Freestone Central Appraisal District
Directors Meeting

Minutes of June 12, 2026 Regular Meeting # 562

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, Sid Fryer, 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 May 13, 2026. 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 May, 2026. A payment of $7,950.00 was made to Mr. Campos for the district's financial audit for 2025. There were a number of payments for litigation that were listed and paid to Low Swinney Evans & James. Mr. Awalt explained to the board that an order had been filed to dismiss the lawsuits from Khushbu Inv, and MOI Fairfield which is the Chevrolet dealership as there had been no communication for two years. He added that the district's expenses are standard for bills paid in May. Ms. Whyte made a motion to approve the financial report for May 2026, with a second by Mr. Fryer. Motion carried.

The board considered Item VII on the agenda, 2026 Budget Amendments. Mr. Awalt reminded the board of the proposed encumberances that was discussed in the previous board meeting. Mr. Awalt proposed an additional $25,000.00 to increase litigation contingency for potential upcoming court cases. $32,143.00 to credit entities for 2027 budget payments, with a total of $57,143.00. After brief discussion, Mr. Awalt stated that the entities had thirty (30) days to review the amended budget and there was no resolutions or disapprovals. The board will now be able to take action and adopt the amendments as recommended by Mr. Awalt. Mr. Brown made a motion, with a second by Mr. Dunlap to adopt the 2026 Budget amendments. The motion carried.

Mr. Awalt proceeded with his presentation of the workshop on the 2027 operating budget. Pointing out the employee Health Insurance Mr. Awalt stated that he had projected an 8 percent increase although the new rates are not available at this time. The postage and mailing services had an increase of $2,950.00 with the postage increasing by 0.04 cents in July with an average of 7 percent each year.

There is an increase of $1,500.00 for the financial auditor as Mr. Frank Campos will no longer provide an audit service, therefore, the district will need to put out a bid for a contract for the financial audit service. There was no change in equipment purchase, or contingency. Division IX Fund Balance showed the district's funds of $32,143.00 for 2027. The total net change proposed for 2027 is a difference of $20,002.00. The amount proposed to be collected from the entities in 2027 is $1,954,854.00, a difference of $89,502.00, which is an increase of 5.66 percent from 2026.

The 2027 Cost Share Estimate showed the entity payments calculated using 2025 total tax levy. Mr. Awalt reminded the board that the actual cost share for 2027 would be based on the 2026 total tax levy after the tax rates are adopted.

Mr. Awalt pointed out the 2027 Budget Comparison Impact Statement. Although a bill was passed in September 1, 2025, the district is required to provide a taxpayer impact statement showing the medianvalued homestead property in each governmental body; a comparison of the property tax bill in dollars is pertaining to the property for the current fiscal year and the upcoming fiscal year, the district does not adopt tax rates, or impose property taxes, and had no direct impact on a taxpayer's property tax bill. The district must still provide an impact statement although the operating costs are funded through proportional allocations from the taxing entities it serves.

Mr. Awalt then reviewed the budget workbook beginning with 2026 CAD Salary Survey, with Deputy Chief Appraiser and Appraisal Supervisor combined into one position, Administration Assistant and Office Manager/HR were also combined, and GIS Mapping and Deeds/Ownership were combined as 'Other'. The district had between 20,000 to 40,000 parcels. The Williamson CAD 2026 Auto Allowance Survey had all responses converted to monthly allowance. The district's median of $750.00 per month had a median of the third highest of each county.

There was an increase for Mr. Moore in employee salaries,; Ms. Gilley Lee is working towards her RPA. The employee health insurance had a projected 8 percent increase, but the actual rate increase will be available in August. Workman's comp had a slight increase but there were no claims filed.

There was nothing budgeted for TNT postcards as the district is no longer required to mail postcards to the taxpayers but is required to post a notice in the newspaper. The difference in expenses paid for office supplies over the past three years is $27,199.00 for 2023, $22,552.00 for 2024, $23,456.00 for 2025; $25,200.00 has been budgeted for 2027.

Mr. Awalt reviewed the list of subscriptions in account 01-6203. The Fairfield Recorder was not budgeted for 2027 as it is rarely used. Just Texas Service for Vehicle Registration Listings is not available for 2027; an estimate of $750.00 was received from Info Nation. A new subscription with Trans Union replaced LexisNexis for address change and other information, with 150 searches included. The monthly fee is $150.00 per person, 12 members with a total of $1,800.00. NADA for mobile homes, and the Teague Chronicle has also been cancelled for 2027.

ESRI Maintenance will need to be repurchased as the district no longer has access to GIS software; it is $3,500.00 to purchase, $1,500.00 each for Mr. Awalt, and Mr. Moore. In 2027 the district will be forced to change to online QuickBooks as they will no longer support the desktop version. Since there were internet issues it will be necessary to move everything to cloud and purchase a new server. A quote for a new server is approximately $40,000.00. $1,320.00 has been budgeted for 2027 once the change has been made.

Pritchard & Abbott had both the Mineral and Software contract's available for the board's review. Mr. Awalt stated that the mineral contract could be signed if the board agreed. Mr. Awalt requested that the board table the software contract until the July meeting adjusting the cost without the handling of emails; it would be more cost effective for the emails to be handled by the district. A motion was made by Mr. Fryer, with a second by Mr. Brown to table both contracts until the next meeting. Motion carried.

Account 01-6305 *Mapping Services,* Pritchard & Abbott map maintenance is not budgeted for 2027 as they have submitted a quote for $17,000.00 with the district not having access to the ESRI software.

The budget for the financial auditor for 2027 was increased to $9,500.00 to cover a new contract, as the district's auditor, Mr. Frank Campos is no longer handling audits; a bid will be going out for year ending December 31, 2026. Starlink Backup Internet Service was added to the utilities account which includes the dish and hardware; There is an upfront cost of $650.00 to purchase the equipment, then $55.00 per month subscription for 50 GB. The City of Fairfield utilities was $893.00 in 2025 due to a water theft, $780.00 is budgeted for 2027.

Division VI *Contingency* had $10,000.00 in Contingency, $51,195.00.00 in CAD retained earnings, $32,143.00 encumbered from 2025 fund balance, and $20,000.00 in building improvement. The total balance in contingency is $113,338.00.00.

After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Awalt recommended that the board have another workshop next month and approve the budget in August giving him time to get quotes and bids. There is no action to take on the workshop, but the budget must be approved in August with a public hearing, and to meet the September 15 deadline.

There being no further business, Mr. Dunlap declared the meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary