



HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

APRIL 8, 2025

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on April 8, 2025 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
Terri Meadows	County Clerk	PRESENT

County Officials/Employees in person:

James Angerstein	Tax Assessor-Collector	Present
Zak Bengé	Sheriff	Present
Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator	Present
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor	Present
Carl Johnson	Facilities Administrator	Zoom
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator	Present
Ryan Martin	Chief Deputy Sheriff	Present
Kristina Massey	County Attorney	Present
Todd McConnell	IT	Present
Mike McCreight	JP 1	Present
Heath Murff	Emergency Management	Present
Jan Pigford	Admin Assistant to the County Judge	Present
Darrellyn Smith	Assistant to the County Commissioners	Present
Red Smith	Constable Precinct 2	Present
Brittani Womack	First Assistant Auditor	Zoom
Addie Hicks	County Clerk Deputy	Zoom

Media:

Visitors: Mark Whitfill (Airport Lease), Johnny Ivy (Deputy Chief Appraiser @ CAD), Clayton and Ruenette Starr (Sons of the Republic of Texas), Kathi Calvert (Houston County Electric Coop), James Guest (Linebarger.....), Kevin Dutton (Linebarger), Patrick McArthur (Perdue|Brandon), Patrick Woods (Perdue|Brandon), Gene Kellum (Houston County Search and Rescue), Kathy Harris (Linebarger...), Carrie Minter (Chief Appraiser @ CAD), Tiger Worsham (Perdue|Brandon), John Angerstein (City of Crockett Manager)

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:
Commissioner Kitchen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Henderson voiced the opening prayer followed by Commissioner Kitchen 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.) **Kathi Culvert was here representing the Houston County Electric Cooperative to thank the Commissioners, especially Commissioner Stokes, the Sheriff, and other citizens of Houston County for going to Austin to take a stand against proposed legislation that threatens to spike costs for rural Texans. They spoke for private property rights, protecting the public from destructive and dangerous actions of fiber and telecom attackers to our infrastructure.**
- (3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court minutes. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes for March 25, 2025. 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. Sheriff's Report
 - f. Hotel Occupancy Tax Quarterly Report**Commissioner Henderson made a motion to receive as information the Community Service/Environmental Report, District Clerk Report, County Clerk Report, Tax Assessor Report, and Sheriff's Report as presented. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees.
 - a. County Clerk's Office – Deputy Clerk to Chief Deputy Clerk **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve the bi-weekly salary of Stephanie Yorgensen promoting to Full-time Chief Deputy Clerk at the County Clerk Office at \$1,548.76 (includes base rate \$1,530.30, and of Allowance \$18.46) in Pay Grade 18, Effective April 19, 2025. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
 - b. Senior Center – Custodian 6 month pay raise **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the 6 month raise for Senior Center Custodian, Darnell Robbins, moving them**

from hourly pay of \$13.88 to \$14.84 in Pay Grade 12, Effective April 1, 2025. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- c. Senior Center – Cook 6 month pay raise Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve 6 month raise for Senior Center Cook, Carol Ham, moving her from hourly pay of \$13.88 to \$14.84 in Pay Grade 12, Effective April 1, 2025. Commissioner Henderson 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 Lovell made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to approve payment of compensatory, and vacation time and necessary budget amendments to Jaidan Jones, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$55.05; J'darius Pruitt, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$257.73; Dwayne Hughes, Precinct 3 Road Hand, in the amount of \$222.11; Shelby Kazmierczak, Chief Deputy Clerk, in the amount of \$942.39; Adrian Buckner, Jailer, in the amount of \$3,761.26 . Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (9) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. Commissioner Stokes made a motion to declare received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments as presented. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (10)Receive as information the Continuing Education Hours for James Angerstein, County Tax Assessor-Collector. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as information the Continuing Education Hours for James Angerstein, County Tax Assessor-Collector. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (11)Discuss and consider proclaiming the week of April 27 to May 4, 2025 as “Soil & Water Stewardship Week”. Commissioner Stokes made a motion to adopt a proclamation designating the week of April 27 to May 4, 2025 as “Soil & Water Stewardship Week”. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (12)Discuss and consider approval budget allocations to Anderson-Houston Soil & Water Conservation District #421. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve budget allocations to Anderson-Houston Soil & Water Conservation District #421. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (13)Discuss and consider proclaiming April 21, 2025 as “San Jacinto Day” and special recognition of the Sons of the Republic of Texas. *Clayton Starr was present representing the Sons of the Republic of Texas to share some little known Texas History about John Parker. After an interesting presentation* Commissioner Lovell made a motion to proclaim April 21, 2025 as “San Jacinto Day” and give special recognition of the Sons of the Republic of Texas. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (14)Discuss and consider an application and Interlocal Agreement to the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund for Montoya Enterprises/Momentum hosting the 2025 Davy Crockett Classic Bicycle Race to be held May 3 & 4, 2025. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve application and Interlocal Agreement in the amount of \$3,000 from the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund for Montoya Enterprises/Momentum hosting the 2025 Davy Crockett Classic Bicycle Race to be held May 3 & 4, 2025. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- (15) Discuss and consider action on renewing the aviation support and maintenance services with DBT Transportation Services for the Airport AWOS system. **It was announced that the contract was not received and that the Court should pass on this item.**
- (16) Receive as information the FY 2023 Annual Disclosure Report as required by the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board pursuant to SEC Rule 15c2-12. ***Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, said that this is the Annual Report that must be filed. She went over the numbers on the Tables with the Court.*** Commissioner Henderson made a motion to receive as information the FY 2023 Annual Disclosure Report as required by the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board pursuant to SEC Rule 15c2-12. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (17) Discuss and consider action on a Resolution of the Governing Body to apply to the Office of the Attorney General for the Victim Coordinator and Liaison Grant (VCLG) for FY 2026. *****Sheila Johnson, Grants Administrator spoke about this agenda item.*** Commissioner Stokes made a motion to adopt a Resolution of the Governing Body to apply to the Office of the Attorney General for the Victim Coordinator and Liaison Grant (VCLG) for FY 2026. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (18) Discuss and consider action to accept a contract for the purchase of 33 V700 Body Worn Cameras, to be purchased with grant award funds which includes the 1st year of cloud storage. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve a contract for the purchase of 33 V700 Body Worn Cameras, to be purchased with grant award funds which includes the 1st year of cloud storage and necessary budget amendments. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (19) Discuss and consider action to accept a contract to begin in 2026 to purchase cloud storage for years 2, 3, 4 & 5 on the 33 V700 Body Worn Cameras purchased with grant funds. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve a budget amendment on the contract that begins in 2026 to purchase cloud storage for years 2, 3, 4 & 5 on the 33 V700 Body Worn Cameras that were purchased with grant funds. Commissioner Henderson. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (20) Discuss and consider action on approving additional equipment for Security System at the Justice of the Peace Offices, and necessary budget amendment from JP Security Fund. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve additional equipment for Security System at the Justice of the Peace Offices, and necessary budget amendment from JP Security Fund. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (21) Discuss and receive as information the FY 2024 Financial & Operating Data Disclosure Report for SEC filing. **No action required this was approved in a previous agenda item**
- (22) Discuss and consider renewal of Airport Hangar Lease Agreement., terms and amount of liability insurance coverage for Craig & Alice Jones. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to renew Airport Hangar Lease Agreement, with the change of amount of liability insurance coverage from 5 million to 1 million for Craig & Alice Jones. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

- (23)Hear a presentation from Gene Kellum on the quarterly report for Houston County Search and Rescues. ***Gene Kellum gave an overview of the past quarter and noted they have 30 volunteers. The Court thanked Gene for all they do in Houston County.***
- (24)Discuss and consider approving Interlocal Agreement between Houston County, Crockett ISD, the HC hospital district and the City of Crockett authorizing the City of Crockett to clean up and possible demolition struck off properties and properties that have failed to sell through foreclosure sales to promote successful sales at no cost to the county. ***John Angerstein, City Administrator, was present to discuss the project. Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve Interlocal Agreement between Houston County, Crockett ISD, the HC hospital district and the City of Crockett authorizing the City of Crockett to clean up and possible demolition of struck off properties and properties that have failed to sell through foreclosure sales to promote successful sales at no cost to the county. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.***
- (25)Discuss and consider action on declaring as salvage a non-working 2008 Kubota Utility Vehicle RTV500 from the Sheriff's Office and consider donating to Crockett Merchants Little League. ***Commissioner Stokes made a motion to declare as salvage a non-working 2008 Kubota Utility vehicle RTV500 from the Sheriff's Office and donate to Crockett Merchants Little League. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.***
- (26)Discuss and consider approving an agreement with the law firm of Linebarger Grogan Blair & Sampson, LLP to act as special counsel to perform all legal services necessary to collect delinquent taxes as provided for in the Texas Property Tax Code and to authorize the County Judge to execute such agreement.
- a. A Resolution approving 33.07, 33.8, 33.11 additional penalties secured by a tax lien to defray the cost of collections.
 - b. Discussion/Action to approve resolution approving contracts with Linebarger Grogan Blair & Sampson, LLP.
- **James Angerstein, Tax Assessor-Collector talked about why he wants to consolidate into one law firm instead of the two we currently use. He wants to go with Linebarger Grogan Blair & Sampson, LLP. He stated this would streamline things and save the county money. This would eliminate the duplication of efforts of both firms. He also said that other counties only use one tax firm.**
- **John Guest, Lead Attorney for Linebarger Grogan Blair & Sampson, LLP and he reiterated some of the things that James Angerstein already said. He reminded the Court this firm has been collecting for Houston County for many years. He shared the numbers and statistics. He introduced Kevin Dutton, that is another attorney with the firm.**
- **Patrick McArthur and Patrick Woods with Perdue|Brandon spoke and encouraged the county to retain their services. They believe that utilizing two law firms is an advantage. He stated that they've had a great working relationship with Houston County for many years.**
- **At 10:21 a.m. Commissioner Kitchen called for a verbal vote to go into closed executive session as authorized under Government Code, Chap. 551 to discuss contracts. Commissioner Kitchen voted Aye, Commissioner Lovell voted Aye, Commissioner Stokes voted Aye, and Commissioner Henderson voted Aye, to enter into an executive session.**

The Executive Session began and 10:22 a.m. and ended at 10:52 a.m.

When the Court reconvened in open session Commissioner Kitchen asked the pleasure of the Court. After a long silence Commissioner Kitchen asked again.....Commissioner Stokes made a motion that we DO NOT enter into an agreement for tax collection with Linebarger Groggan Blair & Sampson, LLP. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion to NOT enter into a contract passed 3 to 1 with Commissioner Kitchen voting in opposition to the motion.

(27)Discuss and consider action on additional cabling installed for network access points at the Senior Center, Adult Probation and Justice Center and necessary budget amendments.
Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve a budget amendment from Non-Departmental, Network line item to install additional cabling for network access points at the Senior Center, Adult Probation and Justice Center. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(28)Adjourn. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn. The motion carried by everyone rising and leaving the meeting at 10:57 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: April 22, 2025