

HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICT NO. 47

MINUTES OF WORKSHOP

September 17, 2022

The Board of Directors of Harris County Emergency Service District No. 47 (“the District”) met for a workshop, open to the public, on the 17th day of September 2022 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:

Brian Havran	President and Public Information Officer
John P. Blanke	Commissioner
Gilberto Porras	Secretary and Records Retention Officer
Mitchell Copeland	Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer
Mike Miller	Treasurer and Investment Officer

All Commissioners were present at the Fire Station except Commissioner Blanke.

Also present at the fire station were Joe Driver, President of the Westlake Fire Department; Colby Hughes, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP of Westlake Fire Department; Alberto Sayago, Treasurer of the Westlake Fire Department; Shannon Draper, Fire Chief of Westlake Fire Department; and Ginny Valls, recording secretary for the District.

Commissioner Havran called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m., and the following business was transacted.

Comm. Havran thanked everyone for attending and all parties present introduced themselves.

Comm. Copeland gave a history of the ESD and the department. He explained the reason for the workshop was for everyone to understand the roles of both the ESD and the department and to make sure we don't get into a situation like ESD 48 did. Comm. Havran discussed that the station is growing and as we grow, we need to run and manage the department differently.

Staffing was discussed. The community does not care if members are paid or volunteer when they have an emergency and need our help. The safer grant was discussed briefly. Comm. Copeland asked what the department feels is happening with staffing. J. Driver stated he feels that some join to see if it is a good fit for then and other leave to pursue a career. Everyone agreed that we need to supplement volunteers with full or part time personnel.

Comm. Havran stated he does not want to come in heavy handed and tell the department what to do. Comm. Copeland is concerned that hiring more paid individuals will push volunteers away. Chief Draper feels that all departments area wide are struggling with a lack of volunteers. Life has changed, requirements have changed, and expectations have changed. Community growth is a catalyst for this as well. Chief Draper feels volunteers will always have a spot in the department. A. Sayago feels it is unrealistic to think volunteers can do it alone and feels we will need to supplement with paid.

With the safer grant, the organizational chart will not change. The grant only covers new employees, and the is would provide benefits for them. A. Sayago feels that the Fire Chief should have benefits and that it would be unfair to give benefits to new employees and not to Chief Draper. Chief Draper stated it would be good to have benefits and it is no secret that he asked about them during the hiring process.

Chief Draper is working on what the numbers would look like if the safer grant employees were working

under the ESD or the Department. He also stated that he could prepare the grant under Westlake and the employees could be transferred when the three year term is over. There is still a lot to figure out in regard to how we will handle the grant.

After the recent Westlake by-law changes in which a few people changed the way things have been done, Comm. Copeland is concerned about the ability of the department members to fire the Chief. The District and the Chief have a good relationship. The contract with the ESD and the department was changed in part because the ESD did not want to see egos get in the way. Comm. Copeland would like for the department to review their by-laws.

Comm. Havran discussed funding and financials. The excess funds are just an accounting issue. It was determined that the ESD and the Department should discuss the excess funds at the end of the year and determine what needs to be done at that time each year. The ESD will decide what an acceptable amount is to roll over.

The ESD would like to meet again in January for another workshop. Possibly mid-January.

Workshop was adjourned at 2:50.