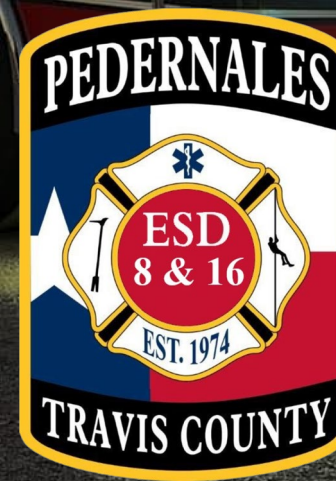
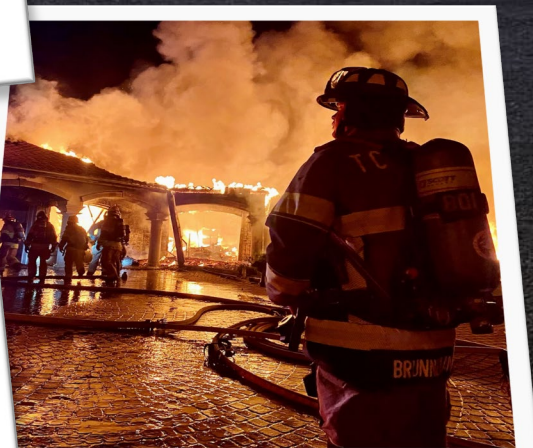


Becoming an ESD Chief – Lessons Learned



From Muni to County



A
F
D



My Story

- **Over 25 Years of Service to Central Texas**
 - 23.5 years with the Austin Fire Department
 - 2 years with Travis County ESD 8
- **Experiences in a City Department – Austin Fire**
 - Operations Responder at every rank through Shift Commander
 - Department Budget Committee Member
 - Logistics Division Chief (Facilities / Fleet)
 - Executive Staff Member



Transition to the ESD model



Pedernales Fire Department

- **February 2022**
 - Hired as Assistant Chief with the expectation of becoming the departments next Fire Chief
 - 18 months of learning the ESD model
 - SAFE-D attendee 1-year after starting
- **July 2023**
 - Appointed Fire Chief
 - Month One
 - Tax Rate Setting
 - Budget Approval
 - Organizational Chart Overhaul



View from 10,000 feet



What is so different... The Challenges

- **Tax Rate Setting**
 - Not done in a municipal fire department
- **No City HR**
 - Unless you hire someone, YOU ARE H.R.
- **No City Finance**
 - Where are your friends in the budget office?
- **Unknown Response Partners**
 - Do you have aide agreements in place?
- **Infrastructure**
 - Hydrants, roads, EMS, LE

View from 10,000 feet



What is so different... The Advantages!

- **No Competition from Internal Departments**
 - Parks and Rec, Libraries, Public Works, Police Force, Street and Bridge, etc.
- **Network of ESD Chiefs**
 - Lots of peers at your rank
- **Budget Opportunities**
 - Training budget!!!
 - Competitive salaries
 - Recruiting
 - Retention



Board of Directors



Your Five Best Friends

- **Not a City Council of all Elected Officials**
 - One agenda – Emergency services for the community
 - Variety of background experiences
- **Be Careful...**
 - Operations - Fire Chief must control
 - Communications from FF to Board
 - Work with your board to set boundaries
 - Family like atmosphere still needs guidelines
- **The Key to Success**
 - Relationships
 - The Board represents the community!



S.W.O.T. Analysis



A Breakdown

- **Strengths**
 - Greater control of decision making
- **Weaknesses**
 - It's you unless you hire them
- **Opportunities**
 - Growth
 - Partnerships
 - Cities, Developers, Other ESD's, Community Groups, Schools, Auxiliary, Association
 - Development
- **Threats**
 - Legislation
 - Annexation

Q and A With The Board



2024 All-Texas Board of Commissioners

- Becky Wynn – Travis County ESD 8
- Dr. Charles Valadez – Travis County ESD 16
- Dave Parker – Harris Country ESD 29
- Sheldon Gilbert – Denton County ESD 1
- Elizabeth K. Cargile - Medina County ESD 5

Thanks, Let's Connect

Tony Haden – Pedernales FD

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- 737-210-9993

- Follow our Social
Media

