

**MINUTES OF THE  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF MANAGERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**November 14, 2018**

LOCATION: 9-1-1 Board Room  
150 Hilbig Road, Conroe, Texas

**BOARD ATTENDING**

PRESENT: Paul Virgadamo, President  
Robert Hudson, Vice President  
Ryan Gable, Secretary  
Jack Yates, Treasurer  
James Simon, Member

NOT PRESENT: John Young, Ex-Officio Member

IN ATTENDANCE: Larry Foerster, Legal Counsel  
Chip VanSteenberg, Executive Director  
Jeanne Frey, Operations Manager  
Roberto Gutierrez, Systems Manager  
Terri Gill, Executive Assistant  
Rick Erickson, The Woodlands Fire Department

Mr. Paul Virgadamo, President, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., noting all members were present.

**Public Comments**

No one requested to address the Board.

**District's Investment Policy**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item one of the agenda, consider and take action of the district's investment policy.

Mr. Chip VanSteenberg, Executive Director, noted the public funds investment act requires the governing board to review their investment policies annually and adopt a resolution specifying any changes made. The district's policy is compliant with state law and there is no need to change the policy or strategy. The qualified brokers would remain the same: FTN Financial and Hilltop Securities.

Mr. James Simon made a motion to approve the district's investment policy. Constable Ryan Gable seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

**Resolution Revising Procedures for the PSAP Improvement Participation Program for FY 2019**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item two of the agenda, consider and take action on a resolution revising procedures for the PSAP improvement participation program for fiscal year 2019.

Mr. VanSteenberg directed attention to the handout, the changes to the initial draft are in yellow, the subsequent changes recommended by Mr. Larry Foerster, Legal Counsel, are in green.

Mr. Foerster noted the resolution as written applies only to the specific year, the policy could be made more generic, or routine, and be applicable for multiple years. Mr. VanSteenberg explained the resolution has been adopted every year, as the program is subject to the availability of funds and the amount changes year-to-year. Mr. Virgadamo stated he would prefer to adopt it once, and if we need to change the amounts, or run out of money, approve a new resolution. Mr. VanSteenberg agreed, a change to the language regarding the availability of funds, i.e., as appropriated.

Mr. Foerster stated if the board is comfortable with the presented resolution, the board may pass it, and by separate motion approve the ongoing policy.

Mr. Virgadamo requested a motion for the resolution as presented for fiscal year 2019. Constable Ryan Gable made the motion to approve the resolution as presented for fiscal year 2019. Chief Robert Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Mr. Foerster noted, for the minutes, the second motion should state, “the resolution just passed would be implemented going forward for future years, such that PSAPs must comply with the similar terms, reimbursed up to, but not exceeding, 90% of the cost of the improvement, with the PSAP paying at least 10% of the improvement. The district will only reimburse for new, expanded or enhanced equipment, furniture or services directly related to the operation of a PSAP and will not fund any routine operating costs.” Mr. VanSteenberg would add, “90%, up to the approved maximum allowed.”

Constable Gable made the motion as presented by Mr. Foerster. Chief Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

### **Meeting Schedule and Holidays for 2019**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item three of the agenda, consider and take action on meeting schedule and holidays for 2019.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated the board typically meets on the third Wednesday of the odd numbered months, with no exceptions for the upcoming year.

Mr. Simon made a motion to approve the meeting schedule and holidays for 2019. Constable Gable seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

### **Carry Over of Unspent Capital Projects from Fiscal Year 2018**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item four of the agenda, discuss carry over of unspent capital projects from fiscal year 2018.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated this is primarily an issue with the PSAP improvement projects. As of September 30, 2018, there were several capital projects which were not complete. This includes PSAP improvement projects from all four PSAPs, as well as a vehicle purchase for the district.

The process is complicated, the PSAP must first determine a project, they need approval from their agency, they need the district’s approval to proceed, and a lengthy procurement process, all in a nine or ten-month period. This year, for example, the Conroe Police Department proposed to purchase a new CAD system. The project got derailed at the last minute because the company they were going to purchase from was being bought out as they were negotiating the contract. They determined they did not want to continue with the purchase.

The Woodlands Fire Department was approved to purchase a personnel accountability system, allowing them to track personnel on via radio system. The order has been placed with Motorola, and they are on Motorola’s timeframe as to when the installation will occur.

The Hospital District was approved for two projects. One has been funded. The other is to install fiber optic cable at the Conroe Police Department, which is where they want to put their back-up system. This project is stuck at TX-DOT waiting for permit approval to cross certain highways.

The Sheriff's Office was trying to make AV improvements, which were not complete by the fiscal year end because the vendor had scheduling issues.

The district was to have purchased a new vehicle, however, we had our own scheduling issues.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated he is hoping to manage the delayed projects with the new projects without a budget amendment. However, if it is not possible, a budget amendment will be presented for approval.

For fiscal year 2019, the district is working jointly with the Sheriff's Office on a project to remodel the back-up at the EOC.

No action was taken.

### **Purchases of Vesta Products Going Forward**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item five of the agenda, discuss purchases of Vesta products going forward.

Mr. Chip VanSteenberg reported the district has purchased all the components and services for its Vesta 9-1-1 system through AT&T. The staff are of the opinion this arrangement is not in the best interest of the district for the future and would like to become a direct customer of Motorola.

The reasons for this:

- A smaller district can use the expertise of AT&T through the negotiating and installation processes
- A larger district buys their equipment directly from the vendor.
- MCECD is a hybrid, we buy through AT&T, but have our own technical staff who troubleshoot problems and contact Vesta directly.
- Ordering a change or a new product involves serious delay, AT&T has stretched their 9-1-1 staff very thin. The district's sales rep covers most of Texas plus Louisiana and beyond. A new order involves emailing the AT&T rep and the Vesta reps and following up to insure the quote is coming or the order has been placed.
- Another problem is product approval, AT&T will not sell anything that has not been through their lab. While this sounds great in theory, there are Vesta products and updates that have been available for a year or more, but the district cannot get them. Vesta direct customers have them. This might be less objectionable if what we had installed came without bugs, it takes months to work out all the bugs in a new install, even after going through AT&T testing. For example, AT&T held up the release of Text to 9-1-1, because the product would not do something we would not normally do. It was finally released eighteen months after other Vesta customers had the product.
- Monitoring through AT&T is of little value. Most of the time our techs are made aware of the problem by the dispatchers, not from the alarm/monitoring center.
- The benefit of going through AT&T is supposed to be pricing, and the additional expertise to help with design and decision-making. The staff see the value of going direct with Motorola as outweighing the benefit of remaining with AT&T, particularly on the pricing.

The district is moving forward with a Master Agreement with Motorola. This is a major change to the way we do business.

Mr. Foerster has reviewed the Master Agreement, and his only recommendation is for the jurisdiction to be Texas rather than California.

No action was taken.

### **Executive Director's Report on Items of Community Interest for Which No Action Will Be Taken**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item six of the agenda, executive director's report on items of community interest for which no action will be taken.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated it has been pretty quiet for the last couple months, as we've wrapped up one fiscal year and started another.

The district has upgraded the Talari appliances, these keep both networks, microwave and fiber, running all the time.

The GIS and database staff have been working on location audits, cell towers and address points. Staff completed the census track information for the Census Bureau and have been working with the schools to update their information.

We continue to do a lot with our RAVE products. Two public schools and two private schools have purchased Panic Button, which allows them to communicate with each other and 9-1-1 very quickly in any type of situation, whether medical, fire, active shooter. We are also developing a library of shape files, in the event of a flood, the area is already loaded, and this speeds notification.

Local iPAWS testing is scheduled for November 26<sup>th</sup>, with the 28<sup>th</sup> as back-up, three different tests will be run.

Staff are working with a firm on branding, ways to market the alert product, and getting people registered.

Ms. Jeanne Frey will be retiring June 2019.

Ms. Andrea Wilson is now the Community Relations Manager, with updates to the job description.

The Texas 9-1-1 Alliance is pursuing some technology projects, developing Next Generation 9-1-1 pieces. The Alliance is also developing a legislative strategy, with a focus on modernizing the wireless fee.

No action was taken.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Virgadamo noted items seven through eleven of the consent agenda, noting the items may be taken separately or as a whole.

Mr. Simon made a motion to approve the consent agenda in its entirety. Chief Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

*These minutes were approved at regularly scheduled board meeting on January 16, 2019.*

*If needed, an official, signed copy may be obtained at the MCECD office.*



Montgomery County Emergency Communication District  
 Post Office Box 1830, Conroe Texas 77305-1830  
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## NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

**November 14, 2018**

DOC# 18-1557  
 POSTED  
 11/06/2018 02:13PM  
 ANNA SANCHEZ  
 MARK TURNBULL, COUNTY CLERK  
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY, TEXAS

Notice is hereby given to all interested members of the public, of a meeting of the Board of Managers of the above styled District, at **12:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 14, 2018**, at the **MCECD 9-1-1 Boardroom, 150 Hilbig Road, Conroe, Texas**. The purpose of the meeting is as follows:

### Open Meeting

Public Comments: Please sign in and limit comments to three (3) minutes

1. Consider and take action on the District's Investment Policy
2. Consider and take action on a resolution revising procedures for the PSAP Improvement Participation Program for FY 2019
3. Consider and take action on Meeting Schedule and Holidays for 2019
4. Discuss carry-over of unspent capital projects from Fiscal Year 2018
5. Discuss purchases of Vesta products going forward
6. Executive Director's report on items of community interest for which no action will be taken

### Consent Agenda

7. Approval of meeting minutes for September 19, 2018
8. Ratify the accounts payable for the months of September, and October 2018
9. Approval of monthly financial statements for the periods ending August 31, and September 30, 2018
10. Approval of quarterly financial statements for the period ending September 30, 2018
11. Adjourn meeting

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. VanSteenberg', written over a horizontal line.

Larry L. VanSteenberg, Executive Director

Parking is available in front of the Law Enforcement Center. Please go to the Information Booth in the Center's main lobby and inform the attendant you are here for the 9-1-1 Board Meeting. You will be met at the access gate near the flagpoles. You may also call (936) 523-5911 from the gate located on Hilbig Road. The gate will be opened via remote.

*The Montgomery County Emergency Communication District reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed above, as authorized by Texas Government Code, Section 561.071 (Consultation with Attorney); 561.078 (Deliberations about Real Property); 561.079 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations); 561.074 (Personnel Matters); 561.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices); and 561.087 (Economic Development).*