



REVISED HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT MINUTES REGULAR MEETING MAY 14, 2024

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on May 14, 2024 in **person and via zoom**, with the following members present, to wit:

The Court

Jim Lovell	County Judge	ABSENT
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:

Andy Biscamp	Bailiff
Mike Cochran	Bailiff
Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator
Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Mike McCreight	JP Precinct 1
Todd McConnell	IT
Terri Meadows	County Clerk
Mike Molnes	Investigator - HCSO
Heath Murff	Emergency Management
Janis Omelina	County Treasurer
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Jerrod Vickers	HCSO

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Roger Dickey	Chief Deputy Sheriff
Meagan Frizzell	9-1-1 Addressing
Stacy Hand	Treasurer's Office
Carl Johnson	Facilities Administrator
Mary Jordan	HCSO
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Laronica Wooten-Smith	Tax Assessor-Collector
Matthew Van Egmond	HCSO
Brittani Womack	1 st Assistant Auditor

Media:

Greg Ritchie – The Messenger - Zoom

Visitors: Jason Frizzell – Crockett Fire Chief, Ronnie Omelina, Steve Faltysek, Charlene Martin – Director of Adult Protective Services of Houston/Trinity County/Region 5, Zak Benge – Sheriff-Elect, Michael Smith - TDEM

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Commissioner Kitchen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Henderson gave the Invocation and Commissioner Kitchen lead 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 April 23, 2024. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 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 Stokes. The Motion carried 4 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
- e. Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Tourism Payments

Commissioner Stokes moved to receive the Community Service/Environmental Report, District Clerk Report, County Clerk Report, Tax Assessor Report, and Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Tourism Payments as information. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

****Heath Murff, Emergency Management, spoke about the Governor including us in the Declared Disaster areas. He said we have lots of road damage.***

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

- a. Part-time Office Assistant/Clerk for Sheriff Office. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salary of Liliana Gonzalez as Part-time Office Assistant/Clerk in the Sheriff's Office at the hourly rate of \$15.11 in Pay Grade 13, effective May 6, 2024. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

- b. Full-time Dispatcher for Sheriff Office. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the salary of Deborah Copaus, as full-time Dispatcher in the Sheriff's Office at bi-weekly pay of \$1,300.00 in Pay Grade 16 effective May 14, 2024. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
 - c. Full-time Jailer for Sheriff Office. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salary of Thomas Flowers as full-time Jailer in the Sheriff's Office at bi-weekly pay of \$1,538.46 in Pay Grade 17, effective May 14, 2024. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
 - d. Part-time Driver – Home Delivered Meals. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the salary of Jerry Cook as part-time Driver for Home Delivered Meals at hourly wage of \$13.88 in Pay Grade 10, effective May 13, 2024. 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 Henderson made a motion and Commissioner Stokes seconded to approve compensatory payment to Gordon Denman, Deputy, in the amount of \$1,094.04; Jerrod Vickers, Comm Supervisor, in the amount of \$829.4; Rocky Hoch, Transport Deputy, in the amount of \$1,075.37; Timothy J. Lowery, Estate of, Jailer, in the amount of \$4,012.08; Joshua Provins, Jailer, in the amount of \$249.01; James Hallmark, Jailer, in the amount of \$3,235.73; Jennefer Cruz, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$55.20; J'Darius Pruitt, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$198.24; Mason King, Jailer, in the amount of \$1,849.39; and Dustin Brown, Jailer, in the amount of \$125.63 because they are over the accrued compensatory limit. 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 receive as information surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider compensation for total hours to be paid to an employee during their attendance of a training conference April 21 through April 24, 2024 in Denton, Texas. **No Action Taken.**
- (11) Discuss and consider adopting proclamation declaring June as Elder Abuse Prevention Awareness Month. *Charlene Martin, Director of APS for Houston and Trinity County, Region 5, gave the 2023 report. In Houston County there were 106 complaints and 76 of those were confirmed. In Trinity County there were 104 complaints and 70 of those were confirmed.* **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to adopt a proclamation declaring June as Elder Abuse Prevention Awareness Month. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (12) Ratify Declaration of Local Disaster for Houston County ordered by County Judge Jim Lovell on May 7, 2024 due to excessive rainfall causing damage to roadways and drainage infrastructure. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to ratify Declaration of Local Disaster for Houston County ordered by County Judge Jim Lovell on May 7, 2024 due to excessive rainfall causing damage to roadways and drainage infrastructure. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and consider approving orders allowing retail fireworks permit holders to sell fireworks to the public in celebration of the following:

- a. Memorial Day beginning May 22, 2024 and ending at midnight May 27, 2024.
- b. July 4th beginning June 24, 2024 and ending midnight July 4th, 2024.

Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve orders allowing retail fireworks permit holders to sell fireworks to the public in celebration of (a)Memorial Day beginning May 22, 2024 and ending at midnight May 27, 2024 and (b)July 4th beginning June 24, 2024 and ending midnight July 4, 2024. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- (14)Discuss and consider action on application for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and agreement with Piney Woods Fine Arts for the Summer Series in the Park. June 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion approve \$3,000 on application for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and agreement with Piney Woods Fine Arts for the Summer Series in the Park to be held June 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th, 2024 and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (15)Discuss and consider recommendation from Human Resource Committee for changes to be made to Sick Leave Pool Policy. **No action taken.**
- (16)Consider approval of request to State Comptroller for refund of unclaimed capital credits received from electric cooperatives in accordance with §381.004 of the Texas Local Government Code. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve request to State Comptroller for refund of unclaimed capital credits received from electric cooperatives in accordance with §381.004 of the Texas Local Government Code. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (17)Discuss and consider action to accept 100 loads of dirt from Mack Currie valued at \$10 a load that will be delivered to Precinct 3 by Mr. Currie. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to accept 100 loads of dirt from Mack Currie valued at \$10 a load that will be delivered to Precinct 3 by Mr. Currie. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (18)Discuss and consider taking action to approve a request from Texas Department of Criminal Justice for Prison Road 1, a private road, to be changed to Jovian Motley Boulevard in honor of Officer Motley. *Officer Motley was killed in the line of duty.* **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve a request from Texas Department of Criminal Justice for Prison Road 1, a private road, to be changed to Jovian Motley Boulevard in honor of Officer Motley. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (19)Discuss and consider a motion to rescind previous motion from March 26, 2024 to advertise to accept bids for improvements within Precinct 2 to CR 3120 using ARPA funding. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to rescind previous motion from March 26, 2024 to advertise to accept bids for improvements within Precinct 2 to CR 3120 using ARPA funding. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (20)Discuss and consider action on advertising to accept bids for improvements within Precinct 2 to CR 2205 using ARPA funding:
- a. Type A Oil Sand Road Materials
 - b. Delivery of Road Materials

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to advertise to accept bids for “A” only, Type A Oil Sand Road Materials, for improvements within Precinct 2 to CR 2205 using ARPA funding. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(21) Discuss and consider accepting a financial donation from Michael Stalnacker, Spectrum, Entrust Solutions Group for improvements to County Road 2330. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept a financial donation of \$2,500 from Michael Stalnacker, Spectrum, Entrust Solutions Group for improvements to County Road 2330 in Precinct 2. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(22) Discuss and consider action to approve installation of pole-mounted power supply cabinets as part of the deployment of fiber based broadband service offered by Spectrum brand to be located in Precinct 1 Houston County:

- a. CR 1880 West of CR 1700
- b. CR 1825 North of FM 2663
- c. CR 1585 East of CR 1590

Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve installation of pole-mounted power supply cabinets as part of the deployment of fiber based broadband service offered by Spectrum brand to be located in Precinct 1 Houston County on CR 1880 West of CR 1700, CR 1825 North of FM 2663, and CR 1585 East of CR 1590. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(23) Discuss and consider action on establishing the Rural Sheriff’s Department Salary Assistance Grant policy and certification form. ***Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, said this is on the agenda because SB22 Rules/Changes are ongoing. How to disperse is continually being changed.*** **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to establish the Rural Sheriff’s Department Salary Assistance Grant policy and certification form as presented. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(24) Receive as information the submitted Annual Report of expenditures for the period 4/1/23 through 3/31/24 under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to receive as information the submitted Annual Report of expenditures for the period 4/1/23 through 3/31/24 under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(25) Discuss and consider action on the Distributed Energy Resource Agreement with Voltus to change the program operator from ERCOT to ONCOR. ***This pertains to energy upgrades with Johnson Controls.*** **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to take action on the Distributed Energy Resource Agreement with Voltus to change the program operator from ERCOT to ONCOR. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(26) Discuss and consider action on renewing the Interlocal Agreement with Deep East Texas Self Insurance Fund (DETSIF) for workers compensation insurance beginning 7/1/2024. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to renew the Interlocal Agreement with Deep East Texas Self Insurance Fund (DETSIF) for workers compensation insurance beginning 7/1/2024. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(27) Discuss and consider applying for the unclaimed capital credits received from electric cooperative as authorized under LGC 381.004. **Duplicate of Item #16.**

(28)Discuss and consider accepting the renewal for county property insurance from Texas Association of Counties for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to accept the renewal for county property insurance from Texas Association of Counties for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(29)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 9:51 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:

Date Approved: June 11, 2024

Terri Meadows, County Clerk