

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

August 20, 2024

1. Hank Dembosky called the meeting to order at 6pm.
2. Claren Kotrla led the Board in prayer and pledges of allegiance.
3. Guests (4) are noted on the attached sign-in sheet.
4. Commissioners in attendance: President Hank Dembosky, Vice-President Skip Smith, Treasurer Colleen Majoue, Assistant Treasurer Claren Kotrla, and Secretary Judy Bryant.
5. No one attended the public hearing.
6. Carolyn Hiebert, Project Manager, Repsol LLC, reported that a request for final investment approval will be going to their Board in September 2024 to start the Pecan Prairie Solar Project. The COD for the full project has been pushed to January or February 2025. They are currently selecting a contractor for the two large lay down yards. The main entrance to the lay down yards will be located at the exotic animal farm, with a second entrance located just south of County Road 469. It was noted that 911 locations are already established in these areas. Starting November 5, 2024, five inverter deliveries will be made per day with one inverter per truck. There will be no oversized loads. Repsol will publish an article in The Normangee Star and local Facebook pages. Dembosky will provide Carolyn the HTL Activity Director's (Rita Russ) contact information, as well as contact information for Chris and Sylvia Moss (The Normangee Star).
7. Ryan Turner with GranSolar Bess stated this will be a 150-megawatt battery storage project and that GranSolar Bess is the third largest tracking manufacturer in the world. The storage facility will be filled with batteries to help stabilize the grid and will be located next to a substation. They are working on environmental and permit plans, followed by financing. It will take 2-1/2 – 4 years for studies and assurance that power to ERCOT can hold itself up. Since Hilltop Lakes is not incorporated, permits may not be needed. Highway 3 is the responsibility of TxDOT. The Director for this project is in Irving, Texas, so approval does not have to come from Spain. GranSolar or an outside company may operate the battery storage facility. Best case scenario is that construction will begin in 2026, with completion in late 2027 or early 2028. There is potential for a lot of vehicle traffic on Highway 3 with Pecan Prairie and GranSolar Bess going on at the same time. There was discussion about ways to ensure all residents are kept safe and informed.
8. Treasurer's Report:
 - a) Majoue presented two checks for approval and signature: (1) Check 1001 in the amount of \$3,823 to HTL VFD/EMS for ambulance payment; and (2) Check 1508 in the amount of \$1,387.35 to Carlton Law Firm, invoice 10820, for legal services. Smith motioned to approve the two checks, and Kotrla seconded. Motion carried.
 - b) Majoue reported on July 2024 financials (report attached). There is currently \$214,528.30 in reserves and \$357,483.28 for operations. Bryant motioned to approve, and Kotrla seconded. Motion carried.
 - c) Sales tax revenue for August 2024 was \$3,556.60.
9. The HTL VFD/EMS Financial and Activity Reports (attached) were presented by Sherry Guerra. She reported that HTL VFD/EMS is looking for and hoping to receive FEMA grants. They spent \$41,425.00 in CY 2024 funds that they weren't expecting to spend.

The monthly performance measures reported are noted in the activity report. Majoue motioned to approve the reports, and Kotrla seconded. Motion carried.

- EMS Calls: 35
- Average Response Time: 04:40
- Average Out-of-Chute Time: 00:01:30
- Fire Training Hours: 16.5
- Volunteer Response Hours: 56

10. Reports/Updates/Recommendations

a) Records Retention: ESD #2 needs a fireproof locking file cabinet. Kotrla stated the cost would be approximately \$700. Bryant motioned to approve the purchase, and Smith seconded. Motion carried. Dembosky will research the use of the Texas Tax Exempt form for the purchase.

b) CERT Training will be held August 23-25, 2024.

11. After discussion regarding air ambulance insurance funding, Kotrla motioned that ESD #2 not participate, and Smith seconded. Motion carried. Dembosky will notify Judge Ryder that ESD #2 will not participate.

12. The ESD #2 operating budget for October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025, in the amount of \$346,500, was discussed. Majoue motioned to approve the budget, and Kotrla seconded. Motion carried. Dembosky and Bryant signed the Resolution Adopting the Budget. Bryant will have the document notarized.

13. After review of the Order Levying Taxes, Dembosky made the following motion: "I move that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.100000, which is effectively a 3.434 percent increase in the tax rate." Smith seconded the motion. The Board approved the adoption of the tax rate with the following record votes: Dembosky – yes; Smith – yes; Majoue – yes; Kotrla – yes; Bryant – yes. Bryant will have the document notarized.

14. Majoue made a motion, and seconded by Kotrla, for Dembosky to send the statement of the adopted tax rate to SAFE-D for posting on the ESD #2 webpage. Motion carried.

15. Based on projected revenue availability, Dembosky motioned, and Smith seconded to approve \$310,000 to support operations and maintenance of HTL VFD/EMS during FY 24/25. Motion carried.

16. Majoue motioned to approve the July 16, 2024 meeting minutes, and Kotrla seconded. Motion carried.

17. At the invitation of Vice President Smith, District 13 State Representative Angelia Orr came to Hilltop Lakes on 8/15/24 to meet with a small group at the Fire Station. Dembosky joined Smith from the ESD. Others included members of the HTL VFD/EMS Board of Directors, volunteers and staff. They discussed issues affecting rural volunteer fire and emergency medical services. The meeting lasted about an hour. Dembosky prepared a letter expressing the ESD's thanks to Rep. Orr for all the commissioners to sign.

18. Dembosky provided a Southwest Leon County Emergency Services District No. 2 handout to attendees of the Hilltop Lakes Open House on August 3, 2024.

19. There were no public comments.

20. Next meeting is September 17, 2024 at 6pm.

21. At 8:12pm, Kotrla motioned to adjourn, and Majoue seconded. Motion carried.