



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 12 2019**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on November 12, 2019 with the following members present, to wit:

Gary Lovell	Commissioner, Precinct #1
Willie Kitchen	Commissioner, Precinct #2 (came in after agenda item 12)
Pat Perry	Commissioner, Precinct #3
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4

Also present:

Sharon Luker	Assistant to the County Commissioners
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Janis Omelina	Treasurer
Melissa Jeter	Auditor
Cynthia Lum	Election's Administrator
Justin Killough	Chief Deputy at S/O
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Jo Smith	Extension Office
Jenny Shafer	Extension Office
Thomas Shafer	Houston County S/O
Terri Meadows	Houston County Clerk

Media:

Will Johnson	The Messenger
Alton Porter	Houston County Courier

Visitors: Pedro Conchas (ATT), Jed Morris (GLS), Gwendolyn Scott

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:
Judge Lovell called the meeting to order, gave the opening prayer, and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and the Texas Flag.
- (2) Recognition and comments from guests:
Judge Lovell recognized the guests and asked if there were any comments. There were none.

(3) Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from October 22, 2019. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(4) Consider approving Budget Amendments. There were 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 of the bills and expenses for a. (Accounts payable), b. (Fund transfers), and c. (Ratify Salary expenses). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Perry. The motion carried 4 to 0.

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

- a. Environmental Report
- b. Community Service (not available)

Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as Information the Environmental Report. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, shared by way of information that she received notice that the Mineral Monies for this year will be \$53,000 and half of that is shared with the school districts. Last year we received \$300,000 with half going to the schools. This amount fluctuates up and down due to new leases every 4 years.

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

- (a) **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the promotion of Tresa Masters from part-time Jailer to full-time Jailer at Pay Grade #16, bi-weekly salary of \$1123.24, effective November 13, 2019. Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (b) **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the hiring of Automn Canton as full-time Dispatcher at Pay Grade #15, bi-weekly salary of \$1018.81, replacing Karandeep Easley, effective November 13, 2019. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (c) **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the hiring of Mike Cochran as full-time Deputy at Pay Grade #19, bi-weekly salary of \$1300.29, replacing Jason Henderson, effective November 14, 2019. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (d) **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the hiring of Jennifer Shafer as full-time Administrative Assistant/Office Manager – Extension Office at Pay Grade #14, bi-weekly salary of \$995.89, replacing Anis Elizabeth Brown, effective November 5, 2019. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, vacation and holiday time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Lovell moved to pay Elizabeth Brown \$137.34, Jason Henderson \$187.74, Martha Jackson \$107.34, and Lynn Gentry \$95.34 for vacation, holiday, and comp time. Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(9) Jed Morris with Goodwin*Lasiter*Strong (GLS) spoke to the Commissioners Court about the bids for the TxCDBG Road Improvement Projects for CR 1860 and CR 4050 under the Texas Department of Agriculture Grant 7218219 and advised 4 bids were received. Jed Morris recommended that Commissioners Court go with Crockett Construction for Base Bid and Additive Alt. #2 because they are the lowest bid, and they do good work, and his group has

worked with them before. He will get the contracts in order and work will begin sometime this spring. Commissioner Perry questioned how long before the Lovelady project can begin, and Jed Morris said he will hurry the paperwork along and get something going on that project as quickly as possible. **Commissioner Lovell moved to award the bid to Crockett Construction with a bid of \$200,227.10. Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(10) Discuss and consider taking action on accepting the grant award for the FY 2019 EMPG grant award in the amount of \$28,359.53 with a matching cost of \$28,359.00. Melissa told the Court that this grant covers EMC Position currently held by Roger Dickey. **Commissioner Lovell moved to accept the grant. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(11) Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, announced there is a 2010 Chevy Silverado Pickup that is a surplus item, and was previously awarded to a bidder, but the bidder never came and picked up the unpurchased pickup. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion that the County re-advertise to accept bids for the sale of this surplus pickup. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(12) Terri Meadows, County Clerk, talked to the Commissioners about the need to approve the yearly archive plan for preservation of records held in her office. This plan covers digitizing the birth records from 98 and before (99 to present is already on the computer), and the first phase of this project will cost around \$30,000. **Commissioner Lovell moved to adopt the FY 2020 Preservation Plan for the Houston County Clerk Office Records Management, Preservation and Archives. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(13) At this point Commissioner Kitchen joined the other commissioners. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the retainer agreement and expenditure with Allison, Bass & Magee, LLP for upcoming 2020 Census preparation and County Redistricting and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Melissa Jeter said this is a necessary expenditure because we need legal oversight to make sure that laws are followed and that we have minimal disruption to our citizens. Willie Kitchen added that there is a lot to be taken into consideration when redistricting. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(14) Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive a donation from Frontier Camp in the amount of \$1500 for improvement to CR 2195 in Precinct 2. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(15) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept a grant from DETCOG for training expenses for Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(16) Melissa Jeter spoke about the Lexis Nexis usage for the County. She said that the law library can no longer afford the fee for patron access, and she has confirmed with Carolyn Rains, District Clerk, that we do not have to provide patron access on line. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to deny subscription agreement with Lexis Nexis for user access for on-line law library through 9/30/2020. Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(17) This item concerning the Indigent Expenditure Report was covered by Melissa Jeter. She explained the fees and why they are so high. She explained the difference between criminal court appointment fees and CPS appointment fees. Commissioner Kitchen questioned whether

or not something could be done to cut costs and save the taxpayers money. It was suggested that the Commissioners meet with the Indigent Defense Council here in Houston County. The conversation ended with Judge Lovell agreeing to speak to the Judges about a way to cut these costs.

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information the FY 2019 Indigent Defense Expenditure Report. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(18) Cynthia Lum, Election Administrator, introduced Pedro Conchas with ATT who spoke about Election Security Assessment. This assessment is mandated by the Secretary of State to see if counties have any security assessments that need to be improved. His company will perform the assessment by looking at our paper and electronic processes and see if we have any areas that could be breached. A report will be provided to the county with findings. This year the assessment will be paid 100% through HAVA funds through the Secretary of State.

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the Election Security Assessment Interlocal contract with Texas Department of Information Resources for Election compliance with Secretary of State. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(19) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the renewal and acceptance of the Routine Airport Maintenance Program (RAMP) grant from Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division for in an amount not to exceed \$50,000 with a 50% match, Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(20) Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information the resignation of Josh Bobbitt as Emergency Services District #2 Board Member. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(21) Judge Lovell announced that this agenda item: discuss and consider taking action to approve tax abatement or proposed expansion of existing manufacturing facility in Houston County be passed at this time.

(22) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to declare a surplus Scales 30'X40' portable building located at 690 San Antonio Road (Precinct 2 County barn) and advertise to accept sealed bids to sell. He said that he will work with the County Attorney on the correct wording. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(23) Canvass the votes from the November 5, 2019 Constitutional Amendment Election.

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the numbers as presented. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(24) Commissioner Kitchen moved to adjourn the Meeting. Judge Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0. The meeting was adjourned.

Jim Lovell, County Judge

Gary Lovell, Commissioner, Precinct #1

Willie Kitchen, Commissioner, Precinct #2

Pat Perry, Commissioner, Precinct #3

Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest:

Terri Meadows, County Clerk