



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 2020**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on October 13, 2020, via **Zoom due to Covid 19**, with the following members present, to wit:

Jim Lovell	ABSENT
Gary Lovell	Commissioner, Precinct #1
Willie Kitchen	Commissioner, Precinct #2
Pat Perry	Commissioner, Precinct #3
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4

Also present:

Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Sharon Luker	Assistant to the Commissioners
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Roger Dickey	Emergency Management Coordinator
Bonita Newman	911 Addressing
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Janis Omelina	County Treasurer
Carolyn Rains	District Clerk
Gwen Womack	Deputy County Clerk
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Terri Meadows	County Clerk

Media:

Will Johnson	The Messenger
Alton Porter	Houston County Courier

Visitors:

James Gentry (CEIDC), Janice Slaughter, Jim Kelly, Gary Keeling, Liza Clark (Crockett Area Chamber Director)

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Commissioner Kitchen called the meeting to order. Commissioner Kitchen led the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and the Texas Flag.

- (2) Recognition and comments from guests: **NONE**
- (3) **Commissioner Perry moved to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from September 22, 2020 and September 29, 2020. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (4) Consider approving budget amendments. **NONE**
- (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 of 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 4 to 0.**
- (6) Receive information, announcements and reports from County Departments:
- a. Environmental Report
 - b. Community Service Report (**Not available**)
- Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as information the Environmental Report. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- Other County Announcements:
- Melissa Jeter announced that she has received notification of the mineral allocation for our county and that the amount is less than last time. It is \$35,250. This amount will be split between the county and the school districts within the county.**
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees:
- (a) Commissioner Henderson moved to approve the hiring of Shiela Johnson as Grants Administrator at bi-weekly salary of \$2104.08 in pay grade 27. Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (c) Commissioner Henderson made a motion approving the hiring of Penny Barber as Office Assistant/Driver at hourly salary of \$10.75 in pay grade 10. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve payment to Lt. Jackson at the HCSO in the amount of \$545.06 and payment to Deputy Orme at the HCSO in the amount of \$54.95. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (9) Discuss and consider action on granting discretionary exemptions for purchases of goods and services related to the COVID-19 pandemic pursuant to Local Government Code §262.024 under the CARES Act/Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). **There was nothing to vote on but Melissa did go over the deadline to make requests that is in the latest letter received from TDEM concerning the grant.**
- (10) **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the *Order Designating Day of Week on Which Commissioners Court Will Convene in Regular Term During FY 2021* and designated the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month as regular meeting dates. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

- (11) Commissioner Henderson moved to adopt the Order for Disbursement of Salaries and Routine Office Expenses for FY 2021 – October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021 and Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0. Following is disbursements allowed in this Order:
- (1. County funds previously budgeted for salaries for officers and employees shall be disbursed by the County Treasurer upon submission of all necessary payroll information by the appropriate department head or supervisor;
 - (2. County funds previously budgeted for utilities, lease purchase payments, fee office payments, Child Welfare Board payments, payroll payable, juror payments and associated donations shall be disbursed upon submission of a proper voucher.
- (12) Commissioner Perry moved to adopt a Proclamation designating October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Houston County. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (13) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to ratify the County Choice Silver Supplemental Retiree Medical policy from Texas Association of Counties, Health & Employee Benefits Pool for calendar year 2021. Commissioner Henderson seconded. *Renewing and keeping the current Plan F Medical Plan with a rate increase from \$265.61 to \$275.83 and Renewing and keeping Current Plan, Option 1 Prescription Drug Plan with rate increase from \$265.56 to \$276.18.* Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (14) Commissioner Henderson made a motion to authorize the purchase of a new recorder from Vistacom for the Houston County Sheriff's office dispatch call center and necessary budget amendments. (the current one was damaged from a lightning strike and will be covered by insurance less the deductible) Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (15) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to accept a donation of 120 gallons of milk, 100 boxes of chicken and 100 boxes of produce from Good Shepherd Food Outreach Ministry the month of September for use by the Sheriff's Department for inmate meals. Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (16) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Sheriff's Office to purchase 9 new bullet-proof vests in the amount of \$7,407.00 using forfeiture funds, DARE and donated funds and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (17) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept a donation from Bartee Construction in the amount of \$7,500.00 for improvements to CR 2300 in Precinct 2 and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Kitchen said that he did not solicit these funds that the donor approached him about making the donation. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (18) Commissioner Lovell moved to accept donation from Vulcraft for 40 pieces of angle iron and 20 pieces of reject scrap deck for head wall replacement on CR 1745 in Precinct 1. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (19) Commissioner Henderson made a motion to table approving request for public display permit requested by St Francis of the Tejas of the Diocese of Tyler for sign to be installed on

Courthouse lawn providing Adoption options and other information until we can get further information and Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- (20) Discuss and consider action on order the removal of a gate placed by landowner(s) across County Road 2106 and in the right of way of County Road 2106 located in Precinct 2. **PASS**
- (21) **Commissioner Henderson moved to accept CRF allocations from the Cities of Kennard, Latexo, Grapeland and Lovelady because these funds were unused by these cities and they can be moved to the County. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (22) **Commissioner Lovell made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to accept the tax abatement application from Lincoln Lumber Crockett LLC and setting date for public hearing on November 10, 2020. James Gentry, CEIDC, along with Gary Keeling shared that this facility is going to provide approximately 18 jobs and utilize the old Edmiston facility on Austin Street. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (23) **Commissioner Henderson made a motion receive as information FY 2020 Seizure and Forfeiture Audit Reports for District Attorney, County Attorney, Sheriff's Department, Constables Precinct 1 and Precinct 2. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (24) **Commissioner Henderson moved to accept Emergency Management Performance Grant award for FY 2020. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (25) **Elections Administrator shared that because Kelly Nicol and Reggie Berry are both on the ballot they cannot serve in this election as tabulation supervisor and must be replaced. Mrs. Lum recommended Dick Murchison because of his prior experience. Commissioner Lovell moved to appoint Dick Murchison as the Tabulation Supervisor for the November 3, 2020 general election. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (26) **Commissioner Henderson made a motion and Commissioner Lovell seconded to receive as information Notice of General Election. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(27)Adjourn. **Commissioner Kitchen made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

Jim Lovell, County Judge

Gary Lovell, Commissioner, Precinct #1

Willie Kitchen, Commissioner, Precinct #2

Pat Perry, Commissioner, Precinct #3

Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest:

Terri Meadows, County Clerk