



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
MAY 25, 2021**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on May 25, 2021, in person and via zoom due to Covid, with the following members present, to wit:

|                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Jim Lovell      | County Judge              |
| Gary Lovell     | Commissioner, Precinct #1 |
| Willie Kitchen  | Commissioner, Precinct #2 |
| Gene Stokes     | Commissioner, Precinct #3 |
| Jimmy Henderson | Commissioner, Precinct #4 |

Also present:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Jan Pigford     | Administrative Assistant to the County Judge |
| Sharon Luker    | Assistant to the Commissioners               |
| Janis Omelina   | Treasurer (Zoom)                             |
| Melissa Jeter   | County Auditor                               |
| Jennifer Kulms  | 9-1-1 Addressing (Zoom)                      |
| Brittani Womack | First Assistant Auditor (Zoom)               |
| Cynthia Lum     | Elections Administrator                      |
| Daphne Session  | County Attorney (Zoom)                       |
| Sheila Johnson  | Grants Administrator                         |
| Kent Blanchard  | Investigator to the DA                       |
| Randy Hargrove  | Sheriff                                      |
| Roger Dickey    | Chief Deputy Sheriff (Zoom)                  |
| Laronica Smith  | Tax Assessor Collector (Zoom)                |
| Carolyn Rains   | District Clerk (Zoom)                        |
| Nathan Turner   | IT   |
| Terri Meadows   | County Clerk                                 |

Media:

|              |                        |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Alton Porter | Houston County Courier |
| Will Johnson | The Messenger (Zoom)   |

Visitors:

Vicki Vogel (Election Systems & Software), Reggie Berry, Tyler Reed

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:  
Judge Lovell called the meeting to order. Commissioner Kitchen led the opening prayer.  
Following the prayer Judge Lovell led the Pledge to the American flag and to the Texas Flag.
- (2) Recognition and comments from guests: None
- \*Commissioner Lovell stepped outside of the meeting**
- (3) **Commissioner Henderson moved to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from May 11, 2021. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- \*Commissioner Lovell returned to the meeting**
- (4) Consider approving budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made the motion to approve budget amendments and Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (5) Consider payment of bills and expenses:
  - a. Accounts payable
  - b. Fund transfers
  - c. Ratify Salary expenses**Commissioner Lovell made a motion to pay all the bills and expenses for a. (Accounts payable), b. (Fund transfers), and c. (Ratify Salary expenses). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Henderson. The motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (6) Receive information, announcements and reports from County Departments:
  - a. County Treasurers Report
  - b. Compensatory Report**Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive the County Treasurers Report and the Compensatory Report as information. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees:
  - (a) **Commissioner Stokes made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to approve the hiring of Gustavo Garcia as Deputy for the HCSO (replacing Matthew Millican) in the amount of \$1,238.37 bi-weekly and a bi-weekly cell phone allowance of \$18.46, Pay Grade 19 effective 5/26/2021. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
  - (b) **Commissioner Henderson moved to approve Charles Moffett as part-time Home Meal Delivered Driver for the Aging Services in the amount of \$10.75 hourly in Pay Grade 10 effective 5/25/2021 AND Nakeita Moore as part-time Home Delivered Meal Driver for the Aging Services in the amount of \$10.75 hourly in Pay Grade 10 effective 5/25/2021. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **None**
- (9) **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve property insurance renewal with Texas Association of Counties through July 1, 2022. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (10) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to approve request for Hotel Occupancy Tax Application and Interlocal Agreement with Salmon Lake Park for Annual Gospel Blue Grass Festival to be held on May 27-30, 2021 in the amount of \$3000.00. The request was for \$4000.00 but County Policy only allows for a maximum of \$3000.00. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (11) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept partial reimbursement and settlement of claims with the Houston County Hospital District for ambulance contract payment and authorize County Judge to sign documents. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (12) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve order allowing retail fireworks permit holders to sell fireworks to the public for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 2021 holiday celebrations. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (13) Discuss and consider action on employee health insurance renewal premiums and option for FY 2022. After some discussion Commissioner Kitchen moved to table this item until Jan Pigford can work some more with our insurance provider about options. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (14) Commissioner Henderson made a motion and Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion to accept a donation from Jessie Harrison of 280 cubic yards of fill dirt road material and authorizing removal from owner's property for use by Precinct 4. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (15) Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information a policy by the Tax Assessor-Collector in accordance with Texas Property Tax Code Sec. 31.07, beginning with the 2021 tax year the office will accept partial payments for current and delinquent taxes. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (16) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to accept sealed bids on the following struck-off properties: a. JJ Thomas, AB 84 2.00 acres; c. Weldon Lot 3 Blk 10; d. Jno Scott AB 916 1.00 acres. (Laronica Smith, Tax Assessor Collector advised that bid on b. E Wray AB 1067 3.00 acres should be rejected). Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (17) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept the terms and conditions of the American Rescue Plan Grant and Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (18) Commissioner Stokes made the motion to approve Crockett Civic Center Rental and Use Agreement for jury selection site up to a max expense of \$600.00 (this is for the 349<sup>th</sup> District Court Jury Selection June 22, 2021). Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

**\*\*AT THIS TIME THE COURT TOOK A SHORT BREAK FROM 10:52 AM TO 11:00 AM**

- (19) Hear presentation from Election Systems & Software on voting equipment. Vicki Vogel was the in-person presenter from the company for the ExpressVoting machines and Chris Moody provided a video presentation of the central counting machine. We will need 22 of the ExpressVoting Devices and 1 of the Central Counting Machines. We will also receive maintenance, installation, hardware, usb's, training, warranty, shipping, and this includes trading in our old equipment.

(20) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to purchase voting equipment and approve contract for maintenance and necessary budget amendments with the total cost being \$150,877.36 and we have a \$120,000 grant to go toward this purchase and we will pay the remaining \$30,000 out of the excess from Coronavirus Relief Fund. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(21) Judge Lovell made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

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Jim Lovell, County Judge

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Gary Lovell, Commissioner, Precinct #1

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Willie Kitchen, Commissioner, Precinct #2

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Gene Stokes, Commissioner, Precinct #3

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Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest:

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Terri Meadows, County Clerk