



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 14, 2020**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on January 14, 2020 with the following members present, to wit:

Jim Lovell	County Judge
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 County Commissioners
Melissa Jeter	Auditor
Justin Killough	Chief Deputy-S/O
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Danette Millican	Tax Assessor Collector
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Gail Thompson	Elections Administrative Assistant
Donna Kaspar	District Attorney
Terri Meadows	Houston County Clerk

Media:

Alton Porter	Houston County Courier
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Visitors: Mike Deckard, Roy Langford, Ann Walker (PWFAA), Peggy Patrick (Ho Co ESD #2)

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order, gave the opening prayer, and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and the Texas Flag.

(2) Recognition and comments from guests:

Judge Lovell recognized the guests and asked if there were any comments. There were none.

(3) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from December 23, 2019. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(4) Consider approving Budget Amendments. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the Budget Amendments. 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 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 5 to 0.**

(6) Receive information, announcements and reports from County Departments:

- a. Environmental Report
- b. Community Service Report (not available)

**Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive the Environmental Report as Information. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees:

**(a) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the hiring of Chandra Griffin as part time Assistant Auditor/Accounts Payable Clerk at bi-weekly rate of \$13.28 per hour, Pay Grade #13 effective January 2, 2020. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

**(b) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the hiring of Belinda Hinson as part time Deputy Clerk I (1/8/2020-1/16/2020) and then full Deputy Clerk I at bi-weekly rate of \$1123.24, Pay Grade #15 effective January 17, 2020. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

**(c) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the promotion of Pamela Fannett as part time Aging Services Director (Home Delivered Meal Program) at bi-weekly rate of \$12.05 per hour, Pay Grade #10 effective January 17, 2020. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(8) Receive as information appointment of Houston County Aging Director.

(9) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve compensatory, vacation and holiday time for County employees and necessary budget amendments (Chandra Griffin \$118.00). Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(10) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve Hotel Occupancy Tax Application and Interlocal Agreement with Pinewoods Find Arts Association for Asleep at the Wheel Concert to be held on February 1, 2020 in the amount of \$1000.00. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(11) Discuss and consider action on Memorandum of Understanding with the Texas Department of Public Safety to provide driver records for insurance verifications. Melissa Jeter, County Auditor informed the Court that our insurance previously handled this, but does not any longer.

**Commissioner Kitchen moved to approve the memorandum of Understanding. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(12) Discuss and consider action on approving employee surety blanket bonds for employees of the County Clerk, District Clerk, Auditor, Treasurer and Sheriff's Deputies as required. Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, stated that in an AG Opinion it is required that employees in the above mentioned offices be covered under a bond separate from the office holder. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the public employee surety blanket bonds for employees of the County Clerk, District Clerk, Auditor, Treasurer and Sheriff's Deputies as required. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(13) Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information a report of the Continuing Education Hours for the Tax Assessor-Collector office. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Danette Millican, Tax Assessor-Collector, said that she and some of her staff have completed all required hours with some to carry over to the next year. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(14) Judge Lovell made a recommendation that Peggy Patrick and William Money be re-appointed to the Houston County Emergency Services District #2 for a two-year term, and that he nominates Roy Langford be appointed to fill a vacancy on the HCES District # 2 left by the resignation of Josh Bobbitt. Commissioner Lovell made this in the form of a motion. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(15) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion and Commissioner Lovell seconded to approve expenditure for roof repair by Lucas Roofing in the amount of \$15,990.00 at Old Jail Storage Facility and necessary budget amendments. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(16) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve a donation in the amount of \$23, 600.00 from Oncor Electric Delivery Company LLC for improvements to CR 2065, 2055, 2080, 2075, and 2115 in precinct 2 and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Commissioner Kitchen wanted everyone to know that he did not request or ask for this donation. It was unsolicited and donated by Oncor of its own accord. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(17) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to renew a Lease purchase with Citizens National Bank for the purchase of a John Deere Tractor and Tiger boom mower for Precinct 2 in January 2015 for an additional 5 years and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(18) Hear update concerning Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Mitigation funds to assist Texas communities with mitigation projects and consider action to select projects which may qualify. The CDBG assist communities with funds for mitigation projects. According to FEMA "Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters."

Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, recently attended a hearing about CDBG, and gave the court a brief synopsis of the meeting. "The General Land Office (GLO) held a hearing where the state prepared a draft action plan detailing the distribution and eligible uses of 4.3 billion in CDBG funds from the US department of Houston and Urban Development. The funding would be used to assist eligible communities with mitigation processes," Jeter said.

The projects would address risks within areas impacted by Hurricane Harvey along with areas affected by flooding in 2015 and 2016 according to Melissa Jeter.

Jeter continued, "The purpose of this is to lessen the impact of future disasters. Their focus is going to address current and future risks. The focus will be on water, sewer, solid waste, communication, health and medical, and other public infrastructure." There will be exclusions associated with the CDBG mitigation funds and included: prohibiting the construction of buildings; prohibiting the expansion of emergency response services; and prohibiting the enlargement of a dam or levee.

Houston County did not qualify for any funding associated with damage from Hurricane Harvey; Melissa Jeter said the county did qualify for CDBG mitigation funds earmarked for the 2015 and 2016 floods.

"Those are both going to be competitive grants. So, whatever projects we come up with, we will have to compete with everyone in our region for those. The minimum project for each of those is \$3 million and the maximum is \$10 million. The purpose for both is to improve the infrastructure for hazard mitigation," Melissa Jeter explained.

**Commissioner Kitchen moved to table Agenda Item #18. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(19) Discuss and consider action on awarding a contract from received Request for Qualifications (RFQs) to prepare and submit the multi-jurisdictional hazard Mitigation Plan and grant application. Judge Lovell stated there were two that applied and they were scored by himself, the Auditor, and Emergency Management and they all agreed on H2O Partners. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to award the contract to H2O Partners. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(20) Judge Lovell moved to adjourn the Meeting. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0. The meeting was adjourned.

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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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Pat Perry, Commissioner, Precinct #3

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Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest:

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Terri Meadows, County Clerk