

TRAVIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 8

**Minutes
July 23, 2025**

A meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Travis County Emergency Services District No. 8 was held on **Wednesday, July 23, 2025, at 5:15 p.m.**, at Station 801, located at 801 Bee Creek Road, Spicewood, Texas 78669, for the following purposes:

1. Call meeting to order; Meeting called to order at 6 p.m.

Board Present in Person:

Debra Opdahl – President, Charles Valadez – Asst. Secretary/Treasurer, Bruce Goodhartz-Secretary, Becky Wynn – Treasurer

Board Absent:

Bruce Mills – Vice President

Also present in person:

Chief Tony Haden, Assistant Chief Tye Prange, Director of Administration Lynnette Courtney, Battalion Chief Matthew Montgomery, EMS Coordinator Clayton Blount, Chris Wood, Brian Storer, Craig Koenig, Jaden Cannaday, Kaleb Thomas and Executive Assistant Sheila Prince

2. Public Comment: Members of the public may speak for up to three (3) minutes regarding general topics or specific agenda items. In accordance with the Texas Attorney General's opinion, any public comment that is made on an item that is not on the published final agenda will only be heard by the Board of Commissioners. No formal action, discussion, deliberation, nor comment will be made by the Board of Commissioners;
3. Public Comment on Agenda items: Individual members of the public may address the Board for a maximum of three minutes per person per agenda item. Individuals may address the Board once per item. Members of the public will speak on agenda items before Board consideration of item. Members of the public who wish to speak on agenda items or make a public comment must complete speaker cards prior to the beginning of the Board meeting.

Discussion/Action Items

President Opdahl changed Agenda order moving to Item 7

Receive monthly President's report and consider taking actions.

On behalf of the ESD8 Board, President Opdahl acknowledged the members of the Department, both administration and crew, on their efforts to aid central Texas during the tragic Texas flooding

President Opdahl stated that our Department members are heroes and true public servants and that the Board is honored to be a part of the Fire Department. President Opdahl then called for a moment of silence for the families were impacted by this disaster.

President Opdahl stated she and Commissioner Mills will begin developing Board policies to bring to the Board for discussion and approval at future meetings.

4. Approval of Minutes of the 06/18/2025 Board meeting;

Commissioner Opdahl asked if there were any changes to the meeting minutes from the 6/18/2025 Board meeting. There being none, Commissioner Goodhartz made a motion to approve the 6/18/2025 Board meeting minutes. Commissioner Valadez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Receive report from Director of Administration and consider taking related action, including:

Director Courtney reviewed:

a) Approval of monthly bills, invoices, and checks, including processing of payroll;

- Aflac
- Amcheck
- Amazon
- AT&T
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- ESO Solutions
- FGMArchitects
- Humana
- Impact Promotional Services
- Lake Travis Fire Rescue
- Medac & Oltman, LLP
- MES
- NAFECO
- On Demand Leadership
- PEC
- Total Safety US Inc
- Travis County Appraisal
- Travis County Emergency Services
- TCDRS
- Vector Solutions

b) Approval of financial report;

- Revenue
- Property Tax
- Sales Tax
 - The sales tax collection is slightly down. The executive staff will keep an eye on these sales figures and keep the Board apprised of any changes.
- Expenses
 - Upcoming invoices expected
 - Training gear has been ordered, and the invoice amount will be around \$56,000.00 which is a budgeted item
 - FGMArchitects Invoice is expected for \$53,000.00, which is part of the sealed bid that was approved by the Board of Commissioners.
- Cash Accounts
- Capital Assets

c) Review and approve quarterly investment report; and

- TexPool General Fund
 - Investment Value
 - Interest Earned
- TexPool Sales Tax Fund
 - Investment Value
 - Interest Earned.

Commissioner Opdahl asked for a motion to approve all bills, invoices, checks, and payroll, including all expenses exceeding \$2,000.00 for the month ending June 30, 2025, and approval of the financial report ending June 2025 along with the investment reports. The motion was made by Commissioner Wynn and seconded by Commissioner Goodhartz. The motion passed unanimously

d) Discuss and consider taking related action on refinancing Station 801.

- Resolution for financing purchase of Station 801 with Republic First National

Corporation (KS State Bank)

- Discuss and consider taking related action on debt service rate

No related action taken.

6. Review, discuss and consider taking action on special projects.

Chief Haden reviewed:

a) Explorer Post

- Lt Matt Brown and FF Danny Hill are involved with Jesus DeLuna- TCESD6
- Program launches August 21,2025
- 18 interested candidates
 - PFD has training gear for the candidates to use during the program

b) Briarcliff ETJ Project

- Developing a map to identify landowners
- Will get the Local 4820 involved in determining ways to help our constituents to join the ETJ.

Commissioner Valadez reported that the Mayor of Briarcliff is engaged in this project.

7. Receive monthly President's report and consider taking actions.

See above

8. Update, Discuss and/or take appropriate action on merging with other ESD's.

a) Includes quarterly update from ESD employees

Chief Haden reported:

The next employee update will be in September.

We are still working on our top three items (District Finances, Pension Options, and Labor items).

- Still waiting on data from both pension plans

Commissioner Valadez expressed concern about the pension plans for older employees who have invested and are ready to retire in the coming years.

Chief Haden assured the Board that all avenues are being researched and as soon as the data is available, it will be shared with staff and Board. Chief Haden also reminded the Board that we continue to explore merger options with the understanding and expectation that department staff and the Board will ensure that none of our employees are harmed in the outcome.

Chief Haden, AC Prange, Director Courtney, and the ESD8 President and Vice President met with the ESD8 General Council on July 8, 2025.

- Steps taken so far
- Advise us on government code issues that could impact a a potential merger.
- Different levels of sharing resources up to a full merger.

Debra Opdahl expressed concern about communication between individual Board members and employees as it pertains to merger discussions, stating that employees should go through th chain of command or the 4820 President for any fire department business or projects

Commissioner Goodhartz requested that the General Council be available to update the rest of the Board

on all items discussed and findings. Director Courtney will contact our General Council and set a BOC Meeting date for an update sometime in the fall.

9. Update, Discuss and/or take appropriate action on Strategic Planning.

Chief Haden reported:

Chief Haden, AC Prange and Director Courtney met with Citygate Associates, our vendor, to discuss the contract and expectations of service.

A follow-up meeting was then held with Commissioner Wood (ESD16) and Commissioner Goodhartz (ESD8).

The contract is now being finalized by our legal counsel.

ESD8 Commissioner Goodhartz expressed satisfaction with the vendor choice as he considers that the Texas-based company has a solid foundation and believes in team work along with strategy.

ESD16 Commissioner Woods expressed satisfaction with the quality of the end product for now and the future.

10. Identify, prioritize and consider taking action on strategic management activities, including:

Chief Haden reported:

a) Department relations with district entities.

- Oak Hill Academy Ride Outs - Continuing this month.
- We are monitoring the developments in the district, with no updates to share this month.

b) Legislative update.

The first Special Session began on July 21, 2025. Special Sessions can last up to 30 days.

Watching:

SB19: deals with the ability for a government to utilize lobbying.

Financial Changes from regular session:

- Competitive Bids are now required for items over \$100K, up from the \$50K limit.
- Raising the limit on Board approval items from \$2k to \$50k. This increase is entirely at the ESD Board's discretion and will be discussed at a future Board meeting.

11. Receive monthly Fire Chief report and consider taking appropriate actions;

Asst. Chief Prange reported:

c) Emergency operations, response times, call volume;

- 100 total calls
 - 63 medical
 - Response on non-EMS Calls 7m:34s
 - 7 Fires
 - Barton Creek Lakeside propane grill left overnight. Crews made a great stop
 - New Reporting software will hopefully capture data for not just property lost, but also property saved.
- Crews assisted with searches in ESD1, Burnet County, and CenterPoint
 - Danny Hill volunteered with CenterPoint and became a lead organizing searches and activities along with the Cajun Navy.
 - Drowning in Briarcliff

- Jaden Cannaday reported that the Department is being nominated for a Rescue award from Paratech due to being able to recover the body of a drowning victim while the lake was flooding.

Chief Haden congratulated those that responded for their use of equipment, skills, and valor to accomplish the recovery.

d) Training; Management activities, personnel, amendments to budget FY 2024/2025, community impact, 801 remodel updates; and Apparatus needs.

- New Hires:
 - 42 people applied, 37 people were evaluated and interviewed, 12 were brought back for further interviews, and 5 people will be hired, starting August 11.
- 15-yr old cardiac survival patient from Highland Lakes Baptist Camp visited A-Shift crews last week.
- Promotional Process
 - All candidates passed all portions.
 - Jude Henry will be promoted to Engineer on 7/28.

Chief Haden addressed the room and congratulated all staff and crew who volunteered during the tragic flood stating he was proud of the Departments response and crews' heroic efforts in recoveries of the victims throughout the counties.

BC Montgomery presented the training report:

- 6 TCFP Certifications
- 3 firefighters are attending General Rescuer
- 442 hours of training logged
- 20 inquired to attend ACC for the fall semester.
- 3 members inquired about higher level education
- Continued collaboration with regional higher education institutes to improve visibility during recruitment.
- West Side 5 to assist in maintaining ReSet delivery

Chief Haden reported on Management activities, personnel, budget, community impact

- Management Activities
 - Finalizing department budget
 - Continuing to work on finalizing the next FY budget to present to the board on July 30, 2025.
- Regional assistance
 - Administrative Staff were heavily involved in providing assistance to the region during the flooding events
 - AC Prange EOC in TCESD1
 - Director Courtney organized Tania Glenn's office for MFAVFD, and assisting with FEMA documentation
 - BC Montgomery served as our department's EOC rep for the Tri-City EOC activation and assisted in coordinating our resources Community Organizations
 - Meeting with community groups that can help us to serve people in the community in

unique ways that our department is not set up to handle. The goal is to create a usable resource list for our crews to help connect our residents to the best possible resource for their needs.

- Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)
 - The CWPP kick off meeting was earlier this week. TCESD8 participated and will be involved in this Travis County led workgroup.
- Personnel
 - Hiring Process
 - All five uniform employee vacancies will be filled.
 - One new paramedic
 - August 11 start date
 - Engineer Promotional Process
 - All four candidates passed all stages of the testing process.
 - Jude Henry was the top candidate and will be promoted on Monday July 28, 2025, to Engineer.
 - 801 Remodel Update
 - Received Design Development plans. The team will be on site on 7/28 to review. Construction Documents are still on schedule for September.
- Apparatus
 - Boat 801 options – will be addressed during July 30, 2025, Budget Workshop

11. Review, discuss and consider taking related action on CAB Policy.

In response to Board direction at the June 18, 2025 Board Meeting, Chief Haden reviewed the items in the packet with the board and the discussed progress that has been made in the new draft of the CAB document. A final version is expected to be ready for board approval at the August 2025 regular meeting. Chief Haden invited Jaden Cannaday from Local 4820 to discuss the labor perspective on the document and the work that has been done between Local 4820 and Chief Haden's staff on the update.

Jaden Cannaday informed the Board the 4820 association needed more time to make changes. No Action taken.

12. Receive report from Pedernales Association of Firefighters regarding fundraising efforts, social and membership events, and unresolved issues discussed at the Chief/Association/Board (aka "CAB") Committee meeting;

Jaden Cannaday reported.

- Ongoing review of CAB Policy
- 4820 is interested in merger talks and will be sending out a survey for feedback from crews.
- Ongoing creation of a Fitness/Wellness Policy

13. Receive monthly report from the District's attorney regarding pending litigation matters, contract issues, and legislative efforts and consider taking related actions;

Tabled

14. Discuss and consider taking action regarding 2025-2026 budget and setting proposed tax rate.

Director Courtney reviewed the tax planning calendar and advised that the purple route be used if the District plans to adopt the tax rate that exceeds the voter approval rate but does not exceed the de minimis rate and requires the District to adopt its budget and tax rate by August 25, 2025, and no election is required.

The Board discussed tax rate, community growth and development.

Commissioner Wynn made a motion to adopt the purple process of the Tax Planning Calendar and budget planning calendar for 2025 and authorize payment of tax process publications, and any related action. Commissioner Goodhartz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

15. Discuss and consider meeting dates regarding 2025-2026 budget planning and proposed tax rate.
 - A budget workshop will be held on Wednesday, July 30, 2025 at 10am.
 - Special meeting will be held on August 5, 2025, at 10:15am
 - Regular Board meeting will be held on August 20, 2025, at 5:15pm
16. Discuss and consider taking action on the Chief's Performance Plan and Goals.
 - The board exited regular session at 7:37pm
 - The board entered executive session at 7:40pm
 - The board exited executive session at 8:36pm and entered regular session at 8:37pm.
 - No action was taken during executive session.
17. Discuss agenda, time, and date for next meeting; and
 - Budget Workshop will be held on Wednesday July 30th, 2025, at 10 am at 801 Bee Creek Road Briarcliff, Texas 78669
 - Special Session will be held on August 5, 2025, at 10:15 am at 801 Bee Creek Road Briarcliff, Texas 78669
 - Regular Session will be held on August 20, 2025, at 5:15 pm at 801 Bee Creek Road Briarcliff, Texas 78669
18. Adjourn. 8:38 pm



Bruce Goodhartz, Secretary
Travis County ESD #8