



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on September 14, 2021, **in person and via zoom due to Covid**, with the following members present, to wit:

Jim Lovell	County Judge (via Zoom)
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 County Judge
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Brittani Womack	First Assistant Auditor (Zoom)
Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Heath Murff	Emergency Management Coordinator (Zoom)
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff (Zoom)
Todd McConnell	IT
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Jennifer Kulms	911 Addressing (Zoom)
Janis Omelina	County Treasurer
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator (Zoom)
Terri Meadows	County Clerk

Media:

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

Visitors:

None

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.. Commissioner Lovell led the opening prayer. Judge Lovell led the Pledge to the American flag and to the Texas Flag.

- (2) Recognition and comments from guests: None
- (3) **Commissioner Lovell moved to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from August 24, 2021, August 31, 2021, and September 7, 2021. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (4) Consider approving budget amendments. **This item was initially skipped and taken up at the end of the Agenda. Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve the budget amendment for the purchase of a 2021 Ford F-250 Truck for Constable Precinct 1. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (5) Consider payment of bills and expenses:
- Accounts payable
 - Fund transfers
 - 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:
- County Treasurers Report
 - Compensatory Report
- PASSED THIS ITEM**
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees:
- Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the hiring of Ole Howard as part-time Road Hand – R & B-Precinct 2 at an hourly rate of \$13.00 in pay grade 13. Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
 - Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve Jennefer Cruz and Charles Joseph Martin as Dispatchers at the HCSO at a bi-weekly salary of \$1,018.81 in pay grade 15. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
 - Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve a 6 month pay increase for Bobbie Stilwell, Agri-life Extension Administrative Assistant raising her bi-weekly salary to \$1,045.68 in pay grade 14. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
 - Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve Stacy Hand as Deputy Treasurer in the Treasurer’s Office at bi-weekly salary of \$1,225.73 in pay grade 16. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to pay out Lakeshia Anderson-Sinville the Assistant County Attorney vacation pay of \$1,262.40 and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (9) **Commissioner Stokes moved to accept the donation of a desk from Bob Reeves to be used by Courthouse Bailiff’s. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (10) Commissioner Stokes made a motion to accept the donation of \$1,000.00 from Gary Johnson for improvements to CR 4025 in Precinct 3. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (11) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve Bare Metal cleaning service for Vent Hood at the Senior Center for a one-time fee of \$650.00 and inspection and cleaning semi-annually. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (12) Commissioner Stokes made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to reimburse Precinct 1 Constable for mileage costs for use of personal vehicle while county truck was not being used. There was some discussion on what the actual policy is concerning reimbursement of mileage and fuel. Commissioner Stokes rescinded the motion to reimburse mileage and Commissioner Henderson seconded and instead moved to reimburse Constable Precinct 1 the actual fuel cost of \$354.91 and that a check be written for this reimbursement today. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (13) Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the Houston County Event Permit from Saint Francis of the Tejas Catholic Church of the Diocese of Tyler to be held on October 3, 2021 from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm for a peaceful assemblage walking around the courthouse square and showing signs within the Respect Life agenda. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (14) Commissioner Lovell moved to accept the Texas Department of Transportation RAMP Grant for Airport Maintenance for FY 2022. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (15) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the Crockett Civic Center Rental and Use Agreement for:
- a. Jury Selection for District Court on September 14, 2021
 - b. Jury Selection and Jury Trial for CCL October 12-14, 2021
 - c. Jury Selection and Jury Trial for CCL November 8-12, 2021
 - d. Jury Selection and Jury Trial for CCL December 13-16, 2021
- Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (16) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information the Order setting the Annual Salary for County Court at Law Court Reporter. The Order gives the position a 4% cost of living increase plus \$2500.00 for necessary equipment purchases required to be paid by the Court Reporter. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (17) Conduct Public Hearing on proposed FY 2021-2022, Archival Plan for the Houston County Clerk Office for records management, preservation and archives. Judge Lovell opened the hearing at 10:18 a.m. Terri Meadows, County Clerk explained the plan.
- (18) Close Public Hearing. Judge Lovell closed the hearing at 10:21 a.m.
- (19) Commissioner Henderson made the motion to adopt the FY 2021-2022, Archival Plan for the Houston County Clerk Office for records management, preservation and archives. Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(20) Conduct Public Hearing on Proposed Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2022. Judge Lovell opened the hearing at 10:23 a.m. There was no discussion

(21) Close Public Hearing. Judge Lovell closed the hearing at 10:24 a.m.

(22) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to adopt the Houston County Budget for Fiscal Year 2022. Commissioner Henderson seconded.

Judge Jim Lovell voted "I"

Commissioner Gary Lovell voted "I"

Commissioner Gene Stokes voted "I"

Commissioner Jimmy Henderson voted "I"

Commissioner Willie Kitchen voted "I"

Motion carried unanimously.

(23) Judge Jim Lovell said, " I move that the property tax increase be ratified with the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.5300 per \$100 value which is effectively a 3.74% increase on the taxable revenue." Commissioner Kitchen seconded the motion.

Judge Jim Lovell voted "I"

Commissioner Jimmy Henderson voted "I"

Commissioner Gene Stokes voted "I"

Commissioner Willie Kitchen voted "I"

Commissioner Gary Lovell voted "I"

Motion carried unanimously.

(24) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to ratify the increase of property tax revenue by 3.74% in the FY 2022 Budget. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(25) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to set salaries for all officers and employees of Houston County for Fiscal Year 2022. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(26) Closed executive session as authorized by Texas Government Code §551.072 to discuss the county's potential purchase, lease, sale, or exchange of real estate and/or the value of the real estate and contemplated litigation per Local Government Code §551.071. Court went into closed session at 11:05 a.m. and returned to open court at 11:29 a.m.

(27)

(28)Adjourn. **Judge Lovell moved to adjourn and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kitchen and approved by everyone standing.**

Jim Lovell, County Judge

Gary Lovell, Commissioner, Precinct #1

Willie Kitchen, Commissioner, Precinct #2

Gene Stokes, Commissioner, Precinct #3

Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest:

Terri Meadows, County Clerk