

**MEDINA COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICT #1
PO BOX 1037
CASTROVILLE, TEXAS 78009**

MINUTES

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2022, 9:00AM

Hearing on Tax Rate and the Vote on Budget and Tax Rate

Location: Courtroom of the Medina County Sub Courthouse at Precinct 2, 8366 FM 471 S, Castroville, TX

I. OPEN MEETING:

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL:

President Marvin Dziuk called the meeting to order at 9:00AM, and established a quorum with Board Vice President Rodney Hitzfelder, Board Treasurer Terry Beck, Board Assistant Treasurer Jenny Ferren, and Board Secretary Tom Page present. MCESD1 Fire Chief Clinton Cooke, District Administrator Polly Eclud, and Administrative Assistant Lori Stein were also in attendance.

1 - A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

President Dziuk requested all in attendance to rise, face the United States flag and then the State of Texas flag and pledge their allegiance to each, respectively. President Dziuk thanked all for their loyal and patriotic participation.

With no citizens present at the meeting, President Dziuk moved to open the hearing and leave the hearing open while the board discussed item 2. Budget Workshop, leaving the hearing open longer to allow any late arriving citizens to attend the hearing. The Board concurred.

II. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. OPEN HEARING ON THE MCESD1 PROPOSED 2022-2023 BUDGET and TAX RATE:

1 - A. Welcome Citizens and Review Comment Procedures:

At 9:03AM, President Dziuk opened the tax hearing on MCESD1 discussion by thanking everyone present for coming and noted that the decisions that will be made are not easy ones since the Board Commissioners are stewards of public funds. He noted that everyone may have differing opinions on how those funds could be used, but that everyone here agrees that the monies should be used wisely and for the betterment of the public.

2. BUDGET WORKSHOP

2 - A. MCESD1 BUDGET SUMMATION, FINAL DISCUSSIONS ON PROPOSED BUDGET and PROPOSED TAX RATE FOR 2022-2023 BUDGET:

The budget workshop opened with the subject of what standards the Board desires for the district. Chief Cooke distributed a copy of NFPA 1720 that would provide standardized requirements for effective and efficient organization and deployment of Fire and EMS operations to the public as a guide. Chief Cooke explained the difference between the different NFPA guidelines.

Commissioner Beck began with a question; 'What level of service can the district provide?' Chief Cooke responded that currently the services being provided are adequate, but with room for improvement. The improvement needed could be started with the request for 4 additional paid firefighters that would provide leadership/mentorship with the large influx of new volunteers that have minimal training. Also, most of the volunteers do not live within easy reach of their current stations. Having the extra paid personnel would help relieve the strain of needing volunteers and increase safety during calls. Commissioner Hitzfelder requested the additional four paid personnel be placed on a probationary basis, to ensure a good fit. Discussion continued in detail about the logistics of scheduling four additional paid personnel and Chief Cooke's recommendations.

Commissioner Beck steered the discussion toward a prior exchange in correspondence between he and Fire Chief Cooke. He noted that he never intended his e-mail content (words) to be taken 'personal', he just felt a more detailed breakdown of the proposed payroll budget for the coming year was required. He wanted to see the entire hiring package itemized, not just salaries in a budget, and he felt these discussions should be conducted in a meeting with the full board present to discuss the topic. He had a fiduciary responsibility as a board member and he was only trying to do his due diligence.

Commissioner Ferren had requested information from Chief Cooke regarding the salaries for the top-ranking operational structure: Deputy Chief, Lieutenants, and the new proposed EMS Asst. Chief. She placed the detailed information in a visual

spreadsheet to show MCESD#1 Commissioners a comprehensive salary package comparison of each proposed top ranking operational staff. The Commissioners appreciated her efforts and thanked her for the informative spreadsheets.

The board continued discussions regarding the request for a paid Deputy Chief of Operations position, and a new budget position for an EMS Chief. If granted, the Deputy Chief of Operations would relieve some of the day-to-day workload of the Fire Chief and allow the Chief to work on projects of a larger scope within the district. Other personnel topics covered were the funding needed to search for an EMS Director, the budgeting process for discussing administrative pay increases, and new capital budget items. The need for swift water equipment and how it would potentially be paid for was highlighted by Commissioner Hitzfelder. While swift water response is not often needed in the district, the ability to respond to it is necessary. Commissioner Page questioned the cost of radios. Chief Cooke explained, in order to operate joint scenes with Bexar County, a dual band radio is needed, and current prices are remarkably high for these units; although, options are being looked at for future purchases. There was also discussion of making sure telephone costs are kept to a minimum. Commissioner Ferrer asked if the accident and sickness insurance policy, currently carried by Mico VFD, would be taken over by the MCESD#1 once the new budget year begins. Chief Cooke had budgeted funds for it; however, no current proposal or estimates for the policy were available. Information was still being collected for insurance companies to provide estimates.

1 - B. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

At this point in the meeting President Dziuk moved to allow any citizens present to make comments. There were none.

2. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING:

President Dziuk closed the public tax hearing at 9:34AM.

III. RECONVENE IN REGULAR MEETING OPEN SESSION:

1. OPEN MEETING: CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL:

President Marvin Dziuk reconvened the open meeting at 9:35AM, and established a quorum with Board Vice President Rodney Hitzfelder, Board Treasurer Terry Beck, Board Assistant Treasurer Jenny Ferrer, and Board Secretary Tom Page present. MCESD1 Fire Chief Clinton Cooke, District Administrator Polly Edlund, and Administrative Assistant Lori Stein were also in attendance.

3. MCESD1 BUDGET 2022-2023 – DISCUSSION, ACTION, and RESOLUTION OF ACCEPTANCE:

President Dziuk asked if there were any other budget discussions needed, and at the conclusion of all discussions he requested a motion for the adoption of a resolution of acceptance to approve the proposed 2022-2023 budget. Treasurer Beck moved to accept the 2022-2023 proposed budget as presented. Commissioner Hitzfelder seconded his motion and the motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

4. MCESD1 TAX RATE(S) - DISCUSSION, ACTION, and RESOLUTION OF ACCEPTANCE:

President Dziuk then called for a vote to approve the proposed 2022 tax rate. All new rates were reviewed one final time along with proposed property tax revenues within the budget. Last year's rate was stated as .0896. Commissioner Beck moved that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.0900/\$100 valuation, which is effectively a 15.83 percent increase in the tax rate. (The percentage by which the tax rate exceeds the no-new revenue rate). Commissioner Hitzfelder seconded his motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

District Administrator, Polly Edlund, would make sure the proper wording required by the State was included in the official resolution; 'This tax rate will raise more taxes for maintenance and operations than last year's tax rate and the tax rate will effectively be raised by 15.83 percent and will raise taxes for maintenance and operations on a \$100,000 home by approximately \$0.40 (cents), and would make sure the Medina County Tax Office received the information.

5. NEW BUSINESS – INTRODUCTION OF ANY NEW BUSINESS:

5 - A. SET NEXT MONTH'S MEETING(S) – September 14, 2022

The next proposed regular meeting of MCESD1 will be at 7:00pm on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, in the Courtroom of the Medina County Sub Courthouse at Precinct 2, 8366 FM 471 S, Castroville, TX. Exact date and time will be confirmed when the agenda is posted.

5 - B. Contracts:

President Dziuk wanted to ensure that discussions about the transition are happening, and that the contracts with the VFDs were moving forward. The Board agreed the contracts needed a few modifications, and President Dziuk requested plain simple wording, and contain definitive response structure wording within the modified agreements.

6. ADJOURN (MOTION):

Commissioner Beck moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Page seconded his motion, and the motion passed with a 4-0 vote. President Dziuk adjourned the meeting at 11:28AM.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



POLLY EDLUND

MCESD1 PRESIDENT



MARVIN DZIUK