



HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT MINUTES REGULAR MEETING JULY 28, 2026

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on July 28, 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
Gene Stokes	Commissioner, Precinct #3	PRESENT
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4	PRESENT
Terri Meadows	County Clerk	PRESENT

County Officials/Employees in person:

Zak Bengé	Sheriff	Present
Sarah Bergman	First Assistant County Auditor	Zoom
Andy Biscamp	Bailiff	Present
Alicia Bittner	County Treasurer Assistant	Zoom
Sarah Clark	CCL Judge	Present
Hugh Coleman	Assistant County Attorney	Zoom
Kris Dyches	Human Resources Administrator	Present
Meagan Frizzell	9-1-1 Addressing	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
Kristina Massey	County Attorney	Zoom
Todd McConnell	IT	Present
Mike McCreight	JP1	Zoom
Heath Murff	Emergency Management	Present
Jan Pigford	Assistant to County Judge	Present
Rita Rodriguez	Office Manager/DA Office	Present
Daphne Session	District Attorney	Zoom
Darrellyn Smith	Admin to Commissioners	Present
Red Smith	Constable Precinct 2	Present
Matthew van Egmond	S/O	Zoom
Brittani Womack	Tax Assessor-Collector	Present

Media: Greg Ritchie (Zoom)

Visitors: Billy Ballow (GLS), Jason Frizzell (Fire Chief), Sean Ebbs (Disc Golf), Dr. Bob Grier (HoCo Hospital District), Robert Baird – Zoom, Cindy Parker (FUMC Minister), Mandy Epperson – Zoom, Shawn Holland – Zoom, Alexis

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

On Tuesday, July 28, 2026, Judge Lovell called the regularly scheduled Houston County Commissioners Court meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., Reverend Cindy Parker voiced the opening prayer followed by Judge Lovell 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.) **Dr. Bob Grier was present on behalf of the Houston County Hospital District. He shared some of the budget challenges the hospital is facing and asked the Commissioners Court to consider taking over the funding of the ambulance service. This is not an Action Item and no Action was taken.**

- (3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court minutes. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes for July 14, 2026. 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 Lovell made a motion to pay all the bills and expenses for a. (Accounts payable), b. (Fund transfers), and c. (Ratify Salary expenses). Commissioner Kitchen seconded. The Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

- a. County Treasurers Report
- b. Compensatory Report

Commissioner Henderson moved to receive as information the County Treasurers Report and the Compensatory Report. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

Commissioner Lovell moved to approve the following salaries and Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Maria Horn mid-year travel allowance as JP1 Court Coordinator at \$23.08 from Supplement , this was budgeted but not submitted at transfer. Effective July 28, 2026.

Kodee Butler as new full-time Patrol Deputy at HCSO replacing Sgt. Ruben Nava at annual pay of \$50,000.00 (County base \$42,798.86 and Supplement \$7,201.14) in Pay Grade S010 effective July 28, 2026.

Cassandra Frank as full-time Dispatcher at HCSO at annual pay of \$38,000.00 from Supplement in Pay Grade SO2 effective July 28, 2026.

Jonathon Strong as promotion to Patrol Deputy at HCSO at annual pay of \$50,000.00 (County base \$42,798.86 and Supplement \$7,201.14) in Pay Grade SO9 effective July 28, 2026.

Spencer Lightfoot as promotion to Patrol Deputy at HCSO at annual pay of \$50,000.00 (County base \$42,798.86 and Supplement \$7,201.14) in Pay Grade SO9 effective July 28, 2026.

Kendall King new hire as County Judge Assistant at \$45,745.80 (County Base Pay \$45,265.84 and cell phone allowance \$480.00) in Pay Grade 20 effective August 3, 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. **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 5 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider request for Cellular Telephone Allowance for Assistant County Attorney (KM) **Commissioner Kitchen moved to approve Cellular Telephone Allowance for Charlie Hooks as Assistant County Attorney. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (11) Discuss and consider the purchase and installation of two aluminum framed glass doors to serve as an added layer of security for the front of the District Attorney's office from Sauciers Glass at a cost of \$4,857.86 and necessary budget amendments. (CJ) **Commissioner Lovell moved to approve the purchase and installation of two aluminum framed glass doors to serve as an added layer of security for the front of the District Attorney's office from Sauciers Glass at a cost of \$4,857.86 with a budget amendment from Permanent Improvements. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (12) Discuss and hear issue with incorrect W-2 and requested refund of social security taxes and order County Treasurer, to take necessary action to correct error. (SC). **There was discussion about the Treasurer's conversion to the new system that caused the error and Janis Omelina, County Treasurer requested that she be allowed to go ahead and write a check to Judge Clark because this error could take Social Security a long time to clear up. Commissioner Stokes moved to approve the County Treasurer to reimburse Judge Sarah Clark \$1,035.01 for the overpayment of Social Security. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and consider action on renewal of employee health insurance with United Healthcare for FY 2027. **No Action Taken**
- (14) Discuss and consider action on renewal of employee GAP insurance with Manhattan Life for FY 2027. **No Action Taken**
- (15) Receive as information Houston County Emergency Services District (ESD) #2 Independent Audit as of September 30, 2025. (JL) **Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information Houston County Emergency Services District (ESD) #2 Independent Audit as of September 30, 2025. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (16) Receive as information the increase in IRS reimbursable mileage for travel associated with official county business from 72.5 cents to 76 cents to be effective August 1, 2026. (MJ) **Commissioner Lovell moved to receive as information the increase in IRS reimbursable**

mileage for travel associated with official county business from 72.5 cents to 76 cents to be effective August 1, 2026. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(17)Receive as information that both JP1 and JP2 will need to enter into an agreement with DPS for the new Texas Conviction Reporting (TXCR) interface for conviction reporting in their offices at no cost to the county. (KM) **Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information that both JP1 and JP2 will need to enter into an agreement with DPS for the new Texas Conviction Reporting (TXCR) interface for conviction reporting in their offices at no cost to the county. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(18)Discuss and consider reappointing a member for Board of Directors for Burke Center for Houston County for a two-year term. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to reappoint Lois Ball as a member for Board of Directors for Burke Center for Houston County for a two-year term. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(19)Discuss and consider action on signing lease agreement between Houston County and Sean Ebbs DBA Benevolent Disc Golf, 203 Montgomery Ave., Crockett, TX. (HC) **Commissioner Lovell moved to approve signing lease agreement between Houston County and Sean Ebbs DBA Benevolent Disc Golf, 203 Montgomery Ave., Crockett, TX. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(20)Discuss and receive as information the certified values for FY 2026 from the Houston County Appraisal District. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information the certified values for FY 2026 from the Houston County Appraisal District. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(21)Finalize HAVA grant purchases and approve sales agreements. (CL). ***Cindy Lum, Elections Administrator, was present to explain the purchases and agreements.* Commissioner Stokes moved to approve finalization of HAVA grant purchases and sales agreements. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(22)Discuss and consider action on renewing the workers compensation policy with Deep East Texas Self Insurance Fund through June 30, 2027. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to renew the workers compensation policy with Deep East Texas Self Insurance Fund through June 30, 2027. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(23)Discuss and consider action on designating Brittani Womack, Houston County Tax Assessor-Collector, to calculate the no-new-revenue and voter-approval tax rate for 2026 tax year. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to designate Brittani Womack, Houston County Tax Assessor-Collector, to calculate the no-new-revenue and voter-approval tax rate for 2026 tax year. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(24)Adjourn. **Judge Lovell made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn. The motion carried by everyone rising and leaving the meeting at 9:53 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: August 11, 2026