

ESD 8 Minutes June 30th 2014 at PFD Station One, 801 Bee Creek Road, Briarcliff, TX. 78669

ESD 8 Board Members Present: Russ Munsch, Gail Zahara, David Streilein, Karen Fromel, Kristy Quigley absent
Staff Present: Fire Chief Gerry Deming, ESD Manager Mike Claypool, Bruce Perkins, Zach Watts.

Call to Order by Board President Russ Munsch at 6:33 P.M.

OLD BUSINESS

- Secretary's Report: Mike Claypool had sent the minutes to Commissioners prior to the meeting. Motion by Mr. Streilein, second by Ms. Zahara to approve the minutes. Approval of minutes 4 -0.
- Treasurer's/ Manager's Financial Report: There will be a delay of one month approximately in the computation of the District 8 effective tax rate, which is necessary to know for developing the 2014-2015 budget and for setting the property tax rate. As a result, it is anticipated that the Board will be unable to meet on these matters for decision making purposes until early September. The reason for the delay in this annual process is due to the Travis County Commissioners challenging the methodology of property tax appraisals, which caused a substantial delay in property appraisals.
- Chief Deming stated the Strategic Plan is ready for presentation at the next Board meeting. A discussion ensued with the Board, and President Munsch, urging administration to develop a strategy for communicating with the public regarding issues facing ESD fire departments. Of special concern at this time are the extremely limited water resources for fighting fires. In particular, ESD's have a particular problem with water resources since they serve areas that are frequently outside piped water systems and have very limited funding to develop substantial sources of water. The result is that ESD 8 must promote public awareness and must recruit local communities to develop their own water resources for emergency services. Specifically, if local communities could put in place water storage tanks for their neighborhoods, it would greatly assist the department in fighting wildland and residential fires.
- The Chief informed the Board that he, together with Commissioner Zahara, had arranged for access to training facilities at the Highland Lakes Baptist Encampment in exchange for the donation of an approximately 15 year old Ford Explorer to the camp. Chief Deming explained that use of the camp training facilities would save money in training costs far in excess of the very limited value of the vehicle.
- Chief Deming and Mr. Claypool discussed the county unified fire service. It was stated that, After much review, the county has decided it cannot support a county wide fire department. It has recommended mergers of ESD's as the best means of strengthening them.
- Travis County has begun developing a network of fire monitors, that will be located in elevated location to detect quickly the outbreak of wild fires.
- Local 4820 firefighters union reported that they are working with the changes in health insurance, but that glitches still need to be worked out. President Mikeska stated that the union considers ESD 3/Oak Hill Fire Department to be the department most comparable to ESD 8/Pedernales Fire Department and would like the Board to strive for equivalent wages and benefits for our firefighters.

NEW BUSINESS

- President Munsch signed the interlocal agreement with Travis County that will supply \$12,00.00 for emergency services supplies to the Pedernales Fire Department.
- Chief Deming and Mr. Claypool recommended transferring \$4,500.00 from the Training budget to Information Technology for the purchase of new computers and printers mainly for stations 2 and 3. The Board voted 4-0 to approve this budget adjustment.
- Mr. Claypool announced that we are unable to refinance the mortgage on Station 1, due to the fact that the original mortgage has a “make whole” provision that requires an interest rate premium on the original, 20 year note. Currently, that amount would be over \$500,000.
- Administration recommended adoption of a Family Medical Coverage stipend, to supplement the base \$453 medical reimbursement. After discussion, Commissioner Streilein moved to make this stipend ½ of the base reimbursement, or a maximum of \$227 per month. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Zahara, and approved by a 4-0 vote.
- After research by Commissioner Streilein and the administration, a motion was made by Mr. Streilein to provide medical premium reimbursement for employees covered under their spouse’s medical insurance plan to a maximum of \$453/month. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Zahara and passed by a vote of 4-0.
- It was decided to hold the next meeting Tuesday, September 2nd at 6:30 PM. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM. An informal budget discussion will be held at 5:30 PM.