

**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 12, 2024**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on March 12, 2024 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

County Officials/Employees in person:

Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff
Melissa Jeter	Auditor
Carl Johnson	Facilities Administrator
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator
Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Todd McConnell	IT
Mike McCreight	JP Precinct 1
Terri Meadows	County Clerk
Mike Molnes	Sheriff's Office
Heath Murff	Emergency Management
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Laronica Wooten-Smith	County Tax Assessor Collector
Red Smith	Constable Precinct 2

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Brittani Womack	1 st Assistant Auditor
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Media:

Greg Ritchie (Messenger) – Zoom

Visitors: None

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:
Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Kitchen gave 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.) **NONE**
- (3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court minutes. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes for February 27, 2024. 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 Henderson 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 Stokes. The Motion carried 5 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 Kitchen moved to receive the Community Service/Environmental Report, District Clerk Report, County Clerk Report, and Tax Assessor Report as information. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
**Cynthia Lum announced that the election ran smoothly and there were 5400 that voted.*
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees.
 - a. Part-time to Full-time Assistant Auditor-AP: **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salary for Sarah Bergman, moving from Part-time to Full-time Assistant Auditor-AP at bi-weekly pay of \$1,399.58 in Pay Grade 16, effective 3/12/24. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve compensatory and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments by approving payment to Jeffry Catoe, Jailer, \$1,031.54 and Belinda Hinson, Auditor Office, \$1,180.01. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (9) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to declare received information as surplus inventory and approve transfers between departments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (10) Discuss and consider accepting a financial donation from Friends of Houston County Child Welfare Board to the Houston County Child Welfare Board. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve accepting a financial donation of \$2,763.00 from Friends of Houston County Child Welfare Board to the Houston County Child Welfare Board. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (11) Discuss and consider accepting a financial donation from Leonard Simmons for improvements to CR 3495 in Precinct 3. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion accept a financial donation from Leonard Simmons for improvements to CR 3495 in Precinct 3, and the donation goes into materials. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (12) Consider and approve the addition of Suite Numbers to the Offices in the Houston County Courthouse, installing mailbox modules in the Courthouse and Annex and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve the addition of Suite Numbers to the Offices in the Houston County Courthouse, and install mailbox modules in the Courthouse and Annex, and approve a budget amendment from Contingency of \$6095.00 to pay for the mailbox modules. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and consider adopting a policy for driveway culverts. *****Commissioner Kitchen said that he requested this item to be on the agenda so they could discuss a policy. After much discussion Judge Lovell said that we will pass on this item until a policy can be written. The Commissioners have asked Daphne Session, County Attorney, to assist in the writing of a policy.***
- (14) Discuss and consider approving bond and overweight permits for Precincts 1, 3 & 4. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve bond and overweight (can go about 4000 lbs. over) permits for Precincts 1, 3 & 4. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (15) Receive as information installation of pole-mounted power supply cabinets as part of the deployment of fiber based broadband service offered by Spectrum brand to be located in:
- a. Precinct 2 at CR 2130, North of FM 229
 - b. Precinct 3 at CR 3395, West of CR 3397
- Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information installation of pole-mounted power supply cabinets as part of the deployment of fiber based broadband service offered by Spectrum brand to be located in Precinct 2 at CR 2130, North of FM 229 and Precinct 3 at CR 3395, West of CR 3397. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (16) Discuss and consider action on application requests for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and Agreement with the Latexo Athletic Booster Club for The Latexo Baseball and Softball Tournament to be held February 29 – March 2, 2024 at the Latexo ISD Baseball Field. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve application requests for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and Agreement with the Latexo Athletic Booster Club in the amount of \$3,000.00 for The Latexo Baseball and Softball Tournament to be held February 29 – March 2, 2024 at the Latexo ISD Baseball Field. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (17) Discuss and consider action on License Plate Status for Houston County Sheriff's Vehicle Unit 7943. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to put all inscription back on the Sheriff's Vehicle Unit 7943 with Exempt Plates. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

****Judge Lovell stepped out at 9:51 a.m. and returned at 9:53 a.m.**

(18) Discuss and consider action on setting spending limit for incumbent county officer not reelected, per LGC 130.908. **Melissa Jeter, Auditor, worked on the totals. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to set the spending limit at \$24,000 per month from Operating Expenses for the Houston County Sheriff Office, for incumbent officer not reelected, per LGC 130.908. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**


(19) Discuss and consider action to accept Grant Agreements from Texas Comptroller for:
a. Rural Law Enforcement Salary Assistance Program for the office of the Sheriff's Office
b. Rural Prosecutor's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program for the office of the District Attorney
c. Rural Prosecutor's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program for the office of the County Attorney

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept Grant Agreements from Texas Comptroller and approve the County Attorney to sign her grant and the District Attorney to sign her grant and the County Judge to sign the Sheriff's Office Grant. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(20) Discuss and consider entering into an Interlocal Cooperation Contract with the Texas Department of Public Safety regarding the Failure to Appear Program. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to enter into an Interlocal Cooperation Contract with the Texas Department of Public Safety regarding the Failure to Appear Program. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(21) Discuss and consider taking action to designate the Crockett Civic Center as an alternate Courthouse from now until the end of 2024 to accommodate large jury panels. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to designate the Crockett Civic Center as an alternate Courthouse from now until the end of 2024 to accommodate large jury panels. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(22) Adjourn. **Judge Lovell made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn. Commissioner Henderson seconded. The motion carried by everyone rising and leaving the meeting at 10:05 a.m.**

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Jim Lovell, County Judge

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Gary Lovell, Commissioner, Precinct #1

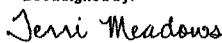
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Willie Kitchen, Commissioner, Precinct #2

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Gene Stokes, Commissioner, Precinct #3

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Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest: DocuSigned by:

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Terri Meadows, County Clerk

Date Approved: March 26, 2024