

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

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022, 7:00PM

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

1. OPEN MEETING:

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL:

President Marvin Dziuk called the meeting to order at 7:01pm, and established a quorum with Board Vice President Rodney Hitzfelder, Board Treasurer Terry Beck, Board Secretary Tom Page, and Board Assistant Treasurer Jenny Ferren present. Fire Chief Clinton Cooke, District Administrator Polly Edlund, and District Analyst Ronda McNew were also in attendance. Additional attendees were Deputy Chief of Operations Jamie Esquivel, Station 12 Captain Felipe Garcia, Lieutenant Ian Zabel, Battalion Chief Joe Wells, Station 11 Captain Jarrett Ferris, Mico 501c3 Board Secretary Linda Garcia, and interested MCESD1 citizen Doris Jungman.

1 – A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and ANY SPECIAL GUESTS/RECOGNITION(S):

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.

2. CONCERNED CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None.

3. ADMINISTRATION - DISCUSSIONS & RESOLUTIONS/ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

3 – A – 1. MINUTES, RESOLUTION OF ACCEPTANCE – (November)

Commissioner Hitzfelder moved to accept the November meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Page seconded his motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

3 – A – 2. Treasurer's Report - FINANCIAL REPORTS and APPROVAL FOR PAYING BILLS and APPROPRIATE TRANSFERS:

Chief Cooke reviewed and explained the various QuickBooks reporting formats for financial reports for the Board, budget verses actuals, actual checkbook activity (deposits and checks remitted), and the actual total funds in all bank accounts. Chief Cooke gave an overview on estimated surplus reserves, after open purchase orders had been accounted for. He and Administrator Edlund made recommendations to place surplus funds into new CDs, since banks had recently offered increased CD rates, at higher rates than current money market accounts offered through the depository agreement. After much discussion, Commissioner Ferren moved to place up to \$500,000 (from the \$3.0M amount that is completely unencumbered in financial institutions) into a twenty-month certificate of deposit (CD), and place \$2.3 M, the amount necessary to cover the new apparatus purchase orders, into a six-month CD. Tabling further action on the remaining surplus reserves until next month and giving the Board time to watch the market. Commissioner Hitzfelder seconded the motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

As a part of the discussion about the District's funds, Commissioner Hitzfelder noted that the District should investigate hiring a financial advisor or dedicated investment officer. District Administrator Edlund stated that an investment officer/advisor was a requirement per the ESD's 775 statute. Chief Cooke informed the Board that he had spoken to two firms and will bring proposals to the Board for consideration.

3 – A – 3. SALES TAX REPORTS (December/YTD):

Chief Cooke stated that the sales tax deposit for December was flat, one of the lower deposits seen in several months; however, there is no real concern at this point. Sales tax revenue was still up 13.05% overall over the same period from 2021-2022 collections. The current year's budget was based on a 6% increase. Commissioner Ferren asked Administrator Edlund to make sure the full December Sales Tax Report, with the detailed analysis, gets sent out to the finance committee for review.

3 – A – 4. CONTRACTED SERVICE PROVIDERS – REPORTING REQUIREMENTS and QUARTERLY FINANCIALS:

Chief Cooke reported that two of the three 501c3s had approved new by-laws. This week the LaCoste VFD 501c3 Board adopted new by-laws and restructured the 501c3 Board to be comprised of three members, two current ESD commissioners and a community citizen member. The LaCoste 501c3 representation nominated David Mangold as their community citizen representative and asked the MCESD#1 to appoint both Mr. Mangold and the two ESD Commissioners to the new LaCoste

501c3 board. They further recommended the MCESD#1 consider making the appointment of one ESD Commissioner being the current ESD Commissioner representing the LaCoste area. The outgoing members of the LaCoste 501c3 Board had strong concerns that the ESD Commissioner appointed to represent the LaCoste Board member, would have their best interests if it were an ESD Commissioner representing the LaCoste area on the ESD Board. Ms. Edlund explained that the Board would approve the representation as an action item at the January 2023 meeting of the MCESD#1 Board, and each year to follow. The MCESD#1 Commissioners would be sworn in, new ESD committee members selected, and 501c3 appointments approved; all in January each year. Commissioner Hitzfelder's concerns were what would constitute a quorum (two members), could any critical action be taken if only two of the three representatives were in attendance, and if MCESD1 staff would be handling the administrative work for the 501c3 Board. Ms. Edlund and Chief Cooke addressed Commissioner Hitzfelder's concerns, and those provisions had been placed within the by-laws.

District Administrator Edlund noted it was her understanding that the Mico 501c3 had also approved by-laws, and while she had not received a copy for review, ESD Commissioner Ferren was currently on that Board. It was noted that the ESD Commissioner on that board may not be a requirement within those new by-laws.

Chief Cooke reported on the status of the Bexar County ESD#7 contract. This department will now be contracted to provide both EMS and Fire services starting in 2023 for that coverage area. He was waiting on the signed document.

4. COMMITTEE/STAFF REPORTS - DISCUSSIONS and POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

4 – A. FACILITIES and FINANCE COMMITTEE – STATION CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS – COMMITTEE UPDATES:

4 – A – 1. MCESD1 LaCoste North Station – A&E Site Planning Project Updates:

Chief Cooke reported receiving a proposed set of drawings/plans from the architect in the past week. The Dockery Architectural Firm sent; Chief Cooke, Commissioner Page, and Commissioner Hitzfelder a tentative timeline and requested permission to begin preparing bidding and construction documents. When questioned by Treasurer Beck on projected cost estimates for the project, Commissioner Hitzfelder noted that the estimated cost of the LaCoste North Station could be approximately \$5.5M without FF&E, and that any utilities situations were resolved – CenterPoint - gas provider, CPS – electrical provider, City of LaCoste – water/sewer provider, and the extensions for services had been discussed. The projected project estimate included a 15% contingency. Chief Cooke remarked his research on cost estimates while at a recent chief's conference of between \$600 - \$700 per sq. ft, with the highest reported estimate at \$822 per sq. ft. Commissioner Hitzfelder remarked that the construction acreage currently is planted in wheat and the farmer anticipates a May harvest. Chief Cooke will notify Dockery et al to proceed with the necessary documents.

5. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORTS – DISCUSSIONS and POSSIBLE ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

Chief Cooke discussed the Chief's Report. Below are items from the report and communiques addressed during the MCESD1 meeting.

5 – A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – PROJECT UPDATES:

Administration:

- Chief Cooke continued to work on policies and guidelines.
- Chief Cooke worked with Architect on finalizing the plans for the LaCoste Station rebuild.
- Chief Cooke continued to work to improve the dispatch system for Fire/EMS. The 911 Board has published an RFP to purchase updated software that will be funded by a grant.
- Chief Cooke noted that the scheduling platform is live, and volunteers are signing up to ride shifts.

Operations:

- Chief Cooke presented a FirePrograms generated Incident Report by Incident Type – Summary (85-total incidents – 20-incident types) and the Department Response Time by District and individual stations – turnout time and travel time noted in minutes. Chief Cooke noted an increase in the number of traffic accidents.
- Commissioner Page reported that TX DoT 'roughened up the pavement' in the FM 1283/Red Wing Road area, following reported concerns.
- Chief Cooke excitedly noted that the average response time was reduced to under ten minutes for the first time; down from an average of twenty-two minutes a year ago.
- Chief Cooke stated that the District had forty-three firefighters actively responding to incidents across the District with an average of over four personnel per incident.
- Chief Cooke reported that fifty-five firefighters participated in over 800-hours of combined training. This 'in house' academy also includes the bookwork completed as part of our fire academy.
- Chief Cooke stated that two firefighters at the off-site fire academy (Sulphur Springs) are completing their skills. This is separate from the in-house academy.

Insurance Services Office (ISO):

- Chief Cooke has requested an audit from ISO, currently waiting on an audit date.

- Chief Cooke is confident that there will be a positive increase across the District for any house within five miles of a fire station. The longer they wait to do the actual audit, the better the District's outcome, more Firefighters/Trucks.

EMS:

- Chief Cooke reported that there were no significant updates for EMS. However, the district's newly hired Lieutenants were all medically trained.

Status of District Assets:

- Chief Cooke noted that all stations and apparatuses are functioning to their capacity. The District is still in discussion with the insurance company concerning the apparatus that caught on fire, BT8110. The District chose Siddons as their cooperative purchasing apparatus vendor. Siddons is working with the insurance to obtain signed documents and compatible dollar amounts to acquire a chassis. The skid unit will be a remount for this vehicle repair.
- Chief Cooke stated that the District is looking for a stock brush truck to purchase with the vehicle grant. Although this brush truck will be funded in the range of \$110,000 to \$130,000 by the Mico 501c3 grant from the Texas Forest Service, Chief Cooke anticipates that the District will have to spend more than the grant funding to purchase the brush truck.
- Commissioner Page requested an update on the Polaris ATV purchase. Chief Cooke stated the Polaris' slow construction is a result of the supply line delays. Chief Cooke noted that a trailer for the Polaris was needed. The purchase of a trailer will be used for the ATV, and the district's maintenance of stations. The District will no longer use a contracted lawn service. In lieu of the lawn service, the District has purchased a zero-turn radius mower and all the other necessary equipment to maintain the outside areas at the various stations. The ATV trailer will also be used to move the lawn care equipment to the different stations as needed.

Recruitment:

- Chief Cooke reported the District stopped all active recruitment due to the large recruitment class currently in their basic training. Chief Cooke noted that more certified personnel are also asking to become part of this department.

Additional Activities:

Chief Cooke had many discussions and meetings with station chief officers and other individuals regarding the operation of the District. A listing of notable activities included:

- Attended County Commissioner Court meetings.
- Multiple discussions with chief officers from the District's stations.
- Employment offers and conditional hiring process completed for Lieutenants. All five career Lieutenants are hired, and recently placed on duty.
- Attended meetings with the City of Castroville police department to continue strengthening the relationship between the organizations.
- Discussions with legal counsel on contract discussions.
- Met with neighboring Chief officers to ensure a common direction for the County.
- Responded to multiple incidents across the district and county.
- Will be meeting with local nursing homes about standard policies, especially lift assistance expectations.

Public Education and Outreach:

- Chief Cooke stated Fire Fighter Melissa Bailey volunteered to lead/organize the District's public relation activities. Firefighter Bailey is currently involved with the 'Santa on a Truck' community service activities.
- Chief Cooke reported that the District participated in multiple community events; however, he continues to seek more tangible interaction documentation of the number of citizens reached.

5 – B. RUN REPORTS – MCESD1 DISTRICT WIDE AND CONTRACTED SERVICE PROVIDER'S FIRE/EMS:

Chief Cooke noted that there are more medical responses on the fire call reports. Most volunteers or career firefighters are EMT trained, and if the current medic unit is on a call, representatives of the fire department will respond to the incident assuring that the person in need received assistance until a medic unit arrives. Chief Cooke stated that it is important to the residents of MCESD1 to know that someone will show up at the emergency scenes when needed and to respond quickly.

5 – C. CONSIDER and APPROVE NEW AND/OR AMENDED POLICIES:

Chief Cooke presented two new policies for the Board's approval, Policy P-027, Professional Development (a formal process for the development up the chain of command from probationary firefighter to the rank of Fire Chief); and Policy P-028, Tobacco/Nicotine Use (revised). Commission Beck moved to accept the policies as presented or amended. Commissioner Ferren seconded his motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

5 – D. CONSIDER NEW BILLING AGREEMENT WITH FIRE RECOVERY USA:

Upon reviewing prior history of the District, Chief Cooke determined that the District approved an agreement to begin billing insurance companies for certain emergency incidents in 2019. However, after the approval from the ESD Board, there was limited action taken to begin the process. Due to no billable activity by the District, the account with Fire Recovery USA was closed; but Chief Cooke contacted Fire Recovery USA and obtained a new copy of the service agreement. The service agreement gives options for what to bill and to what extent. Chief Cooke recommended that MCESD1 seek recovered funds for the following incidents: motor vehicle accidents, vehicle fires, and structure fires. As part of the system, MCESD1 will elect which incidents to send to billing allowing the District discretion at times depending on the specifics around the incident. Chief Cooke briefly review the incidents from January – November 2022 and determined that there were seventy incidents that could be sent to billing. Payment to Fire Recovery USA is a percentage of the amount of money recouped from the insurance companies for the billable incidents. Commissioner Page moved to proceed with the Fire Recovery USA agreement as presented. Commissioner Beck seconded his motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

6. MASTER PLANNING/NEEDS ASSESSMENT/STRATEGIC PLANS/DISCUSSION and ACTIONS ON:

6 – A. PLANNING, LAND ACQUISITION(S), FUTURE STATIONS, DONATIONS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and OTHER FINANCIAL MASTER PLANNING RELATED ISSUES – Any Updates:

Nothing new to report. The item was tabled.

7. OLD BUSINESS (Now changed UNFINISHED BUSINESS – DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

Commissioner Page inquired if there were any updates on the renovations at Station 10 annex. Chief Cooke stated that the District had tabled any renovation discussions for the present.

8. NEW BUSINESS – INTRODUCTION OF ANY NEW BUSINESS:

8 - A. SET NEXT MONTH'S MEETING(s) – January 11, 2023:

The next proposed regular meeting of MCESD1 will be at 7:00pm on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, in the Courtroom of the Medina County Sub Courthouse at Precinct 2, 8366 FM 471 S, Castroville, TX. The exact date and time will be confirmed when the agenda is posted.

8 – B. COMMISSIONER REAPPOINTMENTS:

District Administrator Edlund noted that the commissioner reappointments are on the Commissioners' Court Agenda of the December 15, 2022, meeting.

8 – C. ANNUAL APPRECIATION BANQUET:

The MCESD#1 had approved an annual banquet to be held each year. Administrative Staff understood the importance of the annual event; however, no date had been determined, and Administration staff needed additional time to plan for such an event. No action was taken.

SAFE-D 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

SAFE-D's 2023 Annual Conference, Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, 3001 Kalahari Blvd., Round Rock, Thursday, February 2 – Saturday, February 4, 2023. District Administrator Edlund confirmed rooms at the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center for Chief Cooke, Chief Esquivel, Commissioner Ferren, Commissioner Beck, Commissioner Page, and District Administrator Edlund. Registrations would be made soon to meet the early January deadline.

9. 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 8:12pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,


POLLY EDLUND

MCESD1 PRESIDENT


MARVIN DZIUK