

Travis County Emergency Services District 14 Town Hall Meeting

February 23, 2011

Planning Committee Members

Committee Member	Alternate
Brandon Tanous (ESD Commissioner)	None (would violate Open Meetings Act)
Tom Stevenson (ESD Commissioner)	None (would violate Open Meetings Act)
Wiley McMinn (ETJ Resident)	Veronica Frederick (also serves as Secretary), so attends all meetings (ETJ Resident)
Gary Potts (VVFD Board)	Scott Spurlin (VVFD Board)
Ken Beck (Volente Resident)	Al Gracie (Volente Resident)

Enabling Legislation

- Texas Health and Safety Code
 - Chapter 775. Emergency Service Districts
 - Acts 1989, 71st Legislature
 - Authorization: Sec. 775.003
 - An emergency services district may be organized as provided by Article III, Section 48-e, of the Texas Constitution, as proposed by S.J.R. No. 27, Acts of the 70th Legislature, Regular Session, 1987, and adopted by the voters at an election held November 3, 1987, and by this chapter to protect life and health.

History

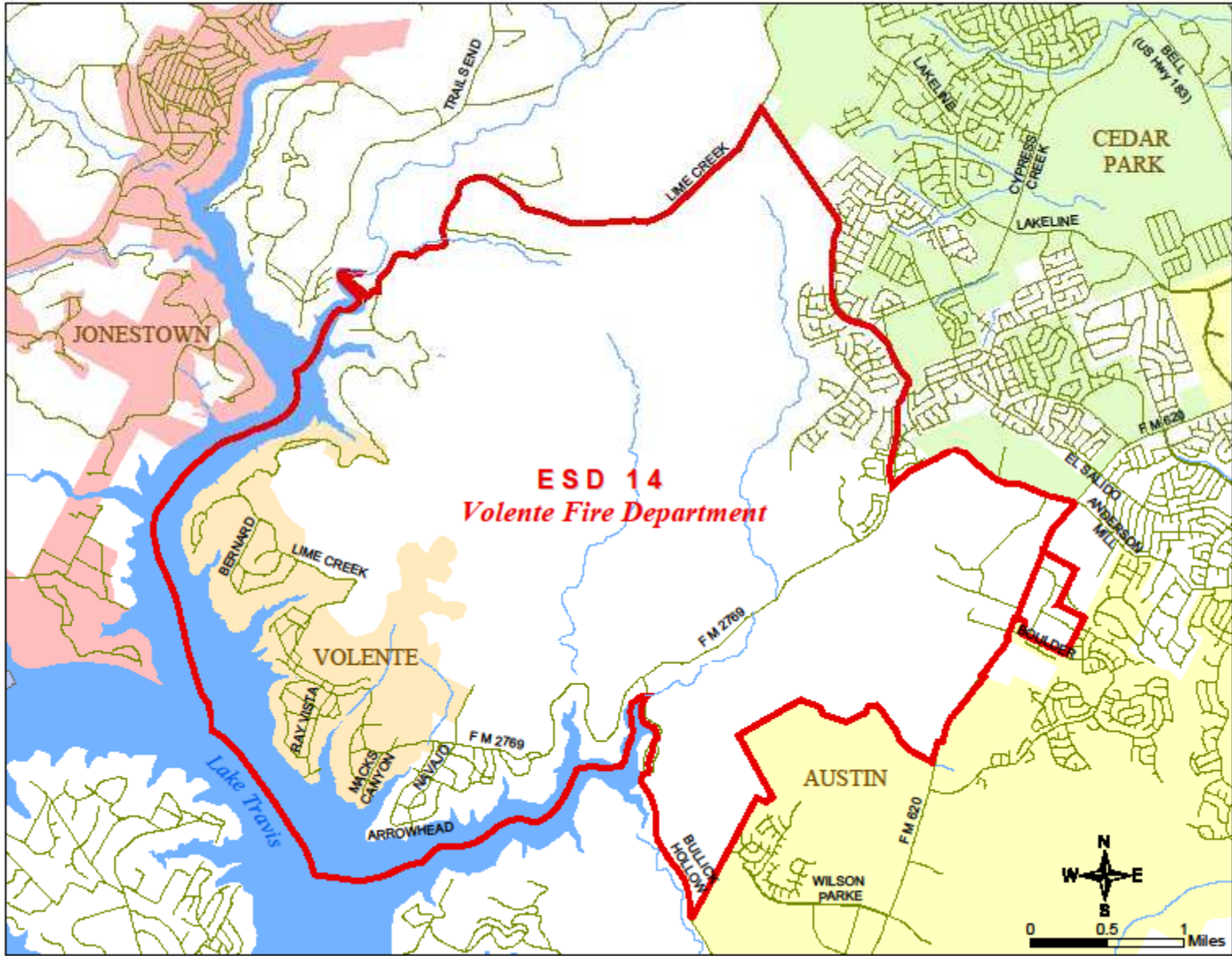
- **1961:** Volente Volunteer Fire Department (VVFD)- chartered
- **1961-1985:** funded entirely from donations and membership dues.
- **1985:** residents voted and created the Travis County Rural Fire Prevention District #11
 - Had taxing authority up to 3 cents per \$100 of property evaluation.
 - Responsible for emergency services by contracting operations to the VVFD- which would remain the primary service provider.
- **Nov. 1999:** residents voted to change the RFPD to an Emergency Service District (ESD)
 - Allowed taxing authority up to 10 cents per \$100 of property evaluation.

History Continued

- **2001:** Village of Volente incorporated and stayed within the ESD 14 authority
- **2004:** ESD 14 contracted with the Cedar Park Fire Department for services to the new dense residential developments along the new Anderson Mill Road (AKA Cedar Park ETJ)
 - Service began in January 2005.
- **1961-2004:** VVFD was an all volunteer organization.
 - First paid Fire Fighter/EMT was hired in 2004
- **January 2008:** VVFD authorized establishment of 24/7 coverage by 2 fire fighters.

Brief on the ESD

- 18 square miles
 - 8 square miles dedicated to Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Preserve.
 - ± 2 square miles contains the CP ETJ
- Ad Valorem Tax Revenue
 - 10 cents/\$100 of Property Evaluation
- Annual Budget around \$1 Million
- 3 Population Centers
 - Volente, CP ETJ, and 620 & Anderson mill Area (Commercial and Residential)
- VVFD/CP are the districts first responders with EMT Medical Services from Austin/Travis County.



Current ESD Situation

- Contract with CP has become unsustainable
 - The contract rates have increased 138% from 2006 to 2010

• 2005	612 Homes	\$ 73,440
• 2006	963 Homes	\$148,495
• 2007	1,341 Homes	\$213,380
• 2008	1,562 Homes	\$272,163
• 2009	1,686 Homes	\$293,769
• <u>2010</u>	<u>1,738 Homes</u>	<u>\$353,926</u>
TOTAL		\$1,355,173
 - 2006- \$154 per home to 2010-\$204 per home: 33% increase
- ESD 14 has been Deficit Budgeting for the past year along with the current year.

Current ESD Situation

- Volente Volunteer Fire Department
 - Decreasing volunteer base
 - 3 person staff is standard for crew and is not being met currently
 - Further cooperation and aid agreements needed to ensure sufficient staffing for fire fighting.
- 620 and Anderson Mill Area
 - Response time is greater than 15 minutes

Strategic Planning

- Planning committee was reestablished at the February 3, 2011 ESD 14 meeting.
- Focus on short, medium, and long range planning for the ESD
- Made of a cross section of the ESD including members from Volente, ETJ Area, ESD Commissioners, Volente Volunteer Fire Department Board, and technical experts for modeling and the VVFD Fire Chief.
- Have been meeting weekly since reestablishment to review, discuss, and prepare planning options for the consideration of the ESD 14 Board.



Committee Goals and Mission

- **Mission**

- To provide the ESD 14 Board with advice and recommendations on actions affecting the ESD currently and in the future.

- **Goals**

- To review all options and considerations for short, mid, and long range planning.
- To provide timely, unbiased and analytical information to the ESD Board for their consideration.

Our Options

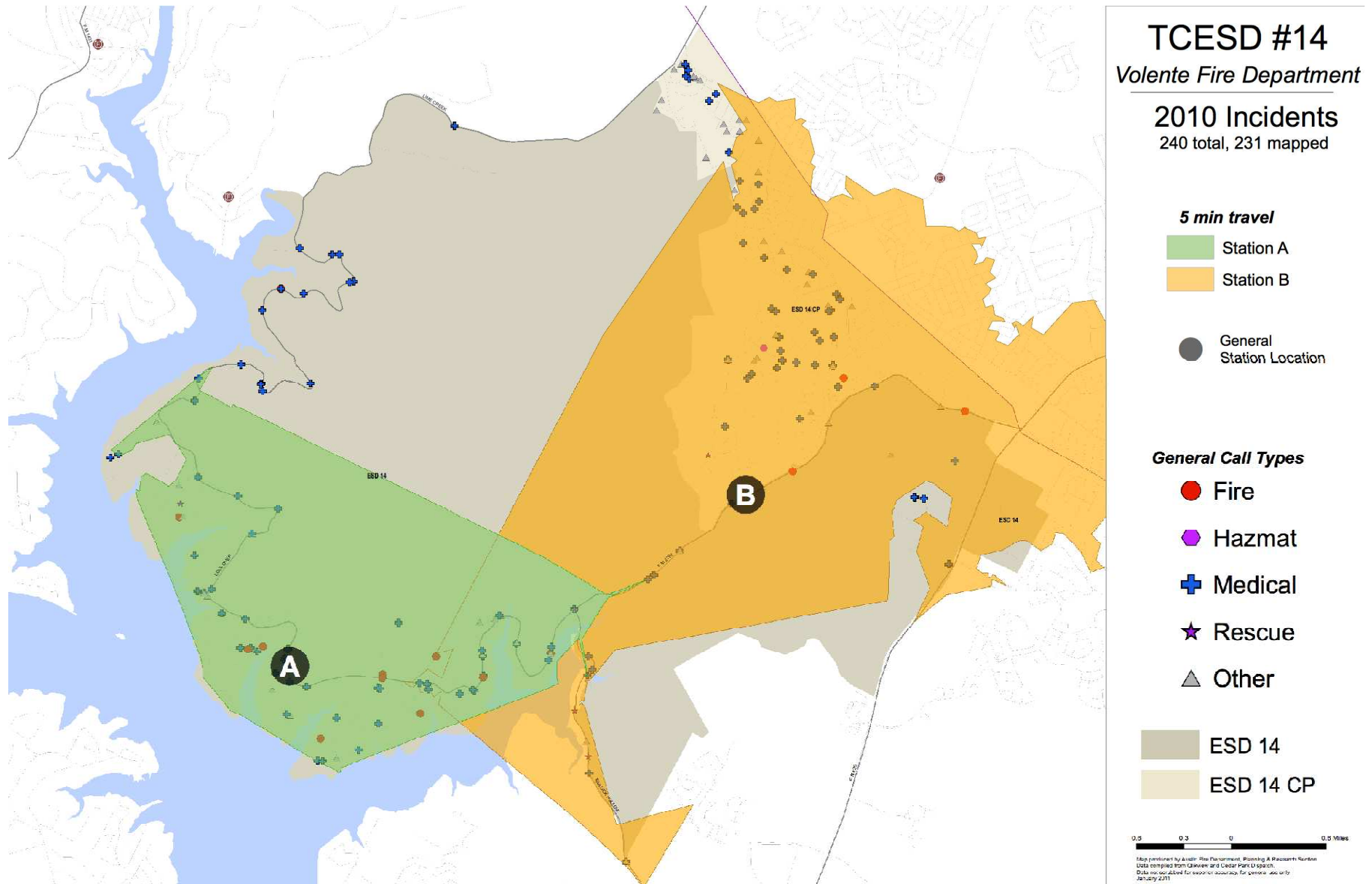
- Listed in-order of preferred options:
 1. Negotiate a new and modified contract with Cedar Park for the ETJ area of the ESD. Upgrade the Volente VFD to a 3 person crew. Secure an integrated resource agreement with our Travis County Partners to ensure sufficient coverage through an intelligent design to maximize coverage to all in the ESD. To be realistic, a sales tax increase will need to be passed by the voters in the ESD. Increase would be from 7.25% to 8.25%, which is the same sales tax paid in Cedar Park and Austin.



Our Options

2. Reject Contract with Cedar Park and withdraw from contract relationship. Build a second station near the southern edge of the ETJ and house a 3 person crew with 1 person at the existing Volente Station. Also, obtain an agreement with our Travis County partners to ensure sufficient and maximum coverage.

Two Station Coverage Map





Our Options

3. Negotiate a new service contract with Cedar Park based on the cumulative property values of the ETJ area, which would be considerably lower. Hold a sales tax election to be voted by the ESD residents to ensure sufficient funding. Also, increase the VVFD to a 3 person crew.



Our Options

4. Reject the Cedar Park Contract and withdraw from that relationship. Contract out for Auto-Aid with our Travis County partners to respond when needed. Would require VVFD to upgrade to a 3 man crew. Also, requires the voters to approve a sales tax increase to support funding.



Our Options

5. Sign Contract with Cedar Park at the current terms for a short period. Would require the board to reduce funding to the VVFD and run on a budget that is already lean. Also, there is a high risk that the ESD Board would be deficit budgeting by using reserves to pay for the service providers.

Factors that Affect Funding

- ESD is restricted to the type of revenue it can receive.
 - Majority of funding comes from Ad Valorem taxes.
- Sales Tax Revenue is essential to consider all the options on the table.
 - Currently: 7.25%
 - Proposed: 8.25%
 - 1 % increase is the max allowed- cap at 8.25%
 - Same sales tax paid in Cedar Park and Austin.

Now What?

- The Strategic Planning Committee will continue to review all options and feasibility of a possible sales tax election.
 - Committee has a standing slot on the ESD 14 Board meetings to report any and all considerations/options.
- ESD 14 Board will continue to work hard in ensuring that all timelines will be met and to ensure continued relations with other government entities and the community.
- ESD 14 Commissioners will ensure that the district receives reasonable and sufficient coverage for Fire and EMS services.