



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

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

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

Also present:

Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to County Judge
Todd McConnell	IT
Brittani Womack (Zoom)	First Assistant Auditor
Heath Murff (Zoom)	Emergency Management
Terri Meadows	County Clerk
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator
Melissa Jeter	Auditor
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Jennifer Kulms (Zoom)	9-1-1 Addressing
Joel Martin	Chief Bailiff
Mike McCreight	HCSO
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff HCSO
Laronica Wooten-Smith	Tax Assessor Collector

Media:

Will Johnson (Zoom)	The Messenger
Jan White (Zoom)	Houston County Courier
Jason Jones (Zoom)	The Messenger

Visitors:

Porter Ellis, Tim Allen, John Ulrich, Hiep Vu, Tami McCreight

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:
Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Lovell voiced the opening prayer and Judge Lovell led the Pledge to the American Flag and the Texas Flag.
- (2) Recognition and comments from guests: 1)Porter Ellis addressed the court concerning his road and property in Precinct 4. Judge Lovell explained to him that issue is between him and his commissioner. Commissioner Henderson told Mr. Ellis they could talk again, but the answer is still the same. 2)John Ulrich addressed the court over concerns about the electronic voting machines. He objects to using them and believes they can be hacked and that the votes are not safe.
- (3) **Commissioner Lovell moved to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from November 23, 2021. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 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 Kitchen 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. Environmental Report
 - b. Community Service Report (not available)
 - c. Sheriff's Report (given orally by Sheriff Hargrove) at the end of his report County Judge Lovell commended the Sheriff on the Excellence Status given by Jail Standards**Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive the Reports as information. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees:
Commissioner Lovell made a motion and Commissioner Stokes seconded to approve the following:
 - a. **Six month raise for Sheila Johnson, Grants Administrator to \$2,251.36 bi-weekly and**
 - b. **Jerrod Vickers as Courthouse Deputy in Pay Grade 19, bi-weekly salary of \$1339.42 and phone stipend of \$18.46.****Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve payment to Lucas Mahan (HCSO Jailer) for vacation and comp time in the amount of \$794.10, and Lorenzo Simpson (HCSO Deputy) in the amount of \$3,215.58. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (9) **Commissioner Henderson presented a Private Road located in Precinct 4 to be adopted as a County Road. He said that he has done the proper postings, gotten the signatures, and done everything necessary to move forward with the adoption as a county road. He emphasized**

that this is not a private driveway. He said at one time this was Forest Service Road 545 and was maintained by the county and then it was Private Road 8045 and he makes the motion to adopt this as County Road 4630 to be maintained by the County. Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(10) Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve a donation of \$1000 from Thomas A. McLendon for improvements to CR 1090/1135 in Precinct 4. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(11) Commissioner Stokes made a motion to accept a donation from \$450.00 from Mario and Judy Dell’Osso for improvements on CR 4030 in Precinct 3. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(12) Commissioner Lovell moved to extend the position for the part-time employee in Elections Administration office until year-end. Election Administrator, Cynthia Lum, informed the Court that the employee is in the middle of a project that should be completed by the end of this year. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(13) Discuss and consider extending moving the voting precinct lines in Precinct 1:

- a. For Precincts 5 & 14 to coincide with the Grapeland School District lines.
- b. For Precincts 14 & 16 to coincide with Latexo School District lines ending along Farm Market 2022 N.
- c. Precinct 8 & 16 to coincide with the Grapeland School District lines.
- d. Moving Precinct 16 voting location to the New Energy Community Church located at 9733 State Highway 21 E Crockett, TX.

Commissioner Lovell moved to LEAVE THE VOTING PRECINCT LINES IN PRECINCT 1 AS THEY ARE. We do not want to make any changes of voting precinct lines in Precinct 1. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(14) Discuss and consider approval for making the following changes in voting precinct lines in Precinct 4:

- a. For the removal of voting Precinct 12 – Belott Community and the split based off of the Kennard School District line from State Highway 21 E down to Farm Market 1050. Everything west would be consolidated into Precinct 4 and everything east would be consolidated into Precinct 20.
- b. Moving the voting Precinct lines for Precinct 11 to run along CR 4550 in Precinct 4 so that voters south would be moved into Precinct 11 and extend the line from CR 4505 to US Highway 287 S. to include CR 4520 and those CRs’ and voters that run along US Highway 287 S. towards Pennington, TX until you reach the current Precinct 11 border.
- c. Renumbering Precinct 22 – Porter Springs Community to Precinct 12. (if (a) is approved)

Commissioner Henderson said that after listening to others, and attending the public forum the words he kept hearing is, “Hey guys, don’t do it.” At this time Commissioner Henderson made a motion to leave the voting precinct lines as they are and do not change them. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0. Commissioner Henderson commended Cynthia Lum for the hard work she had done on this project. Judge Lovell echoed “good job”.

- (15) Commissioner Lovell made the motion to approve increasing the cash/change fund by \$200.00 in the Houston County Tax Office due to two stations added. Commissioner Kitchen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (16) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the Crockett Civic Center Rental and Use Agreement with attached Certificate Liability Coverage for Houston County Court at Law to use for Jury Selection on January 25, 2022. Commissioner Kitchen asked if there had been any rate changes and the Auditor stated there has not. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (17) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to renew and update the Interlocal Housing Agreements with Trinity County, Leon County, Madison County, Walker County, and Angelina County for inmates to be housed in the Houston County Jail. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (18) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve an agreement between Houston County Sheriff's Office Training Facility and Angelina College Law Enforcement Academy for a police academy to be held in Houston County. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (19) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to award bids for road materials for the CTIF Grant projects for Precinct 4 to Bryan & Bryan Asphalt and Frost Crushed Stone. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (20) Commissioner Henderson made a motion and Commissioner Lovell seconded to advertise to accept bids for contract hauling for the CTIF Grant projects for Precinct 2 & 4. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (21) 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/or the value of the real estate and contemplated litigation per Local Government Code §551.071. **Entered into closed session at 10:05 a.m. reconvened into open session at 10:25 a.m.**

(22) Judge Lovell made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried by everyone standing and leaving the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

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