

Freestone Central Appraisal District
Directors Meeting

Minutes of October 8, 2025

Regular Meeting # 554

The Freestone Central Appraisal District Board of Directors met at the appraisal office located at 218 North Mount, Fairfield, Texas. Board members present were Craig Dunlap, Daniel Ralstin, Sid Fryer, Stanton Brown, Jerry Don Sanders, and Lovie Whyte. Representing the appraisal district was Don Awalt, Chief Appraiser; Jason Moore, Deputy Chief Appraiser, Carol Clark, Administrative Assistant.

Mr. Dunlap called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Mr. Dunlap established proof of the posting of public notice of the meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Act from the affidavit attached to the foot of the posted agenda.

Mr. Dunlap then declared a quorum of members present.

Consideration and action were taken on the minutes of the meeting held on September 10, 2025. Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Whyte seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The board then considered the district's monthly financial report for September 2025. Mr. Awalt stated that the bills that were listed were standard for the district's expenses for September. A credit card payment of \$1,178.08 was paid towards travel for Mr. Awalt and Mr. Moore to the 2025 Legislative Update. Payments were also made to Low Swinny Evans & James towards the district's lawsuits. While reviewing the Budget vs. Actual Mr. Sanders asked Mr. Awalt to explain the accounts that were over budget. Mr. Awalt explained that 'Mapping Services' was over budget due to the \$7,500 paid for the flight at the lake. 'Equipment Purchase' was over as two computers were purchased ahead of an increase on electronics. Mr. Awalt added that he would need to look in QuickBooks at the 'CAMA Software License/Website Maintenance' account to verify that all payments are in the correct account. Mr. Sanders made a motion to approve the financial report for September 2025, with a second by Mr. Brown. Motion carried.

Consideration and action were taken on the Investment Officer's Quarterly Report. Mr. Awalt reminded the board that the report was for the third quarter ending in September 2025. The report had a summary of the district's funds that is held at the Community National Bank & Trust of Texas. The beginning balance for the general fund account for July was \$673,691; there were \$142,817 in deposits, \$329,585 in withdrawals, \$721.00 of interest earned, with an ending balance of \$487,644. The account had an interest earned year-to-date of \$2,284. The payroll account, which is not an interest-bearing account, had a beginning balance of \$1,991 in July, \$202,628 in deposits, and \$202,167 of withdrawals. The ending balance was \$2,452. The pledged securities showed coverage for all three months and that the district's funds were safe. Mr. Dunlap made a motion to approve the investment officer's quarterly report as presented. A second was made by Mr. Fryer. The motion carried.

The board then considered Item VIII on the agenda, Amending Financial Policy and Chief Appraiser's Check Signing Limit. Mr. Awalt reviewed the financial policy to the board stating that there were changes since legislative updates were made, including updates that were not changed in the policy. While reviewing Sect. 7.00 Disbursing District Funds, Mr. Awalt pointed out that the Chief Appraiser's check signing limit was raised to \$15,000 on December 9, 2015. Due to the district being at full staff with 13 employees, and an increase in the insurance, Mr. Awalt has reached his limit to transfer funds to pay the insurance premium and Pritchard & Abbotts software contract. After brief discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Fryer to increase the Chief Appraiser's check signing limit from \$15,000 to \$17,000. A second was made by Mr. Sanders. The motion carried.

Mr. Awalt continued his presentation by briefly reviewing the changes and verbiage added that were highlighted in yellow and/or struck out.

- 2.03: Late Payment

If a taxing unit does not pay on time, the board may waive the penalty and interest with good cause shown. The delinquent payment incurs a penalty of 5 percent of the payment amount. Interest accrues at an annual rate of 10 percent.

- 2.04: Excess Entity Payments

If the total payment made by the taxing units exceeds the amount actually spent or obligated to be spent, the district shall credit the excess amount against each taxing unit for the following year. If the allocated portion is not paid before the entity has made their payment, their share of excess funds shall be refunded not later than the 150th day after the end of the fiscal year that payments were made. The district already encumbers funds to the following year.

- 5.01: Proposed Budget

Proposed budget to be submitted before June 15 instead of May 15 due to the timing of the district's financial audit, and budget amendments to encumber leftover funds.

- 5.02: Public Hearing & Publications of Budget

Budget notice to be posted 3 business days in advance instead of 72 hours. A physical copy or a website URL to be posted on the district's website home page. A taxpayer impact statement showing a comparison of the median homestead value for the preceding year and the proposed year. A statement that the district is funded proportionately by each participating taxing entity based on the total tax levy within the district. State that the district does not adopt a tax rate or levy a property tax. HB 1522 was written to taxing entities that adopt a budget/tax rate. The district's budgets are typically adopted before values are certified, entity budgets are adopted, or tax rates are calculated.

- 8.00 Financial Audit

The district's CPA shall prepare and deliver a report of his findings to the board during a regular board meeting before May 15, or as soon thereafter as practicable, of the year following the audit year.

- 9.02: Contractual Services

(f) Ownership or Lease of Real Property – SB 2073 amends Property Tax Code 6.051 effective on September 1, 2025. The acquisition or conveyance of real property or renovation of a building, or other improvement must be approved by three-fourths of the taxing units entitled to vote on the appointment of board members. The board of directors may by resolution and may propose a property transaction. The chief appraiser shall notify the presiding officer of each governing body entitled to vote by delivering a copy of the board's resolution, together with information showing the costs of other available alternatives to the resolution. The taxing units have 30 days for the date of the board's resolution is received to review and approve or disapprove the board's resolution by resolution. The proposal is treated as if it were approved if the governing body fails to act on or before the 30th day or fails to file its resolution with the chief appraiser on or before the 10th day after that 30th day. For contracts exceeding \$25,000, the successful bidder must provide a performance and payment bond. The bond must secure the full amount of the contract price and be executed in accordance with the provisions of Art. 5160, Tex. Rev. Civ. Stat., by a surety company authorized to do business in the state. The board may not increase the contract price by more than 25 percent. The original contract price may not be decreased by more than 25 percent without the contractor's consent. Increases are valid only if the board also appropriates current funds for that purpose.

- 9.03: Other Services

Members of the board of directors will receive \$35.00 reimbursement for travel expenses for each meeting or training session attended.

- 10.00: Competitive Bidding

An appraisal district is subject to the same requirements and has the same purchasing contracting authority as a municipality under Chapter 252, Local Government Code. All expenditure of over \$100,000 must go out for competitive bidding.

- 10.01: Exceptions

There are some exceptions from competitive bidding unless the board grants them. Expenditures of less than \$15,000, has increased to \$100,000 and is not statutorily required.

A motion was made by Mr. Sanders to amend the financial policy. Ms. Whyte seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Consideration and action were taken on appointing the Agricultural Advisory Board Members for 2026-2027. Mr. Awalt recommended the board to re-appoint the same board members for another term. The members of the Advisory board include Mr. Barry Capps, Mr. Scott Holmes, Mr. Brady Johnson, Mr. Keith Hardwick, and Mr. Frank Bonner. Mr. Fryer made a motion to re-appoint all five Agricultural Advisory Board Members for another term. A second was made by Mr. Brown. The motion carried.

The board considered Item X on the agenda, the Annual Report. Mr. Awalt stated that the district is required to present this report to the board, which is a condensed version of the summary appraisal report. Reviewing the main highlights of the report Mr. Awalt stated that the 2025 appraisal roll, as of the certification date, has a total market value of \$6,920,946,502. There was an increase of \$224,871,419 or three percent over the certified value of \$6,696,075,083 for 2024. There was a pie chart and a table showing the market value distribution for each property type description. The chart and table on page fifteen showed the taxable value distribution. Starting in 2024, the Texas Legislature enacted a twenty percent circuit breaker on non-homestead properties value at less than \$5,000,000, excluding agricultural property and personal property. The 2025 appraisal roll, as of the certified date, had a total taxable value of \$3,797,445,126, an increase of \$216,059,536 or six percent over the certified value of \$3,581,365,550 for 2024.

The Appraisal Operation Summary stated that the appraisers utilized the district's GIS mapping software and the 2024-2025 oblique imagery flown under contract by EagleView to properly estimate the acreage for ground coverings and soil classifications according to the NRCS Soil Survey. The overall level of appraisal of the district is shown in the table. There is a mean of 1.00, a median of 1.00, and a weighted mean of 0.98. The coefficient of dispersion is 8.14. The district had a lower confidence interval of 0.99 percent, and an upper confidence interval of 1.01. This was calculated with 353 sales.

Mr. Awalt reviewed the chart with the residential homestead with the exemption amount for the schools assuming the passing of SB 4 and SB 23 in the November 2025 election. The appeal information listed the state law requirements for the district to mail Notice of Appraised Values. From the notices that were mailed out, there were 5,574 parcels that formally protested with a total value of \$1,997,804,092. 4,967 settled informally, 191 was withdrawn. 211 protests received a board order, and 205 were dismissed for failure to appear. The total value decrease due to protest was \$63,013,772 or 3.15 percent of the value protested.

Mr. Awalt pointed out the table with the Tax Rates and Estimated Tax Levy which had the tax rates adopted by each taxing jurisdictions. The entity cost share of funding the district is calculated using the adopted tax rates for the current tax year and were applied to the certified taxable value as of July 25, to determine a tax levy. The entity's cost share is based on the prorated percentage of the total amount of taxes levied in the district. The percentages will be used for entity payment funding of the 2026 appraisal year budget for the district.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Awalt recommended that the board approve the Annual Report. A motion was made by Mr. Sanders, with a second by Mr. Fryer to approve the Annual Report as presented. The motion carried.

The board reviewed the Chief Appraiser's Quarterly Report on Changes to Appraisal Roll. Mr. Awalt stated that the list on the report are history changes for 2025 and prior years ending on September 30, 2025. Most of those listed are homesteads, and homestead linking. The change or correct legal description is mostly due to Ms. Owens, the district's mapper doing 'splits' on those properties. There were also a lot of 'Protests Removed' due to protests being heard up to September 11, 2025. After brief discussion, Mr. Brown made a motion with a second by Ms. Whyte to accept the report as presented. The motion carried.

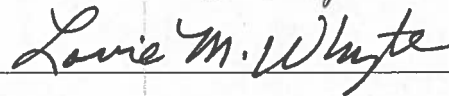
There was nothing to report to the board from the Tax Liaison Officer.

Mr. Awalt reported to the board that the district now has full staff of thirteen employees. He also stated that the appraisers are performing field reviews and things are going well.

There being no further business, Mr. Dunlap declared the meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.



Chairman



Secretary
Board
member