



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: 10/23/2012

Prepared By/Phone Number: Lisa Block/854-7954

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Danny Hobby

Commissioners Court Sponsor: County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Approve proclamation of commendation for Kevin Wayne McDonald for his more than 19 years of dedicated service with **STAR Flight** to Travis County and Central Texas.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

See attached proclamation. Kevin Wayne McDonald is retiring from service with the **STAR Flight** Program with more than 19 years of dedicated service.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Emergency Services and **STAR Flight** recommend approval of this proclamation.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Danny Hobby, County Executive, 9/20/2012

Casey Ping, **STAR Flight** Program Director, 9/20/2012

WHEREAS, Kevin Wayne McDonald began his employment with *STAR Flight* in April 1993 and served with distinction in a highly professional manner for more than 19 years. In 1996 Kevin was promoted to the position of Chief Pilot and served in that capacity for four years until 2000;

WHEREAS, in May 2000, Kevin and his crew, with a patient onboard, suffered an engine shutdown on a short final approach, placing the aircrew in a highly-vulnerable position. Kevin skillfully waved-off his approach, avoided the large array of high tension power lines in front of him and flew the aircraft on one engine to the Austin Bergstrom International Airport. His outstanding piloting skills were directly responsible for saving the lives of four crewmembers and a patient as well as a multi-million dollar Travis County asset;

WHEREAS, in November 2001, Kevin flew numerous rescue missions in rain squalls throughout the evening affecting the rescue of 15 persons who had become trapped in local flood waters. He and his crew were awarded the Rotor & Wing Helicopter Heroism of the Year Award and the Higgins and Langley Memorial Award in Swiftwater Rescue. This story was aired nationally on the Weather Channel's Storm Stories series;

WHEREAS, in April 2009, Kevin and crew were dispatched on a rescue for two kayakers being swept down the flooded Lampasas River forcing the crew to keep pace with the moving victims during the rescue effort. As he flew the aircraft downstream, he and the crew maneuvered the helicopter over bridges and telephone wires that crossed the river in several locations. His piloting skills and

excellent coordination with his crew in a very dynamic situation resulted in the saving of two lives;

WHEREAS, Kevin has been indispensable in the building and maintaining of an outstanding Federal Aviation Administration Aircraft Weight and Balance program as well as a highly detailed flight and medical database; and

WHEREAS, in his nearly twenty-year career at *STAR Flight*, Kevin has:

- Flown 2,752 hours in four different aircraft types to include the latest Eurocopter EC-145,
- Transported 2,300 patients,
- Rescued more than 130 persons during dangerous floods and other emergency situations,
- Performed more than 1,000 firefighting water drops in Central Texas to include nearly 200 drops during the devastating Labor Day Fires of 2011 in Steiner Ranch and Pedernales;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Travis County Commissioners Court wishes to commend Kevin Wayne McDonald for his brave, life-saving actions during medical emergencies, floods, fires and numerous situations that required a skilled pilot and employee. His service to the citizens of Travis County and Central Texas is measured not only by statistics, but also by lives and property saved. We thank you for your years of dedicated service.

Signed and entered this 23rd day of October 2012.

SAMUEL T. BISCOE
Travis County Judge

RON DAVIS
Commissioner, Pct. 1

SARAH ECKHARDT
Commissioner, Pct. 2

KAREN HUBER
Commissioner, Pct. 3

MARGARET GÓMEZ
Commissioner, Pct. 4