

## **Minutes of the February 25, 2021 Commissioners Meeting**

1. **Call to order:** Meeting called to order at 6:33pm
2. **Establishment of a quorum:** Commissioners present in building: Commissioner Mayberry, Commissioner Rankins, Commissioner Anaya. Commissioner Berumen and Commissioner Booth.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge was recited.
4. **Presentations:** None
5. **Review and approve minutes of January 28, 2021 (2) and February 1, 2021 meeting:** Motion to approve minutes as presented made by Commissioner Berumen and seconded by Commissioner Booth. Motion carries.
6. **Election Matters:**

Review and take action on the following matters and Orders relating to conduct an election on the adoption of a sales and use tax in the District under Health and Safety Code §§ 775.0751 and 775.0752:

  - a. Action to approve a contract with the El Paso County Elections office for services relating to the conduct of the election.
  - b. To Consider and take action on such other Orders, Resolutions and related matters as required or appropriate to call for District sales tax Election on May 1, 2021 on the Proposition of allowing the adoption of a District sales and use tax.
  - c. Determine the canvassing date for the May 1, 2021 election.

Sonya Aston from Coveler and Peeler reported that she has been working closely with the elections department and has not received the finalized contract yet. Motion to table item made by Commissioner Anaya and seconded by Commissioner Rankins. Motion carries.
7. **Discussion of update on Community Education Program:** Wendy Duncan from Touchstone reported that they have had some delays with translating the documents into Spanish. She gave the dates of upcoming events that were discussed in the Elections Committee meeting. We all need to promote the website and Community meetings. Item was for discussion only, no action taken.
8. **Review and approve communications report on monthly calls as reported by Horizon City dispatch:** Report was given by Elva Ramos.

- Call numbers reported consist of the following: Alarm – 26, Assistance – 25, Brush Fire – 10, Car Fire – 2, Leaks – 17, Medical – 207, MVA – 22, Structure Fire – 3, Inspections – 23. COVID – Confirmed – 20, PCP - 25
- **Structure Fires**
  - **14352 Desierto Bueno**
    - Dispatch received a call in reference to smoke odor from the furnace at 10:39. The homeowner advised did not have visual on flames or smoke.
    - Horizon and Socorro Fire Departments responded.
    - Q401 enroute at 10:41.
    - P401 on scene at 10:47.
    - AT 11:01, additional responding units were requested to cancel.
    - At 11:20, P401 reported the source of the smell was from the boiler. The boiler was shut off. TX Gas advised the homeowner to contact a plumber.
    - All units cleared at 11:30.
  - **13601 Ryderwood**
    - Dispatch received a call in reference to visual on brown smoke outside the school premise at 15:04.
    - Horizon, Socorro, and Clint Fire Departments responded.
    - P402 enroute 15:04.
    - At 15:07, dispatch received a call stating a dumpster was on fire. The reporting party had visual on flames and smoke.
    - 15:13 water on fire.
    - 15:14 fire contained.
    - Additional responding units were requested to cancel.
    - Fire under control at 15:19.
    - Fire out 15:26.
    - All units cleared at 15:44.
  - **14751 Robeline**
    - Dispatch received several calls in reference to a fully engulfed trailer home and vehicle fire at 11:52. Explosions were also heard.
    - Horizon and Socorro Fire Departments responded.
    - P403 enroute 11:54.
    - SQ404 on scene 12:00.
    - Additional responding units were requested to cancel at 12:02.
    - Fire under control 12:03.
    - Fire out 12:12.
    - Fire investigator requested 12:31.
    - All units cleared at 13:58.
- **Search and Rescue**
  - **22000 Alameda**

- At 22:21, dispatch was notified by CH401 of a body recovery.
- UT402 on the scene at 23:07.
- 4 Water Rescue Members made entry into the water to retrieve the body at 23:20.
- Members out of the water and body retrieved at 23:36.
- All units cleared at 00:07.

- **High Campus/Brooklyn**

- Dispatch received a call in reference to the reporting party advising his truck was stuck in the desert at 21:08.
- UT401 enroute at 21:12.
- CH401 on scene 21:31. CH401 advised he could not locate the caller by the iPhone location and coordinates provided by dispatch.
- CH401 made contact with the caller via public service at 21:38 and obtained a location.
- SQ403 was able to locate the caller and make contact with him at 22:01.
- The callers correct location was in the area of Horizon/Ascencion (2-3 miles off a dirt road).
- At 22:28, the caller was removed from the desert and all units cleared.

- **Structure Fires out of District**

- 410 Camino de la Rosa (San Elizario)
- 4901 Flager (Montana Vista)
- India/Moon (Socorro)
- 10431 Monte Mayor (Socorro)
- 10931 Oden (Socorro)

Motion to approve report made by Commissioner Rankins and seconded by Commissioner Booth. Motion carries.

**9. Review and approve Chief's report on run volume, stipend, training, fleet, personnel, fire response, building construction and additional fire information:** (Report given by Chief Menendez)

- **Calls for the month of January :** 325
- **Station 1 Calls:** 226      **Station 2 Calls:** 99
- **Stipend:** \$49,854.07 (Two periods)
- **Hours:** 4,149.25
- **FMO:** Have had several meetings with Legal and EPEC regarding construction in our district. Legal will elaborate more, Pending a possible A.G. ruling.
- **Training:** Held a live fire training at the EPFD training academy on February 17th. Training has continued, we have had 3 trainings with no issues.
- **CoVID 19:** Infection Control and other staff members are conducting Binex Rapid testing every Monday. As of 02/22/2021 we have no staff out for COVID related illness. Crews responded to 20 confirmed CoVID calls and 25 possible CoVid calls.

- **Fleet:** New Rescue and Utility are in the process of getting equipment installed. Pumper-402 had brake light issue that was fixed, and two new tires replaced. Q401 is out of service unit having starting issues. Rescue 405 is in the shop and getting repaired. Hope to have it back in another two weeks. Pumper 401 has a major leak in the piping that feeds the tank. The unit is not usable, parts are on order. Our fleet is getting order and we need to start thinking about purchasing additional suppression unit.
- **Personnel:** Hired on 9 PFF on February 8<sup>th</sup>. We had a 1 PFF termed for no call no show. Promoted two new red helmets, Porzio and Salvosa. New officers were given their assignments.
- **Fire Response:** Responded to 3 possible fires in district, disposition was minor. 5 possible structure fires out of district for the month of January. We did have two major fires one out at Aviation, an approximate 5000 sq ft house, fire cause is under investigation. Second fire was in Socorro, a double wide prefabricated mobile home. Cause was still under investigation.
- **Building Construction:** Warranty work still be performed at station 2.
- **Misc.:** Drone call out occurred on 2-25-21 to assist Sheriff, and Horizon PD units look for a subject that fled and was hiding on foot in Sparks. Drone pilots Captain Kovach and FST Torres responded and were unable to locate after some time looking.

Commissioner Berumen explained that the Fireman went on a car lock out and did not have a kit. Assistant Chief Ames will investigate and correct the problem. Commissioner Mayberry asked that we make sure that a release is signed by any person that we pull out of the desert when they are stuck. Commissioner Berumen asked about recordings on the drones and making sure that they are recorded and stored properly according to our records retention schedule. The Chief explained in what circumstances he records using the drone and how he stores it. Motion to accept Chief's report made by Commissioner Berumen and seconded by Commissioner Anaya. Motion carries.

**10. Review and approve Fire Marshal's report on operational & construction permits, annual fire safety inspections, new building construction, personnel, training miscellaneous activities & information: (Report given by Fire Marshal Guillen)**

- **Construction and Operational Permits:**
- Total for the 2020 calendar year we have an estimated **37** Construction & Operational Permits.
  - Paid Construction Permits = 13 Total for 2021
  - Paid Operational Permits = 24 Total for 2021

	LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	TOTAL for 2021	TOTAL for 2020
Construction	111 from Dec 2020	13 for Jan	13 for Jan	309
Operational	58 Dec 2020	24 for Jan	24 for Jan	489
Total	169	37	37	798

- **Annual Fire Safety Inspections**
  - 3 = FMO Inspection Results for January 2021. Low #'s due to CoVID-19 restrictions.
    - Annual business inspections ceased due to County Judge's Order #13 and Order #14
  - 1 – On-going Stop Work Orders (SWO) EP Electric Substation at 14681 Triumph.
  - 0 -- Stop Work Orders (SWO) for January
- **New Building Construction**
  - FMO is continuously working with on-going projects: ##% = Completed; UR=Under Review; PR=Permit Released; Comms=Communicating
    - Chapel Hill Apts. = 100%
    - Tire Club = 95%
    - Eastlake Market Ctr. – 85%
    - ELP-1 = 50%
    - Rack Room Shoes = 50%
    - McDonalds = 50%
    - Whataburger = 50%
    - Chipotle = 10%
    - Speedway=20%
    - Specs=PR
    - SISD Combo School = PR
    - Cracker Barrel = Deferred
    - Dairy Queen=Comms
    - City Slice Pizza=PR
    - Mattress Firm=Comms
    - Residential Communities
    - Fire Protection Systems
    - Fire Hydrant distribution
    - Tenant Improvements
- **Personnel**
  - No issues to report...
- **Training**
  - Local and limited TCOLE Training, as required for “mandated” Peace Officer courses.
    - Legislative Updates; Crisis Intervention Training; etc.
  - Virtual Training (EduCode), as required for ICC CE's.
    - (2) participants via virtual conference training -- FM Guillen and AFM Ornelas
- **Miscellaneous Activities & Information**
  - We are still dealing with the on-going issue with EP Electric Co. for building without approved plans & permit at 14681 Triumph (legal to provide update). Working with Legal.

Fire Marshal Guillen asked Mr. Sanchez to give an update on the El Paso Electric stop work order and the meeting they had last week with their legal counsel. Mr. Sanchez gave the board an update on the meeting and the next steps. Motion to approve the report as presented made by Commissioner Rankins and seconded by Commissioner Booth. Motion carries.

- 11. Discussion and take action on Condolence Policy 103.00:** Chief Menendez spoke about the review that Mr. Sanchez had done on the laws regarding gifts and that the flowers for a funeral could be considered to improve employee morale, therefore, is not a gift. The Chief is recommending \$100.00, the amount that would cover the current market cost of flowers. Mr. Sanchez reiterated what the Chief had presented. Motion to accept the policy as presented by Commissioner Booth and seconded by Commissioner Rankins. Motion carries
- 12. Discussion and take action on Employee Cellphone Reimbursement:** Chief Menendez and Mr. Sanchez spoke about the meeting with Tello Cabrera from SBNG and the information on Cellphone reimbursement that Commissioner Rankins had found. After looking at all the information the current reimbursement rate of \$30.00, it was found that the amount is well within the average reimbursement rate. Furthermore, Fiscal Administrator Ames has agreed to audit her cellphone bill for two months to have a base line of use. Motion to take no action on this item was made by Commissioner Berumen and seconded by Commissioner Booth. Motion carries.
- 13. Discussion and take action on Surplus equipment:** Chief Menendez reviewed the list of items on the surplus list. All of the items can no longer be used due to changes in standards and are being recommended to be destroyed. UT-401 is also on the surplus list and the Chief's recommendation is to take it to an auction house that we have used with previous vehicles. Commissioner Rankins asked if we should make a policy about sending all vehicles to auction after all the equipment has been removed from the vehicle. Motion to surplus the items on the list made by Commissioner Rankins and seconded by Commissioner Anaya. Motion carries.
- 14. Discussion and take action on Budget Funds Reallocations:** Fiscal Administrator presented the budget reallocation in the amount of \$945.00 from account 5900.01 to account 9001.01. Motion to approve reallocation made by Commissioner Rankins and seconded by Commissioner Booth. Motion carries.
- 15. Discussion and take action on ESD #1 Letter head:** Chief Menendez would like to have a new ESD letter head to use for external correspondence on the behalf of the department. The letterhead presented also recognizes the Commissioners serving on the board. Commissioner Mayberry asked if "Home of the Horizon Fire Department" could be added to the letterhead. Fiscal Administrator Ames cautioned against this because this letterhead is for the government entity and should only reflect our legal name. Mr. Sanchez agreed and recommended it just have our legal name. Each Commissioner weighed in on the discussion and the consensus was to leave it as presented without the mention of the Horizon Fire Department. Motion to approve the new letterhead made by Commissioner Anaya and seconded by Commissioner Berumen. Motion carries.
- 16. Discussion and take action on animal home window decals:** 1-800-Board-up has come up with a window decal for homeowners to use to indicate the kind and number of pets living in the residents. The sticker can be helpful to the Firefighters when responding to calls at homes with pets. Chief also thought we could pass the stickers out when we are doing walk the blocks for the Election education program. Commissioner Anaya also suggested that they be given out at the local Veterinarian's offices and animal stores. These stickers are at no cost to the department. Motion to approve as presented by Commissioner Anaya and seconded by Commissioner Berumen. Motion carries.

- 17. Discussion and take action on MOU with Town of Horizon:** Chief Menendez presented the Amendment to the CARES document that would allow us to use the unspent funds from the December distribution. There is a possibility there may be more funding in addition to what was originally allocated to us in the near future. Motion to approve the amendment made by Commissioner Booth and seconded by Commissioner Berumen. Motion carries.
- 18. Discussion and take action on purchase of new AC/Heating units for Station #1:** Fiscal Administrator Ames presented a summary of the request for quotes for the replacement AC/Heater units. She sent requests to 11 companies and received 2 on time quotes. Mrs. Ames recommended that the board approve the quote for King's Aire in the amount of \$49,990.00. Motion to approve the bid made by Commissioner Berumen and seconded by Commissioner Anaya. Motion carries.
- 19. Discussion and take action on purchase of new property:** Chief Menendez has been consulting with a real estate agent about properties for the ESD building. He reported on three properties that range from \$4.00 per square to \$13.00 per square foot. The land behind our station is owned by the Federal Government and he will do some research on this. Sample finance packets were presented based on the cost of the land and it is estimated that our payments would range from \$100,000.00 to \$200,000.00 per year. Commissioner Mayberry spoke about the pros and cons to the different land size options and costs. Chief Menendez spoke about the cost of renting a suite in shopping center would be about \$50,000.00 per year and that is without renovations. Commissioner Berumen stated that we should definitely move quickly as the cost of land continues to increase. Commissioner Mayberry would like to see a lot of about 5 acres. Commissioner Berumen also asked that the Chief should inquire about availability of utility services and easements when looking at properties. Motion made to table this item made by Commissioner Anaya and seconded by Commissioner Berumen. Motion carries.
- 20. Discussion and take action on Training props:** Chief Menendez stated that the intent of the Conex box was to build a training maze in it. A quote for materials was presented in the amount of \$7,047.00. The props would be built by Captain Kovach and the Fire fighters. The money would come from account 6900.01. Motion to approve as presented made by Commissioner Booth and seconded by Commissioner Rankins. Motion carries.
- 21. Discussion and take action on purchase and installation of new phones at Station #1:** The quote presented from Casta-Comm to add red dispatch phones at Station #1. This would give dispatch a direct loan to Station 1 and vice versa. These phones were installed at Station #2 so this is to make both Stations have the same capabilities. The quote is for \$2,759.00 that will come from account 9001.01. Motion to approve quote made by Commissioner Anaya and seconded by Commissioner Berumen. Motion carries.
- 22. Discussion and take action on Election printing expense:** Chief Menendez is asking that the board approve the \$35,000.00 budgeted amount for Election printing expenses to be used over the next few months. Motion to approve the funds for Election printing and advertising costs made by Commissioner Berumen and seconded by Commissioner

Booth. Motion carries.

**23. Discussion and take action on purchase of Fire Equipment:** Chief Menendez presented the following quotes:

- Western Shed – This is to replace the aged shed at Station #1 to a much larger building to help store equipment and supplies for the department. The amount of \$10,159.00 will come from account 9500.01 which was originally allocated for a roof access ladder, but a shed is a priority over the ladder. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Booth and seconded by Commissioner Rankins. Motion carries.
- MES – A quote was presented in the amount of \$3,706.10 for a mobile air cart and a quote in the amount of \$1,260.00 for red fleece bags to store the new SCBA masks in. It is proposed that both purchases be made from account 9500.01 for the total cost of \$4,966.10. Motion to approve both quotes made by Commissioner Anaya and seconded by Commissioner Berumen.
- W.S. Darley – A quote was presented for 2 new saws in the amount of \$3,636.00 from account 9500.01. The Chief has found that with the opening of Station #2 that we are short saws at Station #1 and this is to outfit both stations with the same equipment. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Rankins and seconded by Commissioner Anaya.
- RTC – A quote to replace broken and damaged headsets for the vehicles was presented in the amount of \$4,233.00 to be purchased from account 9000.02. Motion to approve expenditure made by Commissioner Berumen and seconded by Commissioner Booth. Motion carries.

**Executive Session:** No Executive Session

**Regular Session:**

**24. For the Good of the District:** Chief Menendez reported that Q-401 is back in service at this time. Also, Assist Chief Ames attended the Horizon Regional MUD board meeting and just learned that they will be putting a bond issue on the May Ballot. Fiscal Administrator will send emails and text messages notifying the board of upcoming election events. We are also asking for catch phrases to go on the banners that will be placed in our district. Commissioner Mayberry thanked all the Commissioners for signing checks each week. Commissioner Berumen thanked the board for approving the expense on the agenda for election printing and advertising.

**25. Set date and time for next meeting in March:** The next meeting will be March 25, 2021

**26. Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Anaya. Meeting was adjourned at 8:59 P.M.

Submitted by: Katherine Ames, Fiscal Administrator

Reviewed by: Cheri Bridges, Administrative Assistant