

Town Hall

Harris County Municipal
Utility District No. 501
November 10, 2016





Program

- Introduction
- Overview of Municipal Utility Districts
- Tax Rate
- Q&A on MUDs & Tax Rate (15 minutes)
- Operations and Water Source
- Board Member's Perspective
- Garbage & Recycling
- Final Q&A
- Survey

A photograph taken from a covered walkway or deck, looking out over a calm body of water at dusk. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. In the background, several houses with warm interior lights are visible, their lights reflecting on the water's surface. The walkway has a wooden railing and is supported by several vertical posts. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

Introduction

Board of Directors

- James Harkrider President
- Sandra Steriti Vice President
- Henry Abel Secretary
- George Gentry Assistant Secretary
- Amy Markiewicz Assistant Vice President

A background image showing a large, multi-story building with a prominent entrance, situated behind a body of water. The building has a mix of brick and stone facades. The water is calm and reflects the sky. The overall scene is bright and clear.

Meet the Consultants

- Attorney: Alia Vinson & Katie Carner, Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP
- Engineer: Truman Edminster & Amy Swackhamer, Edminster, Hinshaw, Russ & Associates, Inc.
- Financial Advisor: Gene Shepherd & Matt Dustin, RBC Capital Markets
- Operator: Eric Thiry, Environmental Development Partners, LLC
- Tax Assessor/Collector: Brenda McLaughlin, Bob Leared Interests

* The District's Bookkeeper is Fran Matuska, F. Matuska, Inc.

The background image is a soft-focus photograph of a suburban residential area. It features several houses with brown roofs and light-colored siding. In the middle ground, there is a wooden gazebo with a blue roof. The foreground is filled with various green plants and colorful flowers, including purple and yellow blooms. A paved path or driveway is visible, leading towards the buildings. The overall scene is bright and sunny, with a clear blue sky.

Overview of Municipal Utility Districts in Texas



What is a Municipal Utility District (MUD)?

- A political subdivision of the State of Texas, like a County or School District, created by the Texas Legislature or the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
- Created by the State over a limited area to provide water, sewer, drainage, parks & recreational facilities, and roads

What MUDs do?

- MUDs provide municipal services:
 - in areas not in a city
 - where a city cannot afford to extend these services itself
 - where the city wants the new development to bear the costs of the new infrastructure



General Information on MUDs in Texas

- Texas has more than 1,200 active special districts and more than 1,700 total special districts, the majority of which were created over land outside of city limits
- More than 1 million Texans live in special districts like MUDs
- MUDs have been used to develop Houston's finest master-planned communities, including the following: The Woodlands, Clear Lake City/NASA, First Colony, Sienna Plantation, Cinco Ranch, Shadow Creek Ranch, Bridgeland, Cypress Creek Lakes, Fairfield, Copperfield and your community, Towne Lake



What laws govern the operation of the MUD?

- MUDs in Texas are heavily regulated political subdivisions
- Unlike Home Rule Cities which have all powers unless expressly taken away, MUDs can **only** exercise those powers expressly granted in the Texas Water Code or other specific law
- MUDs derive their authority and power from the Texas Constitution
- Regulated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the Texas Attorney General (Public Finance Division), Cities, Counties, and the EPA
- MUDs are subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act
- Board members are subject to conflicts of interest, nepotism, penal code provisions, ethics guidelines, gift laws, etc.

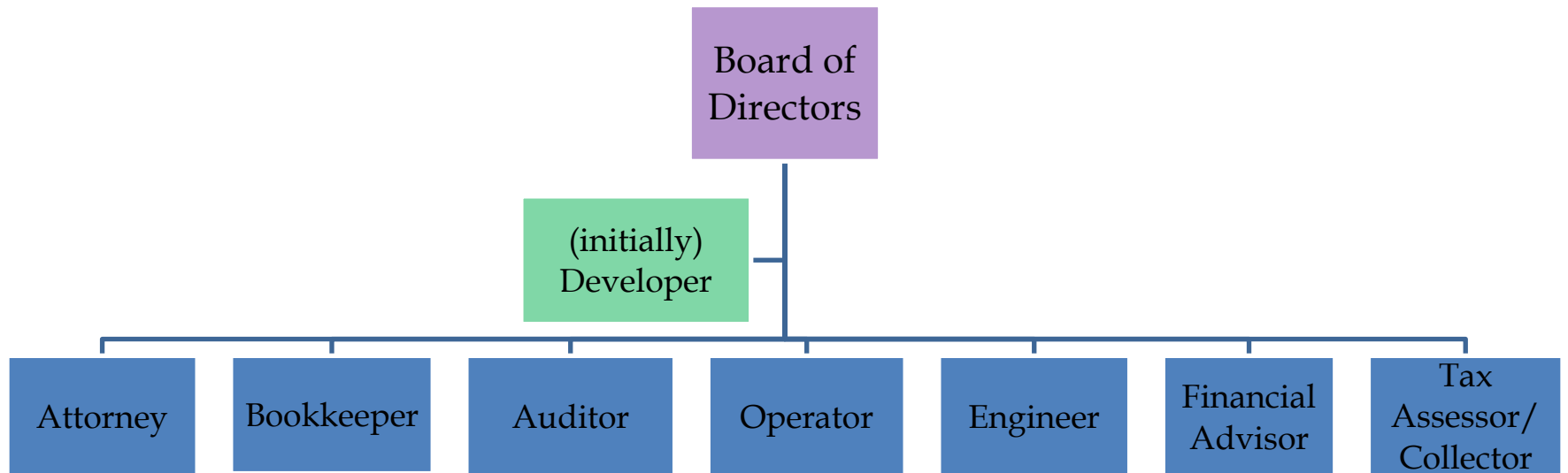



How does a MUD operate?

- The MUD is governed by a five-member Board that is initially appointed by the TCEQ and later elected by residents in the District
 - Elections are held in May of even-numbered years (HC MUD 501 – next election in 2018)
 - Like all state wide elections, only registered voters may vote
- The MUD hires professional consultants to advise the Board, much like City staff



MUD Organizational Chart





What is the role of the Developer in the MUD?

- Requests the creation of the MUD by the Texas Legislature or the TCEQ
- Drives the need for water, sewer, and drainage facilities based on its land plan and development schedule
- “Partners” with the Board to facilitate development of the property in the District
- Funds and constructs private infrastructure necessary for the development (internal streets, signage)
- “Loans” the District all the funds it needs to construct the District’s facilities



General Information About Issuing Bonds

- At the direction of the Board, and with the assistance of the Engineer, Attorney and Financial Advisor, the MUD submits a bond application to the TCEQ
- The TCEQ approves the projects for reimbursement to the developer and the amount that the MUD can reimburse the developer for those projects
- The Texas Attorney General reviews the bonds to ensure compliance with Texas law
- This is a highly regulated process (streets must be completed, sufficient water, sewer, and drainage capacity for all the growth projected, enough value on the ground to support the bonds)

Taxation of the MUD

- A MUD in the beginning levies an Operation and Maintenance Tax on all of the property in the boundaries of the MUD
- After a MUD has issued bonds payable in whole or in part from taxes, it has the authority to levy an ad valorem tax for each year that any of the bonds are outstanding in an amount sufficient to pay the interest and principal of the bonds
- Some MUDs located within a master district system, like Harris County MUD 501, levy a contract tax to pay for their pro rata share of master district bonds issued to fund regional facilities

Revenue for a MUD

MUD Taxes

- Collected from all taxable property in the MUD
- Usually capped at \$1.50 per \$100 of assessed value
- Based on the value on the ground on January 1 of the taxing year
- Tax Assessor/Collector collects the revenue and remits to the MUD bookkeeper

Water and Sewer Revenue

- Rate Order dictates costs
- Water/Sewer Rates include cost for buying or producing the water and collecting revenue
- Operator collects the revenue and remits to the MUD bookkeeper



A scenic view of a lake with a wooden deck and pink flowers in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the image.

**HARRIS COUNTY MUD NO. 501,
LOCATED WITHIN TOWNE LAKE**




Creation of Harris County MUD No. 501

- Created by TCEQ effective August 15, 2007
- Confirmation Election was on November 6, 2007
 - Water, Sewer, Drainage
 - Roads
 - Park and Recreational Facilities
- 929.17 acres with plans for 1407 homes



Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 500 (the Master District)

- Created by TCEQ effective June 25, 2007
- Confirmation Election was on November 6, 2007
 - Water, Sewer, Drainage
 - Roads
 - Park and Recreational Facilities
- 79.939 acres, consisting of commercial and multi-family development



Relationship of Harris County MUD 501 to the Master District

- Harris County MUD 501 is one of four MUDs that makes up the Master District's 2,112-acre Service Area
- Harris County MUD 500 (for land within its internal boundaries), Harris County MUD 501, Harris County MUD 502, and Harris County MUD 503 (collectively, the Participants) each have entered into a contract with the Master District (the Master District Contract), which has been approved by the voters in each of the Participants

The Master District Contract

- Under the Master District Contract, the Master District provides regional water, sewer, drainage, park, road and other facilities to the Participants, including Harris County MUD 501 (Regional Facilities)
 - Examples: water plants; wastewater treatment plants; water and sewer trunk lines to serve multiple Participants; detention ponds; major roads such as Towne Lake Pkwy., Greenhouse and Cypress North Houston
- Each Participant provides internal water and wastewater collection and drainage facilities within its boundaries
 - Examples: internal water lines; sanitary sewer lines; lift stations; storm sewers, etc.






The Master District Contract

- Under the Master District Contract, each Participant is responsible for paying to the Master District its share of:
 - the debt service on the bonds issued by the Master District to pay for the Regional Facilities; and
 - the operation and maintenance costs of the Regional Facilities constructed by the Master District



Master District Contract

- Each Participant pays to the Master District its share of the operation and maintenance costs of the Regional Facilities constructed by the Master District and the cost of water
 - Calculated by the Master District on an annual basis in connection with the adoption of the Master District's budget
 - Paid by Participants on a monthly basis
 - Based on the number of equivalent single-family connections (ESFCs) reserved to each Participant



Harris County MUD 501 Tax Rate



Harris County MUD 501 Tax Rate

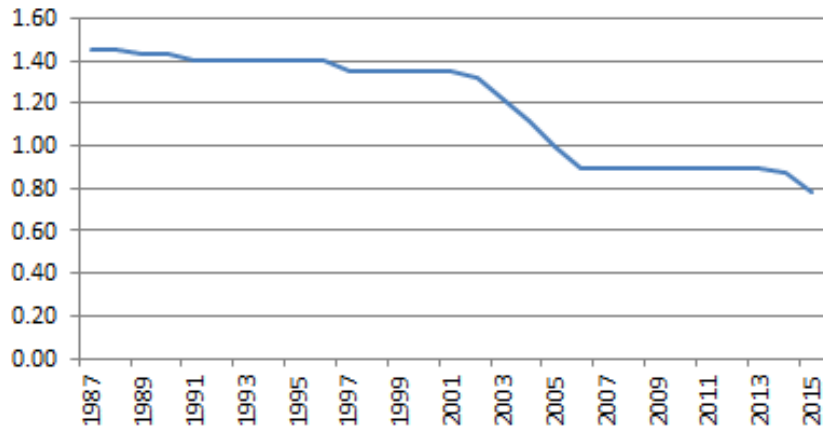
- Split into three components:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Contract*	\$0.66	\$0.93	\$0.90
Debt*	\$0.31	\$0.375	\$0.28
O&M*	\$0.53	\$0.145	\$0.20
Total*	\$1.50	\$1.45	\$1.38

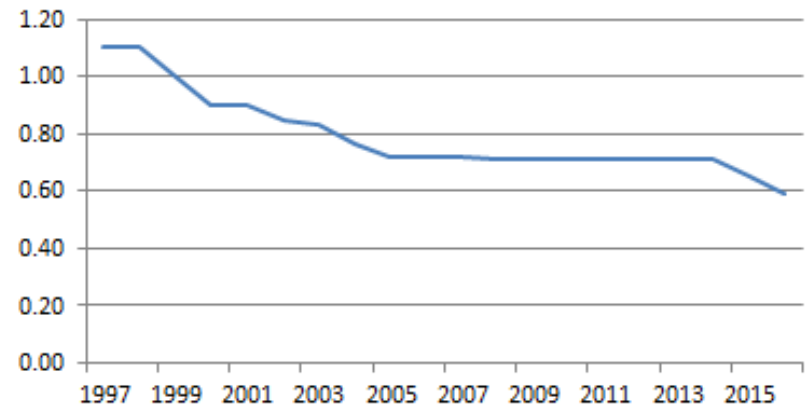
*All amounts refer to the tax rate per \$100 of assessed valuation.

Tax Rate Comparison with "Mature" MUDs in Houston Area

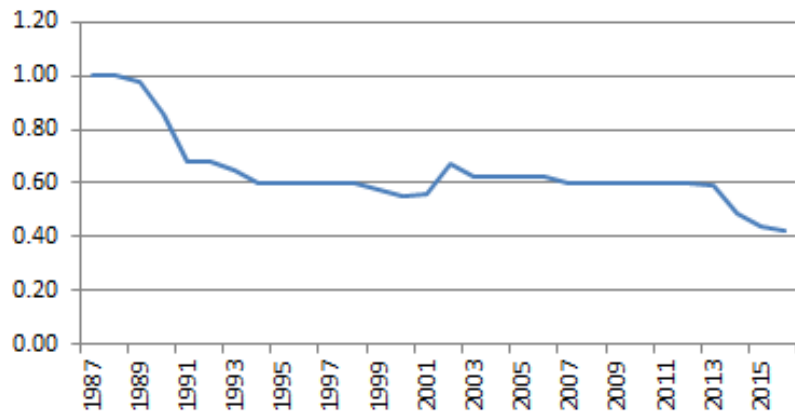
Harris Co. MUD # 172



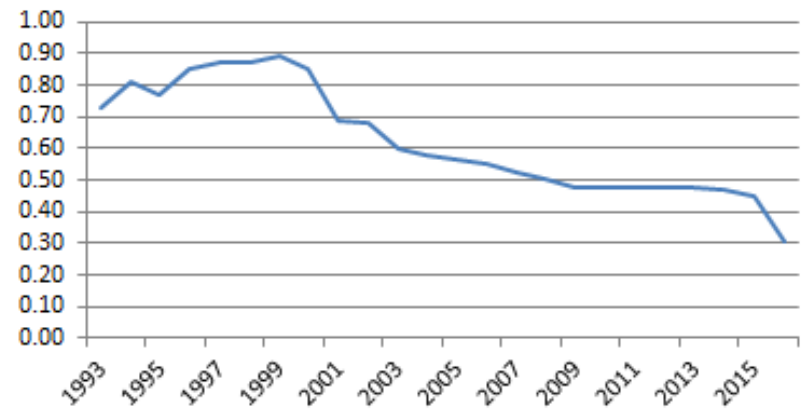
Sienna Plantation MUD #2



Harris Co. MUD # 208



Cinco MUD # 2





Master District Contract Revenue Bonds

- The Master District Contract authorizes the Master District to issue contract revenue bonds to pay for the Regional Facilities
 - Contract revenue bonds = bonds secured by an unconditional obligation of the Participants to pay for the debt service of the bonds through the levy of an annual ad valorem contract tax, water/sewer revenue, or from any other available funds that lawfully may be used for that purpose

Master District Contract Revenue Bonds

- The Master District has issued \$80,890,000 of contract revenue bonds over 8 issuances.
 - \$57,575,000 in water, sewer, and drainage contract revenue bonds
 - \$23,315,000 in road contract revenue bonds
- The Master District anticipates continuing to issue water, sewer, and drainage; road; and potentially park contract revenue bonds to pay for the Regional Facilities that already have been constructed or are planned to be constructed in the future

Master District Contract Revenue Bonds

- Each Participant is obligated to pay a pro rata share of the Master District's debt service on the contract revenue bonds issued by the Master District to pay for the Regional Facilities
 - Calculated annually based upon each Participant's pro rata share of the certified appraised value, as provided by the Harris County Appraisal District (HCAD)
 - For example, for the 2016 tax year, the certified appraised value for Harris County MUD 501 is \$479,855,452, which represents 76.40% of the total gross appraised value of all Participants of \$628,077,008
 - As other Participant MUD's tax base grows, MUD 501's pro rata share is expected to decrease



Master District Contract Revenue Bonds

- Each Participant, including Harris County MUD 501, levies a contract tax to fund its pro rata share of the Master District's debt service on bonds for the Regional Facilities
 - Harris County MUD 501 has not had, and generally is not expected to have, sufficient funds available from water/sewer revenue and other funds to cover its pro rata share of the Master District debt service on the bonds for the Regional Facilities



Harris County MUD 501 Unlimited Tax Bonds

- Harris County MUD 501 sold its first unlimited tax bonds for internal water, sewer, and drainage facilities in 2014
 - Unlimited tax bonds = bonds secured by the District's pledge to levy an ad valorem tax unlimited as to amount or rate sufficient to pay the debt service on the bonds
- The District has sold \$20,125,000 in water, sewer and drainage bonds
- The District plans on selling an additional \$5,640,000 in water, sewer, and drainage bonds later this year or early 2017



Harris County MUD 501 Unlimited Tax Bonds

- Based upon the current land plan provided by the developer, the District currently anticipates that the unlimited tax bond sale later this year will be the last bond sale to reimburse the developer for water, sewer, and drainage projects
 - If additional development occurs in the future within the existing boundaries or Harris County MUD 501 annexes land, additional reimbursement obligations could be incurred

Harris County MUD 501 Tax Changes

- Over 65 or Disabled Exemption (Offered in 2015 and 2016)
 - **For 2016, \$10,000 exemption for Over 65 or Disabled**
 - May increase the exemption in the future and consider a general residence homestead exemption
- Reduce the District's tax rate (in the near future)
 - *****REDUCED TAX RATE IN 2015 by \$0.05*******
 - *****REDUCED TAX RATE IN 2016 by \$0.07*******





Questions on MUDs & Tax Rate?


A photograph of a modern water park. In the foreground, there are several blue water slides and fountains. A large blue ring-shaped structure is on the left. A blue slide winds through the center. To the right, a tall blue fountain sprays water upwards. In the background, there is a large stone building with a white awning. The sky is clear and blue.

Operations & Water Source



Master District Facilities

- Water Supply & Distribution Facilities
 - Potable water supply facilities currently consist of:
 - Water Plant with 500,000 gallons of ground storage tank capacity, 5,115 gallons per minute of booster pump capacity, and 30,000 gallons of pressure tank capacity
 - Second water plant under design
 - Sufficient to serve approximately 2,500 equivalent single-family connections
 - Will need to be expanded to serve future development in the Participants
 - Potable water distribution facilities include water lines ranging in size from 8-inch to 16-inch
 - Convey potable water from Regional water supply facilities to the Participants' internal facilities
 - Master District also owns and operates a non-potable water system that includes detention ponds to supply non-potable water for irrigation



Where does Harris County MUD 501 get its water?

- Under the Master District Contract, the Participants, including Harris County MUD 501, purchase potable water from the Master District
- The Master District purchases surface water from the West Harris County Regional Water Authority
- The Master District also has emergency interconnects with Harris County MUD No. 172 and Remington MUD



Master District Facilities

- Wastewater Collection & Treatment Facilities
 - Wastewater treatment facilities currently consist of:
 - Soon to be 750,000 gallon per day (GPD) wastewater treatment plant
 - Sufficient to serve approximately 4,076 equivalent single-family connections
 - Will need to be expanded to serve future development in the Participants
 - Wastewater collection facilities include sanitary sewer lines ranging from 8-inch to 27-inch and three regional lift stations
 - Collect waste from Participants' internal facilities and transport it to the regional wastewater treatment facilities



Master District Facilities

- Drainage and Detention Facilities
 - Currently include drainage channel facilities, detention pond facilities, and storm sewer conveyance lines
 - Master District Service Area drains into Horsepen Creek and Cypress Creek
 - Both maintained by Harris County Flood Control District
 - Conveyance of sheet flow run off to storm sewers supplemented by a system of curb, gutter, and street inlets

Harris County MUD 501 Internal Facilities

- Internal water distribution, wastewater collection, and storm water conveyance facilities for each section of development within the District
 - Water distribution facilities consist of water lines ranging from 4-inch to 12-inch, which connect to the Master District's regional water supply facilities
 - Wastewater collection facilities consist of sanitary sewer lines ranging from 8-inch to 12-inch, which convey waste to the Master District's regional wastewater collection and wastewater treatment facilities
 - Storm water conveyance facilities include curbs, gutters, inlet street paving, and storm sewer conveyance lines, which convey storm water to the Master District's regional drainage and detention facilities



An aerial photograph of a residential area, overlaid with a semi-transparent purple map. The map shows a network of streets and a central water body. The text 'M.U.D. 501' is printed in white on the purple overlay.

What the MUD doesn't own....

- Streets
 - The County generally is responsible for all maintenance and repair of the streets
- Sidewalks
 - Some sidewalks are owned by you and some by the HOA



Harris County MUD 501 Billing Services

- The District contracts with Environmental Development Partners (EDP) to operate its internal facilities and to manage the District's utility billing system
- EDP reads residents' water meters monthly and generates utility bills based on actual water usage
 - The District—not EDP—sets all rates and charges in utility bills through its Rate Order, which may be amended by the Board from time to time

A blue circular sculpture, possibly a water feature, is in the foreground. In the background, there is a stone building with a white roofline under a clear sky.

Harris County MUD 501 Billing Services

- EDP offers numerous payment options for utility bills:
 - In person at one of EDP's offices (Houston, Richmond) or drop box (Spring)
 - Online bill pay through customer's own bank*
 - By mail
 - Online: <https://edpwater.firstbilling.com>*
 - Customers may make a one-time payment or set up automatic monthly payments
 - Accepts all major credit cards, debit cards, and eCheck
 - By phone: 832-467-1599
(Mon. – Fri., 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.)*

*Convenience fees may apply



Who Do You Contact If You Have a Problem?

- For water outages or other water, sewer, or drainage issues (e.g., water leak, sewer back up) or billing issues, contact EDP 24/7 at **(832) 467-1599**
 - Normal office hours are Mon. – Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., but EDP maintains an after-hours call service to address issues needing immediate attention
- Non-emergency questions may be emailed to the District by using the “Contact Us” page on the District’s website
 - <http://www.hcmud501.org/general/contact-us/>



Board Member's Perspective


A scenic view of a lake with a row of houses in the background and a red Adirondack chair in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the image.

Amy Markiewicz
My first 5 months

Why Did I Run for the Board?

I had many questions:

- Why were our MUD taxes so high?
- Were our tax dollars being used effectively?
- Why were we being told some things at the HOA meetings that conflicted with what we were being told at the MUD meetings? (i.e. who paid for/owned the lakes, were parks private or public, who had the right to use the lake)
- Why was information on the MUD not easier to access?
- Why were the MUD meetings held during the day and so far away?
- Were the residents of Towne Lake really being represented on the board?



What has changed in the last 5 months?

- Website
- Town hall meeting
- Scheduled meetings closer to you
- Board members digging into the information to make informed decisions for you, the taxpayer!
- Board availability to talk with residents, answer questions, and voice concerns during meetings

Easier Access to MUD 501 information www.hcmud501.org

Harris County
Municipal Utility
District 501

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Sign up to receive important news
and alerts via email about the district.

Subscribe

Author: **HCMUD 501**

Mission Statement

August 8, 2016 by HCMUD 501

Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 501 (Harris County MUD 501) was created by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in August 2007, with the idea that providing public water, sewer, drainage, and other services to our community was a job best done by a group of

Meetings

Wednesday, October 19th at 10:00 am

[Agenda \(PDF\)](#)

Colorado Conference Room on the 26th Floor

Wednesday, November 2nd at 12:30 pm

Website - Home Page

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Save the Date for Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 501 Fall Town Hall

October 12, 2016 by HCMUD 501

[Please click here](#) for the invitation to the Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 501 Fall Town Hall. All residents are welcome to attend. A copy of the invitation also will be included with your October utility bill.

Posted in: [General](#)

Mission Statement

August 8, 2016 by HCMUD 501

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Board Members

Jim Harkrider, President, Term Expires: May 2018

Sandra Sterili, Vice President, Term Expires: May 2018

Henry Abel, Secretary, Term Expires: May 2018

Amy Markiewicz, Asst. Vice President, Term Expires: May 2020

George Gentry, Asst. Secretary, Term Expires: May 2020

Consultants

Attorney

Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP
3200 Southwest Freeway, Suite 2000
Houston, TX 77027
Phone: (713) 960-6400

Financial Advisor

RBC Capital Markets
2800 Post Oak Blvd.
Suite 3900
Houston, TX 77056

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Website - Documents

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Documents

- [New Resident Welcome Packet](#)
- [Rate Order – 2016-05-04](#)
- [Water Quality Report – 2015](#)
- [Texas Landowners Bill of Rights](#)
- [Resolution Adopting Website Posting Policy](#)
- [Resolution Adopting Policy and Procedures for Leak Adjustment Credits](#)
- [Leak Adjustment Request Form](#)

Board Meeting Agendas

- [2016-10-19-Special](#)
- [2016-10-05](#)
- [2016-09-07](#)
- [2016-08-03](#)
- [2016-07-06](#)

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Website - Trash & Recycling

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Utility District 501

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Trash & Recycling

Residential Recycling & Refuse of Texas, Inc. (RRRTx) is the garbage and recycling provider for HCMUD 501. Each residence is provided with one container for recyclables. These recycling carts are the property of RRRTx and will be maintained by RRRTx. If you have any questions, please contact RRRTx at:

Residential Recycling and Refuse of Texas (RRRTx)
1327 West Main Street, Suite 1
Tomball, TX 77375
Phone: (866) 516-9805
Fax: (281) 357-0775
Email: info@rrtx.net

[Click here to view the Flyer from your Trash & Recycling Provider.](#)

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Houston, TX 77027

Website - Trash & Recycling

Residential Recycling Guidelines

The residential recycling day will be every Tuesday. By **7:00 a.m.** the containers should be placed at curbside, or near the garage door (visible from the street).

Recycling items should be placed in the 48-gallon cart provided by RRRTx. No sorting of different types of recycling items is required, but RRRTx prefers, although does not require, that recycling items be placed in clear, white, or light blue bags before they are placed in the cart. RRRTx will not collect recycling items that are placed in black bags.

Recyclable materials must be emptied and rinsed clean. The following will NOT be accepted: styrofoam, computer parts, electronics, batteries, medical waste, biohazard, fireworks, ceramics, mirrors, porcelain, pottery, commercial glass, light bulbs, wire hangers, paint cans, baby diapers, used paper towels, paper plates, or napkins, etc. "When in doubt, leave it out."

Acceptable Materials for Recycling:

- Glass
- Plastics 1-7 (only exception is styrofoam in the #6 plastic category)
- Thin Plastic
- Paper
- Cardboard
- Tin / Aluminum Cans

Items that are for commercial use do not fall under the household recycling umbrella.

Household Hazardous Waste can be taken to the following location:

Harris County Household Hazardous Waste Collection
6900 Hahl Road
Houston, TX 77040

Please call Harris County Household Hazardous Waste Collection at (281) 560-6200 for

Website - Water & Sewer

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Water & Sewer

Pay Your Water Bill

As a convenience, Harris County MUD 501 offers a number of different payment options. See the descriptions below to find the method that works best for you. These options are for paying your water bills only. Tax payments must be made through the Tax Office.

[Pay Your Tax Bill Online](#)

Utilize Your Existing At-Home Internet Payment Service

- You may use your existing at-home internet bill payment service (offered by your bank) to make an electronic payment.
- You must have your 15-digit water account number to make a payment.
- You are not charged by Harris County MUD 501 for this payment option.

Direct Payment Plan

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Website - HGSD and West Harris County Regional Water Authority (WHCRWA)

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Harris-Galveston Subsidence District and West Harris County Regional Water Authority

Harris County MUD 501 is within the boundaries of the Harris Galveston Subsidence District (the Subsidence District) which regulates groundwater withdrawal. The Subsidence District has adopted regulations requiring reduction of groundwater withdrawals through conversion to alternate source water (e.g., surface water) in certain areas within the Subsidence District's jurisdiction, including the land within Harris County MUD 501. The Subsidence District imposes disincentive fee penalties, currently \$7.00 per 1,000 gallons of water, for groundwater use that exceeds its regulations.

[Click here for more information about the Subsidence District.](#)

In 2001, the Texas legislature created the West Harris County Regional Water Authority (the Authority) to, among other things, reduce groundwater usage in, and to provide surface water to, the western portion of Harris County and a small portion of Fort Bend County. Harris County MUD 501 is located within the boundaries of the Authority. The Authority has entered into a


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3200 Southwest Freeway, Suite 2600
Houston, TX 77027



Bringing the information closer to you!

- **Town Hall Meeting**
 - tell you about the MUD and answer any questions that you may have
 - meet the attorneys, advisors, and Board members
- **Regular board meetings will be scheduled periodically in Towne Lake**
 - bring the meeting close to you
 - considering holding meetings at a time that is not during the work day

Resident Interest

- Your interest as a resident is very important
- What can you do to learn more about the MUD?
 - attend the meetings (both 500 and 501)
 - ask questions
 - if documents are not found on the district website, make open records requests
- Currently, George Gentry and I are the only 2 Towne Lake residents on the board (of 5 board members). The remaining Board members own property in MUD 501 but are not residents.
- There will be 3 Board of Directors positions up for election in May 2018



My Goal

As a member of the board of directors of MUD 501, I am striving to achieve transparency and make sure that our hard-earned money that we pay in taxes to the MUD is used as effectively as possible.

Garbage and Recycling

A photograph of a park area. In the foreground, there is a concrete path and a black metal bench. The middle ground features a large, circular area covered in dark mulch, which is part of a playground. To the right, there is a wooden gazebo with a green roof. In the background, there are trees, a fence, and a building under a clear blue sky.

Final Questions?

Survey and Frequently Asked Questions

- Please return the completed survey upon leaving the town hall, or complete it online at www.hcmud501.org/survey



Thank you for
attending!

For additional information, please visit the
Harris County MUD 501 website
(<http://www.hcmud501.org>) or attend an
upcoming Board meeting