



HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

NOVEMBER 12, 2024

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on November 12, 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
Terri Meadows	County Clerk	PRESENT

County Officials/Employees in person:

Andy Biscamp	Bailiff
Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator
Laura Goolsby	District Clerk
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Wanda Jordan	Historical Commission
Al Kreger	Historical Commission
Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners
Kristina Massey	Assistant District Attorney
Todd McConnell	IT
Heath Murff	Emergency Management
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Darrellyn Smith	Commissioners Assistant
Brittani Womack	1 st Assistant Auditor

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Meagan Frizzell	9-1-1 Addressing
Matthew Van Egmond	S/O

Media:

Visitors: James Angerstein, Cameron Labat (Samsung), Cameron Morgan (K C Andrews), Christian Jacobs (K C Andrews), Rhonda Anderson (Charter Communications), Scott Rone (TAK Comm), Ron Forehand (Crockett Area Chamber Director), Ray Vann (RKV & Associates), Kane Rawson (Spectrum Cable), Lynn Markham (Champion Health Plan), Colton Bentz (Champion Health Plan – Zoom)

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Kitchen voiced 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 – the guests that wish to speak are connected to an agenda item and will speak at that time**

- (3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court minutes. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes for October 22, 2024 and October 29, 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 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
- e. Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Tourism Payments
- f. Auditor's Report

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information the Community Service/Environmental Report, District Clerk Report, County Clerk Report, Tax Assessor Report, Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Tourism Payments, and Auditor's Report. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0. (note: Clerk did not have any supporting documents for Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Tourism Payments, or Auditor's Report).

Judge Lovell reminded everyone about the Thanksgiving Pot Luck on 11/22/24 at the Senior Center, and the Christmas Event on 12/13/24. Heath Murff, Emergency Management Coordinator, reminded everyone about the Search and Rescue demonstration of new equipment, today at 11:00 am at The Armory.

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

- a. Transfer District Attorney Office Manager to District Clerk Deputy – **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the salary of Arnita Cavender as Full-time Deputy Clerk in the District Clerks Office at bi-weekly salary of \$1,265.71 in Pay Grade 16 effective December 30, 2024. Commissioner Kitchen 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 and Commissioner Stokes seconded to approve compensatory payment to Ryan Hutcherson, Deputy, in the amount of \$328,65; Johnny Romo, Jailer, in the amount of \$2908.53; Matthew VanEgmond, Deputy, in the amount of \$237.09; J'darius Pruitt, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$419.52; Michael Combest, deputy, in the amount of \$331.52; Charles Martin, Dispatcher, in the amount of \$4704.22, and Jerrod Vickers, Community Supervisor, in the amount of \$739.31. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (9) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to declare received information as surplus inventory and approve transfers between departments. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (10) Discuss and consider action on approving expenses and necessary budget amendments under the District Clerk Records Management Fund. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve expenses and necessary budget amendments in the amount of \$4,527.90 for salary supplement to the newly created Clerk position in the District Clerk Office under the District Clerk Records Management Fund at the bi-weekly rate of \$174.15. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (11) Discuss and consider approving an addendum to the LGS contract. **The County Attorney requested that no action be taken at this time until she can confirm if the increase for the additional employee is month to month.**
- (12) Discuss and receive as information the FY 2024 Indigent Defense Report. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information the FY 2024 Indigent Defense Report. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (13) Discuss and receive as information the Chapter 59 Forfeiture/Seizure audit reports for FY 2024. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to receive as information the Chapter 59 Forfeiture/Seizure audit reports for FY 2024. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (14) Discuss and consider taking action to change date of the 2nd Commissioners Court meeting of December. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to change the 2nd Commissioners Court meeting of December from December 24, 2024 to December 23, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (15) Discuss and consider approving the Houston County Truck Driving Academy Reimbursement agreement. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to approve the Houston County Truck Driving Academy Reimbursement agreement with changes discussed to take out the language - foreman/supervisor. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(16) Discuss and take action to approve a resolution to submit a 2025-2026 TxCDBG application to the Texas Department of Agriculture. ****Ray Van spoke to the Court about this Agenda Item.*** **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve a resolution to submit a 2025-2026 TxCDBG application to the Texas Department of Agriculture. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(17) Discuss and take action to approve a resolution authorizing the County Judge to respond to the Texas General Land Office's DRRP call for projects. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve a resolution authorizing the County Judge to respond to the Texas General Land Office's DRRP call for projects. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(18) Discuss and consider approving the recommendations from the Executive Committee of the Historical Commission for the 2025-2026 term beginning January 1, 2025. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the recommendations from the Executive Committee of the Historical Commission for the 2025-2026 term beginning January 1, 2025 as presented. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(19) Discuss and consider accepting as allotment of RAP materials from Texas Department of Transportation. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to accept as allotment of RAP materials from Texas Department of Transportation and to divide equally (25% per each precinct) as has been done. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(20) Discuss and approve the addition of Private Road 8180 to the official Houston County Map. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the addition of Private Road 8180 to the official Houston County Map. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

****The Court took a recess from 10:05 a.m. to 10:14 a.m.**

(21) Discuss and consider action on applications for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and agreement for:

- a. Pineywoods Fine Arts Association for the Bacon Brothers concert to be held on November 22, 2024 at the Crockett Civic Center
- b. Pineywoods Fine Arts Association for The Singin' Axes Jazz Band Christmas concert to be held on December 7, 2024 at the Crockett Civic Center
- c. Crockett Area Chamber for the Christmas in Crockett Celebration to be held on November 23, 2024 located in downtown Crockett

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and Agreement for \$1000 for (a) Pineywoods Fine Arts Association for The Bacon Brothers concert to be held on November 22, 2024 at the Crockett Civic Center, (b) \$1000 for Pineywoods Fine Arts Association for The Singin' Axes Jazz Band Christmas concert to be held on December 7, 2024 at the Crockett Civic Center, and (c) \$2000 for Crockett Area Chamber for the Christmas in Crockett Celebration to be held on November 23, 2024 located in downtown Crockett. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

- (22) Review the Champion Health Plan (supplemental employee insurance) comparative analysis and the savings to the County and consider approval of the implementation of the plan and execution of contract documents and set a proposed starting date. *****Lynn Markham (in person) and Colton Bentz (zoom) addressed the Court about the supplemental employee insurance plan. After the presentation and discussion Commissioner Lovell made a motion to table any action on the Champion Health Plan pending the County Attorney reviewing the entire contract. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.***
- (23) Discuss and consider updating Houston County Travel Policy. ***Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, explained the changes to the Travel Policy. Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve the updates to the Houston County Travel Policy as presented. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.***
- (24) Discuss and consider action on authorizing the expenditures for continuing education expenses for newly elected officials prior to officer's term of office as authorized under LGC 152.907. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to authorize the expenditures for continuing education expenses for newly elected officials prior to officer's term of office as authorized under LGC 152.907. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (25) Discuss and consider approving Spectrum to install Fiber Optics along the following County Roads as part of their deployment of fiber-based broadband and other services to residents of Houston County.
- a. CR 3300 W of TX 304 Loop - 836' install of Fiber Optics via directional bore
 - b. CR 3315 E of FM 2110 – 1044' install of Fiber Optics via directional bore
 - c. CR 4015 E of SH 19 – 5734' install of Fiber Optics via directional bore
- Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve Spectrum to install Fiber Optics along (a) CR 3300 W of TX 304 Loop - 836' install of Fiber Optics via directional bore, (b) CR 3315 E of FM 2110 – 1044' install of Fiber Optics via directional bore, and (c) CR 4015 E of SH 19 – 5734' install of Fiber Optics via directional bore as part of their deployment of fiber-based broadband and other services to residents of Houston County. Commissioner Kitchen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (26) Hear presentation from representatives from Spectrum Broadband. **Rhonda Anderson with Charter Communications Rural Digital Opportunity Fund gave a presentation to Commissioners Court from Spectrum Broadband project.**
- (27) Hear presentation from Cameron Morgan with K E Andrews and representatives from Samsung on solar +battery energy storage system project. **Cameron Morgan and Cameron Labat gave project overview of Dionysus Solar Project.**
- (28) Discuss and consider taking action to begin application process with Samsung. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to allow Samsung to begin the application process. Commissioner Lovell seconded. The vote was 3 For and 2 Against and the motion passed.**

(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 11:03 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: November 26, 2024