

*Minutes*

*VILLAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING*

*Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 6:00 P.M.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

A regular fire commission meeting of the Village Fire Department was held on March 27, 2024, at 901 Corbindale Houston, Texas 77024. It began at 6:00 p.m. and was presided over by Matt Woodruff. The secretary was present.

**Present & Voting Were:**

City of Hedwig Village  
City of Bunker Hill Village  
City of Spring Valley Village  
City of Piney Point Village  
City of Hunters Creek  
City of Hilshire Village

Commissioner Matt Woodruff, Chair  
Commissioner Keith Brown, Vice Chair (6:05)  
Commissioner Henry Kollenberg, Treasurer  
Commissioner Allen Carpenter, Secretary  
Commissioner Rob Adams, Member (6:15)  
Commissioner Robert (Bob) Buesinger, Member (6:07)

**Present Were:**

City of Hedwig Village  
City of Piney Point Village  
City of Spring Valley Village  
City of Hilshire Village  
Village Fire Department

Alternate Mayor Tom Jinks  
Alternate Aliza Dutt (6:32)  
Alternate John Lisenby  
Alternate Mike Garofalo  
Interim Fire Chief, Howard Miller  
Administrative Staff, Marlo Longoria & Katherine Stuart  
Attorney Brandon Morris  
Auditor, Robert Belt  
TMRS, Kenneth Oliver

Randle Law Firm  
Belt Harris Pechacek  
Texas Municipal Retirement System

**Not Present Were:**

City of Bunker Hill Village  
City of Hunters Creek

Alternate Clara Towsley  
Alternate Fidel Sapien

Commissioner Woodruff requests that Agenda Item 7b be taken out of order. Commissioner Kollenberg moved and was seconded by Commissioner Buesinger.

**Motion passed unanimously**

**7b. Robert Belt's presentation of the special audit (*article 1*)**

Mr. Robert Belt Certified Public Accountant stated that the Board had approved the proposed new scope of work in November 2023 for the 2022 special audit. He presented the timeline of requests, findings, and best practices for the department.

**Budget Amendments** - Budget amendments were presented as the updated total amended budget amount rather than presenting the specific amounts that were being changed. Because the change is the primary issue being considered for approval, the dollar amount of the change should be specifically stated. When presenting budget amendments for approval, the best practice would be to

present the original budget, the requested change (the amendment), the final amended budget, and an explanation for why the change was necessary.

Budget preparation - He also stated that in some instances the original budget was prepared in less detail than the general ledger. Presentation of the budget and general ledger at the same level of detail facilitates a comparison of the actual results to the budget and aids the department in identifying where differences are occurring.

**Budget Amendments and Authorization** – Minutes showed approval of budget amendments.

**Budget Amendments and Authorization – per the interlocal** – Interlocal Agreement and budget amendment were being followed.

*Letters of Authorization* – Best practice is that the department should keep a copy of any letters of Authorization from the participating cities.

**Budget Compliance**- The Department expenditures exceeded the final budget amount authorized in most line items, which does not appear to conform to the interlocal agreement. While the total budget expense variances, after including offsetting fuel revenue, were a favorable \$83,274, the legal level of budgetary control appears to be at the expense line-item level of the final amended budget as approved by the participating cities.

It appears important to note that while \$83,274 was the overall favorable budget to actual variance, the reason for the positive variance was that the Department did not incur planned capital outlay expenses, which resulted in a positive variance of \$220,779 for capital outlay. The reason why this is relevant is that most operating expenses tend to be reoccurring each year, whereas capital outlay tends to be large one-time purchases. Accordingly, resolving an excessive operating expense by forgoing planned capital purchases likely results in pushing a disparity in operating expense to revenue imbalance in future years.

Discussion on the draft Special Audit and budget practices continued.

Commissioner Woodruff stated the cities set the rules and the commission has to abide by them, therefore, we have to put policies and procedures into place that ensure we have appropriate controls in place, and we comply with the interlocal agreement.

## 7a. Texas Municipal Retirement System

Mr. Kenneth Oliver presented the current Village Fire Department benefit overview, an overview of the new bill signed by Governor Abbot (*Article 2*), and what Updated Services Credit (USC) means to Village Fire Department. (*Article 3*).

Effective May 27, 2023, different type of COLA calculations the Texas Legislature amended the TMRS Act to provide participating cities with a new repeating COLA option. (*Article 2*)

Information Updated Service Credit (*Article 3*)

### **1. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Comments are limited to 3 minutes each)**

None

### **2. CONSENT AGENDA** – All Consent Agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the Board of Commissioners and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Board Member requests, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

#### **A. Approval of Minutes –**

3-27-2024

Village Fire Department

Regular Monthly Board Meetings

- Minutes - February 24, 2024 – Regular Monthly Meeting

**B. Approval of Bills Paid –**

- February 2024

Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the items presented in the consent agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Adams.

**4. REPORTS and POSSIBLE ACTION**

- A. Steering Committee report and possible action –** Alternate Lisenby presented the following information main roof discussion.

Roof – any items related to the roof

Commissioner Brown made a motion to ratify a motion on the action made last week with respect to the roof, seconded by Commissioner Carpenter.

- B. Treasurer’s Financial Reports – February 2024**

Commissioner Kollenberg presented the Treasurer’s Financial Report for February 2024. He stated that he would recommend the staff send out the monthly report received from Oliver Rainey & Wojtek, LLP (ORW) to the commission when received.

- C. Fire Chief’s Report – Events of February 2024, Monthly Performance; Staffing, Record of Calls, Response Times, etc.**

**1. Staffing**

Captain DePaul injured his right arm and had surgery. He is on light duty.

Jeremy Royster had surgery on his knee. His physical therapy is going well.

The new hire process is underway to fill two vacancies.

**2. Apparatus and Equipment**

- Engine 1 was taken to the shop for preventative maintenance.

- Ladder 1 had a flat on one of the front tires.

**3. Major incidents**

3/16/2024 Hedwig House Fire

**February 2024 Incidents**

Fire Incidents: 69

EMS type Incidents: 78

Service Calls Non-Emergency: 17

HFD Calls: 17

Total incidents: 181

Average Response Time: 4 Minutes 17 Seconds

EMS 1st response time: (Natl Standard is 6:30)

Fire: (Natl Standard is 6:50)

4. Major Projects (2024):

Main Roof: Still working out the details before the work can begin.

Finance Consultant Clair Bogard is working with the staff to provide financial guidance and best practices.

Hydrant Testing: Hunters Creek Village is all that is left.

Business Pre-fire Planning has started for this year.

Buffalo Bayou Regatta. Village FD and SVPD water rescue teams assisted.

Get to know your fire department event, 6:00 pm.

5. Other activities

6. Discussion and consideration items:

Dispatch solution to staffing shortage and issues with upcoming shortage. (Agenda Item)

TMRS (Agenda Item)

**5. CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS** – The Board will discuss and consider possible action on the following:

**C. Oliver Rainey & Wojtek, LLP – engagement letter 2024-2025**

Commissioner Woodruff stated the village fire will continue with the accountant on a month-to-month basis until we decide the VFD needs them on a long-term basis.

No action was taken.

**D. Clair Bogard – agreement**

No action was taken

**6. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS-** The Board will discuss and consider possible action on the following:

None

**7. DISCUSSION ITEMS/PRESENTATION OF SPECIAL REPORTS** - The Board will discuss and consider possible action on the following:

Agenda items were taken out of order and moved to the beginning of the meeting.

**A. Texas Municipal Retirement System**

**B. Robert Belt – Special Audit**

**8. DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING** - The Board will discuss and consider possible action on the following:

**A. 2023 Carryover – US Digital**

3-27-2024  
Village Fire Department  
Regular Monthly Board Meetings

Marlo Longoria presented the information on the US Digital invoice and stated the \$21,732.30 is a 2023 expense and it will be paid in 2024.

No action was taken.

**B. Part-time dispatcher**

Commissioner Woodruff suggested that the commission consider authorizing the Fire Chief to hire part-time dispatcher(s) as long as not one of them exceeds the terms the council specified.

Commissioner Adams requested an update on the potential dispatch partnership with Memorial Village PD.

Chief Miller stated he is still looking into combining dispatch and the possible cost of equipment. The original quote was \$260,000. He stated he did however find out that MVPD still has their Motorola equipment, so he is going to see if it is compatible. The department is only given one unit of HFD's equipment, so that equipment will need to be where the console is located.

The VFD council, Mr. Morris stated in the offer letter that there needs to be a specific language that defines the part-time guidelines such as the hours and eligibility. He stated the departmental guidelines don't differentiate between full-time and Part-time employees.

Chief Miller stated that the employee guidelines will be posted on SharePoint and the guidelines will be updated accordingly.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to authorize the Fire Chief to hire part-time dispatcher(s) as needed subject to the part-time dispatcher working no more than 30 hours a week or 1000 hours within the given year of their employment. Seconded by Commissioner Buesinger.

**Motion passed unanimously**

**9. EXECUTIVE SESSION - The Board of Commissioners will retire into Executive Session as authorized by Chapter 551; Texas Government Code, to seek legal advice related to the following matters:**

Commissioner Woodruff requested to table 9A moved by Commissioner Brown, and seconded by Commissioner Buesinger

**Motion passed unanimously**

- A.** Executive session pursuant to Section 551.074 authorizing a governmental body to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee to:

- (1) Finance Position
- (2) Administrator
- (3) Administrative Specialist

**10. ACTION – CLOSED SESSION** – The Board of Directors will reconvene in open session to consider and take any actions necessary on items discussed in Executive Session

No action

**11. FUTURE TOPICS**

Commissioner Woodruff requested any future items be submitted before the next meeting.

3-27-2024  
Village Fire Department  
Regular Monthly Board Meetings

**12. NEXT MEETING DATE**

April 24, 2024

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Woodruff asked for a motion to adjourn at 8:08 p.m. Commissioner Carpenter moved, seconded by Commissioner Buesinger.

Audit link to 3/27/2024

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/3zf2QbQlYE8p3VMKNymoMs7E9Z3\\_RF8wq8idPMn9hjxyd\\_aLGrGunTrbbgzA3VGWo-2r\\_jIQiBvz-HY.kJZGBERarI5BDL9b](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/3zf2QbQlYE8p3VMKNymoMs7E9Z3_RF8wq8idPMn9hjxyd_aLGrGunTrbbgzA3VGWo-2r_jIQiBvz-HY.kJZGBERarI5BDL9b)

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