

**WILLIAMSON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING – June 22, 2023**

The Williamson County Emergency Services District #2 held a regular meeting on June 22, 2023 at Sam Bass Fire Department Station 2, 16248 Great Oaks Drive, Round Rock, Texas and on-line at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/645098693> and by phone at 1-571-317-3129 or 1-877-309-2073.

**Commissioners in Attendance:**

Commissioners present in person: Russell Strahan, Tim Hunsberger, Darryl Pool, and Thom Nanninga.  
Commissioner absent: Jordan Baltazor

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm by Commissioner Strahan. A quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Strahan.

Public Comment: No member of the public requested to speak.

**Action items**

ITEM 4: *Approve minutes of prior meeting(s).*

Motion to approve minutes of regular meeting held May 18, 2023 as presented.

Motion: Nanninga    Second: Hunsberger    [Unanimous]

ITEM 5: *Review bookkeeper's report from Municipal Accounts & Consulting and consent to: a) approval of payment of monthly bills and invoices, b) approval of monthly financial report.*

Municipal Accounts & Consulting representative Tyler Wilson presented the District's monthly financial statements, bills, and invoices for May 2023. He stated there was nothing out of the ordinary to report.

Motion to approve MAC reports as presented.

Motion: Pool    Second: Hunsberger    [Unanimous]

ITEM 6: *Review Sam Bass Fire Dept. bookkeeper's report from M.A.&C.*

Wilson presented SBFD's monthly financial statements, bills, and invoices for May 2023. He stated there was nothing out of the ordinary to report.

ITEM 7: *Receive monthly operations report from Sam Bass Fire Department.*

a) *Receive monthly statistics report from Sam Bass Fire Department.*

SBFD Captain Corby Bryan presented SBFD incident report data and activities for May 2023 plus comparison to prior years. He included a new page showing SBFD's employee attrition rate as requested by Commissioner Baltazor at the May meeting. Commissioners found this additional information was presented well and helps them understand concerns expressed at previous meetings about employee turnover. Commissioner Hunsberger requested this page in future reports include the total number of SBFD positions authorized.

b) *Receive update on Community Outreach Program at Sam Bass Fire Department.*

SBFD Assistant Chief Amber Jordan reported Station 2 held four scheduled tours of the facility plus some unscheduled ones. Next month SBFD will host the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Boy Scout pancake breakfast fundraiser and will participate in several neighborhood parades. SBFD also plans to

visit with students at The Learning Experience.

*c) Receive update and take action relative to Department Apparatus.*

SBFD Chief James Shofner stated SBFD still expects to take possession of a new Truck 2 this August. He reported the date to take possession of a new Pierce Engine 2 has been delayed again and is now projected to be October 2024 due to Pierce Manufacturing experiencing a shortage of workers. No action needed.

*d) Receive update on insurance billing test.*

Chief Shofner said he is going to enter into a six-month trial with Surefire Recovery who will attempt to collect reimbursements from insurance companies when SBFD responds to fire emergencies and vehicle accidents. No contract with Surefire is required. Medical and fire alarm calls will not be included. Surefire will send two bills per incident to see if reimbursements can be collected, but the company will not pursue further action. He said most vehicle accidents to which SBFD responds involve out of District residents.

*e) Receive update and take action relative to Maintenance and Repairs of Stations 1 & 2.*

Chief Shofner said SBFD Battalion Chief Jared Rogers is still getting bids for replacing HVAC units at stations 1 & 2.

*f) Receive update relative to benefit enhancements for Sam Bass Fire Department.*

Chief Shofner reported the increased funds authorized by the District to SBFD at the May meeting will be used for a 6% base pay increase beginning 7/1/2023 for full and part-time SBFD personnel.

**ITEM 8:** *Discuss and take action relative to the collection of sales tax.*

Commissioners discussed the prospect of placing a proposition on the November 2023 general election ballot asking voter approval for the District to collect a sales tax. No member of the public requested to speak. No Commissioner spoke in opposition to the proposal. Numerous comments were made to get facts on the record concerning the proposal. Points noted in the discussion included:

- The District will need revenue in excess of that collected by property tax to meet future needs, especially if SBFD personnel are to receive increased benefits.
- The District is surrounded by four municipalities. One or more of those entities might annex a portion of the District at some point. Such annexation would reduce the District's property tax revenue but not reduce its expenses.
- Recent comments by top state government leaders concerning reducing property taxes or eliminating certain property taxes raise questions as to how reliable property tax will be as the sole source of revenue for the District in future years.
- Many District residents would not experience a tax increase as they currently do not take the step necessary to notify on-line merchants they live in an unincorporated area which has no municipal sales tax. In such cases, an extra 2% tax is added to on-line purchases on top of the 6.25% Texas sales tax with that 2% tax also going to the state.
- Most all other ESDs that have adopted a sales tax have received revenues well above amounts that had been estimated. If revenue from sales tax should prove sufficient, it might present a future board with the opportunity to reduce the District's property tax rate.
- Placing a proposition on the November 2023 general election ballot would enable the sales tax issue to receive more attention than if it is placed on a general election ballot like 2024 that includes a contest for U.S. President.

- If a sales tax is approved by voters and then enacted by the District, there will be a significant time lag before the state would send the District its first quarterly payment. Commissioners must adopt a 2024 District budget before the result of any sales tax election is known. Due to seasonal variances in sales tax revenue, it will be necessary for the District to receive four quarters of payments before having a good understanding of how much sales tax revenue can be projected when adopting annual budgets.
- Commissioners cannot simply enact a sales tax. They must first place such a proposition on a ballot for voter approval. If a sales tax proposition is rejected by voters, state law prohibits the measure from being placed on a future ballot again for a minimum of one year.
- Commissioners acting in their official capacity may provide factual, objective information to the public but are prohibited from campaigning in favor of such a proposition. Other individuals, including SBFD personnel, are not restricted from electioneering in their off-duty time.
- The District's 2023 budget includes \$3500 for election expenses, all of which is still available for use.

Motion to proceed as necessary to place a proposition on the 2023 general election ballot seeking voter approval for the District to enact a sales tax and further to authorize expenditures necessary to accomplish this task.

Motion: Strahan    Second: Nanninga    Commissioner Strahan requested a roll call vote.

In favor: Strahan, Hunsberger, Pool, Nanninga    Opposed: none    Absent: Baltazor

ITEM 9: *Receive and take action relative to the report from the Steering Committee regarding adopting Sam Bass FD.*

Commissioner Nanninga reported the Steering Committee has not met since May.

ITEM 10: *Receive and take action relative to the report from the Strategic Planning Committee regarding revised strategic plan.*

Commissioner Strahan reported work on revisions to the District's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan is still in progress. He stated a decision on a sales tax election needs to be made before revisions can be completed.

ITEM 11: *Discuss potential agenda items, location, time and date(s) for future business meeting. (7/20/2023)*

Next regular meeting to be held July 20, 2023 beginning at 7:00pm at Sam Bass Fire Station 2.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn made at 8:27pm.

Motion: Strahan    Second: Hunsberger    [Unanimous]

**“I attest that all the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.”**

Submitted by Darryl Pool, Secretary, Williamson County ESD #2