

**VILLAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 6:00 P.M**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

A regular fire commission meeting of the Village Fire Department was held on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at 901 Corbindale, Houston, Texas 77024. It began at 6:02 p.m. and was presided over by Chair Dan Ramey. The secretary was present.

**Present & Voting Were:**

|                               |                                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| City of Piney Point Village   | Commissioner Dan Ramey, Chair         |
| City of Spring Valley Village | Commissioner John Lisenby, Vice Chair |
| City of Hilshire Village      | Alternate Mike Garofalo               |
| City of Hedwig Village        | Alternate Patrick Breckon             |
| City of Hunters Creek         | Alternate John DeWitt                 |
| City of Bunker Hill Village   | Commissioner Josh Pratt               |

**Present Were:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| City of Bunker Hill Village                     | Alternate Clara Towsley  |
| City of Piney Point Village                     | Alternate Henry Kollenberg   |
| City of Spring Valley Village                   | Alternate Steve Bass   |
| Village Fire Department<br>Administrative Staff | Fire Chief, Brian Croft<br>Amy Buckert, Administrator/Finance<br>Director<br>Katherine Stuart, Administrative Specialist |
| Randle Law Firm                                 | Attorney Brandon Morris  |

**Not Present Were:**

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| City of Hedwig Village   | Commissioner Matt Woodruff        |
| City of Hilshire Village | Mayor Bob Buesinger, Secretary    |
| City of Hunters Creek    | Commissioner Rob Adams, Treasurer |

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLIGIANCE/PRAYER**

The Pledge of Allegiance and prayer were recited.

**3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – Comments are limited to 3 minutes each.**

**4. 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 – Regular Monthly Board Meeting Minutes March 2026
- B.** Approval of Bills Paid – March 2026

There was a motion to approve the consent agenda.

**Motion:** Lisenby  
**Second:** Pratt

The motion passed unanimously.

5. **REPORTS**

- A. Financial Report – March 2026 (Buckert)
- B. Administrator’s Report – March 2026 (Buckert)
- C. Investment Report – March 2026 (Buckert)
- D. Fire Chief’s Report – March 2026 (Croft)
- E. Emergency Management Update (Croft)
- F. VMIG Update (Stuart/Thomas)
- G. Post-meeting: Door Breach Demo

The Administrator reported that financials are tracking well, with the organization approximately 25% through the fiscal year and expenditures generally at or below budget expectations.

Draft audit numbers are currently under review in coordination with the auditors and ORW. Minor follow-up questions related to payroll accruals and calculation methods have been addressed. There are no unexpected or material adjusting journal entries identified, and the audit is anticipated to be completed in time for May.

No internal control issues have been identified to date, a significant improvement over past years.

Cybersecurity training compliance remains in progress, with 3 of 12 completed. Additional reminders will be sent.

Investment performance was reviewed:

- Texas CLASS: approximately 3.78%, trending downward with market conditions
- Stellar account: approximately 2.58%

Transfers are made monthly following receipt of city revenues, in accordance with established thresholds determined by the investment committee.

The Chief provided an overview of operations, community engagement, and departmental initiatives.

The Chief specifically recognized administrative staff for their work on the audit and budget, noting that both were completed earlier and more efficiently than in prior years, with improved clarity and organization.

**Community Engagement & Training**

- 9 scheduled outreach events conducted in March
- 6 station walk-ins
- 157 total community members engaged
- 89 CPR/AED certifications year-to-date (12 in March)

The Chief emphasized the importance of CPR training, highlighting a recent cardiac save where dispatcher-assisted CPR contributed to a successful outcome.

**Operations**

- 491 calls for service in March
- 36 overlapping calls
- New tracking added for out-of-area (HFD) responses

### **Infrastructure & Equipment**

- Hydrant inspections ongoing with improved coordination with the water authority, including real-time reporting and response
- Blocker truck nearing completion, with final assembly and delivery expected shortly
- Rescue boat delivered and undergoing break-in and training, pending final registration

### **Emergency Management**

- Coordination underway for TDEM training for elected officials
- Monitoring regional hospital capacity and potential impacts on EMS response
- Evaluating need for increased ambulance staffing if response times are impacted

The VMIG health insurance information was presented by the Department's representative, Ray Thomas. He reminded the Board that the initial (rejected) renewal proposal was a 21% increase. The final outcome resulted in a transition to TML with ~5% decrease.

Discussion included claims volatility (recent loss ratio over 100%), the impact of large claims on a small pool, employee disruption due to changes in providers, pharmacies, and labs, and communication gaps from vendors and brokers.

The Board emphasized the need for earlier renewal timelines, improved communication to employees, a better use of claims data to guide decision-making, and increased accountability for brokers and vendors.

6. **DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING PAST FINANCIAL MATTERS (Morris)** - The Board of Commissioners will discuss and take any action necessary related to past financial matters, the resulting forensic audit, and steps toward resolution.

No formal update has been received from the District Attorney's Office.

No action was taken.

7. **DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING TIMING AND PAYMENT OF 2024 AUDIT (Ramey)** - The Board of Commissioners will discuss and take any action necessary related to past financial matters, the resulting forensic audit, and steps toward resolution.

Staff reported ongoing discussions with the external auditor regarding billing practices.

A formal letter was sent disputing certain charges and indicating the Department would not fund broader firm practices with public funds.

Resolution is expected prior to the next meeting.

No action was taken.

8. **DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ACCEPTANCE OF 2025 AUDIT (Croft/Buckert/Audit Committee)** - The Board of Commissioners will discuss and take any action necessary related to the review, discussion and acceptance of the 2025 Audit.

9. **DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING WORKERS COMPENSATION**

**INSURANCE (Buckert)** - The Board of Commissioners will discuss and take any action necessary related to the Department's Workers Compensation insurance.

Staff presented alternatives following a significant premium increase (approximately \$109,000 to \$183,000). The recommendation was to transition to VFIS (Texas Mutual). This would result in an estimated \$43,000 annual savings. There will now be quarterly payroll reporting and billing for improved accuracy. VFIA specializes in fire service risks. There is access to broad network of providers and includes training and safety support.

The Board Chair directed staff to proceed with execution of the contract.

- 10. FY 2027 BUDGET UPDATE #3 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS (Croft/Buckert/Budget Committee)** - The Budget Committee will give an update on the budget process, followed by discussion and any possible action on FY 2027 Budget items.
- A. General Fund (GF)
  - B. Capital Replacement Fund (CRF)
  - C. Equipment Replacement Fund (ERF)
  - D. Facility Fund (FF)
  - E. 2026 Budget Amendments
    - 1. 2026 - 02
    - 2. 2026 - 03
    - 3. 2026 - 04
    - 4. 2026 - 05

The following highlights were identified in the 2027 Budget:

#### **Salary Increase Proposal**

- Proposed 3.5% increase based on CPI projections.

#### **Capital & Equipment Planning**

- Focus on eliminating large budget spikes by:
  - Spreading costs over time
  - Establishing replacement schedules
- Discussion of creating an Equipment Replacement Fund similar to CRF:
  - Potentially funded by EMS revenue
  - Would cover items like monitors, gear, and equipment with defined lifespans
- Recognition of rising EMS equipment costs (e.g., monitors doubling in price)

#### **Life Safety Equipment**

- Identified deferred items (e.g., gear, cameras, monitors, vests).
- Proposed:
  - Funding some portion of the \$191,000 in items using 2025 surplus (estimated to be approx. \$600,000)
  - Removing those items from the 2027 budget
  - Processing via budget amendment in 2026

#### **Facility Fund**

- Discussion of dissolving ~\$13,000 facility fund and reallocating to General Fund.

The FY 2027 budget was presented and discussed in detail.

The Board noted the budget was significantly more developed and transparent than prior years, with

detailed input from staff and improved reporting capabilities.

Key Elements:

- Overall increase: 4.23%
- Adjustments made through FY 2026 budget amendments
- CRF funded with 80/20 EMS revenue split
- Creation of Equipment Replacement Fund (ERF)

ERF Discussion ensued, to include smoothing large capital expenditures and reducing volatility, the use of conservative EMS revenue projections, the need to address increasing equipment costs and the importance of long-term planning. There was also a concerted effort to avoid large, unpredictable budget spikes. The Board discussed equipment lifecycles, purchasing constraints due to timing, the differences between operational and capital equipment planning.

Next there was discussion on the Budget Amendments. Multiple FY 2026 amendments were reviewed, and there was discussion on consolidating amendments vs maintaining detail.

There was a motion to approve the FY 2027 Budget as presented, thereby approving both the CRF and ERF, as well as approve the budget amendments as one consolidated amendment.

**Motion:** Lisenby

**Second:** Garofalo

The motion passed unanimously.

11. **DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE CLOSURE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S FACILITY FUND (Buckert). RESOLUTION 2026-01** – The Board of Commissioners will discuss and take any action necessary related to the closure of the Facility Fund accounts (Stellar and TexasClass) and the passage of Resolution 2026-01.

The Board revisited prior discussion regarding the facility fund.

Discussion confirmed:

- Fund is no longer needed in its current form
- Balance (~\$12K-\$13K) to be transferred to the General Fund
- Bank requires formal resolution to close account

There was a motion to approve the closure of the facility fund, to close associated bank accounts, and to transfer the funds to General Fund.

**Motion:** Lisenby

**Second:** Garofalo

The motion passed unanimously.

12. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – The board of Commissioners will retire into Executive Session as authorized by Chapter 551; Texas Government Code Section 551.074 authorizing a governmental body to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee; or to hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee(s);
1. City Attorney
  2. Personnel:
    - a. Firemedic
    - b. Firemedic

There was a motion to recess into Executive Session at 7:37 pm.

**Motion:** Breckon

**Second:** Lisenby

The motion passed unanimously.

13. **RECONVENE OPEN SESSION** – The Board of Commissioners will discuss and take any action necessary related to Resolution 2026-02 – An hourly fee agreement for legal services with the Randle Law Office, LTD., L.L.P.

The Board reconvened the Executive Session at 8:15 pm.

No action was taken.

14. **FUTURE TOPICS**

15. **NEXT MEETING DATE**

**May 27, 2026**

**John Lisenby, Chair – Spring Valley Village**

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

There was a motion to adjourn at 8:17 pm.

**Motion:** Breckon

**Second:** Garofalo

The motion passed unanimously.