



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2025**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on January 14, 2025 in **person and via zoom**, with the following members present, to wit:

The Court

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|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Jim Lovell | County Judge | ABSENT |
| 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:

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|------------------|--|
| James Angerstein | Tax Assessor-Collector |
| Kris Dyches | Insurance Coordinator |
| Laura Goolsby | District Clerk |
| Daisy Hernandez | HCSO Admin |
| Carl Johnson | Facilities Administrator |
| Sheila Johnson | Grants Administrator |
| Joel Martin | Bailiff |
| Ryan Martin | Chief Deputy Sheriff |
| Kristina Massey | County Attorney |
| Todd McConnell | IT |
| Mike McCreight | JP 1 |
| Janis Omelina | Treasurer |
| Jan Pigford | Administrative Assistant to the County Judge |
| Daphne Session | District Attorney |
| Darrellyn Smith | Assistant to the County Commissioners |
| Red Smith | Constable Pct 2 |
| Brittany Womack | 1 st Assistant Auditor |

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Missy D'Angelo | Assistant County Auditor |
| Melissa Jeter | County Auditor |
| Thomas Shafer | Investigator – DA Office |

Media:

Greg Ritchie (by Zoom) - Messenger

Visitors: Tim Allen (HCCWB), James Bond (Hodges Surveying), Ronnie Omelina (Citizen), Patrick McArthur (Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott LLP), Sally Brannen (HCCWB), Theresa Lair (HCCWB)

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:
Commissioner Kitchen called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Commissioner Henderson voiced the opening prayer followed by Commissioner Kitchen 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.) **None**
- (3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court minutes. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes for December 23, 2024 and January 2, 2025 with a correction to Jennefer Cruz salary in the January 2, 2025 minutes (salary typed as \$2,769.23 bi-weekly and corrected to \$1,769.23 bi-weekly). Commissioner Stokes 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 Stokes 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 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
- Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as information the Community Service/Environmental Report, District Clerk Report, County Clerk Report, and Tax Assessor Report. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees.
- a. County Clerk's Office Senior Clerk 6 month pay raise – **Commissioner Henderson made a motion approve 6 month pay raise for Brittney Watson, Full-time Senior Clerk in the County Clerk's Office, moving her salary from \$1,391.18 bi-weekly to \$1,446.83 and continue the \$18.46 cell phone allowance in Pay Grade 17 effective 1/27/2025. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
 - b. Deputy Clerk/Tax Office to District Attorney's Victims Assistance Coordinator – **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salary for Destini Mancilla, moving from the Tax Office to District Attorney's Office as Victim Assistance Coordinator/Grand Jury Clerk at bi-weekly salary of \$1,469.56 (includes SB 22 supplement of \$161.71) in Pay Grade 17 effective 1/20/2025. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
 - c. Precinct 2 Part Time R & B Truck Driver – **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the hourly pay of Oma Lou Dromgoole, as R & B Truck Driver/CDL in Precinct**

2 at \$17.60 per hour plus cell phone allowance, in pay grade 17 effective 1/14/2025. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- d. **Commissioners Assistant from Part-time to Full-time – Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the full time bi-weekly salary of Darrellyn Smith, Commissioners Assistant, at \$1,329.66 in Pay Grade 13, effective January 14, 2025 moving from Part Time to Full Time. Commissioner Henderson 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 Lovell made a motion and Commissioner Stokes seconded to approve compensatory payment to Martha Jackson, HCSO/Jail Admin, in the amount of \$1,026.80; Jaidan Jones, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$209.76; J'darius Pruitt, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$209.76; Mike Molnes, Sr., HCSO/Investigator, in the amount of \$4,917.53; Jerry Baker, HCSO, in the amount of \$587.48; Roger Dickey, HCSO/Chief, in the amount of \$1,171.60; Kristina Massey, Assistant DA, in the amount of 1,258.27; Angelo Vela, HCSO/ PT Deputy, in the amount of \$1,240.59; John Catoe, HCSO/Deputy, in the amount of \$3,765.22; Casey Bradshaw, HCSO/Bailiff, in the amount of \$999.58; Jennefer Cruz, HCSO/Dispatcher, in the amount of \$3,784.80; and Jeffery Dean, HCSO/Deputy, in the amount of \$3,430.09. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (9) **Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. Commissioner Henderson made a motion and Commissioner Stokes seconded to declare received information as surplus inventory and approve transfers between departments. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (10) **Discuss and consider declaring salvage and surplus inventory from Sheriff's Office to be sold. After some discussion about the inventory Commissioner Lovell suggested we hold up until it is decided what to do with this inventory. No action taken.**
- (11) **Discuss and consider approval of payment of \$287.00 to TEEX for Telecommunicator Course for Jessi Cunningham to be paid from Sheriff's Office forfeiture account and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve payment of \$287.00 to TEEX for Telecommunicator Course for Jessi Cunningham to be paid from Sheriff's Office forfeiture account and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0**
- (12) **Discuss and consider expenditure for Kristen Wells from the County Attorney's office to attend a victim's assistance coordinator training as required by the Victim Coordinator and Liaison Grant. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to authorize expenditure for Kristen Wells from the County Attorney's office to attend a victim's assistance coordinator training as required by the Victim Coordinator and Liaison Grant. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (13) **Discuss and consider approving Deep East Texas Council of Governments County sponsorship for the Deep East Texas Legislative Reception and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve Deep East Texas Council of Governments County sponsorship for the Deep East Texas Legislative Reception in the amount of \$500.00 and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

- (14) Discuss and consider appointment of board member for HC Sick Pool Committee which is one full time employee who offices in Law Enforcement including Sheriff Department, Justice of the Peace offices and all other outlying offices. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to appoint Ryan Martin, from the Sheriff's Office, as a member of the HC Sick Pool Committee. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (15) Consider submitting nomination and adopting resolution for a replacement representative for the Houston County Appraisal District Board of Directors. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to nominate Willie Kitchen for a replacement representative for the Houston County Appraisal District Board of Directors. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Willie Kitchen accepted the nomination. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (16) Discuss and consider action to appoint a new member to the Houston County Child Welfare Board and swearing in for new and five reappointed members. **Commissioner Stokes nominated Theresa Lair as a new member to the Houston County Child Welfare Board and the re-appointment of Sally Brannen, Tim Allen, Tami Bruner, Carole McQueen, and Cathy Minchew. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0. Commissioner Kitchen swore in Theresa Lair.**
- (17) Discuss and consider adopting Resolution of Support for Adding Passing Lanes on Highway 19 South. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to adopt a Resolution of Support for Adding Passing Lanes on Highway 19 South. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (18) Discuss and consider action on a resolution with the Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division for the implementation of the improvements to the Houston County Airport. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to adopt a resolution with the Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division for the implementation of the improvements to the Houston County Airport.**
- (19) Discuss, consider and authorize the Grant Administrator to apply and adopt Resolution for the Rifle Resistant Body Armor Grant Program FY 2026 from the Public Safety Office to equip peace officers with body armor. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to authorize the Grant Administrator to apply and adopt Resolution for the Rifle Resistant Body Armor Grant Program FY 2026 from the Public Safety Office to equip peace officers with body armor. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (20) Discuss, consider and authorize the Grant Administrator to apply for the Community Wildfire Defense Grant from the Governor's Office and Texas Division of Emergency Management for the purchase of equipment to implement a fire prevention program and to install a generator at critical facilities. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to authorize the Grant Administrator to apply for the Community Wildfire Defense Grant from the Governor's Office and Texas Division of Emergency Management for the purchase of equipment to implement a fire prevention program and to install a generator at critical facilities. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

- (21) Discuss and consider approving roof replacement for bank buildings and community room and payment from received quotes and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the bid from 4L Construction to replace the roof for bank buildings and community room with necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (22) Discuss and consider the placement of a wall or other divider between the District Attorney's Office and the spiral staircase to the first floor within the District Clerk's Office. **There was discussion and it was decided they would get pricing for a door rather than putting up a wall. The Facilities Administrator is to get prices. No other action taken.**
- (23) Discuss and consider action on authorizing a lease purchase agreement with Citizens National Bank for the purchase of 2024 Brazos 40' Pit Boss Belly Dump for Precinct 2 in an amount not to exceed \$38,000.00, collateralized with CD and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to authorize a lease purchase agreement with Citizens National Bank for the purchase of 2024 Brazos 40' Pit Boss Belly Dump for Precinct 2 in an amount not to exceed \$38,000.00, collateralized with CD and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (24) Discuss and consider action on applying to renew the fuel storage tank pollution liability insurance policy for the Houston County Airport. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to apply to renew the fuel storage tank pollution liability insurance policy for the Houston County Airport. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (25) Discuss and consider action on transferring license plates from standard to exempt for a 2022 Ram (4696) under the Sheriff Office. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve transferring license plates from standard to exempt for a 2022 Ram (4696) under the Sheriff Office. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (26) Discuss and consider action on addendum to financial software contract upgrade for the County Treasurer and County Auditor Offices, and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve addendum to financial software contract upgrade for the County Treasurer and County Auditor Offices, and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (27) Discuss and consider action on a contract between Houston County and TDCJ-Eastham Community Work crew to do upgrades and repairs to the Justice Center. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to receive as information a contract/agreement between Houston County and TDCJ-Eastham Community Work crew to do upgrades and repairs to the Justice Center. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (28) Discuss and consider action on Order to appoint James Bond as the Houston County Authorized Agent and Designated Representative for On-Site Sewage Facilities/Septic Systems in the Unincorporated Areas of the County effective February 1, 2025. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion approve an Order to appoint James Bond as the Houston County Authorized Agent and Designated Representative for On-Site Sewage Facilities/Septic Systems in the Unincorporated Areas of the County effective February 1, 2025. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(29) Discuss and consider action on extending the grant contract through March 31, 2025 with Deep East Texas Council of Governments and Houston County Aging Services for Home Delivered Meals to eligible clients and Senior Center Operations. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve extending the grant contract through March 31, 2025 with Deep East Texas Council of Governments and Houston County Aging Services for Home Delivered Meals to eligible clients and Senior Center Operations. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(30) Receive as information delinquent tax report from Patrick McArthur from Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins and Mott LLP. **Patrick McArthur went over the tax report on delinquent taxes with the Court. At the end of his presentation Commissioner Kitchen said this report would be received as information**

(31) Adjourn. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn. Commissioner Lovell seconded. The motion carried by everyone rising and leaving the meeting at 10:02 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: January 28, 2025