

## **HENDERSON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICT #12**

### **MINUTES**

November 18, 2024

6:30 PM – Henderson County Courthouse Annex

The meeting was called to order by President Cody Seale. All members were present and a quorum was established. Wes Johnston represented the fire department. Guests: Tyler Jordan and Cy Ditzler. There were no public comments.

Commissioner Bersano moved to accept the minutes as written and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Bristow. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer Bristow presented the latest financial report. Commissioner Monk moved to accept and Commissioner Bersano seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Wes Johnston gave the CVFD report. There were two major events: a fatal accident on SH 31 near Brookshires and a search and assist in the Athens area. The brush truck is in the shop for repairs. There was no CVFD financial report. The new firetruck will be delivered to the Dallas area for additional installation of equipment. This will be in late December or January.

Commissioner Monk moved to act on a tax freeze for taxpayers over 65 or disabled. Commissioner Bristow made the second. Commissioners Bertholf, Bersano and Seale expressed a need for more information and clarification from the attorney. (Monk, Bristow for; Seale, Bersano and Bristol opposed). It will be reconsidered when more information is available that shows a history/precedent/legalities for ESD's. Bersano and Seale questioned the need for this since any increase in the current rate beyond .006001 would require a vote approval from the taxpayers. Motion will be reconsidered when more information is available that shows a history/precedent/legalities for ESD's.

Commissioner Monk moved to consider and act to establish a homestead exemption for taxpayers who are over 65 or disabled for the 2025 tax year. Commissioner Bristow seconded. Commissioner Bertholf shared an email from Barbara Lovelady at Henderson County that stated ESD's did not have exemptions unless it was for a DV or capital loss. Commissioner Monk stated that the amount saved by the taxpayer would not be large but could make a difference to someone on a lower income. Commissioners Bertholf and Bersano asked for time to clarify the information provided by the county and to seek precedents for ESD's who have homestead exemptions. The president called for a vote:

Monk, Bristow for; Bersano, Bertholf, Seale against.

All members moved to continue development of ESD12 operating policies, capital planning and risk management. Commissioner Bertholf has operating policies and Strategic Plans in the ESD's files which need to be revised to fit the specific needs of ESD 12. These will be ready for the January meeting.

Commissioner Monk moved to consider and act to implement audio recording at meetings. Commissioner Bristow seconded. Commissioner Monk stressed the need for transparency and

suggested equipment to be purchased. Concerns about storage and accessibility were expressed. It was agreed that the treasurer's laptop could be used. Commissioner Bersano agreed to investigate recorder prices and report back to the board in January. The president called for a vote: Passed unanimously.

Commissioner Monk moved to consider and act to draft RFQ for the audit. Mr. Bristow seconded. Commissioners Seale and Bersano will send out the RFQ to a list of auditors presented. The deadline will be December 10. Commissioner Seale called for a vote and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Monk expressed concern that the ESD was not getting the best rates for the firetruck loan and moved to change the wording in item number 11 to "consider and act to send RFP to Government Capital AND local financial institutions: Vera Bank, Southside Bank, UBank and Simmons Bank". The form is to be returned by December 10. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Submitted by

Nancy Bertholf