



HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 26, 2023

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on September 26, 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	ABSENT
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4	PRESENT

County Officials/Employees in person:

Terri Meadows	County Clerk
Todd McConnell	IT
Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk
Jo Smith	Extension Agent
Corey Hicks	Extension Agent

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Laronica Wooten-Smith	Tax Assessor-Collector
Brittani Womack	First Assistant Auditor
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff
Carl Johnson	Facilities Administrator
Meagan Frizzell	9-1-1 Addressing
Matthew VanEgmond	Sheriff's Office

Media:

Greg Ritchie (Messenger)

Visitors:

Carrie Beaver (4-H), Landry Beaver (4-H), Tobi Curliss (4-H), Jed Morris (Agenda #20), Ray Ritchie (Citizen)

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., the Judge gave 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.) **None**

(3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court minutes.

Commissioner Lovell moved to approve the Commissioners Court Minutes from September 12, 2023 and September 19, 2023. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(4) Consider approving budget amendments. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the Budget Amendments as presented. Commissioner Kitchen 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). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kitchen. The Motion carried 4 to 0.

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

- a. County Treasurer Report
- b. Compensatory Report (**not available**)
- c. Hotel Occupancy Tax Revenue and Expense Report

Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive the County Treasurer Report and the Hotel Occupancy Tax Revenue and Expense Report (given orally) as information.

Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

Judge Lovell gave everyone an update on Joan Reed, who was struck by 2 vehicles on the square. She is having surgery on her leg, today. He asked to keep praying for her.

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

- a. Accept the resignation of Full-Time Dispatch Supervisor

Commissioner Henderson made a motion to accept the resignation of Casey Olds as Dispatch Supervisor. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- b. Part-Time Equipment Support Technician

Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salary of Richard Gattis as Part-Time Equipment Support Technician for Elections Administration at an hourly wage of \$14.04 in Pay Grade 15, effective October 1, 2023. Maximum of 160 hours per year. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- c. Full-Time Dispatcher

Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the salary of Jaidan Jones as Full-Time Dispatcher at the Houston County Sheriff's Office at a bi-weekly wage of \$1200 in Pay Grade 16, effective September 26, 2023. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- d. Full-Time Deputy

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the salary of Zachary Allen as Full-Time Deputy at the Houston County Sheriff's Office at a bi-weekly wage of \$1,521.96 and bi-weekly phone allowance of \$18.46, in Pay Grade 20, effective September 26, 2023. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- e. Transfer of Administrative Deputy to Lieutenant/Communications Supervisor
This item was not considered until action was taken on Agenda Item #25. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the salary of Transfer of Administrative Deputy to Lieutenant/Communications Supervisor, Full-Time, bi-weekly salary of \$1,923.08 with bi-weekly phone allowance of \$18.46, in Pay Grade 24, effective October 1, 2023. Commissioner Lovell 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 Kitchen made a motion to approve payment of compensatory and vacation time for of Casey Proctor in the Sheriff's Office in the amount of \$841.56 and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (9) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the surplus/salvage inventory and transfers as presented. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider action to dispose of damaged items in surplus inventory as waste, LGC 263.151 (2)(a). **PASS**
- (11) Discuss and consider proclaiming October 1- 7, 2023 as National 4-H week. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to proclaim October 1 – 7, 2023 as National 4-H week. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
4-H Members, Tobi Curliss and Landry Beaver gave moving speeches on what 4-H means to them. Afterwards a photo was taken, and the young ladies were thanked for their presentations.
- (12) Discuss and consider action on a budget amendment request and receive as information the salary reduction affidavits for FY 2024:
 - a. County Judge to Administrative Assistant
 - b. District Judges to District Court Coordinator**Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the budget amendment request and receive as information the salary reduction affidavits for FY 2024: County Judge reducing his salary by \$3,200 per year to benefit the Administrative Assistant, District Judge of the 349th reducing her salary by \$4,859.53 per year and District Judge of the 3rd Judicial reducing his salary by \$3,651.18 per year to benefit the District Court Coordinator. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and consider recommendations from Human Resource Committee:
 - a. Discuss and consider approving updated pay scale for FY 2024. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve as a recommendation from Human Resource Committee the updated pay scale for FY 2024. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

- b. Discuss and consider accepting new job description for Maintenance/Custodial Supervisor and placement on pay scale. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve as a recommendation from Human Resource Committee the new job description for Maintenance/Custodial Supervisor and placement on pay scale from Pay Grade 14 to Pay Grade 17. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (14) Discuss and consider action to nominate candidates to fill the positions for the Houston County Appraisal District Board of Directors for 2024-2025. **PASS**
- (15) Discuss and consider action on items for the Houston County Child Welfare Board:
- a. The Revised Bylaws
 - b. Board Membership List
- Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Revised Bylaws and Board Membership List for the Houston County Child Welfare Board. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (16) Discuss and consider signing the “Notice of Special Election” for the November 7, 2023 General Election. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve signing of “Notice of Special Election” for the November 7, 2023 General Election. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (17) Discuss and consider action on an application request for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and Interlocal Agreement with Piney Woods Fine Arts Association for:
- a. The Grand Ol’ Halloween Show to be held on 10/07/2023 at the Crockett Civic Center.
 - b. The Mark Chestnut Concert to be held on 10/27/23 at the Crockett Civic Center.
- Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the application request for Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and Interlocal Agreement with Piney Woods Fine Arts Association for \$1000 for The Grand Ol’ Halloween Show to be held on 10/07/2023 at the Crockett Civic Center and \$1000 for The Mark Chestnut Concert to be held on 10/27/23 at the Crockett Civic Center. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (18) Discuss and consider action to accept the FY 2024 Vine Service Contract Renewal with Appriss Insights, LLC to provide SAVNS to Houston County. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept the FY 2024 Vine Service Contract Renewal with Appriss Insights, LLC to provide SAVNS to Houston County. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (19) Discuss and consider action on the FY 2024 Resolution for the Texas Indigent Defense Commission Formula Grant for improved indigent defense services and to designate the County Judge as the Authorized Official to apply for and accept the award. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the FY 2024 Resolution for the Texas Indigent Defense Commission Formula Grant for improved indigent defense services and to designate the County Judge as the Authorized Official to apply for and accept the award. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (20) Discuss and consider plans and specifications and authorize GLS to advertise for bids to purchase and transport of base material for Houston County 2021 TDA Road Improvements – TxCDBG – CDV21 – 0354. **Jed Morris was here to speak about the project to Commissioners Court. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve plans and specifications and authorize GLS to advertise for bids to purchase and transport of base material for Houston County 2021 TDA**

Road Improvements – TxCDBG – CDV21 – 0354. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- (21) Discuss and consider FY 2024 user contract for account access between Houston County Sheriff's Office and Leads Online. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve FY 2024 user contract for account access between Houston County Sheriff's Office and Leads Online. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (22) Discuss and consider approving FY 2024 maintenance contract between Houston County Sheriff's Office and Vistacom for Justice Center dispatch phone and radio recording system. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve FY 2024 maintenance contract between Houston County Sheriff's Office and Vistacom for Justice Center dispatch phone and radio recording system. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (23) Discuss and consider adopting Order setting day of week of regular Commissioners Court meetings during FY2024 Texas Local Government Code §81.005(a). **A motion was made by Commissioner Willie Kitchen, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Henderson and adopted by the Commissioners Court of Houston County, Texas according to Texas Local Government Code §81.005(a), hereby designating the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month as regular meeting dates for Fiscal Year 2024, on the 26th day of September, 2023, by a vote of 4 FOR and 0 AGAINST.**
- (24) Discuss and consider reviewing and setting Sheriff and Constable Fees effective January 1, 2024 Texas Local Government Code §118.131(d). **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to set the Sheriff and Constable Fees according to Texas Local Government Code §118.131(d) by leaving them the same as 2023 and to be effective January 1, 2024. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (25) Discuss and consider action on FY 2024 budget amendments for Senate Bill 22 funding:
- a. Rural Sheriff's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program - \$350,000
 - b. Rural Prosecutor's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program – County Attorney - \$175,000
 - c. Rural Prosecutor's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program – District Attorney - \$175,000
- Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve FY2024 budget amendments for Senate Bill 22 funding (to be backfield) providing Rural Sheriff's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program of \$350,000, Rural Prosecutor's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program – County Attorney - \$175,000, and Rural Prosecutor's Office Salary Assistance Grant Program – District Attorney - \$175,000. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (26) Discuss and consider action on a lease purchase agreement with Cadence Equipment Finance for 13 months for the purchase of a 2024 Mack GR64F Dump Truck in the amount of \$165,368.28 for Precinct 2. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve lease purchase agreement with Cadence Equipment Finance for 13 months for the purchase of a 2024 Mack GR64F Dump Truck in the amount of \$165,368.28 for Precinct 2. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (27) Discuss and consider action on renewing the CountyChoice Silver Texas Association of Counties Retiree Medical Insurance policy pending funding from 2024 Budget. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to renew the CountyChoice Silver Texas Association of Counties Retiree**

Medical Insurance policy and keep with the current plan at no increase to the County pending funding from 2024 Budget. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(28)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 10:02 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