



HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

FEBRUARY 27, 2024

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on February 13, 2024 **in person and via zoom**, 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:

Sarah Clark	CCL Judge
Roger Dickey	Chief Deputy Sheriff
Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff
Melissa Jeter	Auditor
Carl Johnson	Facilities Administrator
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator
Wanda Jordan	Historical Commission
Al Kreger	Historical Commission
Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Joel Martin	Bailiff
Todd McConnell	IT
Mike McCreight	JP Precinct 1
Terri Meadows	County Clerk
Mike Molnes	Sheriff's Office
Heath Murff	Emergency Management
Janis Omelina	
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Laronica Wooten-Smith	County Tax Assessor Collector

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Casey Bradshaw	Bailiff
Gail Thompson	Elections
Matthew Van Egmond	Sheriff's Office
Brittani Womack	1 st Assistant Auditor

Media:

Greg Ritchie (Messenger) – Zoom

Visitors:

Amber Stelly (Consolidated Water, Mark Whitfill (Airport), Adam Schendel, Joe Eddie Blackwell (citizen)

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Lovell 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 February 13, 2024. 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. Treasurer Report
- b. Compensatory Report

Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive the Treasurer Report and the Compensatory Report as information. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

****Commissioner Kitchen asked the Sheriff about internet providers entry on rental property. Information and discussion followed.***

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

- a. Part-time Dispatcher to Full-time Dispatcher: **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the salary for Julia Evans, as Part-time Dispatcher at hourly pay of \$15.75 in Pay Grade 16, and move to Full-time Dispatcher at bi-weekly pay of \$1,260.00 in Pay Grade 16, effective 2/27/24. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- b. County Clerk – Deputy Clerk II Six month Salary Raise: **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the six month salary raise of Sonya (Angie) Ray as Full-time Deputy Clerk II in the County Clerk Office moving from bi-weekly salary of \$1,275.41 to bi-weekly salary of \$1,364.69 in Pay Grade 16, effective 2/27/24. Commissioner Lovell 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 Henderson made a motion to**

approve compensatory and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments by approving payment to Jennifer Henley, Dispatcher, \$690.63 and Tena Smith, Tax Office, \$313.34. Commissioner Stokes 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 declare received information as surplus inventory and approve transfers between departments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider approving Ross Pennington as a Volunteer Precinct 2 Heavy Equipment Operator. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve Ross Pennington as a Volunteer Precinct 2 Heavy Equipment Operator. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (11) Discuss and consider action to grant a Sanitary Control Easement on CR 1825 in Precinct 1 with Consolidated Water Supply Corporation for protection of water and to maintain Sanitary Control. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to grant a Sanitary Control Easement on CR 1825 in Precinct 1 with Consolidated Water Supply Corporation for protection of water and to maintain Sanitary Control. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (12) Receive as information 2023 Annual Report from Houston County Historical Commission. ***Wanda Jordan spoke on behalf of the Historical Commission and paid tribute to Vaden Caldwell that passed away last March.* Commissioner Stokes made a motion to receive as information 2023 Annual Report from Houston County Historical Commission. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (13) Receive as information the Racial Profiling reports from Houston County Historical Commission. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as information the Racial Profiling reports from Houston County Historical Commission. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (14) Discuss and consider action on renewing the contract for 2024 with Texas Association of Counties Health and Employee Benefits Pool for required Affordable Care Act Reporting and Tracking Services (ARTS) and designating the County Treasurer as the primary contact. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to renew the contract for 2024 with Texas Association of Counties Health and Employee Benefits Pool for required Affordable Care Act Reporting and Tracking Services (ARTS) and designating the County Treasurer as the primary contact. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (15) Discuss and consider request by the local United States Postal Service to deliver all mail to one location per building for all County Offices. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to DENY the request by the local United States Postal Service to deliver all mail to one location per building for all County Offices. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (16) Discuss and consider action on renewing 6 copier leases with Texas Document Solutions under the Buyboard purchasing co-op for 48 months and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve renewal of 6 copier leases (Sheriff Office, Jail, Treasurer Office, JP Precinct 1, Juvenile Probation, and Auditor Office) with Texas Document Solutions under the Buyboard purchasing co-op for 48 months and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (17) Discuss and consider accepting a financial donation from Operation Riess XR Cattle for improvements to CR 2210 in Precinct 2. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept a financial donation from Operation Riess XR Cattle for improvements to CR 2210 in Precinct 2. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (18) Receive as information the rewards and incentives earned for 2023 by Houston County Employees under the Healthy County Wellness Program. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as information the rewards and incentives earned for 2023 by Houston County Employees under the Healthy County Wellness Program. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (19) Discuss and consider action on authorizing the following through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) Grant funds and necessary budget amendments for Precinct 1:
- a. Approving the purchase of a 2024 670G John Deere Motor Grader under a Sourcewell contract for \$325,000 and payment to Doggett Machinery Services.
Commissioner Lovell made a motion to authorize the purchase of a 2024 670G John Deere Motor Grader under a Sourcewell contract for \$325,000 with payment to be made to Doggett Machinery Services from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) Grant funds and necessary budget amendments for Precinct 1. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (20) Discuss and consider taking action to approve and consent to a transfer of Houston County Airport Hangar for:
- a. Parcel ID #28880 from Christopher Haeckler to Mark Whitfill
 - b. Parcel ID #28884 from Mark Whitfill to Chris Morris
- Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve and consent to a transfer of Houston County Airport Hangar for (a) Parcel ID #28880 from Christopher Haeckler to Mark Whitfill and (b) Parcel ID #28884 from Mark Whitfill to Chris Morris and for Mark Whitfill to provide a copy of current lease for Parcel ID #28884, before transfer, to Houston County Attorney. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (21) Discuss and consider approving a quote for repair of the Community Room awning from 4L Roofing and Construction for \$9,850.00 and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve a quote for repair of the Community Room awning from 4L Roofing and Construction for \$9,850.00 and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (22) Discuss and consider approving the Rental Agreement and Certificate of Liability Insurance between the Houston County District Clerk's office and Crockett Civic Center for Jury Qualification on April 30, 2024. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the Rental Agreement and Certificate of Liability Insurance between the Houston County District Clerk's office and Crockett Civic Center for Jury Qualification on April 30, 2024. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (23) Discuss and consider action on removing and replacing coil of HVAC system at the Jail/Justice Center from received quotes and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve Ferraras Heating and Air Quote of \$10,010.49, to remove and replace**

coil of HVAC system at the Jail/Justice Center from received quotes and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(24)Discuss and consider action on License Plate Status for Houston County Sheriff's Vehicle Unit 7943. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to table the License Plate Status for Houston County Sheriff's Vehicle Unit 7943 until we get an opinion from the County Attorney. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(25)Discuss and consider approving the modification to the trash services for the Houston County Justice Center from Live Oak Sanitation and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve the modification to the trash services for the Houston County Justice Center from Live Oak Sanitation increasing the dumpster from 4yd/3wk at a rate of \$326.45 to a 6yd/3wk at a rate of \$457.46. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(26)Receive as information the 2023 Hotel Occupancy Tax Report as submitted to the Texas Comptroller under Tax Code 352. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as information the 2023 Hotel Occupancy Tax Report as submitted to the Texas Comptroller under Tax Code 352. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0. ***Commissioner Kitchen requested to see the post event reports.***

(27)Receive as information the FY2023 Houston County Juvenile Probation audit as prepared by Todd, Hamaker and Johnson. ****Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, gave the report and Judge Clark spoke to the increase explaining that it is not more juveniles in trouble, but the price of detention beds has increased.*** Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information the FY2023 Houston County Juvenile Probation audit as prepared by Todd, Hamaker and Johnson. Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(28)Closed executive session as authorized by Texas Government Code 551.072 to deliberate additional security devices and procedures per GC 551.076(1). **The Court entered into executive session at 9:54 a.m.**

(29)Reconvene. **Court reconvened into open session at 10:33 a.m.**

(30)Discuss and consider action for security measures at the Houston County Courthouse. **Judge Lovell announced there was nothing to vote on.**

(31)Adjourn. **Judge Lovell made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. The motion carried by everyone rising and leaving the meeting at 10:33 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

Date Approved: February 27, 2024