March 4, 2025

The Rusk County Emergency Services District #1 met on this date at 6:07 p.m. for a Special Called Workshop with Board President David Burks presiding. Board Members present were Gloria Dooley, Jiffy Dukes and Wayne Griffith. Board Members absent were Brian Bathke. The workshop was opened with a prayer from Fire Chief Patrick Dooley followed by the pledge to the American flag.

Departments present were: Tatum, Crims Chapel, Carlisle, Rusk County Rescue Unit, New Salem, Reklaw and Church Hill.

President Burks opened by explaining that the purpose of the workshop was to discuss implementation of a 7/800 redundant system in the District. Board Member Jiffy Dukes lead the discussion and requested from Josh Stelly information regarding how this redundant system would work and what the approximate cost to the District would be just for the equipment. Josh showed the group where the equipment would be installed and how it would take over in the event that the main 7/800 system went down so that the District wouldn't be dependent on the VHF system currently in place as backup. During the discussion it was noted that this would have to be done in stages as the Oakhill tower site is completed but not yet "live" due to hold ups from the FCC on the license and that a date to go "live" had not been established. The situation has been turned over to APCO for them to resolve so that this tower can be put into use. It was also pointed out that the Laneville tower would not be complete until possibly the end of 2025 and that even when it is completed, and the Garrison 7/800 tower is complete and online, we would have to be sure that coverage from those two towers is as good as or better than the coverage we currently have from the South tower site before dismantling and turning off the South tower. All of the South tower equipment would then probably be moved to the Good Springs tower site in the Carlisle area to provide better service in the west sector of the county. All of this would take 18 to 24 months to complete so implementing a redundant system right now would not serve the purpose of eliminating the VHF system at this time. Board Member Dukes asked the departments to weigh in on the discussion and give us information on any problems that they are currently experiencing on the 7/800 system. Noted were the following problems: Repeated problems with being able to communicate with dispatch and department members in the west, south and north sectors of the county; not being able to communicate from mobile units in trucks that are not P25 digital; the need for extra handheld radios for use in Incident Command; programming and installation of base mobile units at the departments; reprogramming of multiple pagers and the cost of amplified chargers for pagers. At the end of the discussion, it was agreed that the Board should instead address the current, pressing issues presented by the departments and

purchase 40 refurbished P25 digital mobile radios for installation in department vehicles with departments assuming the cost for the installation; issue out one additional handheld per department for IC use; program and install mobile base units in all departments; and address any programming issue with pagers. All of these items will be addressed as agenda items at the March ESD meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, a motion to adjourn was made by Board Member Jiffy Dukes, and duly seconded by Board Member Wayne Griffith. On a unanimous vote of the Board, the workshop was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

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Secretary President