Officer II classes. The TCFP Firefighter test passed with a 100% rating. The Department sent two (2) members to FDIC. The scheduled SCBA upgrade to MFG is delayed due to a parts shortage. The Department sent the Engine 4 crew to Louisiana for TIFMAS Deployment.

TO RECEIVE AN ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT FROM ASSISTANT CHIEF RAY SIDWELL AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION RELATED TO HIS REPORT.

Chief Sidwell discussed his report. Chief Sidwell is sending letters to each Employee regarding the new pay ranges and what Grade and hourly rate they will be assigned. The Department is working with Prime ITS on a QuickBooks upgrade issue the Department has encountered. Chief Sidwell is amending the 2022 Budget based on the last meeting and will represent again once all of the budgetary numbers are re-verified. Chief Sidwell requested Board Member signatures on a Trustmark National Bank letter the Department received verifying the District's Commercial Loan with the bank.

Mr. **Henderson** made a motion to sign the Trustmark agreement for the Commercial loan. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

TO RECEIVE ANY REPORTS FROM THE DISTRICT'S BUSINESS MANAGER AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION RELATED TO HER REPORT.

Business Manager Almasri discussed her report. The Department finally completed a new, upgraded QuickBooks update. The Department had to order extra Licenses for Employees to be able to log in and do their job. Next Week Thursday, September 23, 2021, the Department will meet with Mr. Mason to illustrate how to implement the information dump from Visa Interlink into QuickBooks. Ms. Almasri will revisit with Allegiance Bank to see if they can have the NACHA File transported into the upgraded QuickBooks version after finalized implementation with Visa.

The Administrative Employees have been given the new Visa credit cards and have turned in the Bank of America credit card. The new credit card allows the Employee to reconcile and capture credit card receipts. Ms. Almasri has trained each Administrative Employee to make both applications on the phone and PC, self-turn receipts, and code to the required GL accounts. Ms. Almasri made some adjustments to the Credit Card SOG per Chief McAteer for Chief Sidwell to re-present for Board approval. Each Administrative Employee must reconcile their credit card statement monthly, and the Business Manager is to complete the entire Department's final reconciliation. Once the Department has the official completed credit card SOG, Chief Sidwell will sit with each Employee to explain and sign the SOG. The signed SOG will then be put into each Employees personnel file.

The Department is currently conducting our Annual District audit. The Department experienced a couple of hiccups. One was with acquiring information from BBVA since the sell to PNC Bank. Ms. Almasri visited BBVA Compass Bank to obtain new banker account information. They provided us the information required to pass on to our auditor, Jill Henze. Chief Sidwell is now added to the BBVA accounts.

Ms. Almasri is in the process of discussing the 2021 benefit rates with our District's Brokers for medical/dental/vision/Aflac/STD/LTD. The Department hopes to have those rates

/numbers by next month to begin negotiations on the best possible rates for our Department. The Brokers have been scheduled to come and assist all four (4) shifts during open enrollment. The Department will be conducting Benefit Open Enrollments in November for the 2022 Plan Year. The Admin Training Rooms have been scheduled in SharePoint to be blocked from Monday, November 1-4, 2021, starting at 10:00 a.m. All four (4) shifts will have the opportunity to come in and listen in to any plan changes, have their questions answered, enroll/make changes to their Benefits by our benefit carriers. The Department will need the Assistant Chiefs and Battalion Chiefs to make sure all shifts come in to attend and enroll. Please be aware that Aflac, STD, and LTD will be moving to a 1/1 Calendar Year.

TO RECEIVE AN EQUIPMENT, APPARATUS, AND FACILITIES REPORT AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION RELATED TO THE REPORT.

Chief Sidwell stated Rehab 3 is out of service with an injector problem and HUT 1 is out of service with a transmission issue.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND TAKE ACTION ON ANY NEEDED MAINTENANCE, REPLACEMENTS, AND IMPROVEMENTS RELATED TO THE OPERATION OF THE DISTRICT'S FIRE STATIONS, APPARATUS, OR EQUIPMENT.

Item tabled.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT REGARDING THE STATUS OF DISPATCHING THE DEPARTMENT TO CALLS FOR SERVICE BY WESTCOM.

Chief McAteer discussed the dispatching of the department calls for service to Westcom was a smooth transition.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF DISTRICT POLICIES, STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES, OR JOB DESCRIPTIONS.

Chief McAteer understood that it was common practice for the Department to have the Board and fire chief sign all District policies, standard operating guidelines, or job descriptions.

After discussion, Mr. **Henderson** made a motion to approve the Fire Chief to sign all District standard operating guidelines and policies except for the job descriptions. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND TAKE ACTION FOR THE SALE OR DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS AND/OR SALVAGE PROPERTY PURSUANT TO TEXAS HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE §775.251.

Chief Sidwell discussed the sale or disposal of surplus and/or salvage property pursuant to Texas Health and Safety Code §775.251. Quartermaster has a list of gear that needs to be decommissioned. This gear is either not repairable or has exceeded its life for the District, and no longer has a monetary value. The Department has attempted to donate to the Texas Forestry Service, but they are not taking any gear donations at this time. The Department has made contact with Daco Fire Equipment who has a donation route for Fire Departments in Mexico.

The Department is asking for Board approval to allow the gear to be donated through Daco Fire Equipment.

Chief Sidwell also discussed the 2007 Ford Expedition and requesting Board approval to send the vehicle to the GovDeals auction site. This is the last of the old expeditions for retirement and to set the reserve amount the same as the Department did the previous three (3) 2007 Expeditions.

Mr. **Fleming** made a motion to approve the donation of decommissioned gear to Daco Fire Equipment. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

Mr. **Solomon** made a motion to approve the 2007 Ford Expedition for sale at the GovDeals auction site. Mr. **Fleming** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

TO DISCUSS ANY NEW ITEMS WHICH NEED TO BE ON THE AGENDA FOR THE SUBSEQUENT DISTRICT MEETINGS AND APPROVE THE PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR THE BILL PAY MEETING TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M., AND THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M.

The Bill Pay meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

The Regular Monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE §551.071 TO CONSULT WITH LEGAL COUNSEL.

The Board entered Closed Session at 7:36 p.m. and returned to Open Session at 8:05 p.m.

TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE §551.072 TO DELIBERATE REGARDING REAL ESTATE MATTERS.

The Board did not exercise the option of Closed Session regarding real estate matters.

TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE §551.074 TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS.

The Board entered Closed Session at 6:53 p.m., with Chief Eric Bank and Chief McAteer. The Board concluded this closed session at 7:35 p.m., and continued in closed session pursuant to Government Code §551.071 to consult with legal counsel.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING ANY DISTRICT PERSONNEL MATTERS.

Following closed session, Mr. **Fleming** made a motion to proceed with a termination of the employment of the District's Assistant Chief of Operations as set forth in the District's

contract with Brett Ellis. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

Additionally, Mr. **Fleming** made another motion to compensate Assistant Chief Eric Bank at his internal hourly rate for all work performed at the hospital triage tent, which is being reimbursed by the Memorial Hermann Hospital System. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS, AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING DISTRICT REAL ESTATE MATTERS.

No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business brought before the Board nor any further public comment, Mr. **Henderson** made a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. Mr. **Solomon** seconded the motion. Chairman **Fossum** next called for a vote and the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

The foregoing minutes were passed and approved by the Board of Commissioners on October 20, 2021.



Russell Solomon
District Secretary