

17,046

**FIRE PROTECTION AGREEMENT CONTRACT**

**FILED FOR RECORD**  
at 3:30 o'clock P M

**THE STATE OF TEXAS §**  
**COUNTY OF HUNT §**

**AUG 28 2021**

**BECKY LANDRUM**  
County Clerk, Hunt County, Tex.  
By 

**ARTICLE I**

This agreement ("Agreement"), made and entered into on the day and date last hereinafter written, by and between Hunt County, Texas, hereinafter called "County", acting herein by and through its duly elected qualified County Judge and County Clerk, having been heretofore authorized so to act under and by virtue of the provisions of a resolution duly adopted by the Commissioners Court of said County and \_\_\_\_\_ (hereinafter called "Department"), acting through its Fire Chief as authorized by said Department. Department is an incorporated volunteer fire department, or municipal fire department, located in Hunt County, at the address of \_\_\_\_\_. This Agreement is made pursuant to authority of: Texas Local Government Code Chapters 352 and 791; Texas Government Code Chapter 418 Subchapters E and E-1; and Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code Section 78.001, as applicable.

**WITNESSETH**

**WHEREAS**, the Department is the owner of certain fire fighting vehicles and other equipment designed for and capable of being used to fight, control, and extinguish fires; and

**WHEREAS**, the County is desirous of obtaining certain firefighting services rendered by said department, as more fully hereinafter described and limited,

**NOW, THEREFORE**, for and in Consideration of the premises and mutual benefits to be derived by each of the parties hereto, which said parties now Agree to be valuable and sufficient Consideration, said parties Agree upon the terms and conditions as follows:

**ARTICLE II**

**DEFINITIONS**

As used herein, the words and phrases hereinafter set forth shall have the meanings as follows:

- A. "Emergency" shall be any circumstance in which there is a high probability of death or serious injury to an individual or significant property loss located in any area of Hunt County.

- B. "District" means the area within the boundaries of Hunt County, Texas, for which the Department located in such district, has permanent responsibility for first alarm response to fires in such district.
- C. "HCFA" means The Hunt County Firefighters Association, which is a corporation made up of the Fire Departments in Hunt County that receive funding from the County.
- D. "Urban area" means any area within the corporate limits of an incorporated city, town, or village within said County.
- E. "Department" means a firefighting group that is either a government entity or non-profit entity located in Hunt County.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **SCOPE AND NATURE OF SERVICES**

- A. Services to be rendered and performed hereunder by the Department are limited to Fire Protection Services normally rendered under circumstances of emergency as hereinafter defined.
- B. It is hereby understood and agreed by and between the parties that the County is divided into Districts, as shown by map of Hunt County dated (10-26-15) on file and available for review in the office of the Hunt County Fire Marshal and Hunt County 911 Office, for the purpose of establishing primary responsibility for Fire Protection throughout the County. The HCFA will be responsible for dictation, formation, and alterations of District boundaries, with final approval being made by Commissioners' Court or their designee.
- C. Each department in Hunt County is responsible for making first alarm responses to fire or other emergencies within their District. No Department shall respond out of its District unless Mutual and/or Automatic Aid are requested by another department. Local Government Code, Section 418.109. If the responsible department does not respond, then Dispatch will assign the call to another department. If Department is not available at any time due to equipment or personnel issues, Department shall notify the Hunt County Fire Marshal and dispatch offices immediately, and shall include in such notification the expected length of time the Department will be unavailable.
- D. Such service shall be rendered on first response basis to the District provided; however, when one or more fires are in progress within the County, or when the strength of the firefighting personnel of the Department has been substantially or materially weakened by the absence of the members thereof in the suppression and fighting of fire, or when any such equipment or personnel has been ordered into action or to remain on a standby basis

because of actual or threatened disaster or calamity, and when any such condition or emergency shall exist, it shall be the responsibility of the Fire Chief of said Department or some other member thereof designated by him/her for such purpose, to determine whether or not such firefighting equipment shall be dispatched, and the judgment of such person in such matter shall be final.

- E. County agrees that Department shall render such services to other Districts in the County if Mutual Aid and/or Automatic Aid is requested by the Department of such District. Department shall have Authority to render Mutual Aid Assistance as provided by Section 418.109 and Section 418.110 of the Local Government Code.
- F. County gives and grants to the Department full and complete authority to operate the Department's vehicles on and over the roads, highways, and other thoroughfares of the County and other public places that are subject to the County's maintenance and control. Vehicles must be compliant with State of Texas safety and insurance requirements. Also, drivers of fire vehicles must meet the requirements of the State of Texas:

#### **CDL Exemptions**

Individuals who operate any of the following vehicles are not required to obtain a CDL but must have the correct class of driver license for the vehicle they are operating. Individuals must also certify to the Texas Class A or B Driver License Application - Non-CDL Exempt Vehicles (CDL-2). See [CDL-Exempt Vehicle Test Sites](#).

1. Military or commercial vehicles when operated for military purposes by military personnel;
2. A vehicle controlled and operated by a farmer, used to transport agricultural products, machinery or supplies within 150 miles of the individual's farm;
3. Fire-fighting or emergency vehicles necessary to the preservation of life or property or the execution of emergency governmental functions whether operated by an employee of a political subdivision or by a volunteer firefighter;
4. Recreational vehicles driven for personal use (although a CDL is not required, individuals must obtain the proper license class for the vehicle weight); and
5. A vehicle used exclusively to transport seed cotton modules or cotton burrs.

- G. Department agrees that a Firefighter providing service to the County under this Agreement may be considered an Agent of the County as provided by Section 352.004 of the Local Government Code, if all other conditions precedent for that agency relationship are met when engaged in the scope of its duty to provide fire protection services for the residents in any part of the area of the County that lies outside the territorial limits of any municipal corporation. However, it is understood by the parties that the Department is a private non-profit corporation and not a governmental entity and is not an agent of the County for any other purpose.

- H. It is expressly agreed and understood that the Department assumes all responsibility for any injury or damage suffered by any person or property resulting from the provision of any emergency service not the subject of this contract or the use of any member's personal vehicle in response to any dispatch including any damage or injury caused or contributed to by reason of the use or operation of any equipment or tangible property owned by the County or purchased by the County for the Department including attorney fees, costs of court, and other expenses reasonably necessary in preparing and presenting any defense in such matter as well as for any damage for which the County is found liable by any court of competent jurisdiction.
- I. The County's authority shall be limited to that authority provided by Chapter 352 of the Texas Local Government Code or other applicable law. Under that authority, and in order to protect the best interest of the residents of the County, each member of the Department shall be subject to a criminal background check and drug screening at the Department's expense upon joining the Department, or within three months after full execution of this Agreement if no criminal background check or drug screening occurred upon the member's joining. Each new member of a Department will be reported to the Fire Marshal's office: noting his/her name, DOB, date of criminal background check, and date of drug screening, within two weeks. A person cannot perform the duties of a firefighter until this notification is submitted. An additional drug screening shall occur after any collision or other accident involving a Department vehicle or a member's personal vehicle while responding to a dispatched emergency call. If any criminal background information or positive drug screen is obtained during these tests and/or background checks, the information shall be forwarded within five (5) business days to the attention of the Hunt County Fire Marshal. If the Fire Marshal or the Department believes the information obtained warrants removal of the member from the Department, the member shall be removed from the Department, or the Department will no longer receive payments from Hunt County under this Agreement. In addition, if it is discovered that the Department intentionally or knowingly failed to perform its duties under this paragraph, it shall repay the monies obtained from the County during the entire period of non-compliance.
- J. Department agrees that if it is known or becomes known that an active member has:(1) ever been convicted of or received deferred adjudication for ARSON, MURDER, KIDNAPPING, SEXUAL OFFENSES (as defined by required registration as a Sexual Offender), SELLING OF DRUGS, CRIMES OF MORAL TURPITUDE or DOMESTIC / FAMILY VIOLENCE or (2) been convicted of any FELONY, including deferred adjudication, within the past 5 years, such information will be made known to the County through the Hunt County Fire Marshal and said member will be removed from that department. Department agrees that time shall be calculated from the last date of confinement, parole, or probation in determining the age of the offense.

- K. The Hunt County Fire Marshal shall be responsible only for the performance of the contract and not responsible for day-to-day operations of the contracted departments.
- L. The HCFA may monitor Department performance to include equipment, personnel, training, apparatus and response, and if determines there is a deficiency, to report such to the Hunt County Fire Marshal.
- M. All fire/arson investigations (except those within the City Limits of Greenville and Commerce) will be conducted and coordinated by the Hunt County Fire Marshal's Office. No Department shall initiate, conduct, or request outside investigation assistance unless first approved by the Hunt County Fire Marshal.
- N. Departments may submit expense invoices to insurance companies for legitimate expenses in response to an emergency incident. However, if the Insurance company does not pay, that invoice shall NOT be sent to the person involved in the incident.
- O. **Minimum Standards**: the level and type of equipment and personnel at the disposal of the Department shall be certified by the Hunt County Fire Marshall or his designee as being sufficient to provide services in the Department's district, and that certification will occur as soon as it is practicable to complete after this agreement is signed by the Department. The District shall provide notice of any reduction in force from lost, broken, or out-of-service equipment or reduction in the number of volunteer firefighters on the Department's roster by forwarding information related to the reduction to the Fire Marshall within 2 business days of the reduction. The Fire Marshall's certification the Department's minimum standards approval must occur before payments pursuant to this contract will increase from the previous contract's monthly payment of \$2,400 per month. The Fire Marshall's certification is for the sole purpose of providing information to the Commissioners Court, and it may not be relied upon as an expert opinion of the needs of the Department's district. The Fire Marshal's certification will be considered by the Commissioners Court

**ARTICLE IV**

**TERM**

The term during which this agreement shall be in force and effect shall commence on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, and end at such time when a new contract supersedes the current contract.

**ARTICLE V**

**COMPENSATION**

- A. It is understood that County will enter into an appropriate contractual relationship with other Cities/Departments within the County relating to the rendition of Fire Protection

Services to areas within the said County, and will make payments to the City/Department rendering said services.

- B. As consideration for services rendered by the Department thereunder, Hunt County shall make the following payments unless unforeseen budget restrictions prevent payments:
- a. Hunt County will generally provide \$4800 per month for such Fire Protection and Emergency Services, which may be increased or decreased by the Commissioners Court at any time based on changes in the Department's personnel or equipment, or changes to the Department's district – including size of area, number of residents in that area, or any other change relevant to the Department's responsibilities. The initial payment to Department under this agreement will be \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month, effective the first of the calendar month following the approval of the Hunt County Commissioners Court.
  - b. Hunt County will provide an amount not to exceed \$2,500.00 per month to be divided by departments for run overage of dispatched fire calls. This report will be provided to the County by the HCFA on a monthly basis. The overage report shall reflect those departments that have responded to more than 10 dispatched fire calls. The overage money shall be divided by percentage to the departments, depending on the number of fire calls over 10.
- C. The payments from Hunt County shall only be used for fire department operations. Volunteers of the Volunteer Fire Departments shall not receive any stipend or compensation for performing the duties of a firefighter.
- D. The County will provide Workman's Compensation Insurance coverage to all Volunteer Firefighters while they are in the performance of their duties of firefighter for their respective department. Any person having filed a claim for Workman's Compensation shall not perform any duties with said fire department until a written release from a Medical Doctor is submitted to Hunt County and the said fire department. Such release MUST include a specific notation that the firefighter is released for heavy physical activities such as those normally encountered in active fire control.
- E. The payments from Hunt County listed in Article V. B. above shall be reviewed annually during the budget process and shall not be made unless approved by the Commissioners during a regularly scheduled session or special session. If the County budget is depleted due to an unforeseen disaster or act of God, the County shall not be under obligation to pay the scheduled amount.

## ARTICLE VI

### BOOKS, RECORDS, AND EQUIPMENT

- A. The Department shall keep accurate books and records as to all firefighting or other emergency calls made. Such records shall reflect the date, time, and the location of where the service was rendered, and the name and exact address if available. At any point, the County may request a copy of call records. The Department must provide the requested records within five (5) business days.
- B. Monthly reports shall be submitted to the Texas Fire Incident Reporting System, the Texas Forest Service, and the National Fire Incident Reporting System.
- C. Monthly call reports shall be submitted to the HCFA at the following monthly meeting.
- D. A performance quarterly report shall be given by a HCFA Executive Officer to the County Commissioners Court that shall include the call volume and number of AMR dispatches, including the number of AMR dispatches that were not responded to, for each department. The quarterly report shall be broken down by Department and call type. A written copy of said report shall be submitted to the Court. The performance report shall be submitted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of April (for the preceding quarter), 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of July, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of October, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of January.
- E. The Department shall keep accurate books and records of all monies spent from County contract funds. A Financial Quarterly report shall be submitted to the Fire Marshal's office, which reflects complete income and expenditures. The Quarters shall consist of January-March, April-June, July-September, and October – December. The report shall be submitted the first day after the Quarter, and is considered late after the 25<sup>th</sup>, which will result in termination of County funds to the Department. The Financial report will be submitted on Quick Book accounting ledger (such accounting is available online for \$199 per year). The Department shall appear before the Commissioners' Court to have funding restored, but the Commissioners Court may impose a 25% penalty on any unpaid sums in its sole discretion.
- F. The Department shall keep and maintain a list of active members. A roster of all current members will be submitted to the Fire Marshal's Office at the beginning of each budget year.
- G. The Department is encouraged to have a member attend each of the HCFA meetings to conduct business, report any concerns, ideas, comments, and keep the Fire Protection in

the County moving forward. No Department's receipt of the monies provided for in Section V.B, above, shall be contingent upon attendance of such meeting.

- H. Contract payments shall be distributed from Hunt County to the Department monthly. Payments to Departments whose reports and records are not received by the deadline may be withheld by the decision of the County Judge. These reports are inclusive of financial reports, new member reports, and reports listed in the contract that are not submitted within the prescribed time.
- I. The Department shall maintain its firefighting apparatus, personal protection equipment, communications equipment, and other equipment such that it is in good working order at all times. Hunt County Fire Marshal's office, which may include HCFA upon the Fire Marshal's request, shall be entitled to inspect said apparatus and equipment at any reasonable time.
- J. The Department shall maintain sufficient liability insurance (with a minimum of \$300,000) for all vehicles used in furnishing fire protection in Hunt County. Written verification of insurance will be furnished to Hunt County if requested and kept on file at all times.
- K. The books and records mentioned in the Agreement, including a list of active members, shall be open to inspection within ten business days of written notice by a person designated by the Hunt County Commissioners Court. Nothing in this section shall limit the application of the Texas Public Information Act.
- L. The Hunt County Fire Marshal's office may perform periodic inspections of Department's equipment and facilities and conduct financial audits.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

No representation or promise shall be binding upon parties hereto except those representations and promises contained herein, or in some future writing signed by the party making such representation or promises.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **SEVERABILITY**

If any section of this Agreement should be deemed void for any reason, such action shall affect only that particular section, and will not adversely affect the validity of the Agreement.



**ARTICLE IX**

**TERM OF AGREEMENT**

This agreement shall be effective upon its execution and shall reviewed and and re-approved on or before October 1 of each year. This agreement may be terminated by either party by giving written notice to the other party sixty (60) days prior to termination. Such termination will affect the funding provided to the fire department.

**ARTICLE XI**

**VIOLATIONS / REMEDY**

If Department violates any of the terms in this agreement, or if it does not communicate with the County or Fire Marshal's office or provide documentation as required under this agreement, then upon the advice of the Fire Marshall, the County Commissioners Court may immediately vote in regular or special session to indefinitely withhold further funding from Department. Department shall appear before the Commissioners' Court to have funding restored, but the Commissioners Court may impose a 25% penalty on any unpaid sums in its sole discretion.

**ARTICLE XI**

**NOTICE**

Notice to the Department provided for herein shall be sufficient if sent by certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested, addressed to the following:

\_\_\_\_\_

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Legal mailing address)

And notice to County provided for herein shall be sufficient if sent by **both** of the following methods:

1. sent by certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested, addressed separately to each of the following:

HUNT COUNTY, TEXAS  
ATTN: COUNTY JUDGE  
ATTN: HUNT COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL  
COUNTY COURTHOUSE

P.O. BOX 1097  
GREENVILLE, TEXAS 75403-1097

2. To the Fire Marshal's Office e-mail address - [homelandsecurity@huntcounty.net](mailto:homelandsecurity@huntcounty.net).

EXECUTED this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of 2021, \_\_\_\_\_, in HUNT COUNTY, TEXAS,

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
BOBBY STOVALL, HUNT COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
BECKY LANDRUM, HUNT COUNTY CLERK

Fire Department \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief or Authorized Official

Date: \_\_\_\_\_