



Bandera, Uvalde, Medina, and Real County – Utopia/Vanderpool Area Emergency Services District No.1

Minutes of March 19, 2020 Regular Meeting

**Meeting Location: Utopia Volunteer Fire Department,
485 Main Street, Utopia, (Uvalde County), Texas. 78884.**

Commissioners attending: Al Buckner, Chad Hillis, Bill Cockerill, Karen Heideman, Josef Richarz

Commissioners not attending: None

Visitors: Rhonda Garafano, Tyler Rich, Jim Cantrell

- 1. Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by **Buckner** and a quorum was established at 7:02 p.m.
- 2. Invocation:** The invocation was given by **Richarz**.
- 3. Citizens communications:** Rhonda Garafano and Tyler Rich. They spoke on a later agenda item.
- 4. Departmental reports:**

Utopia Volunteer Fire – Richarz turned over the report to Cantrell, the chief, who reported that four firefighters had completed spring training. The department received a private donation of \$15,000 toward half of the bunker gear. There are now 21 firefighters. The station has been cleaned and sanitized. Two trainings had been conducted and extrication training is scheduled in May involving Utopia Fire, Vanderpool Fire and Utopia EMS.

Vanderpool Volunteer Fire – Buckner reported that things had been relatively quiet other than one big grass fire that involved seven departments.

Utopia EMS – Cockerill turned over the report to Garafano, the EMS administrator, who reported that the EMT basic class had started last night and that four of the students would hopefully join the department. Eight medics had trained on emergency scene and safety. Protocols had been issued on corona virus cases. She said the community auction, which had been scheduled for April, had been

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postponed due to corona virus concerns. The auction would have benefited the Utopia EMS, Utopia Volunteer Fire Department and the Utopia Park Board.



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5. Minutes of previous ESD Board of Directors meeting, corrections and approval:

Hillis moved to approve minutes as presented. *Heideman* seconded. Motion carried.

6. Treasurer's report and approval to pay ESD bills: *Heideman* reported that the ESD had received about \$197,000 of the \$215,000 allocated for tax revenues. More revenues were anticipated and expenses were on target. *Hillis* made motion to accept financial report as presented and to pay bills. *Cockerill* seconded. Motion carried. Financial report attached.

7. Discussion and action on distribution of funds to service providers: *Heideman* made the motion to approve a disbursement of funds to service providers. *Cockerill* seconded. Motion passed. The disbursement totaled \$199,928, including Utopia EMS, \$94,966; Utopia Fire, \$56,979; and Vanderpool Fire, \$37,987.

8. Discussion and action on the ESD being the single source of payments for the web sites of the ESD, EMS and two fire departments: *Buckner* reported in the past that he would send separate bills to the ESD and three service providers. He said it would be more convenient to submit one annual bill to the ESD covering all the entities. The bill is approximately \$130 annually. *Cockerill* made the motion to consolidate the payments. *Richarz* seconded. Motion carried.

9. Discussion and action on adopting an ESD calendar for filing requirements as well as deadlines for service providers to comply with contractual items: *Buckner* reviewed the


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calendar that includes election and state report deadlines. **Heideman** made a motion to approve the calendar. **Hillis** seconded the motion. Motion passed. The calendar is attached.

10. Discussion and action on funding directly from the ESD for the departments' use of "Radio Over IP" instead of all three departments having to pay separately for the service: **Buckner**

asked Ty Rich to review the program, which allows cell phones to function as radios in hearing and responding to calls. Rich said this would be helpful in areas where radio signals are poor. The cost would be \$2,000 for each year plus \$6 per user per month. **Buckner** noted that not every member of each department would need the service, maybe only two to three. Rhonda Garafano of Utopia EMS said they are not interested in the program, as it was expensive and would reduce ESD funding for other services. Jim Cantrell, chief of Utopia Fire, said he can see lots of benefits for the service. He said perhaps interested service providers could fund the program on their own, not through the ESD, in order to answer EMS concerns. **Cockerill** said **Buckner** had previously stated that the ESD would fund the program only if all three service providers were interested. **Buckner** agreed. **Richarz** made a motion to table action on the item. **Hillis** seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Signed: 
Bill Cockerill, Secretary

Approval Date: 4/16/2020

Signed: 
Board President or Vice President

Al Buckner – President ♦ **Chad Hillis** – Vice President ♦ **Karen Heideman** – Treasurer
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