

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on January 8, 2019 with the following members present, to wit:

Jim Lovell	County Judge
Gary Lovell	Commissioner, Precinct #1
Willie Kitchen	Commissioner, Precinct #2
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4

Also present:

Sharon Luker	Assistant to the County Commissioners
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Melissa Jeter	Houston County Auditor
Doug King	Houston County Sheriff's Office
Danette Millican	Houston County Tax Assessor Collector
Janis Omelina	Houston County Treasurer
Daphne Session	Houston County Attorney
Terri Meadows	Houston County Clerk

Media:

Alton Porter	Houston County Courier
Will Johnson	Grapeland Messenger

Visitors: Lonnie Ellis, James Gentry, Judge R.C. "Chris" von Doenhoff, Joel Stockton, Ann Walker, Gwen Scott, Darrell Jones, Robert Duhon, Jeff Jeffcoat, Bill Riemenschneider, Nelson Varghese, Karthik Sundaram, James Taylor

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order and Gary Lovell gave the opening prayer. Judge Lovell led the pledges of allegiance.

Judge Lovell recognized the guests and asked if there were any comments.

Lonnie Ellis made comments concerning his precinct.

Gwen Scott from Precinct #3 questioned how the precincts prioritize projects and where she can go to find out what money is being spent where. Judge Lovell deferred a response to more experienced commissioner Willie Kitchen. Commissioner Kitchen responded that the #1 consideration in prioritizing is budget and to see how money is spent she can request open records through the County Auditor or County Clerk.

Judge Lovell mentioned that Houston County has been declared an emergency area due to the flooding and heavy rains, but it is undetermined how long it will take to receive financial aid from FEMA.

Willie Kitchen made a motion to approve the prior Commissioners Court minutes. Gary Lovell seconded the motion and the motion carried 3 to 0.

There were no budget amendments.

Willie Kitchen made a motion to pay the bills and expenses. The motion was seconded by Gary Lovell. The motion carried 3 to 0.

A motion was made by Willie Kitchen to accept as information the Environmental Report and Community Service Report. The motion was seconded by Gary Lovell. Motion carried 3 to 0.

A motion was made by Gary Lovell to approve salary for Terry Jordan moving from part time to full time. Willie Kitchen seconded the motion. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Willie Kitchen made a motion to approve and confirm the salary of Belinda Hinson as Houston County Aging Director replacing retiree Evalena Ashley. Gary Lovell seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Gary Lovell moved to approve the salary of Lois Netardus as Chief Deputy Treasurer replacing Janis Omelina who was elected as the new County Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Willie Kitchen. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Willie Kitchen made a motion to approve payment of compensatory, vacation and holiday time for previous County employees and necessary budget amendments. Gary Lovell seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Judge Lovell said that he was going to throw Sharon Luker a curve on the power point and move to item 18 on the agenda. Mr. Duhon voiced his concerns about Willie Kitchen installing 2 speed bumps on CR 2345 in front of Vulcraft and feels there is no need for the speed bumps. Willie Kitchen invited Jeff Jeffcoat, Transportation Manager at Vulcraft, to speak to the need for the speed bumps. He gave a report on daily traffic at the intersection. Willie Kitchen voiced his major concern is to have a safe intersection.

Judge Lovell announced he would move back to item 9 on the agenda. Willie Kitchen moved to receive as information appointment of Chief Deputy County Treasurer, Chief Deputy County Clerk, and Chief Deputy District Clerk. Gary Lovell seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

A motion was made by Gary Lovell to receive as information appointment of Houston County Aging Director, Belinda Hinson. Willie Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

A motion was made by Willie Kitchen to receive as information report of the Continuing Education Hours for Tax Assessor-Collector Office given by Danette Millican. Gary Lovell seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Gary Lovell made a motion to appoint Tasha Brent to replace Mandy Patrick as the Houston County Wellness Coordinator for Texas Association of Counties statewide wellness initiative. Willie Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0. Jan Pigford mentioned she is warning everyone that we will be starting back up in April with our first incentive (*laughter*).

There was discussion on approving the renewal of contract with Buell Sanitation for household/commercial garbage service for the southern part of the county. Willie made a motion to renew the contract and Gary Lovell seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Gary Lovell made a motion to accept an anonymous donation in the amount of \$1000 for purchase of law enforcement equipment. Willie Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

A motion was made by Willie Kitchen to accept a donation from the Elks Lodge in the amount of \$2000 for the Senior Center food budget. Gary Lovell seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Ann Walker asked for the approval of Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Application and Interlocal Agreement for Piney Woods Fine Arts Association for the Music and Arts Festival to be held in March. Willie Kitchen made a motion to approve \$1000. Gary Lovell seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.

Texas Futura LLC owners were present to provide information regarding the tax abatement request for their upcoming business venture in the Crockett Industrial Park. Karthik Sundaram spoke first giving information on how the plant will operate. Nelson Varghese followed up with some additional information and then Mr. Sundaram concluded.

Willie Kitchen made the motion to adjourn which was seconded by Gary Lovell.

The motion carried 3 to 0 and the meeting was adjourned.

Jim Lovell, County Judge

Gary Lovell, Commissioner, Precinct #1

Willie Kitchen, Commissioner, Precinct #2

Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest:

Terri Meadows, County Clerk