

**MINUTES OF DECEMBER 1, 2025 MEETING OF
ECTOR COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 1
&
ECTOR COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 2**

A public meeting was duly called by the Board of Commissioners of **Ector County Emergency Services Districts No. 1 & 2** on **December 1, 2025**, which was held at the **Kellus Turner Park Community Center**, located at **2261 W. Sycamore Dr., Odessa, Texas 79763**.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by **John Turner**, Board President, who stated a quorum was present. Those Commissioners present included:

John Turner	Present
Kevin Searcy	Present
Randy Lighfoot	Present
Heather Burks	Present
Patti Kappauf	Present

Also present at the meeting were Precinct 1 Commissioner Mike Gardner, Director Jeff Avery, Fire Chief Jason Cotton, Katie Norris of RIT Financial (attending remotely), Ira Coveler and Melissa Wiggins of Coveler & Peeler, P.C. (attending remotely), and other members of the public attending in person.

TO RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT.

The Board opened the floor to public comment. First to speak was Ms. Dana Weist who stated she had not been included on the meeting agenda after requesting information from Board members at the last meeting. Ms. Weist questioned whether two (2) or three (3) stations would be built as the current budget appeared to conflict with the earlier promise of more than two (2) stations. Mr. **Searcy** clarified that construction of two (2) stations was planned for 2026, though more stations could be built afterwards, depending on the budget and District revenues. No concrete timeline or locations had been established at this time, but were under consideration by the Board. Ms. Weist then asked if all Board meetings would occur in West Odessa and was told that meetings could be held elsewhere, though the Kellus Turner Park Community Center had been designated as the District's administrative address, especially for meetings like the annual budget and tax setting meetings.

Next to speak was Mr. Austin Harden who informed the Board that West Odessa Fire Department was looking forward to an upcoming two (2) acre property donation to construct the West Odessa Fire Station. He then stated a new tanker pumper was coming in to be part of the Department's fleet, along with the new ladder truck platform. He expressed the goal for the Department and ESDs to work together, and keep an open dialogue related to services.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR DISTRICT USE.

Ira advised that discussion related to specific sites would be held in Closed Session, but discussion of general areas could be held in Open Session.

Mrs. **Kappauf** and Mr. **Lightfoot** have been investigating a property in West Odessa as a possible site for a fire station to be constructed. The Meadow Lake property is county owned and contains twelve (12) acres with a retention pond that will be constructed. They have met with county officials to obtain more information regarding the acquisition and use of the property by the ESD for use as a fire/EMS facility. The site is adjacent to a school. Traffic patterns and pedestrian traffic are a concern. Mr. **Searcy** supplied drone footage was observed that showed time lapse footage of afternoon pickup time at the school.

County Commissioner Mike Gardner, pct 1, spoke and expressed the need for a traffic study in the proposed area. Mr. Gardner also thanked the ESD board for their time and commitment to assist all areas within the ETJ to receive services in the coming years. He also reiterated that the Commissioner's Court is supportive of the ESD and willing to help however they are able.

Jeff Avery, Public Works Director for Ector County, presented traffic accident data for the area in question. Mr. Avery addressed the possibility of traffic lights in the area but noted that they are expensive at \$450-500k. Mr. Searcy asked about the floodplain in the area and Mr. Avery explained that is the reason for the retention pond which would encompass approximately two (2) acres. Mr. **Searcy** also asked if there was room to widen the street. Mr. Avery stated that there is room to widen Meadow Lake Avenue.

Mr. **Searcy** asked Chief Jason Cotton his views on widening the streets and how that may impact operations of the station. Chief Cotton said that the street would need to have "no parking zones" on either side of that street. Mr. **Searcy** asked Chief Cotton to briefly explain the Dark Horse data that assigns future station locations based on current response data. According to the data, the addition of a new station in the Meadow Lake area would affect the response times positively for West Odessa. Mr. **Searcy** inquired if Dark Horse would be able to differentiate city response times and rural response times to create accurate data for comparisons. Chief Cotton replied that he was sure that was possible. Mr. **Searcy** asked Chief Cotton if a smaller, satellite EMS-only station in the west area would be acceptable. Chief Cotton replied no because it would need to be a six (6) man fully staffed station and that takes away from other station needs. He stated that everyone on the fire truck is either a paramedic or EMT and the only thing that the fire truck does not have that an ambulance has is a cot. A fire truck can do everything treatment wise that an ambulance can. Mr. **Searcy** asked about having an ambulance within the VFD's to cover the transportation of patient issue. Chief Cotton replied that saving lives is the ultimate goal and that he does not have the experience to answer the question about how a combination department may or may not work out. Mrs. **Kappauf** expressed concern about relationships between the VFD and OFR personnel. Chief Cotton replied that if everyone is on the same page regarding treatment of situations and patients, there are no issues.

Judge Dustin Fawcett spoke of how the County Commissioner's Court is supportive of the work of the ESD and that public safety is the priority. He encouraged the board to continue to deeply explore the location options for the stations and to consider future needs while mapping out station locations.

No action was taken by the Board at this time.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING LONG-TERM PLANNING AND FACILITIES MATTERS RELATED TO ECTOR COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 1 AND ECTOR COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 2.

No action was taken by the Board.

TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORTS, AND TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON FINANCIAL MATTERS AND TO PAY DISTRICT BILLS.

Ms. Katie Norris presented the financial report for the Districts noting bank balances as of December 1, 2025 in the following amounts:

1. ESD 1 - \$320,168.46
2. ESD 2 - \$319,391.77

Ms. Norris also provided a summary total of legal invoices to both Districts, requesting action to pay those legal invoices from June through October, in the total combined amount of \$66,178.51. She then addressed invoices to the Districts from Ector County, each in the amount of \$5,453. Invoices for bookkeeping services would be provided beginning in January, per their service agreement. After review, Mr. **Turner** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Searcy**, to approve payment of invoices from Ector County and Coveler & Peeler, P.C. as presented.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING ANY NEEDED BUDGET AMENDMENTS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE ECTOR COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT FEES THAT ARE CHARGED TO THE DISTRICTS.

Mr. **Searcy** next addressed amendments to the District budgets, including the imposition of quarterly tax assessment fees from the county in the amount of \$54,650 per year for each District. He briefly reviewed figures which had been updated compared to the original proposed and adopted budgets. Mrs. **Kappauf** requested clarification regarding ownership of the budget, especially related to the role of Board Treasurer, and the amendment process itself. She asked if the budget could be handled by Mr. **Lightfoot** and Ms. Norris given their roles. Mr. Coveler advised that any Commissioner could submit amendments to the budgets for Board consideration and approval. Mrs. **Kappauf** restated that while others had originally developed the budget, it made sense for the Treasurer to handle the budget.

Ms. Norris informed the Board that future reports would include a monthly budget report including a profit and loss report and budget to actual comparison for each District. Mr. **Lightfoot** then stated Ms. Norris had not been added to the District bank accounts due to scheduling issues

with Frost Bank, though that would hopefully be addressed the following week. He also requested to receive bank statements when they were sent to legal counsel.

Mrs. **Kappauf** next questioned the estimates for service contracts in the amended budget which listed \$1,250,000 per District, rather than the agreed upon contract price of \$1,000,000 per year. Mr. **Searcy** explained that the \$250,000 represented a reserve to cover the last quarter of 2026 since the Districts were responsible for paying the 4th quarter of 2025, along with three (3) quarters of 2026 before restarting the fiscal year in October 2026. Addressing the need for fourth quarter funding early in the budget would create a reserve to ensure that quarter's payment was available when needed.

Mr. **Searcy** lastly addressed the addition of fees related to bookkeeping services for both Districts which would be paid on a monthly basis. After discussion, Mrs. **Kappauf** made a Motion, seconded by Ms. **Burks**, to approve the budget amendments as presented. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION RELATED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICT INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS WITH TEXAS CLASS AND TEXPOOL.

Ms. Norris next advised the Board regarding investment pool accounts through Texas Class, and TexPool. Ms. Norris recommended establishing a Texas Class account as they were easy to work with, and maintained stable interest rates. When asked, she stated the set-up process for an account usually took around two (2) weeks, from the time she received a signed Board resolution, to the time the account was opened. Funds in a Texas Class account could be moved within the hour on any business day prior to 4:00 p.m. and could be moved from the investment account, outside of the District accounts to vendors or to pay bills as necessary. Mr. Coveler informed the Board that TexPool, which was governed by the state Comptroller, did not allow transfers outside of District accounts, though both investment pools were bound by the Texas Public Funds Investment Act.

Ms. Norris then added that more information could be presented on a monthly basis from Texas Class, which would be included with the monthly bank statements and balance sheets for each account, including interest rate information for the month. Mr. **Searcy** asked if the investment account was considered a "reserve", and was told that it was a reserve, though at least three (3) months of operating funds should be kept in the regular District accounts. That figure, or any adopted by the Board, would also be notated in the District Investment Policy. Mrs. **Kappauf** questioned the requirement to hold funds in reserve, though Mr. Coveler advised that funds in TexPool or Texas Class were more flexible as they were not otherwise dedicated to CDs or other fixed investments.

After discussion, Mr. **Lightfoot** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Turner**, to adopt the District Investment Policy as discussed with three (3) months emergency funds held in District accounts, and for Ms. Norris to set up District accounts with the Texas Class investment pool. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0, with Mrs. **Kappauf** abstaining.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING INVESTMENT POLICIES FOR THE DISTRICTS.

No action was taken at this time.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING(S).

The Board next reviewed the November 3, 2025 meeting minutes. After review, Mr. **Searcy** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Turner**, to approve the minutes as presented. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0 with Mrs. **Kappauf** abstaining.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING ADOPTION, AMENDMENT AND EXPLANATION OF DISTRICT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES.

- a. Tax Abatement Policy
- b. Records Retention & Digital Records Management

Mr. **Searcy** advised the Board that information for the Tax Abatement Policy was included in the Board packet, and offered to table discussion of the policy for further review, discussion, and revision. He stated the policy was similar to the county's policy, but allowed the Districts more latitude since their policy would only apply to the District's territory in the ETJ. At this time, Mr. **Lightfoot** made a Motion, seconded by Ms. **Burks**, to table action on the tax abatement policy for further discussion. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

Mr. Coveler then informed the Board that his office was working to develop an appropriate records policy, but advised that other records such as email and text messages if related to District business, should also be maintained according to state retention schedules. Ms. Wiggins also advised that to maintain records in text messages, screen shots could be saved to maintain those records. The Board was also reminded that using personal cell phones for business purposes could make those phones subject to the Public Information Act. Mr. **Lightfoot** then suggested obtaining District cell phones for Commissioners to avoid that conflict, and to make records retention easier. Using official District phones would also give Board members the option to communicate with the community without providing private information. At this time, Mrs. **Kappauf** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Searcy**, to seek information and pricing related to obtaining cell phones for each Board member, to be discussed and acted upon in a future meeting. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

At this time, Mrs. **Kappauf** requested the Board return to Agenda Item No. 8 to address the Investment Policy. Mr. Coveler explained that the Board Treasurer would be appointed as the Investment Officer, though others could be appointed as liaisons or facilitators. Mrs. **Kappauf** stated the Board's intention to name Mr. **Lightfoot** and Ms. Norris to manage District funds. After discussion, Mrs. **Kappauf** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Lightfoot**, to name Katie Norris as the Districts' Investment Facilitator to act under the direction of the Treasurer regarding bank and financial matters with all authorizations as needed. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF NEEDED DISTRICT COMMITTEES.

Mr. Coveler then advised that the Board should identify and officially appoint Committee members as needed to address issues including real estate, investments, and negotiations, which had been discussed but not formally established several months prior. After discussion, the Board agreed to table appointments of the real estate and negotiation committees for further discussion in Closed Session. At this time, Mrs. **Kappauf** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Searcy**, to appoint Mr. **Lightfoot**, Mr. **Turner**, and Ms. Norris to the Districts' Investment Committee. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM UPCOMING REGULAR AND SPECIAL MEETING DATES, AND TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON ANY DISTRICT MATTERS WHICH NEED TO BE INCLUDED ON THOSE AGENDAS.

Mrs. **Kappauf** then advised the Board that a calendar for meetings in 2026 should be considered, echoing the transparency of other taxing entities in the area. A draft of that calendar would be included in the January meeting packet for review and consideration, allowing the Board to avoid potential holiday and scheduling conflicts down the road. The Board then confirmed the next meeting for Monday, January 5, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

TO REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH LINEBARGER GOGGAN BLAIR & SAMPSON, LLP, PURSUANT TO §6.30 OF THE TAX CODE FOR THE COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT DISTRICT AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES.

Mr. Coveler explained that the law firm Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP ("Linebarger") worked with Ector County to collect delinquent property taxes throughout the county. He suggested that the Districts engage with Linebarger to also collect delinquent taxes on their behalf. Ms. Wiggins noted that a Linebarger representative had advised that based on the Districts' Interlocal Agreements, delinquent tax collections were most likely handled by the county, rather than through Linebarger directly. Mr. Coveler requested approval for the contract with Linebarger to interact with them directly, pending review of the Districts' ILAs. At this time, Mr. **Searcy** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Turner**, to engage with the law firm Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP to in whatever means necessary including engaging in a contract for delinquent tax collections. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE §551.071 TO CONSULT WITH LEGAL COUNSEL.

At this time, Mrs. **Kappauf** made a Motion, seconded by Ms. **Burks**, to enter into Closed Session at 9:04 p.m. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0, and the Board entered into Closed Session to consult with legal counsel.

TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE §551.072 TO DELIBERATE REGARDING REAL ESTATE MATTERS.

The Board convened in Closed Session at 9:04 p.m.

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 9:58 p.m.

TO REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO REAL ESTATE OR OTHER MATTERS AS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION.

No action was taken by the Board.

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business brought before the Board, Mr. **Lightfoot** made a Motion, seconded by Mr. **Searcy**, to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 p.m. Thereafter, the Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

The foregoing minutes were passed and approved by the Board of Commissioners on January 5, 2026.

ECTOR COUNTY EMERGENCY
SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 1

By: 

District Secretary

ECTOR COUNTY EMERGENCY
SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 2

By: 

District Secretary