

Freestone Central Appraisal District
Directors Meeting

Minutes of May 10, 2023

Regular Meeting #525

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, Stanton Brown, Lovie Whyte, Jerry Don Sanders, and Sid Fryer. Representing the appraisal district was Don Awalt, Chief Appraiser; Carol Clark, Administrative Assistant. Also in attendance was Mr. Ron Brokmeyer.

Mr. Dunlap called the meeting to order at 7:01 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.

During the receipt of public comment Mr. Brokmeyer addressed the board introducing himself as a member of the public and a member of the Appraisal Review Board. He stated his reason for attending the board meeting was to bring to the boards attention the issues with the district's new website.

Mr. Brokmeyer explained that there were many changes when comparing the old website and the new website. Conditions of a property, replacement value and minutes from previous board meetings are no longer available.

Mr. Brokmeyer stated that as an engineer he was able to collect data on the old website that is omitted from the new website. He continued to explain that with ARB hearings to be scheduled in the near future, property owner's will not have documentation available when presenting their case. He also stated that the new website had slow performance. He asked the board to consider 'weighing up' the savings on having a new website compared to having data available for the public.

Mr. Awalt responded to Mr. Brokmeyer stating that he had informed Pritchard & Abbott by submitting a ticket requesting updates. The website may be updated as soon as next week. Mr. Awalt also stated that the tax payer may request data that is not available on the website.

Mr. Dunlap thanked Mr. Brokmeyer for attending and addressing the board with his concerns. Mr. Brokmeyer exited the meeting.

Consideration and action were taken on the minutes of the meeting held on April 12, 2023. There was a motion by Mr. Brown to approve the minutes of April 12, 2023. Ms. Whyte seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The board then considered the district's monthly financial report for April 2023. Mr. Awalt reviewed the Bill List on the front page of the report. He pointed out the two payments made erroneously to Pritchard & Abbott for the district's software contract; the second payment has been applied to the third quarter payment. The ARB were paid for attending their state required training; the new members attended a class for a full day, the half day continuing education class was attended by the three remaining board members. Mr. Dunlap asked Mr. Awalt to explain the payment made to Bohreer Law Firm PLLC. Mr. Awalt responded that the Employment law firm was hired to review the district's personnel policy but have not completed the review and submitted the changes at this time. Mr. Fryer asked Mr. Awalt whether the lawsuits listed were on-going; Mr. Awalt responded that the payment for New Fairfield Property Inc which is Fuel Max maybe the last for 2020; the 2022 lawsuit has been settled. Shemal LLC which is Family Dollar had a lawsuit filed for the last three years. Mr. Awalt concluded his report stating that the bill list for April was typical and gave the board an opportunity to ask questions.

After brief discussion, Mr. Fryer made a motion to approve the financial report for April 2023, with a second by Mr. Sanders. Motion carried.

The board considered the proposed amendments to the 2023 operating budget. Mr. Awalt first reviewed the 'Unassigned Fund Balance Due to Entities' reminding the board that \$409,857 was the unassigned fund balance from the 2022 audit presented by Mr. Campos during the April meeting. The balance less \$30,385 for CAD retained earnings for prior years, less \$88,492 of entity payment reserve for 2023. \$150,000 of litigation fund credit is also deducted leaving a balance of \$140,980. A balance of \$14,427 is deducted for 2022 CAD earnings which are payments made to the district for late rendition charges from the tax office, an annual dividend check from Texas Association of Counties Health & Employee Benefits Pool (TAC), and other miscellaneous payment for copies and data. A total of \$126,553 is due back to the entities or to be encumbered.

Mr. Awalt continued his presentation by pointing out the \$56,553 toward the 2024 entity credit, and a lump sum of \$50,000 payment to TCDRS the district's retirement provider for 2023 to keep funded liability down. Pointing out the TCDRS Plan Customizer for Plan Year 2024 on the next page, Mr. Awalt reviewed the rates with the board. He then explained to the board that for many years the payment rate remained steady due to their being one retiree receiving benefits; Ms. Bobbi Shepherd, Ms. Sherry Nichols, Ms. LaDonna Mullen, and Ms. Verita Davis have also retired over the last few years. Over the next ten years there will be at least five more employees who are more likely to retire. There was no change to the employee deposit rate of 7.00 percent and no change to retirement eligibility. The 2024 required rate is 15.5 percent which will decrease to 14.6 percent after the payment of \$50,000. Mr. Awalt stated that the district would continue to pay 15.0 percent making a funded rate of 94.0 percent in 2024.

There was a payment of \$20,000 toward the aerial photography reserve. Mr. Awalt recommended an upgrade to the contract to change the resolution from nine inches to six inches with the additional funds from the 2022 budget. He reminded the board that the original 2022 budget had two employees that had not been replaced. The appraisers had 2022-2023 reviews completed at the end of December by working from aerials.

After discussing the changes with Mr. Kevin Beers from Eagleview Mr. Awalt received an estimate for \$20,000 added to the flight cost, at \$10,000 per year for 2024 and 2025. There would be a new 6-year contract to increase from \$34,000 to \$44,000 per year.

Mr. Awalt continued the presentation of his report for amendments to the 2023 operating budget. Division I *Personnel Services* showed the \$50,000 difference for TCDRS. Division VI *Contingency* had a total difference of \$90,980 which included \$14,427 of unrestricted fund balance, and \$76,553 of entity payment reserve with a grand total of \$140,980. Mr. Awalt pointed out the 2023 Cost Share using 2022 adopted tax rates; the adopted and amended budget for 2023 showed a balance of \$1,352,521.00 reflecting the amount collected from the entities. There was a zero balance and no change in the amount to be collected for the remainder of the year.

After briefly reviewing the employee benefits schedule Mr. Awalt asked the board if they had questions. Mr. Fryer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sanders to approve the proposed amendments to the 2023 Operating Budget. Motion carried.

The board conducted a workshop on the 2024 operating budget. Prior to his review of the budget workbook Mr. Awalt pointed out the data on the CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The report listed an increase from between 4.02 and 5.24 percent from 2021 to 2023 which is an average of the five percent base increase for the employees for 2024. The 2021 Survey Data from the Comptrollers office is also in line with 2024 salary increase. There was no change in auto allowance or communication allowances.

Mr. Awalt pointed out the 15 percent rate for 01-6101 *Employee Retirement* reminding the board that a \$50,000 payment would be made in 2023 as approved for the 2023 operating budget. The district will

continue to pay 15 percent although the mandatory rate is 14.6 percent. The total TCDRS Employer Payment is \$92,670. Mr. Awalt estimated a 1.06 percent increase for the district's health insurance having a total premium cost of \$170,816.88. 01-6104 *Texas Workforce (Unemployment)* has the same rate of .0160 as estimated last year.

Account 01-6200 *Postage & Mailing Services* was increased to \$34,500 to include Truth-In-Taxation (TNT) mailing as they were classed as public notice in previous years. Mr. Awalt explained to the board that postage and mailing would be more appropriate. 01-6203 *Subscriptions* had an increase in the subscription for CoStar. CoStar provided the district with sales data. Also included in subscriptions is LexisNexis who provided addresses and verified births and deaths. The total amount budgeted for subscriptions is \$8,277.

Mr. Awalt informed the board that he had included an estimate from Pritchard & Abbott for a server lease or for cloud service. The current lease expires in March 2024. The annual fee for the hardware is \$10,000. The one time set up fee is \$9,500 which may be paid from CAD earnings. A total of \$1,850 was credited from 01-6304 *CAMA Software License* for webhosting; it is now included in the webhosting contract which was approved at the beginning of 2023.

An increase of \$250 was made for the district's financial auditor whose fees were a total of \$6,250 in 2023 for the year ending December 31, 2022. 01-6404 *Building & Grounds Maintenance* had an increase of \$100 for MS Smith Janitorial from \$650 to \$750; an additional \$75 per quarter was added for pest control.

There was a change in 01-6406 *Travel & Training* to reflect the increase in mileage rate as listed in the Standard Mileage Rates from the IRS website. The rate has increased to .655 and an increase of \$5 for meal rates bringing a total rate of \$20.

01-6803 *ARB Travel & Training* has decreased with a budget of \$200 due to the board attending their training online. After brief discussion and the completion of the proposed 2024 budget report Mr. Awalt asked for the board's recommendations and allowed time for questions. He also reminded the board that this being a budget workshop no action would be taken but the proposed budget would be presented during a public hearing in June. Changes can be made to the proposed budget prior to its approval. Mr. Awalt also informed the board that he would submit the preliminary 2024 operating budget to the entities.

At 8.50 p.m. Mr. Dunlap announced that the board was entering executive session to discuss personnel matters.

At 8:58 p.m. the board returned to open session. The board then considered the matters discussed in Executive Session. Ms. Whyte made a motion to extend health insurance to an employee until July 5, 2023. Mr. Fryer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The board then reviewed Item XI Taxpayer Liaison Officer's report submitted by Ms. Bobbi Shepherd.

Mr. Awalt then presented the Chief Appraiser's Report for the district's activities since the last meeting.

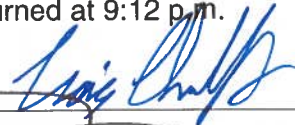
Noted in the report:

- Notices of Appraised Value were mailed out to property owners on April 14 which will make the 30-day protest deadline next Monday, May 15.
- Certified estimates of taxable value were submitted to the taxing entities on April 25. Please see the attached estimated values. These are a conservative estimate of the values that entities might expect to be certified for 2023, after taxpayer review and the equalization phase of the property tax process.

- Business Personal Property, Mineral, Utilities, and Industrial notices will be mailed on May 23, which is after the May 15 extension deadline. This will make the protest deadline for those notices Friday, June 23.
- The 2023 appraisal records will be turned over to the Appraisal Review Board at their meeting on May 25 to start the equalization phase of the tax year process. At that time, Mr. Awalt will submit the 2023 U.S.P.A.P. Mass Appraisal Report.

The board then considered the proposed scheduling of the June meeting. Mr. Awalt reminded the board that in previous years the June meeting was changed from the second week in the month due to conflict with the annual fair scheduled during the same week. After brief discussion the board agreed to meet on June 21, 2023. Mr. Fryer made a motion for the board to meet on June 21, 2023; seconded by Mr. Sanders. The motion carried.

There being no further business, Mr. Dunlap declared the meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.



Chairman

Secretary

Jurisdiction	2022	2023	Total Change	Percent Change
Freestone County	2,976,407,609	3,321,204,834	344,797,225	11.58%
City of Fairfield	264,850,341	320,814,573	55,964,232	21.13%
City of Streetman	11,603,724	12,644,587	1,040,863	8.97%
City of Teague	153,212,093	166,716,044	13,503,951	8.81%
City of Wortham	42,542,207	44,625,063	2,082,856	4.90%
Buffalo ISD	94,815,127	119,369,075	24,553,948	25.90%
Fairfield ISD	1,230,450,567	1,494,345,119	263,894,552	21.45%
Oakwood ISD	116,992,151	133,009,311	16,017,160	13.69%
Corsicana ISD	9,962,878	10,504,528	541,650	5.44%
Dew ISD	222,871,106	271,257,325	48,386,219	21.71%
Teague ISD	874,747,582	1,025,829,557	151,081,975	17.27%
Wortham ISD	197,122,996	232,702,979	35,579,983	18.05%
Mexia ISD	2,378,318	2,915,083	536,765	22.57%
Fairfield Hospital District	1,443,851,559	1,595,162,443	151,310,884	10.48%
Teague Hospital District	982,137,991	1,103,350,755	121,212,764	12.34%