



HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT MINUTES REGULAR MEETING JULY 14, 2026

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on July 14, 2026 in **person and via zoom**, with the following members present, to wit:

The Court

Jim Lovell	County Judge	PRESENT
Gary Lovell	Commissioner, Precinct #1	PRESENT
Willie Kitchen	Commissioner, Precinct #2	PRESENT (joined at 9:19 a.m)
Gene Stokes	Commissioner, Precinct #3	PRESENT
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4	PRESENT
Terri Meadows	County Clerk	PRESENT

County Officials/Employees in person:

Hugh Coleman	Assistant County Attorney	Zoom
Kris Dyches	Human Resources Administrator	Present
Pam Foster-Fletcher	349 th District Judge	Zoom
Meagan Frizzell	9-1-1 Addressing	Zoom
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk	Present
Charlie Hooks	Assistant County Attorney	Zoom
Melissa Jeter	Auditor	Zoom
Carl Johnson	Facilities Administrator	Present
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator	Present
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator	Present
Ryan Martin	Chief Deputy Sheriff	Present
Todd McConnell	IT	Present
Mike McCreight	JP1	Zoom
Lila McNiel	Summer Student Intern	Present
Heath Murff	Emergency Management	Present
Les Neeley	HCSO	Zoom
Jan Pigford	Assistant to County Judge	Present
Daphne Session	District Attorney	Zoom
Darrellyn Smith	Admin to Commissioners	Present
Tina Teetz	District Court Coordinator	Zoom

Media: Greg Ritchie (Zoom)

Visitors: Ariel Burks (TDC – Warden), Michael Britt (TDC – Director), Kathie Prestera (DAR), Tonya Allum (DAR)

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

On Tuesday, July 14, 2026, Judge Lovell called the regularly scheduled Houston County Commissioners Court meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., Judge Lovell voiced the opening prayer followed by leading the Pledge to the American Flag and the Texas Flag.

- (2) Recognition and comments from guests. (For informational purposes only, with no deliberation and no action taken, except that the Court may discuss whether to include any matter on a future agenda for deliberation and/or action.) **At the end of the Agenda, Ariel Burks, Warden at Wainwright Unit in Lovelady, Texas, was present to share that the prison is enlarging the inmate cemetery. It is on property owned by TDC. She wanted the Commissioners Court to be aware that this change is happening at Wainwright.**
- (3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court minutes. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes for June 23, 2026. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (4) Consider approving budget amendments. **Commissioner Stokes moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 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). Commissioner Henderson seconded. The Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (6) Receive information, announcements and reports from County Departments:
 - a. Community Service/Environmental Report
 - b. District Clerk Report
 - c. County Clerk Report
 - d. Tax Assessor Report
 - e. Treasurer's Report
 - f. Auditor's Office**Commissioner Lovell moved to receive as information the Community Service/Environmental Report, District Clerk Report, County Clerk Report, Tax Assessor Report, Treasurer's Report, and Auditor's Office Report. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees.
Commissioner Stokes moved to approve the following salaries and Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
Ruben Nava as new full-time Patrol Sergeant at HCSO replacing Mark Simon at annual salary of \$53,000.00 (\$48,163.96 – County Base Rate and \$4,836.04 – Supplement) in Pay Grade S11 effective July 14, 2026.
Wendy Conner as new full-time Administrative Assistant to the Extension Office replacing Cindy Lee at bi-weekly pay of \$1,299.16 (County base \$39,676.00 and Supplement \$2,324.00) in Pay Grade S04 effective July 20, 2026.
- (8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. (Treasurer) **NONE**

- (9) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. (Auditor) **Commissioner Henderson moved to declare received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments as presented in the packet. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider approval of an amendment to the Airport Project Participation Agreement to TxDOT and Houston County. (SJ) **Commissioner Henderson moved to approve an amendment to the Airport Project Participation Agreement to TxDOT and Houston County. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (11) Discuss and approve the Non-terminal Agency Agreement between Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Office. (DS) **Commissioner Lovell moved to approve the Non-terminal Agency Agreement between Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Office. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (12) Discuss and consider approving National Society Daughters of the American Revolution "250 America Patriot Marker" to be placed at the Houston County Courthouse. **Commissioner Lovell moved to approve the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution "250 America Patriot Marker" to be placed at the Houston County Courthouse. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and consider expenses related to the HAVA grant. (SJ) *Sheila Johnson, Grants Administrator, shared that the EA needs to purchase additional equipment for elections. With the remainder in the HAVA Grant and her surplus funds she will have the money for the purchase.* **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve expenses related to the HAVA grant. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (14) Discuss and consider approving donation of \$3,500.00 from Steely Lumber Co., INC for materials used on CR 4065 in Precinct 3. (GS). **Commissioner Stokes moved to accept a donation of \$3,500.00 from Steely Lumber Co., INC for materials used on CR 4065 in Precinct 3. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

***Commissioner Kitchen joined the meeting at 9:19 a.m.**

- (15) Discuss and consider action on designating the Title II and Title III election percentages for FY2026 Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (SRS) payments. (MJ) **Commissioner Lovell moved to designate the Title II and Title III election percentages for FY2026 Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (SRS) payments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (16) Discuss and consider receiving as information the addition of private roads located off County Road 2245 (PCT 2): PR 6305, PR 6310, PR 6315, and PR 6320. (MF) **Commissioner Henderson moved to receive as information the addition of private roads located off County Road 2245 (PCT 2): PR 6305, PR 6310, PR 6315, and PR 6320. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (17) Discuss and consider taking action to set designated parking for District Judges. ***Judge Fletcher appeared by Zoom to state her case for the need of a designated parking spot for the District Judges. After the Judge called for a motion this item failed for lack of a motion being made.***
- (18) Discuss and consider taking action to release a Waiver and Liability form for the Houston County gun range. (HM) **Commissioner Lovell moved to approve a Waiver and Liability form for the Houston County Gun Range. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (19) Discuss and consider action on renewal of employee health insurance with United Healthcare for FY 2027. **This agenda item was tabled by the County Judge.**
- (20) Discuss and consider action on renewal of employee Gap Insurance with Manhattan Life for FY 2027. **This agenda item was tabled by the County Judge.**
- (21) Discuss and consider authorizing exemption pursuant to Local Government Code Chapter 262.024 (a)(9) Commissioner Kitchen from the competitive purchasing requirements in order to buy personal property sold at auction. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to authorize exemption pursuant to Local Government Code Chapter 262.024 (a)(9) Commissioner Kitchen from the competitive purchasing requirements in order to buy personal property sold at auction. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (22) Discuss and consider creation of a committee and delegating authority to the committee for the evaluation of the criteria, and their assigned points, which will be contained in the project documents for the Renovation of Existing Bank – Phase I. (SJ) ***After a lot of discussion about who should be on this committee the following motion was made: Commissioner Stokes made a motion to create a committee consisting of Kevin Maxwell, Commissioner Lovell, Commissioner Kitchen, and alternate Kevin Holbrook, and delegate authority to the committee for the evaluation of the criteria, and their assigned points, which will be contained in the project documents for the Renovation of Existing Bank – Phase I. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.***
- (23) Executive Session: Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 551.072 (Deliberation regarding Economic Development Negotiations; Closed Meeting)
- a. Tax incentives

The Court entered into Executive Session at 9:42 a.m.

- (24) Reconvene into regular session and consider action, if any, on executive items.

The Court reconvened into open session at 10:14 a.m.

(25)Adjourn. **Judge Lovell made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn. The motion carried by everyone rising and leaving the meeting at 10:19 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

Date Approved: July 28, 2026