

WILLIAMSON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING – March 21, 2024

Williamson County Emergency Services District #2 held a regular meeting on March 21, 2024 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: Jordan Baltazor, Russell Strahan, Tim Hunsberger, Darryl Pool, and Thom Nanninga.

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

Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Baltazor.

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 February 15, 2024 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, c) approval of District's Investment Policy.*

Municipal Accounts & Consulting representative Alexia Kolmodin presented the District's monthly financial statements, bills, and invoices for February 2024. She stated there was nothing out of the ordinary to report.

Motion to approve MAC reports as presented.

Motion: Baltazor Second: Nanninga [Unanimous]

Kolmodin said the board needs to conduct its annual review of the District Investment Policy. She stated the only proposed change to the current policy is an update of approved brokers. Kolmodin will provide the proposed policy to Commissioners prior to next month's meeting, at which time it will be placed on the agenda for approval.

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

Kolmodin presented SBFD's monthly financial statements, bills, and invoices for February 2024. She stated there was nothing out of the ordinary to report. SBFD Assistant Chief Amber Jordan questioned the budget figure for the department's 2024 revenue being stated as \$3,600,000. She believed the correct figure to be \$3,690,000. Commissioner Baltazor confirmed the District had increased SBFD's budget by \$90,000 earlier this year. Kolmodin said she will update the figure.

ITEM 7: *Discuss and Take action relative to State denial of Sales and Use Tax implementation.*

After adjournment of the February 15, 2024 meeting, Commissioner Baltazor opened a letter from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The letter stated that their prior approval of the District's November 7, 2023 sales and use tax election results has been revoked. The ballot wording authorized enactment of a sales and use tax up to 2% districtwide, but the Comptroller found a small portion of ESD #2 includes part of Austin Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority which already has in place a sales and use tax in the amount of 1%. No local government entity in Texas, such as ESD #2,

is permitted to authorize a total sales and use tax above 2%. The letter pointed out how a minor change in the ballot wording could have permitted the District to enact a sales and use tax and be in compliance with state law.

Commissioner Baltazor promptly informed SBFDF Chief James Shofner about the letter and an open meeting was quickly held to inform SBFDF personnel. At the conclusion of the meeting, those in attendance expressed a willingness to work for passage of a new election authorizing the District to implement a sales and use tax.

Commissioners discussed the Comptroller's letter. It was agreed the Comptroller's point was valid and that it would not be worthwhile to protest the decision. It was noted state law would not permit the District to hold another election prior to the 2024 general election.

ITEM 8: *Discuss and Take action regarding retention/replacement of District legal council.*

Commissioners discussed the reaction of the District's legal counsel to the state invalidating the sales and use tax election. There was a consensus among Commissioners that they no longer have confidence in the counsel's guidance. Commissioner Baltazor reported on the counsel's response when informed about the state invalidation of the election and his lack of any response to a follow-up inquiry. Commissioners found both to be unacceptable. It was agreed the current legal counsel should be retained until it is determined whether a suitable alternative can be found. Commissioner Nanninga said he is aware of an attorney who provides service to emergency services districts and serves on an area ESD.

Motion to authorize Commissioners Nanninga and Pool to search for any attorneys willing and qualified to serve as District legal counsel and to report at the next regular meeting the names of any for Commissioners to consider.

Motion: Baltazor Second: Strahan [Unanimous]

ITEM 9: *Receive report from commissioners who had attended 2024 Safe-D conference*

Commissioners Hunsberger and Nanninga attended the 2024 SAFE-D Conference. Commissioner Hunsberger said government grants are available to help emergency service districts meet specific needs. He also recommended looking into how to inform people about the increasing incidence of electric motor fires, especially on battery powered bikes and scooters, which are prevalent in apartment complexes in the District.

Commissioner Nanninga spoke with representatives of four architectural firms, including the firm that designed Station 3, and found all of them willing to perform fire station remodeling design work.

ITEM 10: *Receive monthly operations report from Sam Bass Fire Department.*

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

SBFD Captain Corby Bryan presented abbreviated SBFD incident report data and activities for February 2024 plus comparison to prior years. He had previously emailed Commissioners the full report. He added a new page, Call Volume Per Month with Trend Line, that shows the number of calls each month since January 2016 with a projection through the end of calendar year 2024. The new page indicated the Station 2 squad continues to produce improved response times. SBFD Chief Shofner was congratulated on 25 years of service to the department.

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

Chief Jordan said some SBFD personnel attended a child's birthday party at a local park, visited students at Stepping Stone School, and Station 2 hosted a girl's robotics team. The department held a badge pinning ceremony on February 24, the first of what is planned as an annual event. SBFD will hold an employee appreciation lunch and awards ceremony on April 20.

c) *Receive report & take action relative to District vehicles and apparatus.*

Chief Jordan gave a report on behalf of Chief Shofner that recommended replacing the Chief's vehicle with a more suitable one, repurposing the Chief's current vehicle for squad use, and returning the current squad vehicle to its original purpose as a brush truck before the summer wildfire season begins. A new vehicle for the Chief could be purchased and outfitted for approximately \$150,000 and would take one to three months to acquire. The fire marshal's vehicle is in good working order and does not need replacement.

Jimmy Girvan, Territory Manager for Metro Fire Apparatus Specialists, Inc., spoke about the cost of purchasing a new Cummins ladder truck, manufacturing timeline, and payment options. He noted new engine standards will be mandated beginning in 2027 which will raise the price. Commissioner Baltazor requested SBFD prepare a detailed proposal for presentation at next month's meeting.

Motion to authorize SBFD to purchase a new vehicle for use by the Chief.

Motion: Strahan Second: Nanninga [Unanimous]

Commissioner Strahan reported he inspected and found hail damage to the Station 1 roof. He also found deterioration of some siding panels. The siding is still under warranty. The board authorized him to contact the insurance adjustor and to file a claim for roof hail damage.

ITEM 11: *Discuss potential agenda items, location, time, and date(s) for future business meeting. (4/18/2024)*

Commissioner Pool inquired whether the 2004 budget should be amended next month given the board has committed to significant expenditures after adoption of the 2024 budget. Kolmodin recommended amending the budget later in the year when other adjustments may need to be made. She said she could provide Commissioners with a separate budget page that would be regularly updated to reflect expenditures authorized after the budget was approved.

Next regular meeting to be held April 18, 2024 beginning at 7:00pm at Sam Bass Fire Station 2.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made at 8:50pm.

Motion: Strahan Second: Nanninga [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