



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
NOVEMBER 14, 2023**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on November 14, 2023 in person and via zoom due to Covid, with the following members present, to wit:

The Court

Jim Lovell	County Judge	<b>PRESENT</b>
Gary Lovell	Commissioner, Precinct #1	<b>PRESENT</b>
Willie Kitchen	Commissioner, Precinct #2	<b>PRESENT</b>
Gene Stokes	Commissioner, Precinct #3	<b>PRESENT</b>
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4	<b>PRESENT</b>

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
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk
Mike McCreight	JP Precinct 1
Heath Murff	Emergency Management
Andy Biscamp	Bailiff
Janis Omelina	Treasurer
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Brittani Womack	First Assistant Auditor
Laronica Wooten-Smith	County Tax Assessor Collector
Meagan Frizzell	9-1-1 Addressing
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Matthew VanEgmond	S/O

Media:

Greg Ritchie (Messenger) appeared by Zoom

Visitors:

Ronnie Omelina, Ray Vann (Agenda Item 16)

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

**Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., Commissioner Stokes 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 Lovell made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes for October 24, 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 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 Report, District Clerk Report, County Clerk Report, and Tax Assessor Report as information. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

**OTHER OFFICES: Jan Pigford announced the County Thanksgiving Lunch to be held 11/17/23, and the Employee Appreciation Dinner to be held 12/1/23 at a location to be determined.**

- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees.
  - a. Dispatcher Full-Time. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve salary of Jennifer Henley as Full-time Dispatcher at bi-weekly salary of \$1,300.00 in Pay Grade 16, effective 11/14/23. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
  - b. Justice of the Peace Precinct 1 – Part-time Office Clerk. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salary of Irene Brantner as Part-time Office Clerk for Justice of the Peace Precinct 1 at hourly pay of \$13.14 per hour in Pay Grade 13, effective 10/24/23. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
  - c. Precinct 2 Part-Time Heavy Equipment Operation. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the salary of Tyson Easterling as Part-time Heavy Equipment Operator in Precinct 2 at hourly pay of \$17.39 in Pay Grade 17, effective 11/14/23. 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 Kitchen made a motion to pay Ethan Miller from the Houston County Sheriff's Office \$2,244.50 in Comp Time and an**

**additional \$27.15 as part of the SB Supplement. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (9) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information surplus inventory and approve transfers between departments as presented. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider action on salvage and surplus property currently contained in the Hangar Inventory Building, per LGC 263. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to dispose of all broken items in the salvage and surplus property currently contained in the Hangar Inventory Building, and update the list as departments remove any usable items for their offices, per LGC 263. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (11) Discuss and consider recommendation from Human Resource Committee to clarify employee eligibility for Medical Health Insurance and amend Employee Handbook. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to table this item until Kris Dyches, Insurance Coordinator, can do some additional research. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0. Judge Lovell announced that the Court would pass on this item.**
- (12) Discuss and consider adopting a Cell Phone Usage Policy for the Employee Handbook. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to adopt the Cell Phone Usage Policy, as presented, for the Employee Handbook. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and consider action to reappoint Houston County Fire Marshal. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to reappoint Michael Heath Murff for a 2-year term as Houston County Fire Marshal. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (14) Discuss and consider approving the purchase of (8) 10# ABC and (4) 20# ABC Fire Extinguishers for each of the County Precinct Barns and Fuel Storage areas and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the purchase of (8) 10# ABC and (4) 20# ABC Fire Extinguishers for each of the County Precinct Barns and Fuel Storage areas and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (15) Discuss and approve the sale of a John Deere Tractor & a Tiger Boom Mower from Precinct 1 to the City of Grapeland for \$23,000.00. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the sale of a John Deere Tractor & a Tiger Boom Mower from Precinct 1 to the City of Grapeland for \$23,000.00. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (16) Hear presentation by Raymond K. Vann & Associates related to TxCDBG Contract No. CDV21-0354. **Ray Vann was present to speak on the project. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to note that Ray Vann spoke about TxCDBG Contract No. CDV21-0354 with specific reference to Section 3. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (17) Discuss and consider approving Non-Exempt License Plates for new unmarked CID Vehicles, Unit #4269 and Unit #8721. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve Non-Exempt License Plates for new unmarked CID Vehicles, Unit #4269 and Unit #8721. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(18) Discuss and consider approving the payment to Bartee Construction for Bridge Repairs on CR 2159 in Precinct 2. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the payment of \$4,335.00 to Bartee Construction for Bridge Repairs on CR 2159 in Precinct 2. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(19) Discuss and consider approving the Interlocal Agreement for Inmate Housing between Houston County, Texas and:

- a. Nacogdoches County, Texas
- b. Trinity County, Texas
- c. Angelina County, Texas
- d. Leon County, Texas
- e. Madison County, Texas

**Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement for Inmate Housing between Houston County Texas and Nacogdoches County, Texas, Trinity County Texas, Angelina County, Texas, Leon County, Texas, and Madison County, Texas with Contracts to be increased to \$75 per-diem rate per inmate day. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

**\*\*Judge Lovell and Commissioner Lovell stepped out of the Courtroom at 9:48 a.m. and Commissioner Kitchen took over presiding over the Agenda.**

(20) Discuss and consider action on awarding a contract from the received bid to sell the Precinct 3 2023 Kubota Tractor. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to award a contract from the received bid to Houston County Equipment to sell the Precinct 3 2023 Kubota Tractor to them for \$45,000. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 3 to 0.**

**\*\*Judge Lovell returned to the meeting at 9:50 a.m.**

**\*\*Commissioner Lovell returned to the meeting at 9:52 a.m.**

(21) Ratify action on a Resolution approving execution of renewing the equipment lease purchase agreement with Cadence Equipment Finance, a Division of Cadence Bank for a 2024 Mack Granite Tractor/Truck with OX Body for \$165,368.28 with guaranteed buyback program and designating Commissioner Willie Kitchen as the authorized signer. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to ratify the action on the Resolution approving execution of renewing the equipment lease purchase agreement with Cadence Equipment Finance, a Division of Cadence Bank for a 2024 Mack Granite Tractor/Truck with OX Body for \$165,368.28 with guaranteed buyback program and designating Commissioner Willie Kitchen as the authorized signer. Commissioner Kitchen called for a Roll Call Vote:**

NAME	VOTE
Commissioner Stokes	For
Commissioner Henderson	For
Commissioner Kitchen	For
Commissioner Lovell	For

(22) Discuss and consider taking action with necessary amendments including rescinding the adoption of order previously approved by Commissioners Court along with any personnel salaries that have been changed pursuant to the said order. **PASS**

(23) Discuss and consider action on Software License for JP 1 for additional users under EdocTec and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the cost for Software License for new part-time clerk in JP 1 with EdocTec and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(24) Discuss and consider action authorizing a lease purchase agreement with Citizens National Bank for Precinct 2:

- a. For the purchase of a 2023 Caterpillar 150-15 Motorgrader in the amount of \$302,417.21 from Mustang Cat for a term of 5 years with balloon payment, then renewal for additional 5 years and necessary budget amendments.
- b. Authorize trade in of 2008 140M Caterpillar Motorgrader from Precinct 2 towards down payment in the amount of \$90,000.
- c. Authorized signers would be Willie Kitchen and Jim Lovell.
- d. Authorize a Certificate of Deposit to be purchased in an amount not to exceed \$302,417.21 to be held as Collateral as well as the Motorgrader.

**Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve authorizing a lease purchase agreement with Citizens National Bank for Precinct 2 for the purchase of a 2023 Caterpillar 150-15 Motorgrader in the amount of \$302,417.21 from Mustang Cat for a term of 5 years with balloon payment, then renewal for additional 5 years and necessary budget amendments; Authorize trade in of 2008 140M Caterpillar Motorgrader from Precinct 2 towards down payment in the amount of \$90,000; Designate authorized signers to be Willie Kitchen and Jim Lovell; Authorize a Certificate of Deposit to be purchased in an amount not to exceed \$302,417.21 to be held as Collateral as well as the Motorgrader. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(25) Discuss and consider action on a Change Order on the contract for Hauling with Womack Trucking for Precinct 4 ARPA Road Projects. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve Change Order on the contract for Hauling with Womack Trucking for Precinct 4 ARPA Road Projects. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(26) Discuss and consider action on the following for Road and Bridge Precinct 2:

- a. Rebid state base project – road materials (none received). **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to authorize to re-advertise the state base project – road materials, because no bids were received for the Road and Bridge Precinct 2. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- b. Accept hauling bid for state base as received. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to award the hauling bid for state base for Road and Bridge Precinct 2 to Womack Trucking. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- c. Rescind oil and sand project – road materials and hauling bids (none received, will rebid at a later time if possible). **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to rescind the entire project for Road and Bridge Precinct 2 until a later date. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

**\*\*Commissioner Lovell stepped out of the Courtroom at 9:59 a.m. and returned at 10:01 a.m.**

(27)Receive as information the FY 2023 Indigent Defense Expenditure Report. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive the FY 2023 Indigent Defense Expenditure Report as information. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(28)Discuss and consider approving commitment for Title Insurance covering the property located at 415 E. Goliad Ave., Crockett, Texas and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve commitment for Title Insurance covering the property located at 415 E. Goliad Ave., Crockett, Texas and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(29)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 10:58 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:

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Terri Meadows, County Clerk