

The Workshop Meeting and Special Council Meeting of April 11, 2017 was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

MAYOR

Ron Reinhard

OTHERS

Shannan Kinsley

Shane Reddout

Brenda Reinhard

Mario Hune

COUNCILMEMBERS

Susan Darst

Chandler Baker

Dennis Yates

Lou Hoffman

Mitch Thornton

Linda Reeves

Phil Howard

Laurie Hawkins

Jennifer Nottingham

Irene Scharf

Lynn Tiner

Kathleen McCloskey

Travis Lorton

Mayor Reinhard called the Workshop Meeting for the City of Grey Forest to order and declared a quorum with all Councilmember's present.

Commissioner Mario Hune, President of Bexar County Emergency Services District (ESD) No. 8 called the ESD Board Meeting to order. Commissioner Hune declared a quorum with three Commissioners present; himself, Commissioner Linda Reeves and Commissioner Dennis Yates. Commissioner Linda Logan and Commissioner Michael Voss are not present this evening.

WORKSHOP MEETING

1. CITY COUNCIL JOINT WORKSHOP MEETING WITH BEXAR COUNTY ESD NO. 8 BOARD

a. DISCUSS SIGNAGE RELATED TO ESD 8 OPERATIONS AND USAGE OF THE GREY FOREST STATION

Mayor Reinhard stated the City has a working relationship with the ESD and we've arranged to have a Workshop to discuss some common issues. We have a specific issue related to the sign on the street in front of the station where City Council previously expressed some concerns about not wanting to alter the sign. The ESD has expressed the concern of having proper signage and making sure people know they're there. We would like to try to resolve this topic tonight and move forward. Since this topic was last discussed at a City Council Meeting, we now have new Council members. In addition, the ESD has new Commissioners and it would be good to hear about their operations and any plans they may have. We would like to have a good working relationship moving forward. Last August, Mayor Reinhard stated he brought a proposal before Council to make changes to the sign showing the new ownership and it was rejected by Council. Some time has passed and he would like to reopen this for discussion. From his perspective, with the City as the landlord and the ESD being the tenant operating out of the facility, he thinks it's very appropriate for the ESD to have signage on the street declaring the operations going on and the services provided. Some of Council has had the feeling that the sign was donated by a local artist and declares a lot of history. There's a lot of history with the Grey Forest Area Volunteer Fire Department (GFAVFD) and they're proud of it. He would like to go around Council and let them explain where they're at in terms of how we can move forward.

Commissioner Mario Hune stated he would like to address Council and give them an idea of where they're coming from. He's not sure how we got here, but the ESD wants to move forward with a good working relationship, not only with just the City of Grey Forest but with the entire boundary the ESD covers. They are actively in the process of rebranding the department. They're working on the new logo for the trucks, patches, uniforms, etc. He likes the change to the sign that Mayor Reinhard proposed. The only addition he would make is to have some sort of placard or plaque with the history of the GFAVFD along the sign. They are very interested in making sure the sign represents the operation that's going on there but to not forget the history.

Mayor Reinhard stated he would like to open it up to Council for discussion.

Council member Nottingham stated she has talked to a large amount of citizens and the overwhelming majority do not want the sign changed. She is going to support her constituents. Because they still have volunteers, they could leave the sign as is and add a plaque to the bottom stating "Operated by Bexar County ESD No. 8". You could add station numbers as needed.

Council member Howard stated he's not necessarily opposed to changing the sign. He thinks that life is a motion picture, each frame is the same but slightly different. Life changes and to not forget the past, but also recognize we're moving to the future.

Council member Tiner stated everybody he has talked to is not in favor of changing the sign. They would rather not change the sign in any way and as an alternative, relocate the entire sign someplace where we could commemorate the GFVFD.

Council member Darst stated she has had extensive conversation with neighbors and has received the same response, not to alter the sign in any way. There is a huge sense of history with not only the creator of the sign but the GFVFD. There's a lot of emotional values in the sign for the neighbors of our community. The sign needs to remain unchanged and the ESD can put up their own sign on the property somewhere else.

Council member Hoffman stated it was a momentous occasion when this picture came out and it was considered at Council. Momentous because the stars had aligned and the astronomical conditions were incredibly unique. He absolutely supports the Mayor's proposal to change the sign. It's a misnomer to keep the GFVFD sign. Bringing the sign up to date with its current operations is appropriate. He's also in support of the Mayor's previous proposal to move the GFVFD sign and dedicate a wall in City Hall for the sign along with memorabilia to treasure the history. What not a better way since the current Council Chambers is the very place that garaged the original Fire Department.

Commissioner Mario Hunes stated they understand the history but at the same time, they don't want to misrepresent the operations. They are supportive of recognizing the past, it is part of this community and you can't ignore that. He understands the importance of where you came from but things do change. They're trying to figure out how to meet the interests of all and be able to move forward at the same time. He represents the community that's far larger than just Grey Forest. They're an emergency response organization providing fire and medical services. There's a lot of criteria you would want applied to a sign for an emergency response organization so people can find it.

Commissioner Linda Reeves stated initially she thought this discord and controversy was an issue of ownership. But after some more reflection, she realized that's really not the case. From where she's sitting, this controversy really started back in 2007 when ESD No. 8 contracted with the GFVFD. Fast-forward to somewhere around August of 2015. There's been constant discussions between the ESD and GFVFD about ownership. Around August 2015, there was an email sent with a letter attached that the ESD took issue with. For the ESD, that was kind of the beginning of the end for the GFVFD. The ESD decided that they wanted to solve the ownership issue and determined it would be better if the GFVFD was a part of the ESD. People have called it a merger, transfer and others have said it was a takeover. It was probably a combination of all three. But now as of October 1, 2015, the GFVFD ceased to operate or function as a Fire Department. All personnel and assets were transferred to the ESD. Two laws applied; one says if any ESD taxpayer dollars are expended on a particular item, that item then belongs to the ESD and the other law deals with a service provider discontinuing its service; if a Fire Department ceases to function, then the assets go to the subsequent service provider. So those assets were all transferred. During the same period, some members of the City Council contacted the ESD looking to reduce the expenses for fire services. From there, the ESD and City Council were able to negotiate an Interlocal Agreement for services and a Lease Agreement for the land and building which included the sign. Then in August 2016, she sent an email to Mayor Reinhard stating they were thinking of changing the sign and asked if he had any suggestions. They agreed with some ideas and not others. Nothing else transpired about the sign until she and Commissioner Linda Logan actually started the signage project. They put up plates over the "Volunteer" part of the sign. They felt the plates would not detract the sign and in return, would reflect the current operations. Not until then

did anybody say anything about not changing the sign. Since then, they've had the plates removed as instructed. She recognizes the history of the GFVFD and doesn't want to take away from that. The GFVFD worked on less than a shoestring budget for years of which they deserve great credit. However, the GFVFD is no longer a functioning Fire Department. At this point, to preserve the heritage and history of the GFVFD, it's her opinion that they shouldn't change the sign. To prevent any future discord over this, she likes the idea of the City taking the entire sign down and allowing the ESD to put up their own signage.

Mayor Reinhard thanked Commissioner Linda Reeves for her background but stated he would like the record to reflect that in September 2016, he sent her an email advising that City Council did not approve the requested changes to the sign. He requested a Workshop between City Council and the ESD to try and work out the signage issue.

Commissioner Dennis Yates stated he understands maintaining the heritage. In their rebranding efforts, the ESD has gone through some pretty extensive lengths to incorporate some elements of what was formerly the GFVFD and carry that heritage forward. His interest is in having a sign that reflects the activity that's being conducted at the station and who's conducting it. With that said, the design proposed by Mayor Reinhard is definitely acceptable, but there's a problem with that too in that ESD No. 8 is growing and they already need additional stations. Then the ESD will be back in front of City Council again saying, we need to make the sign accurate to reflect the station number and so on. We're always going to be chasing this. In addition, if the sign is considered an art piece, it shouldn't be hanging outside. It's already starting to show signs of deterioration. It's going to constantly need to be maintained and repaired. He doesn't think the ESD has an interest in maintaining an art piece. He likes the idea and thinks it's probably appropriate to house the sign in what was the original station. His interest is solely in having something that identifies the ESD's operations and can be maintained going forward. Logically, it seems that it would solve a lot of problems on both sides if the City were to take the sign back and preserve it in a manner that keeps with the desires of the citizens. This would allow the ESD to put up signage that reflects the operations going on there. They all have unlimited ideas but he doesn't think they will get everyone to agree. It's hard enough to get three people on one Board to agree and then you magnify the problem by bringing in other parties with completely different interests in the people they represent.

Mayor Reinhard stated it sounds like moving the sign is definitely an option. Another consideration could be to modify the sign to reflect Bexar County ESD 8 Fire & Rescue. Then add a plaque, recognizing the history of the Fire Department starting with the Scenic Loop Playground Volunteer Fire Department, GFVFD and GFAVFD with the appropriate dates of service.

There was further lengthy discussion on moving the GFVFD sign. That a new sign would have to comply with all City ordinances. There was discussion on who would pay to move the sign. It was noted the Lease Agreement states the ESD pays for maintenance up to \$4,999. Anything over \$5,000, the City pays for and retains ownership. There was some opinion that the ESD should be willing to pay for any changes to the sign since they requested the change. There was other opinion that the sign is a permanent fixture on the property. Therefore, the City owns it and should maintain it. There was lengthy discussion on possible locations for a new ESD sign and additional discussion on locations to move the GFVFD sign.

Mayor Reinhard stated it sounds like the GFVFD sign should be moved. The big thing he keeps hearing is preserve. If it's about preserving the sign, then it should be moved. He's heard from a number of citizens, some sitting in the room this evening that would like to see the sign moved somewhere else and let the ESD put up their own sign. It seems to be the best choice for preservation of the sign and satisfying the needs of the ESD. He would like to come to an agreement this evening to move the sign and then work on a timetable to accomplish it.

Mayor Reinhard stated he would like to briefly adjourn the Workshop Meeting and move to the Special Council Meeting. Mayor Reinhard adjourned the City of Grey Forest Workshop Meeting at 7:27 p.m.

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

1. DISCUSS AND ACT ON SIGNAGE RELATED TO ESD 8 OPERATIONS AND USAGE OF THE GREY FOREST STATION

Mayor Reinhard called the Special Council Meeting for the City of Grey Forest to order at 7:27 p.m. A quorum was declared with all Council members present. He stated we have an item on the Agenda to discuss and act on signage related to ESD 8 operations and usage of the Grey Forest station. Mayor Reinhard stated there's been good discussion between City Council and the ESD. He would like to entertain a motion. Council member Howard made the motion that the City of Grey Forest will move the GFVFD sign at its own cost to a location to be determined within three months. The motion was seconded by Council member Tiner. The motion passed with 3 YES by Council member Howard, Council member Tiner, Council member Hoffman and 2 OPPOSED by Council member Nottingham and Council member Darst. Mayor Reinhard stated the motion passed by a vote of three to two. The City of Grey Forest will move the GFVFD sign within three months. He stated by this action, we've approving the expenditure. The next step will be to put together a plan for the signs placement over the next three months.

Mayor Reinhard adjourned the Special Council Meeting for the City of Grey Forest at 7:29 p.m. The Workshop Meeting for the City of Grey Forest was reconvened.

WORKSHOP MEETING

1. CITY COUNCIL JOINT WORKSHOP MEETING WITH BEXAR COUNTY ESD NO. 8 BOARD

b. DISCUSSION WITH ESD 8 BOARD ON ESD 8 ONGOING OPERATIONS

Mayor Reinhard stated ESD No. 8 provides fire and medical services to the City of Grey Forest through an Interlocal Agreement. In addition, the City leases property to the ESD that they operate out of. We greatly appreciate their service to the area. Since this is the first time City Council and the ESD have met, he asked the ESD if they could explain how they operate and what they're thinking of for a long-term plan.

Commissioner Mario Hune stated they're still working on a long-term plan. They know that they have some challenges before them. One challenge has to do with what the City of San Antonio is planning to do as far as annexation. The ESD has a plan to add a second station at the corner of Cielo Vista and Babcock Road. There has been no discussion about moving the operations out of the Grey Forest Station. They think the station is centered and well-done. They're trying to put together short and long-term plans for the needs of the entire ESD No. 8 service area. Their Board Meetings are typically held on the first Tuesday of the month. All are welcome to attend.

Commissioner Linda Reeves stated the major goal of the ESD has been to get additional stations. They purchased the land at Cielo Vista for a station. The goal was to start building as soon as possible and she wishes it was already done. They can't make any guarantees that they'll always be at the Grey Forest Station. There's been quite a bit going on since the GFVFD became a part of the ESD in October 2015. Renaming the department was a big part of that.

Commissioner Dennis Yates stated with new Commissioners on the Board, they're are working on things such as payroll, professional services, equipment replacement, etc. The main objective is to make sure personnel has the tools necessary to provide the best service to the entire district. They will continue to plan accordingly to maintain and continue to improve those services.

Council member Hoffman stated he thinks as the ESD is developing their short and long-term plans, in order to promote interest and get information out to the service area, he'd like to see the ESD come up with a way to communicate their meetings and activities to the area.

Mayor Reinhard thanked City Council and the ESD for getting together. He appreciates the time and the good discussion. Perhaps it would be a good idea to have Annual Workshops. There being no further action, Mayor Reinhard adjourned the Workshop Meeting for the City of Grey Forest at 7:36 p.m.

Commissioner Mario Hune stated they will adjourn the Bexar County Emergency Services District No. 8 Workshop. Commissioner Dennis Yates made a motion to adjourn the Workshop, Commissioner Reeves seconded the motion and the Workshop was adjourned.

These minutes were written/recorded by Shawna Kinsley.

These minutes were approved as ~~written~~ amended on the 25 day of July, 2017.

Signed: Ronald G. Reinhard
Ronald G. Reinhard