

HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICT NO. 47

Minutes of Workshop Meeting  
January 21, 2023

The Board of Directors of Harris County Emergency Service District No. 47 (“the District”) for a workshop meeting, open to the public, on the 21st day of January 2023 at 1:00 p.m. at the Westlake Fire Department, 19636 Saums Rd., Houston, TX 77084, a designated meeting place of the Board. The roll was called of the duly constituted members of the Board, to-wit:

Mitch Copeland	President
John P. Blanke	Commissioner
Gilberto Porras	Vice President, Assist. Treasurer, Assist. Secretary, and Records Retention Officer
Brian Havran	Secretary and Public Information Officer
Mike Miller	Treasurer and Investment Officer

Commissioners Copeland, Havran and Miller were present.

Also present at the fire station were Joe Driver, Westlake VFD Board President; Colby Hughes, Westlake VFD Board Vice President; Mark Lindley, Westlake VFD Board Treasurer; JP Pean, Westlake VFD 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; Shannon Draper, Fire Chief of Westlake Fire Department; and Ginny Valls, recording secretary for the District.

Commissioner Copeland called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., and the following business was transacted.

Strategic Plan update – from the District’s perspective, how does the plan address new employees? The District still wants to keep volunteers. Chief Draper stated 2023 is a year for new recruitment and hopes to capture a younger crowd. Starting this next week we are holding a recruitment day at Mayde Creek High School and we will be reaching out in the community as well. Through public relations events, we hope to let the community know we still want volunteers. Chief Draper discussed all that has been accomplished thus far. Chief Draper discussed that we are not meeting our minimum staffing requirements. He also stated there is no reason to go full time only. We have a strong volunteer base and he feels the part time staff will reduce. Comm. Copeland asked if there is any interest in hiring internally. Chief Draper stated yes and that half will likely come from internal. Mr. Driver feels that will be offered will be attractive to individuals looking for a career in firefighting. Westlake has the top of the line equipment. We have a high call volume. Chief Draper stated we have not filled the EMS Coordinator position yet. We continue to review the task book and make recommendations to make is better.

The contract between the District and the Department was discussed. The District wants to make sure everyone is clear on whose stuff is whose. The Department has accumulated funds over the years and by consensus the District agrees with returning the funds to the District. There is not reason for the Department to have excess funds. The District needs to decide the amount to remain with the Department.

Long term and short-term planning was discussed. Chief Draper feels that in the future, the department may need to look at a second station. We don’t need it now but in 10 years that need may be different. The idea is to purchase land while it is available to potentially split the call volume, lower response times, and serve the

community better. He feels it would benefit the community to put one ambulance and a fire truck there. Chief Draper asked about having the Fire Chief and the Assistant Chief's employed by the District. Comm. Copeland asked the Westlake Board if this would cause issues the volunteers and what the pros and cons are. Mr. Pean stated that WVFD are contractors and if the Fire Chief is employed by the District that the volunteers would not have representation. He feels that the Department should have someone to represent them. There was much discussion on paid vs. volunteer and the by-laws. Comm. Copeland stated that he wants to make sure that everyone is protected in the future and that it is more complicated now with the need for staff. The District and the Department have had a great long-standing relationship. It is hard to deal with losing volunteers but it may happen. The District made it clear that they do not want to go away from having volunteers.

Workshop was adjourned at 2:33