

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

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 2023, 7:00PM

Meeting 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 7:02pm, and established a quorum with Board Vice President Rodney Hitzfelder, Board Secretary Tom Page, Board Treasurer Terry Beck, and Board Assistant Treasurer Jenny Ferren present. Fire Chief Clinton Cooke, Randall F. Parr - District Investment Officer, District Administrator Polly Edlund, and District Analyst Ronda McNew were also in attendance. Additional attendees were MCESD1 Assistant Chief Sarah Windsor, MCESD1 Captain Jarrett Ferris, Lieutenant Ian Zabel, Lieutenant Ben Hicks, MCESD1 Firefighters Natasha Hernandez, Damion DeLeon, Brandon Sanchez, Zane Maurer, Colt Strickland, Kevin Cody, volunteer Firefighter/medic Xochitl Scott, and MCESD1 citizen Doris Jungman.

1 – A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO UNITED STATES AND TEXAS FLAG:

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.

1 – B. INVOCATION:

Chief Cooke led the assembly in prayer thanking the Lord for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Medina County, His blessings on the Board and that the decisions to be made will be fiscally responsible and pleasing to Him. He asked the Lord to keep His hand on the firefighters and keep them safe.

1 – C. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUEST(S) / RECOGNITION(S):

President Dziuk asked Chief Cooke to do the introduction of special guest, Randall F. Parr, the district's investment officer, to the Board and meeting attendees. Mr. Parr resides in the Houston area and maintains an accounting practice focusing on non-profit companies and the technical aspects of taxation thereof. President Dziuk welcomed Mr. Parr to the meeting and thanked him for making the trip.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None.

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

3 – A. MINUTES, RESOLUTION of ACCEPTANCE – (May)

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

3 – B. TREASURER'S REPORT - FINANCIAL REPORTS, APPROVAL FOR PAYING BILLS, and APPROPRIATE TRANSFERS:

Chief Cooke reviewed the May 2023 Finance Report that was presented to members of the Board in meeting materials. The report detailed the budget versus actuals showing all the fiscal year-to-date transactions listed by chart of accounts categories, listed all transfers, deposits, and remittances, and a summary of all account balances. Chief Cooke noted that the District is eight months or 66.67% into the current fiscal year and on track with budget and he is comfortable with the current monetary position. The District has received billing revenue of \$8,414 YTD for motor vehicle collections and structure fires with an additional \$3,000 received in June that is not reflected in Chief Cooke's report.

Commissioner Hitzfelder moved to accept the May treasurer's report as emailed to members of the Board and presented in meeting materials. Commissioner Beck seconded his motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

3 – C. SALES TAX REPORTS (May/YTD):

Chief Cooke noted that the May Report was in the Board's folder. June 2023 net sales tax deposit total was \$297,387 and is tracking 9.91% over the 2022 sales tax totals for the same period. Chief Cooke stated that specific vendors had moved up on the Sales Tax Report, specifically vendor #1 and #4 and presently these two were among the larger sales tax contributors. When asked about additional details on sales tax contributors, District Administrator Edlund stated that the confidential,

detailed report had been emailed to Board members, and if there were any vendor specific questions to please call the office to discuss those in more detail. Chief Cooke notified the board that negotiations with the contractor had taken place prior to the startup of the larger construction project to make sure sales tax dollars were coded to the site address.

3 – D. DISCUSSION AND APPROVE INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS and SETUP FOR NEW INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS:

President Dziuk called upon Finance Committee Commissioner Ferren to report on the new investment account setup. Commissioner Ferren directed the meeting to the Investment Officer, Mr. Randall Parr to give his investment report prior to starting any board discussions. Mr. Parr distributed to the members of the Board a copy of his monthly 'Investment Report, Authorization and Review' for the period from May 1, 2023, to May 31, 2023, for the Board's information and review. Mr. Parr reviewed the funds listed and how and what accounts the funds are deposited into (investment pools and Certificates of Deposit and Money Market Accounts) and the current interest rate the invested funds were yielding. Following the presentation of the monthly investment report by Mr. Parr, Commissioner Ferren presented her proposed bank account restructure recommendation, prepared by Commissioner Ferren, in conjunction with discussions she had held with finance committee members, and after meetings with the local banking institutes. The new bank account restructuring was a compilation of many conversations and inputs. Commissioner Ferren recommended compressing accounts, investing surplus funds to achieve better interest rates on local bank's investment accounts by utilizing the local bank's agreement to match TX Pool rates monthly, and moving the operating account and a new payroll account into interest-bearing checking accounts. It was recommended that accounts at Security State Bank be closed since this financial institution could not match the interest rate that could be obtained using the Texas Pools for investments. Castroville State Bank confirmed that they would match the Texas Pool rates monthly on money market accounts, which would also maintain local banking relationships. There was much discussion about the involved financial institutions and the allocation of funds in these institutions. Loan options using Sales Tax as collateral were also discussed. The Investment Officer suggested another option for using a percentage of the property tax through a debt rate or I&S fund as collateral in lieu of collateralizing the sales tax on loans. Administrator Edlund noted the debt rate method had been utilized in the past, and used the calculations formula as debt paid off, the M&O rate slowly moved upwards, maintaining the same tax rate annually, without a tax rate increase over many years. The District was now in a good position to maintain its M&O rate at nine cents, especially with the new SB2 formulas and continue to receive the revenues needed for day to day operations. In prior years, the sales tax had been used for growth and development. The Board desires to be great stewards of the taxpayers' money. Commissioner Beck summarized the discussion with this statement, 'the district needs to get the best return on our money that we can because we are going to need it to fund the rapid growth of the district.' President Dziuk stated that he could see no reason that local funds should leave the area when the local financial institution is willing to match the TX Pool rates. Administrator Edlund notified the board that the TX Class accounts had not been set up yet, and before these two accounts could be set up, the local bank came forward and offered to match the Texas Class rates. There were also discussions taking place amongst different Commissioners about how many accounts to open, and at which institutions. Commissioner Ferren moved to terminate the certificates of deposit at Security State Bank and move the money from Security State Bank into the money market account at Castroville State Bank, to rearrange the checking accounts to match the restructuring proposal and rates presented by the finance committee, compressing the accounts, and not to open the Texas Class accounts at this present time. Commissioner Beck seconded her motion. Commissioner Ferren amended her motion to include the statement to close all the current accounts at Security State Bank. Commissioner Beck seconded the amendment to her motion, the amended motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

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

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

Administration:

- Chief Cooke and the Finance Committee consulted with financial advisor, Mr. Randall Parr, on investment plans.
- Chief Cooke and the Finance Committee met with Castroville State Bank and Security State Bank regarding future investments.
- Chief Cooke participated in the Parade of Homes event in Castroville.
- Chief Cooke toured the District with Commissioner Ferren.
- Chief Cooke and Commissioner Hitzfelder continued discussions regarding a site for a station on FM 1283.
- Chief Cooke discussed and reviewed the final grade with ISO.
- Chief Cooke participated in a Chamber of Commerce event.
- Chief Cooke developed plans for the 2023/2024 budget.

Operations:

- Chief Cooke presented the Fire Programs Incident Report by Incident Type – Summary (70-total incidents – 22 incident types) and the Department Response Time by District and individual stations – turnout time and travel time noted in minutes. The District continues to improve in response times, which is now less than eight minutes.
- Chief Cooke reported the completion of the in-house Fire Academy; with 22 personnel trained to the minimum Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 standards. The class consisted of 464 hours of firefighter training per student since October 1st.
- Chief Cooke stated that during the month of May Fire Academy personnel received 373 hours of combined direct firsthand and classroom training,
- Chief Cooke stated during May 2,007 hours of staffing were covered with volunteers supplementing the full-time staff. Had this been career staff, the cost would have been just over \$45,000 in payroll for the month.
- Chief Cooke reported that the District deployed the new radios to the station; however, waiting for Bexar County before being able to communicate across county lines.

Insurance Services Office (ISO):

- Chief Cooke reported that the initial ISO audit was completed on February 23, 2023, and he confirmed that the maximum grade received was 4 in the cities and 5 in the unincorporated areas. This grade gets all our residents within five miles of a fire station into a preferred insurance rating. These numbers will be reported to the Texas Department of Insurance on July 1st; however, he is not sure when residents will see the financial relief. Commissioner Hitzfelder stated that when the audit numbers are reported to the Texas Department of Insurance there needs to be public information/outreach of the ISO rate changes. Chief Cooke had planned for a public announcement on the social media outreach and other public relations processes. Commissioner Beck questioned what can be done to improve the ratings and Chief Cooke responded that several items needed improvement over the next three years; for instance, training and hydrant testing are needed and an additional tender in service off FM 1283.

EMS:

- Chief Cooke stated that currently the district continues to prepare our system with no specific updates to report.

Status of District Assets:

- Chief Cooke reported that all stations and apparatuses are in service to their capabilities.
- Chief Cooke stated that the District's maintenance team, headed up by Dan Huber, continues to repair small ticket items, daily monitor the fleet to keep it in service and saving the district monies.
- Chief Cooke noted that Chief Windsor's vehicle is awaiting the arrival of all equipment before it is sent in for outfitting. This item was updated...the vehicle is slotted for outfitting the week of June 26th with a 3-4 week build time.
- Chief Cooke reported the delivery of the new demo brush truck (aka the grant truck) for the station in Mico. The type 3 truck is being outfitted and personnel are receiving proper training and will be the primary response truck out of Mico. The brush truck and the wrapped ATV were available for viewing prior to the MCESD1 Board Meeting.
- Chief Cooke reported that he and the facilities committee completed a preliminary sketch of floor plan of the Castroville Station on Madrid Street to better accommodate 24/7 staffing.
- Chief Cooke reported that he and the facilities committee worked on plans for the Castroville Old Station on Paris Street to present a better front to the community.

Recruitment:

- Chief Cooke reported no updates noting this item will be removed from future reports until action is merited. Chief Cooke stated that MCESD1 is not actively recruiting; however, volunteers are actively applying.

Additional Activities:

Chief Cooke had many discussions and meetings regarding the operation of the District. A listing of these activities included:

- Conducted multiple discussions with officers from stations.
- Multiple discussions with the finance committee.
- Attended Commissioner Court Meetings.
- Attended City of Castroville City Council Meeting.
- Attended Parade of Homes and supported the event.
- Discussions with ESD1 Commissioners over a myriad of items.
- Met with mutual aid chiefs on multiple occasions.
- Attended Chamber of Commerce events.
- Met with water providers regarding better fire department access to rural water.
- Met with County Commissioners on our ESD1's plans and needs,
- Attended demonstration of new medic units.

- Finalized preliminary agreement with ESD6 to mutually help.

Public Education and Outreach:

- Chief Cooke reported that Melissa Bailey has built a team of volunteers that are developing a standard public education and outreach approach. After meeting with this team, Chief Cooke et al are supportive of their direction and are looking forward to beginning to see tangible outcomes.
- Chief Cooke conducted a photo shoot for personnel in uniforms.

Chief Windsor's Activities:

Chief Cooke reported the following activities of Chief Windsor:

- Chief Windsor led the Microsoft Safety demonstration, stop the bleed course.
- Chief Windsor attended a department hospitality meeting at STRAC, the STRAC Prehospital MCI Workgroup, and general STRAC meeting.
- Chief Windsor met with multiple medical equipment vendors and received quotes for desired medical equipment.
- Chief Windsor successfully launched the departmental medical continuing education platform.
- Chief Windsor met with Dr. Wentling and established an initial task outline.
- Chief Windsor and Chief Cooke attended a demonstration of ImageTrend, a STRAC supported ePCR/FireRMS suite (computer software that allows better data transfer). Chief Cooke noted that STRAC does the bidding to acquire good rates for the software, and then extends the use of the software thru ESD use agreements.
- Chief Windsor attended a Chamber of Commerce event.
- Chief Windsor attended the swearing-in session of new Castroville City Council members.
- Chief Windsor and Chief Cooke attended various meetings.
- Chief Windsor determined potential locations for central medical supply and central controlled substance supply and additionally began to determine station modifications needed to meet licensing and storage requirements.

Chief Esquivel's Activities:

Chief Cooke reported the following activities of Chief Esquivel:

- Facilitated the removal of Brush Truck 8212 from Station 12 and relocated the unit to Station 11. Received the new Brush Truck 8112 at Station 12. The old 1987 Brush Truck is no longer in service.
- Chief Esquivel supervised apparatus repairs/maintenance on the following apparatuses: Brush Truck 8115, Engine 8110, Engine 8112, Engine 8115, Engine 8210, Engine 8215, Heavy Brush Truck 8211, Tender 8110, Tender 8111, Tender 8112, and Tender 8115.
- Chief Esquivel transported the new ATV to the graphics company for wrapping in fire department colors and logos.
- Chief Esquivel participated in the new ambulance demonstration.
- Chief Esquivel arranged for service of the cascade systems at Station 12 and Station 10; ordered and installed final needed parts.
- Chief Esquivel assisted with the Texas Railroad Commission inspection at Station 12, related to propane.
- Chief Esquivel and Chief Windsor participated in a live demonstration for ambulance equipment.
- Chief Esquivel and Chief Windsor gave the bleed presentation at Microsoft.
- Chief Esquivel attended various meetings regarding medical equipment, the new LaCoste North fire station, and personnel.
- Chief Esquivel assisted with skills training/remediation of students in the academy
- Chief Esquivel began inputting/uploading skills data to SSFMA.
- Chief Esquivel planned June's training and discussed daily skills/assignments with Lieutenants.
- Chief Esquivel filtered/prioritized new volunteer applicants and began making contact accordingly.
- Chief Esquivel reassigned personnel within the agency/district. Allegiance Mobile Health reassigned some of their personnel.

4 – B. UPDATE ON BID PROCESS FOR NEW LACOSTE STATION PROJECT (STATION 11 NORTH OF RAILROAD):

Chief Cooke stated there was a pre-bid meeting held at LaCoste on site with several contractors present. Chief Cooke noted that all is on the time schedule approved by the Board at the last meeting. The particulars of the construction were published in the paper and in the builders' exchange, There will be a bid opening on June 29, 2023, at 2:00pm and since it will be a public meeting, a posted possible quorum agenda is required. Commissioner Page inquired about a spec book for the construction project and was told that it was probably online; however, Chief Cooke would locate a copy of it for him. Commissioner Page was most interested in the scoring page and how it related to the list for alternate options/costs.

4 – C. UPDATE ON FINANCING PROPOSALS FOR THE LACOSTE STATION CONSTRUCTION PROJECT:

District Administrator Edlund reported that proposals are being drafted for the financial piece, the RFP for financing of the construction project. Chief Cooke recommended the Board approve the request for proposals to be sent out requesting \$5,000,000 as the loan amount. District Administrator Edlund noted this part of the project would require three years of audit reports, and the final audit report was being finalized by the auditor and should be completed by the end of June. When the RFP package is complete, the entire request package will be sent out to the finance committee for review.

4 – D. CONSIDER and APPROVE RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT WITH TEXAS A&M TASK FORCE 1:

Texas A&M Task Force 1 (TX-TF1), a State and Federal Emergency Response Task Force requested a membership renewal endorsement for Chief Cooke. TX-TF1 functions as one of the 28 federal teams under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s National Urban Search and Rescue System and as a statewide urban search and under the direction of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). TX-TF1 also coordinates the state's swiftwater rescue program and the helicopter search and rescue team which works in conjunction with Texas Military Forces.

Commissioner Hitzfelder moved to approve the renewal of the Texas A&M Task Force 1 (TX-TF1) membership endorsement for Chief Clint Cooke and approve his participation in TX-TF1 activations and training, meetings, and emergency response activities. Commissioner Beck seconded his motion, the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote. Chief Cooke reported that one of the district's four tenders and personnel are currently on deployment to the Border Patrol Agency in Dilley, Texas, to provide fire protection to a migrant holding facility until the water system used for fire protection is operational.

4 – E. CONSIDER and APPROVE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH SOUTH TEXAS REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STRAC) FOR DISASTER DEPLOYMENT:

The Texas Emergency Medical Task Force is comprised of eight regional teams strategically located throughout the state and aligned with the DSHS (Department of State Health Services) Public Health Regions. These regional teams leverage existing relationships with EMS providers, fire departments, hospitals, and healthcare organizations to provide personnel and essential resources available to respond within its specific region or throughout the state when needed. The Emergency Medical Task Force Program consists of seven components: Task Force Leadership, Ambulance Strike Teams, Ambulance Buses, Mobile Medical Units, Registered Nurse Strike Teams, Medical Incident Support Teams, and Ambulance Staging Management Teams. These components provide maximum flexibility for the activation, deployment, and utilization of specialized teams and resources needed for unique situations and missions resulting from tragedies, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, wildfire, flooding, terrorism, and any other natural or manmade disaster.

Commissioner Hitzfelder moved to participate as a member of the Emergency Medical Task Force (EMTF), and to approve the MOA with STRAC as the Lead RAC. Commissioner Beck seconded his motion, the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote,

4 – F. CONSIDER and APPROVE AGREEMENT WITH EMERGICON TO SERVE AS OUR EMS BILLING COMPANY:

Chief Cooke reported that Chief Windsor, after careful and thorough research for the most appropriate billing company to handle the needs of MCESD1, recommended EMERGICON Emergency Medical Billing for contracted billing and collection services with a proposed commission rate of 6 ½% of cash collections for the length of the contract. In comparison to other considered billing and collection services, EMERGICON, had the lowest commission rate, the highest new client acquisition, and an increase in revenue on average of 30% for their newly acquired clients compared to their previous billing agency. Chief Windsor requested that MCESD1 Fire/EMS enter into a contractual agreement with EMERGICON to handle the billing and collection needs. The contract begins upon execution with no sign-on fee associated with the new contract. It is recommended that the contract be signed a year in advance of the projected launch date. Commissioner Hitzfelder moved that MCESD1 enter into a contractual agreement with EMERGICON emergency billing to handle the billing and collection needs of MCESD1 Fire/EMS. Commissioner Page seconded his motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote.

4 – G. CONSIDER and APPROVE PROPERTY DISPOSITION POLICY:

Chief Cooke presented a new policy for the Board's approval, Policy P-032, Property Disposition. Commissioner Page moved to accept the policy as presented. Commissioner Beck seconded his motion, and the motion was approved with a 4-0 vote. Chief Cooke explained that disposal of any surplus, salvage, or 'no longer of value to the district' property would be a Board decision. Chief Cooke further elaborated that the state has a 'helping hands' donation program where items that have no value to MCESD1 can be claimed by an agency that is looking for that exact item.

5. NEW or UPCOMING DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT(S) - DISCUSSIONS and ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

Chief Cooke remarked that discussions have taken place with MCESD1 Board members, Medina County Commissioners, and Vulcan Officials regarding locations on FM 1283 for a site of an additional fire station. There are two sites available for discussion...one is closer to Mico and the other closer to the FM 471 intersection. Commissioner Hitzfelder viewed the 'FM 471' site and noted that this 6-acre site had 300-feet of frontage on FM 1283; however, it needed to be cleared. Vulcan wants to be a team player. Discussions continue in this area of MCESD1 regarding land to build another station.

Commissioner Ferren spoke about her recent District tour with Fire Chief Cooke. The growth and development of the District is rapidly happening. She recommended every Commissioner make the time to tour the District, it was an 'eye opening' experience.

6. OLD BUSINESS – DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING

None.

7. NEW BUSINESS – INTRODUCTION OF ANY NEW BUSINESS:

7 - A. JULY 4TH PARADE – POSSIBLE BOARD PARTICIPATION:

District Administrator Edlund suggested that members of the Board ride on a trailer or fire truck in Castroville's July 4th parade and toss candy to the children watching the parade. This idea was not accepted. Chief Cooke and members of the MCESD1 Fire/EMS will parade apparatuses and shower the parade route with candy. District Administrator Edlund noted that Castroville and LaCoste 501c3 groups have each pledged to donate \$500 for the purchase of the decorations and candy. The Mico group will be contacted for a similar donation. No action was taken.

7 – B. MONTHLY MEETING – JULY 12, 2023:

The next proposed regular meeting of MCESD1 will be at 7:00pm on Wednesday, July 12, 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.

June marks the one-year anniversary of having full-time firefighters on duty in Medina County ESD1. Our district's growth and involvement mirror the community growth and changing aspects. Currently the district is providing 24-hour staffing out of two stations for fire and emergency response.

The Commission on Professional Credentialing awarded Fire Chief Clint Cooke the professional designation of Chief Fire Officer on June 6, 2023. Following an extensive peer review process, this designation recognized demonstrated excellence in seven measured components: experience, education, professional development, professional contributions, association membership, community involvement, and technical competence. Upon receipt of this designation, Chief Cooke became one of only 1,882 Chief Fire Officers worldwide.

8. 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 8:39pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



POLLY EDLUND, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

MCESD1 PRESIDENT



MARVIN DZIUK