

**Minutes of the DeSoto Parish EMS Board of Commissioners
Tuesday, August 13, 2019**

The DeSoto EMS Board of Commissioners held a regular Board meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 2019, at DeSoto EMS Central Station at 5:00 p.m.

Members present were Board Members: Brent Ingvaridsen, Tim Thames, Dennis Reed, Jim Bob Vidler, David Caston, and KaTina Lane. Chairman LaTarsha Shelton was absent.

Guests attending were: Administrator Joe Magee, Assistant Administrator Karl Mann, Administrative Assistant Jane Manning, Office Assistant & Billing Specialist Melonie Confair, EMS Medical Director Dr. Pat McGauly, paramedics Logan Moore and Jason Nash.

Guests from the DeSoto Parish Police Jury were Reggie Roe, Greg Baker, Keith Parker, and Charlie Roberts.

DeSoto Fire District 2 Board of Commissioners Chairman, Shepard Fields and Fire Chief Noel Tucker were also guests.

The meeting was called to order by Administrator Joe Magee in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman at 5:00 p.m with no objections to have him lead the meeting. Dr. McGauly gave the invocation, and Magee led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guests were acknowledged by Magee, and he also asked for public comments. Mr. Fields stated that he represented DeSoto Fire District 2 and wanted the Board to know they were in favor of a joint EMS/Fire station in Keatchie because of the 20 – 25 minute response time in some areas of District 2.

Greg Baker spoke on behalf of DeSoto Fire District 3 stating that their Board, of which he is a member, wishes to have the rights to the property at 1460 Hwy. 171 in Stonewall relinquished to DeSoto Fire District 3.

New EMS Board Member from the Logansport area, Jim Bob Vidler, was introduced. He was appointed by the DeSoto Parish Police Jury in July to serve the remainder of Rusty Canton's term ending in August, 2020. Mr. Canton passed away in May, 2019. DeSoto EMS welcomes Mr. Vidler.

A motion to approve the minutes from the June 11, 2019, Public Hearing and Board meeting with no corrections was made by Lane. Caston seconded the motion. There were 5 ayes and 1 abstention by Vidler, who was not an EMS Board member for the June meeting. Motion carried.

The financial reports: current bank balances, income and expenses, and budget vs. actual were presented by Magee. A motion to accept them was made by Ingvaridsen. Thames seconded the motion. Motion carried by all ayes.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Thames with Ingvarlsen seconding the motion. All ayes carried the motion.

Old Business:

An update was given on Medic 12 by Magee. This medic unit has been recently repaired at manufacturer, Excellance, following an accident in October, 2018. It is back in DeSoto Parish and back in service.

An update was given on unit 705, which is in Weatherford, TX, having a service box installed. Delivery is expected the last week of August. It will be a rescue truck upon completion.

New Business:

DeSoto Fire District 2's Fire Chief, Noel Tucker, requested to speak before the Board. Some points he made were:

- DFD2 now has paid firemen and no volunteers. Their crew quarters are currently a donated mobile home.
- Tucker also works for DFD8 and stated that joint the EMS/fire Station 5 in Pelican is working very well.
- There is an almost 30-minute EMS response time to parts of DFD2's area, such as, State Line Road and Hwy. 169.
- DFD2 had built a station in 2012 with offices, a classroom, and bays in Keatchie with no crew quarters.
- Their 6000 sq. ft. fire station has a foundation for heavy trucks which could accommodate a lift for DeSoto EMS' mechanic shop, which could be moved from the current location at EMS Station 4 in Carmel to Keatchie.
- More people are moving into DFD2's coverage area.
- DFD2 has 3 ALS paramedics, but they cannot transport patients.
- The DFD2 Board of Commissioners expressed a desire to share an EMS/fire station in Keatchie at their June, 2019 meeting.
- The EMS/fire station would house two DFD2 employees at all times, along with a sprint truck, a tanker, a grass truck, and a pumper. He requested four, not two, dorm rooms for future needs.
- DFD2 is willing to contribute \$1,000,000 and to sign a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with DeSoto EMS for the proposed DeSoto EMS Station 6.

Discussion about the proposed Station 6 in Keatchie was begun by Administrator Magee. There were 405 calls to the Station 6 area in 2018 (data from the 911 incident reports).

Mr. Reed inquired as to the demographics. Magee responded that if the Logansport (Station 1) medic unit, responds to any call, it could be 2 to 2 ½ hours, before they return to their station.

Therefore, a medic unit from Mansfield has to “post” in the Station 1 area until Medic 1 returns to Logansport. There were 690 posts by Mansfield’s Medic 2 and Medic 6 units in 2018, taking them out of the Central Station area.

A medic unit from the proposed Station 6 could respond to those outlying areas in a much shorter time than the Station 1 (Logansport) or Station 3 (Stonewall). A color-coded map was displayed to designate the medic unit response areas.

Mr. Vidler stated that the Shiloh/State Line Road/Hwy 169 area is unlikely to have a short response time due to the distance to be travelled the way it is now.

Mr. Reed had to leave the meeting. There was still a quorum.

Ingvardsen made the motion to purchase 1.88 acres of land on Hwy. 5 in Keatchie next to the Post Office from Donnie Fisher for \$30,000 for Station 6. Caston seconded the motion. All ayes carried the motion.

Caston made the motion to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with DeSoto Fire District 2 to house their fighters in the proposed DeSoto EMS Station 6 in Keatchie. The motion was seconded by Vidler. There were 4 yeas and 1 nay (Thames). Motion carried.

Magee presented information about the new State Fire Marshal requirements that any governmental building must have certain features that would classify it as a safe house – meaning that it would be a shelter able to withstand severe winds and storm conditions. An architect would have to submit plans to the State prior to January 1, 2019, for an exemption for Station 6. The cost of a shelter/safe house building could almost double the cost of the construction.

Caston made the motion to bid the construction for the proposed Station 6. Vidler seconded it. 3 yeas and 2 nays (Thames and Lane). Motion carried.

At the June 11, 2019, Board Meeting, the Board gave Magee the authority to purchase insurance coverage period 8/20/19 – 8/19/20. Quotes were received from our current broker, Querbes and Nelson, and Lena Haydel of Laris Insurance. Magee proceeded with the Laris Insurance coverage.

The following policies will be sharing the coverage for annual premium \$392,139.

- National Interstate – commercial auto, commercial excess umbrella, general and professional liability
- Scottsdale and Lloyd’s of London – excess liability
- Allianz Global – commercial property and equipment
- Allied World – directors and officers liability
- RSUI Indemnity – directors and officers excess liability
- Traveler’s Casualty and Surety – crime and cyber liability
- Allied World – employment practices liability

The motion to approve the quote submitted by Lena Haydel of Laris Insurance was made by Thames. Ingvarlsen seconded the motion. All ayes carried the motion.

There were some comments made about the hiring committee at the last Board meeting. Manning mentioned that any discussion on this matter could be made during New Business, as there were several agenda items on this topic.

New Business:

The next agenda item concerns the Former EMS Station 3 that was donated to DeSoto Fire District 3 in Stonewall. A letter was received from the DFD3 Board of Commissioners asking DeSoto EMS to relinquish the rights to the land that the donated station is built on.

Here are the pertinent details:

- A Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) signed on Feb. 26, 2009, stated that the DeSoto Parish Police Jury paid DeSoto EMS \$20,000 to demolish the former DeSoto Parish Library – Stonewall Branch building.
- The CEA also granted DeSoto EMS “exclusive use of the property where the former library was housed”. It also gave EMS the right to occupy the property.
- On Feb. 23, 2017, DeSoto EMS entered into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with DeSoto Parish Fire District 3 for donation of the former DeSoto EMS Station 3, built in 2009.
- DeSoto Fire District 3 filed the CEA with the Clerk of Court, and we must relinquish our rights to the land, so they can have full use of the property.

Thames made the motion to relinquish the rights to the former DeSoto EMS Station 3 land located at 1460 Hwy. 171 in Stonewall to the DeSoto Parish Police Jury. The second was made by Caston. All ayes carried the motion. Manning will write a letter to the Police Jury confirming the relinquishment, and the Police Jury will complete the transaction with DeSoto Fire District 3.

Ingvarlsen made the motion to approve the letters of engagement for Dees Gardner, CPA's for the following:

- 2018 – 2019 fiscal year audit (fee no more than \$11,000) and
- the LA Legislative Auditor's Statewide Agreed-Upon Procedures (SAUP's) for the 2018 – 2019 fiscal year (fee no more than \$3500).

The second was made by Thames. Motion carried by all ayes.

Administrator Magee and Administrative Assistant Manning have reviewed and completed the LA Compliance Questionnaire. The motion to approve the LA Compliance Questionnaire for the 2018 – 2019 audit was made by Caston. Lane made the second. The motion was carried by all ayes.

The DeSoto EMS Board Member's compliance required by the LA Legislative Auditor was completed as follows: review of the DeSoto EMS ethics training policy from the DeSoto EMS Handbook and the "related party questionnaire". Annual Ethics Training for Board Members certificates were also collected.

Discussion regarding the hiring committee policy approved the by the DeSoto EMS Board of Commissioners on January 24, 2017, began with concerns made by Lane that the Board should be involved in the process of hiring prospective employees.

Lane made the motion to table this agenda item until all Board Me Vidler stated that it was unethical for a Board to be involved in the hiring process. mbers could be present. Ingvaridsen seconded the motion. No vote was taken. Discussion ensued with Police Jurors Roe and Baker stating that an alternative motion could be made because agreement could not be made to table this item. The alternative motion made by Thames was to leave the existing hiring policy "as is" in Section 404 of the DeSoto EMS Handbook with no changes. Caston made the second. Roll call votes were: Caston aye; Thames aye; Ingvaridsen aye; Vidler aye; Lane nay. Motion carried.

The Board discussed revising the policy for the hiring and firing of employees to come before the Board of Commissioners. Currently, a quorum of the Board will hear an appeal of an employee's termination. The EMS Board voted to have no other involvement in the hiring and/or firing process on January 24, 2017, in a Special Meeting.

Caston made the motion to leave the policy for the hiring and firing of employees policy stated in DeSoto EMS Handbook Sections 404 (hiring), 716 (firing), and 718 (Board only hears appeals of terminations) "as is". Vidler seconded the motion with 4 ayes and 1 nay (Lane). Motion carried.

The Board discussed revising the policy for adding new rules and regulations to the DeSoto EMS Handbook to be approved by the Board of Commissioners.

The current policy is in Section 402 if the DeSoto EMS Handbook, approved by the EMS Board on January 24, 2017. It states that the EMS Board of Commissioners authorizes the DeSoto EMS Policies and Procedures Manual, aka the DeSoto EMS Handbook.

The policy also states that any new policy or procedure will have the approval of the Administrator and/or the DeSoto EMS Board of Commissioners. A designee to make the changes will be appointed.

Because the Board already has the authority to add new rules and regulations to the DeSoto EMS Handbook, Caston made the motion to leave the policy "as is" in Section 402. The second was made by Thames. All ayes carried the motion.

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Lane made the motion to adjourn at 6:17 p.m. Thames seconded, and the motion was carried by all ayes.

David Caston
Board Member

Jim Bob Vidler
Board Member