

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

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, August 14, 2024 6:00PM

Meeting Location: Medina County Precinct 2 Bldg., Courtroom, 8366 FM 471 S, Castroville, TX 78009

I. OPEN MEETING:

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL:

President Marvin Dziuk called the meeting to order at 6:07pm, and established a quorum with commissioners Tom Page, Leroy Haby and Rodney Hitzfelder present. Commissioner Ferren joined the meeting under agenda item #4. Also present were Fire Chief Clinton Cooke, District Administrator Polly Edlund, Assistant Fire Chief Sarah Windsor, Deputy Chief Jaime Esquivel, Division Chief Tallon Reddout, and Administrative Assistant Lori Stein. Maintenance Lt. Joe Wells was also present.

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

President Dziuk requested all in attendance to rise, face the United States and Texas flags and pledge their allegiance to each. President Dziuk thanked all for their participation.

1 – B. INVOCATION:

At President Dziuk's request, Chief Cooke led the assembly in prayer giving thanks to God and asking for His guidance for the Board and members of the MCESD#1, and for His protection for all first responders.

1 – C. INTRODUCTION OF ANY SPECIAL GUEST(S)/RECOGNITIONS:

The recently selected Division Chief, Tallon Reddout, and his family attended the meeting and Chief Cooke introduced them to the Board. Chief Reddout lived within the district, in Bear Springs subdivision. Chief Reddout gave appreciation for the opportunity and welcomed any questions the board may have. Dr. Jessica Wentling, the medical director for the district, was also in attendance. She introduced herself to the Board, and let the Board know she was glad to be involved with this District, especially since she lived within the district, and if they had any questions to please ask her.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

3. ADMINISTRATION – DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTIONS/ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

3 - A. MINUTES, RESOLUTION OF ACCEPTANCE – (July 31st, 2024 Minutes)

Commissioner Page made a motion to approve the draft minutes as submitted. Commissioner Hitzfelder seconded the motion, and the motion passed 3-0.

3 – B. FINANCIAL REPORTS, APPROVAL FOR PAYING BILLS AND APPROPRIATE TRANSFERS

Chief Cooke went over the financial report for the month covering transactions between October 1, 2023, through August 14, 2024. This report covers ten months of the fiscal year or 83.33%. The district was 99.73% collected on the Ad-Valorem property tax. Sales tax revenue represented 9 months, accrual based sales tax revenues December through August. This month's net deposit was \$194,817.41. There had been a slight decrease in the sales tax revenues compared to the prior two years' trends. Next year's budget and sales tax forecast have been adjusted due to this current trend. Fire billing had generated \$20,447.21. The district had budgeted \$10,000 for the year. Investments netted \$479,493 over ten months. The budgeted estimate to be received during the year was \$225,000. This had slowed down some as the district spent the funds for station 10 and 11 construction projects. Payroll had completed 23 pay cycles or 88.46%. Total payroll was currently at 70.39% not deducting the Deployment OT the district receives reimbursed for. The construction accounts are within budget. There were no accounts that he was concerned about, and nothing having any major negative effect on the total budget. The account balances were shown on page 16 of the report, and there were open POs charged against it to the sum of 3.4 million and the 600 thousand left on construction projects, leaving total unencumbered balances of approximately 4 million, not including the pending ad-valorem collections, sales tax net deposits for September thru December, the payroll reimbursements still pending, and any expenses through the end of the year. He expected to end the 2023-2024 year between 3.9 and 4.1 million in unencumbered reserves.

Commissioner Haby moved to approve the financial reports, paying of bills and appropriate transfers. Commissioner Page seconded his motion, and the motion passed 3-0.

3 – C. SALES TAX REPORTS (JULY / YTD)

The Sales Tax report was submitted to the board. There was no action item needed.

4. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORTS

4 - A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Cooke gave the Fire Chief's report for the prior month of July, see report for details. Notes of interest or additional board discussion included:

- The District passed its first TCFP evaluation to ensure compliance with NFPA rules. They found no violations.
- Station 14's metal building was completed and doors installed.
- EMS service packet to DEA had been submitted
- State inspection was scheduled for August 14th, and once that gets completed a licensing number will be issued.
- EMS had completed the setup processes for billing services, the district was only awaiting licensing to finalize.
- Medic Unit #130 will be the 4th EMS unit if Allegiance is out of units, or down to zero.
- Also discussed was the recent increase in medical calls within the district, there had recently been 13 calls on one day last month. The average call volume was currently 2000 runs per year.
- BCESD#2 and Chiefs had met to discuss automatic aid moving into the future, utilizing closest unit, and to remove the artificial boundaries between ESDs.
- The salvaged 1997 Engine donated through Helping Hands had found a home in Jasper County.
- The Brush Truck from Station #14 – Unit#129 a 2023 6.7 Diesel Ford F550 had catastrophic engine failure and was at the Ford Dealer under warranty conditions. A replacement engine was on order and would be replaced under warranty. The Board discussed the medic units on order also being of this same year model and type, and concerns regarding similar issues down the road.

4 - B. CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE REPORTS AND PROJECT UPDATES

4 - B - 1. STATION #11 CIP MONTHLY DRAW APPROVAL, CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATES & YTD PROJECT COSTS

Station 11 remained on schedule for a late August substantial completion. The construction committee meets bi-weekly with the contractor, and they visit the site multiple times per week. To date the district has spent \$3,873,183.01 of the 4.5-million-dollar budget. There was \$453,593.15 still owed on construction. Leaving 123K for FF&E minus current open purchases orders of \$80,274; leaving \$43k for additional FF&E and station equipment and supplies. The current plan was to do a Monday punch list walk through prior to substantial completion.

Commissioner Page moved to approve the draw request #11 in the amount of \$394,590.10 for W.R. Griggs Construction Company Inc. Commissioner Hitzfelder seconded his motion, and the motion passed 4-0.

4 - B - 2. STATION REMODEL PROJECT #10 – CONSTRUCTION UPDATES & YTD PROJECT COSTS

Plumbing work was continuing, all demo and reconstruction was complete on walls, only awaiting flooring and final plumbing install on new dorm area. The Construction team anticipated the project wrapping up this month. As of August 9th, there had been expenditures of \$231,1461 of the \$500,000 budget including all Architectural fees and FFE. Once complete on this project, the construction team would move to the Station #10 Annex Building project.

4 - B - 3. STATION REMODEL PROJECT #14 – CONSTRUCTION UPDATES & YTD PROJECT COSTS

The metal building was complete with garage doors installed. The project costs to date were \$372,236 of the amended budget of 394,661 to put that station online this year. This station project was complete, and they were not looking to spend anymore, unless an unexpected issue came up that needed to be addressed.

5. NEW OR UPCOMING DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT(S) – DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

Chief Cooke gave a quick update and encouraged all board members to go see station #11. The large data center project on FM471 was still online for property tax revenues to start for the 2026 budget year. The Hwy 90 data center project was set to kick off its construction portion of the project in 2025, the sitework on this location had been completed. Chief Cooke was planning to discuss compensation with the Microsoft construction manager, as the district continues to attend and participate in all their safety drills. While the district wants to maintain good partnerships, he wanted to discuss the possibility for the district to get compensated for its time and services.

6. CONSIDER AND APPROVE MCESD#1’S BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 – 2025

At the July 31st MCESD#1 meeting, the board reviewed the proposed budget in detail, and following the discussion Commissioner Hitzfelder requested Fire Chief Cooke to present three budget options using three different property tax rates for the board’s review prior to the August 14th vote on the tax rate. Chief Cooke provided the board with the three budgets for discussion along with other board meeting materials. The basic difference was the budget line item for M&O property tax revenues and how this budget line item would affect the surplus reserve fund to balance the budget.

	Total Budget	At Tax Rate	M&O Property Tax Revenues	Surplus Reserves Needed
Option 1	7,579,331.65	.10 cents	3,250,000.00	854,081.65
Option 2	7,579,331.65	.097 cents	3,152,500.00	951,581.65
Option 3	7,579,331.65	.094 cents	3,055,000.00	1,049,081.65

At the conclusion of the budget discussions and how each property tax rate would affect the budget and the reserve fund, President Dziuk requested a vote to approve the proposed 2024-2025 budget. Commissioner Page moved to adopt the 2024-2025 budget, based on option one with a property tax revenue budget of \$3,250,000.00 and the needed surplus revenues to balance the budget at \$854,081.65. Commissioner Ferren seconded his motion. The motion passed 4-0.

7. CONSIDER AND APPROVE RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE MCESD#1’S TAX RATE(S) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

The board deliberated on the tax rate. President Dziuk commented that while he was never in favor of raising the tax rate to the maximum allowed, a ten-cent rate, the board as a whole makes the decision. Commissioner Ferren mentioned that depending on what tax rate is chosen there is always the option to use the homestead exemption again as a lever to offset the tax burden to the taxpayers. Commissioner Haby noted that this is a one-year increase utilizing the reserve fund to start up EMS and the citizens are getting something for the increase. They are getting five medic units, and one backup unit, instead of three, and next year the property tax revenues will be different. Commissioner Page noted that in his opinion choosing the 10-cent tax rate due to the startup of EMS this year was acceptable. Commissioner Hitzfelder noted that citizens in his area, LaCoste, have waited a long time to have EMS in their area. Commissioner Page moved that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.10/\$100 valuation, which is effectively a 18.06 percent increase in the tax rate (the % by which this tax rate exceeds the no-new-revenue rate). This tax rate will raise more property taxes for maintenance and operations than last year’s tax rate. Commissioner Ferren seconded his motion. The motion passed 4-0.

8. OLD BUSINESS – DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING:

None.

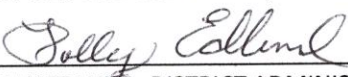
9. NEW BUSINESS – INTRODUCTION OF ANY NEW BUSINESS

9 – A. Monthly Meeting – September 11, 2024. The next regular meeting of MCESD1 was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 7:00pm at the same location. The date and time would be confirmed when the agenda was posted.

10. ADJOURN

Commissioner Ferren moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Page seconded her motion, and the motion passed 4-0. President Dziuk closed the meeting at 7:11pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,


 POLLY EDLUND, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

MCESD1 PRESIDENT


 MARVIN DZIUK, PRESIDENT