

City of Centerville City Council Special Called Meeting on December 10, 2025

The Centerville City Council met for a Special meeting on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building Meeting Room. Council members present were Mike Cannain, Charlie Shafer, Bobby Walters and Rebecca Smith. Sue Sandel was not in attendance. Mayor Noal Ray Goolsby called the meeting to order at 5:59 p.m. and a quorum was established.

There were no public comments

Board member Rebecca Smith expressed concerns in regards to the city continuing to financially support the Centerville Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD). She explained that once the Leon County Emergency Service District #1 (ESD #1) was established the City was no longer committed to being responsible for all of the CVFD's monthly bills. John Adams, CVFD's Chief argued that an Agreement signed between the City of Centerville and the Gresham family (the family that donated the land for the City Hall to be built) in the 1990's was still enforceable and the CVFD would pursue legal action against the City in order to have the City reimburse the CVFD for certain requested bills paid by the CVFD and to require the City to assume all bills paid in the CVFD's behalf as they had been paid for in the past. The City of Centerville currently pays the CVFD's monthly phone bills, electricity bills, fuel bills and a portion of their salaries (upon the fire chief submitting a signed invoice reporting the number of drills and calls attended by each volunteer fire fighter). The ESD pays for their Property and Liability and their Workers' Compensation. *See attached, the CVFD's Financial Statement of Activity.

Stephen Dicker was present for the meeting. He was at one time, president of the Magnolia County ESD #4. He explained how ESD's are agencies often supported by a petition signed by local voters and are created to provide fire protection and or emergency medical services in specific areas. He went on to say that Fire fighters are contracted employees under an ESD and ESD's retain/maintain fire departments and its equipment within the area the ESD has jurisdiction. Therefore, he continued to say the Leon County ESD #1, once created years ago, was financially responsible for the fire departments within its jurisdiction (Centerville VFD and Leona VFD) from the ad valorem taxes collected through the county and no other person, business, organization, etc. is required to pay anything in order to support these fire departments. The ESD owns everything that falls under the fire departments in their area, including fire trucks, fire equipment, any other fire vehicles, any assets, etc. All fire trucks should be registered under "Leon County ESD #1" not the Centerville VFD and the CVFD chief is not the head authority over the fire department, the ESD is, and they are responsible for making sure the fire chief answers to them. There was no action taken at this time.

John Adams stood up and replied loudly "he would probably retire tomorrow, life is too dang short and this crap is getting out of hand".

Charlie Shafer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 p.m. A second motion was provided by Bobby Walters. Motion carried 4 ayes 0 noes and 1 absent



Teresa Bates, City Secretary



Noal Ray Goolsby, Mayor