

HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #28



17061 Rolling Creek
Houston, TX 77090-2411
281-444-8465
FAX 281-444-8052
www.hcesd28.com
www.ponderosavfd.org



HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT No. 28 Minutes of Board of Commissioners Meeting

May 18, 2026

Members in Attendance:

Mike Jenkins, President
Ken Koenig, Treasurer
Erika Smiley, Asst Treas./Sec.

Dan Dronberger, V. P.
Shirley Jauma, Secretary

Others in Attendance:

Fred Windisch, Fire Chief
Dana Schmanski, Office Manager
Mat Mason, District Chief

Public

No Public

Call to Order

- The ESD 28 board meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

To approve the Minutes of prior meeting (s).

- The minutes from the previous meeting were presented for approval.
- Motion made by Dan Dronberger. Second by Erika Smiley. All in Favor.

To receive a Financial Report from the District Treasurer and to pay District bills, including approval of commissioner's fees.

- **Financial Report and Cash Balances**
 - April total cash balance decreased by \$387,000 to \$12.1 million (up \$2 million or 19% vs. April 2025's \$10.1 million).
 - Texas Class account decreased \$390,000 to \$11.9 million (vs. \$9.9 million last year, up 20%).

- Current Texas Class \$12.2 million; planned draw of \$570,000 (corrected to \$550,000).
 - Projected Texas Class: \$11.7 million on May 26; \$11.3 million in June.
 - Revenues in April: \$264,000 (property tax \$33,000; sales tax \$227,000; P&L \$4,000; other \$365).
 - Property tax for the 2025 levy collected through April: \$5,000,000 (98.4% of the \$5.1 million budget).
 - Sales tax April: \$227,000 (1.8% less YoY); YTD \$446,000 (9.34% less YoY).
 - May sales tax: \$295,000 (1.75% less YoY); YTD \$729,000 (6.42% less YoY).
 - Statewide sales tax: May +12.58% YoY; YTD +9.2% YoY.
 - Expenses through April (excluding CARES Act): \$2.8 million (38% of budget vs. 33.3% expected).
 - Largest operating expense: PVFA draw \$625,000 for April; \$2.5 million YTD (37.4% of budget).
 - CARES Act fund balance: \$396,000.
 - Interest income (Texas Class): \$38,000 in April (1,583 less than the prior month; \$632 more YoY); \$143,000 YTD (+288 YoY).
 - Expected interest: \$38,000 in May; \$35,000 in June.
 - April interest rate mentioned inconsistently; general rate changes vs. last year.
 - Conclusion: Financials presented; cash and interest remain strong despite sales tax softness.
- **Segregation of Funds in Texas Class**
 - Current Texas Class allocations: General \$4.9 million; Truck \$4.4 million; Building \$2.5 million.
 - Recommendation: Open two additional Texas Class accounts to separate funds (e.g., capital improvement fund and building fund).
 - Rationale: Demonstrate funds are allocated to future commitments; avoid perceptions of excess cash.
 - Operational note: Move money Mon–Thu to avoid weekend processing issues.
 - Conclusion: Motion passed to open two new Texas Class accounts and manage transfers on weekdays. Motion made by Erika Smiley. Second Shirley Jauma. All in favor.

To review and take action on the payment of operations funding pursuant to year 2026 budget and service agreement with the Ponderosa Volunteer Fire

Association, Inc.

• Bills and Payments

- Arretta Jenkins newsletter: \$550.
- Coveler and Peeler legal fees (April): \$1,314.01.
- Harris County Appraisal District Q3 assessment: \$10,266.
- Prime ITS cybersecurity awareness annual: \$168 (recommended to pay; optional participation for some members).
- PVFA May draw: \$550,000.
- Invonics Technologies (security, Station 61): \$11,382 (later clarified to reimburse PVFA, not vendor directly).
- Commissioner compensation discussed.
- Conclusion: Motion made by Erika Smiley to pay listed bills; adjust Invonics payment to PVFA as reimbursement, and to include commissioners' compensation. Second, by Shirley Jauma. Mike Jenkins abstains.

To receive a report from the Ponderosa Fire Department (“Department”).

• Department Activity and Donations

- April responses: 214; software transition causing reporting issues; resolution expected by a specific date.
- Cypresswood Estates annual donation: \$4,000 (in lieu of taxes; will appear as miscellaneous income in May).
- Anticipated similar items pending property value postings for other locations.
- Conclusion: Donation received in lieu of taxes; response software being addressed.

• Cyber Insurance Change

- Current insurer: Cowbell; premium increased from \$3,650 to \$4,100; deductible raised from \$25,000 to \$50,000.
- Issues: Cowbell would not allow IT vendor involvement in claims; would burden internal staff.
- Proposed insurer: TechRug; aligns with IT provider (Prime ITS); deductible \$10,000; premium \$2,450; policy limit \$1,000,000.
- Status: To present at PVFA meeting; application to follow; current coverage through June 28.
- Conclusion: Board supports moving to TechRug; expect cost savings and improved incident handling.

• Hiring Update

- Six hires on May 12; training ongoing; positive performance reported.

- Applications: 31 received; 22 remained after initial attrition; 17 qualified post-testing; 6 hired; 1 candidate may be hired mid-June pending certs.
- New hires include varied ages (19–31) and backgrounds; overall strong group.
- Conclusion: Successful hiring round; potential additional hire in mid-June.

To review, discuss and take action regarding the purchase of capital equipment including apparatus.

- **Capital Equipment and Apparatus Status**

- New trucks visible in production via Siddons Martin website; cab interior painted; final inspection targeted mid-July (week after July 4).
- T-bone pumper at frame shop; parts on hand; assembly to proceed after frame; no firm return estimate.
- Conclusion: Equipment progressing; timelines tentative.

To review, discuss and take action regarding Care’s Act-Employee Retention Tax Credit Refund.

- **CARES Act Security Project**

- Scope: Replace 6 of 8 cameras; add front door camera; 42" monitor in office; door release and exit push-button; remove proximity switch.
- Payment: \$11,382 for hardware/labor previously issued to vendor; correction to reimburse PVFA per prior agreement.
- Power outage caution noted.
- Conclusion: Project in process; payment routing corrected to PVFA.

To review and discuss district newsletter.

- **District Newsletter**

- Next issue: Lead story on FIFA World Cup impacts (Fire/EMS/traffic/hotels).
- Additional content: Interviews with new employees; pool safety; hurricane-season items requested and likely included.
- Timeline: First game June 16; preparations underway.
- Conclusion: Newsletter in development with timely topics.

- **World Cup Operations Planning**

- Regional coordination is ongoing; most agencies do not provide scheduled services to the City of Houston.
- City to receive \$64 million for increased operations.

- Local plan: Modest staffing increases at stations (e.g., add one person here, one at Station 3; Station 2 staffed with four).
- Expect higher EMS and fireworks-related calls; flexible plan window June 13–July 8.
- Some departments (e.g., Woodlands ESD 48, Spring) may provide services at NRG; compensation unclear.
- Conclusion: Internal staffing adjustments planned; external commitments limited; monitoring ongoing.

To review, discuss and take action on 2026 Budget revision:

- **Discussion Held no motion.**

To designate the Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector's Office to prepare the District's No New Revenue Tax Rate and related tax rate calculations for 2026, and to authorize District counsel to publish the necessary 2026 Tax Rate setting notices

- **Tax Rate Preparation**

- Annual designation of Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector's Office to prepare ad valorem tax rates and truth-in-taxation documents.
- Authorize District Counsel to publish 2026 tax rate notices.
- Conclusion: Motion passed to designate and authorize as in prior years.
- Motion made by Erika Smiley. Second by Shirley Jauma. All in favor.

To review, discuss and take action regarding Regional Radio Grant

- **Move to next meeting.**

To review and discuss Texas Emergency Communications Center, to include review of construction cost.

- **TECC Cost Sharing Model Revision**

- Revised model adjusts costs across agencies; increases for some, decreases for others.
- For Ponderosa, increase \$44,000 vs. prior; earlier budgeted estimate was \$36,000 (net \$6,000).
- Motion passed to accept the revised model; aligns with channel closure and updated allocations.
- Conclusion: Revised TECC cost-sharing model adopted. Motion made by Dan Dronberger. Second by Shirley Jauma. All in favor.

To review and act to approve a memorandum of understanding with other emergency services districts which participate in Texas Emergency Communications Center regarding cost sharing for required grant match related to grants for the construction of new dispatching facilities.

- **Grant for Communications Center Construction**

- Grant drafting cost: 5,000; success-fee model if awarded.
- Potential FEMA grant covers 70–75% of construction.
- Board authorized the President to sign an MOU with other ESDs for the TECC cost-sharing grant proposal upon completion.
- Conclusion: Proceed with the grant application; signing authority granted. Motion made by Erika Smiley. Second by Ken Keonig. All in favor.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

To set a meeting date for June 15, 2026, regular meeting at 17061 Rolling Creek Drive, Houston, TX 77090.

Adjournment

Ken Koenig made a motion to adjourn at 5:46 P.M. Shirley Juama seconded the motion with unanimous approval of the board.

Shirley Jauma, Secretary