



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 11, 2023**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on July 11, 2023 in person and via zoom due to Covid, 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:

Terri Meadows	County Clerk
Todd McConnell	IT
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk
Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Red Smith	Constable Precinct 2

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Brittani Womack	First Assistant Auditor
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Laronica Wooten-Smith	Tax Assessor-Collector
Meagan Frizzell	9-1-1 Addressing

Media:

Greg Ritchie - Newspaper

Visitors:

John Angerstein (City Administrator), Mike Cunyus (Burke Center)

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., Commissioner Stokes led 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 Lovell moved to approve the Commissioners Court Minutes from June 27, 2023. 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). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Henderson. The Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (6) Receive information, announcements and reports from County Departments:
 - a. District Clerk Report
 - b. Tax Assessor Report
 - c. County Clerk Report
 - d. Community Service/Environmental Report - **NOT AVAILABLE**
Commissioner Henderson moved to receive the District Clerk Report, Tax Assessor Report, and County Clerk Report as information. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees.
 - a. Temporary Part-Time Deputy Clerk: **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the salary of Temporary Part-Time Deputy Clerk in the County Clerk Office, Sonya (Angie) Ray, at \$12.73 per hour in Pay Grade 13, Effective July 10, 2023. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
 - b. Jailer to Jail Sergeant
 - c. Jailer to Jail Sergeant
 - d. Jailer to Jail Sergeant
 - e. Jailer to Jail Sergeant
Judge Lovell announced the Court would take up items b – e at the same time. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion that the salaries of Theresa Hayes, Matthew Graham, Weston Reeves, and James Hallmark, moving from Jailer to Jail Sergeant, be set at bi-weekly salary of \$1,484.16 in Pay Grade 19. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
 - f. Full-Time Jailer
 - g. Full-Time Jailer
Judge Lovell told the Court to take up items f-g at the same time. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salaries of Kenneth Gould and James D. Lowery as Jailer-Probationary, at bi-weekly of \$1,179.29 in Pay Grade 16. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

- (8) Accept as information the appointment and salary order for the Third Judicial District Court Official Court Reporter. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Order Setting Annual Salary of the Official Court Report of the 3rd Judicial District at \$105,887.65 per annum, with Houston County's portion being \$14, 411.31 annually. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (9) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County Employees and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve comp time payout of \$509.52 to Brooke Steubing, Dispatcher at Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve a transfer of a 2009 Chevy Tahoe from the County Attorney Inventory to Information Technology; small safe transferred from County Clerk to Community Service/Environmental; small window ac as salvage from Airport Lunge; file cabinets, laserjet printer, counter, scanner, keyboards, monitors and mouse, time recorder, voice recorder, rolling file cabinet, Lenovo Thinkcentre, Ithaca receipt printers, chairs, desk, computer speakers, money box, chromebooks, computer charging cables, as surplus/salvage. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (11) Receive as information Houston County Emergency Services District (ESD) #2 Independent Audit as of September 30, 2022. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information Houston County Emergency Services District (ESD) #2 Independent Audit as of September 30, 2022. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (12) Discuss and consider approval of revised Interlocal Agreement between Houston County and Burke Center to exclude Jasper County from the Agreement and authorize the County Judge to sign. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve Modified Interlocal Cooperation Agreement and Contract between Houston County and Burke Center to exclude Jasper County from the Agreement and authorize the County Judge to sign. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and consider action on the contract with Life Check Systems which provides mobile devices that assist jailers in monitoring inmates within the Houston County Jail. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the cancellation of the contract with Life Check Systems which provides mobile devices that assist jailers in monitoring inmates within the Houston County Jail. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (14) Discuss and consider action to accept a contract between Houston County and Goodwin Lassiter Strong for project engineering services on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and authorize the County Judge to execute the Contract. **Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, said this is one more step in the CDBG contract with Precinct 1. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to accept a contract between Houston County and Goodwin Lassiter Strong for project engineering services on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and authorize the County Judge to execute the Contract. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (15) Discuss and consider action to accept an agreement between Houston County and Raymond K. Vann & Associates, LLC for Administration Services on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and authorize the County Judge to execute the contract. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion accept agreement between Houston County and Raymond K. Vann & Associates, LLC for Administration Services on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and authorize the County Judge to execute the contract. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (16) Discuss and consider action on a Memorandum of Understanding between City of Lovelady and Houston County authorizing radio repeater equipment to be installed on the water tower for use by emergency responders.
- (17) Discuss and consider action on a Memorandum of Understanding between City of Grapeland and Houston County authorizing radio repeater equipment to be installed on the water tower for use by emergency responders.
Judge Lovell announced that the Court would consider Item 16 and 17 together. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion approve Memorandum of Understanding between City of Lovelady and Houston County AND Memorandum of Understanding between City Grapeland and Houston County authorizing radio repeater equipment to be installed on the water tower for use by emergency responders. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (18) Discuss and consider action on authorizing the following items through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Fund and necessary budget amendments.
- a. Authorize the purchase of a new dishwasher from Cooks Direct for the Houston County Jail. Total \$12, 445.57. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion authorize the purchase of a new dishwasher from Cooks Direct for the Houston County Jail at a total cost of \$12, 445.57, and authorize payment through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Fund with necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
 - b. Authorize the purchase of multiple selected items, as itemized in request list, in lieu of "Trauma Kits" in approved budget for the Houston County Sheriff's Office. **This item is passed to allow the Sheriff to look at products Commissioner Stokes found at a reduced cost.**
- (19) Discuss and consider approving contract and designate funding source with Local Government Solutions, L.P. (LGS) for case management software, support, installation and training program for use by the County Clerk, District Clerk, County Judge, District Judges, County Court at Law Judge and County and District Attorneys and necessary budget amendment of one-time installation and license fee of \$47,770.00. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve contract and designate funding source with Local Government Solutions, L.P. (LGS) for case management software, support, installation and training program for use by the County Clerk, District Clerk, County Judge, District Judges, County Court at Law Judge and County and District Attorneys and necessary budget amendment of one-time installation and license fee of \$47,770.00 and approve budget amendment to pay fee from American Rescue Plan act (ARPA) Grant Fund. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (20) Discuss and consider action on updating the requisition policy deadline for submitting invoices for payment processing. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve updating the requisition policy deadline for submitting invoices for payment processing to Tuesday before**

the next Commissioners Court at Noon. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(21)Receive as information notification Corebridge Financial assumed ownership of Valic Financial Houston County employee 457 Accounts. . **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information notification that Corebridge Financial assumed ownership of Valic Financial Houston County employees 457 Accounts. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(22)Discuss and consider action on employee health insurance policy renewal, premiums and options for FY 2024.
Commissioner Stokes made a motion to stay with our current Blue Cross Blue Shield Employee Health Insurance Policy at a monthly cost of \$859.02 per employee. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

The Court announced that it would table a decision on Group Life Policy to allow the Insurance Coordinator to gather additional information and bring it back to the Court.

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion approve TAC Voluntary Life Plan as an add on option to the employee at the employee expense. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve adding MetLife Vision and TAC Vision Value Plan as options for the employee at the employee expense. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve adding MetLilfe Dental as an option for the employee at the employee expense. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(23)Discuss and consider action executing a Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA) for all participants of the upcoming closed executive session pertaining to Economic Development Negotiations.
Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve execution of a Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA) for all participants of the upcoming closed executive session pertaining to Economic Development Negotiations. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(24)Closed Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code §551.087, Executive Session for Deliberation Regarding Economic Development Negotiations. **Entered Executive Session at 10:20 a.m.**

(25)Reconvene. **Court Reconvened at 11:16 a.m.**

(26)Adjourn. **Judge Lovell made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn. The motion carried by everyone rising and leaving the meeting at 11:16 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