



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 24, 2023**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on January 24, 2023 in person and via zoom due to Covid, with the following members present, to wit:

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:

Sharon Luker	Administrative Assistant to Commissioners
Missy d'Angelo	3 <sup>rd</sup> Assistant Auditor
Gwen Womack	Chief Deputy County Clerk
Kris Dyches	Insurance Coordinator
Belinda Hinson	2 <sup>nd</sup> Assistant Auditor
Brittani Womack	1 <sup>st</sup> Assistant Auditor
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
NaTrenia Hicks	Elections
Joshua Caldwell	Veteran's Service Officer
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Carl Johnson	Facilities Administrator
Janis Omelina	County Treasurer
Joel Martin	Bailiff
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff
Todd McConnell	IT
Sheila Johnson	Grants Administrator
Ronnie Jordan	JP Precinct 2

County Officials/Employees by Zoom:

Heath Murff	Emergency Management
Laronica Wooten-Smith	Tax Assessor Collector
Daphne Session	County Attorney

Media:

Greg Ritchie - Messenger

Visitors: Denise Kessler (Latexo Baptist Church), Betty Harville (Latexo Baptist Church), Jenni Shartle (Houston County Child Welfare Board), Kris Klein (Guadalupe County Auditor), Rita Murphy

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:  
**Judge Lovell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., Commissioner Kitchen led 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 Stokes moved to approve the Commissioners Court Minutes from January 10, 2023. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (4) Consider approving budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the Budget Amendments as presented. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (5) Consider payment of bills and expenses:
  - a. Accounts payable
  - b. Fund transfers
  - c. Ratify Salary expenses**Commissioner Stokes 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 Kitchen. The Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (6) Receive information, announcements and reports from County Departments:
  - a. County Treasurers Report **(not available)**
  - b. Compensatory Report **Commissioner Henderson moved to receive the Compensatory Report as presented. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**  
Joel Martin, Courthouse Bailiff, gave a report that covered from August 15, 2022 – December 15, 2022, and the number of people that entered the courthouse during that time period is 4,834. Cindy Lum announced that they need some new polling places and asked the Commissioners Court for suggestions and recommendations.
- (7) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees:
  - a. Full time Custodian  
**Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve salary of Tamara Rath as Custodian at bi-weekly pay of \$1,018.72 in pay grade 13. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (8) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **None**

- (9) Discuss and consider declaring received information as surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information the following as salvage/surplus inventory and approving transfers between departments.**

**Department: County Attorney      Bar code # 1130      Brother HL-5470DW Laser Printer  
SN U6308K3N535463      Salvage**

**Department: Sheriff's Office      Bar code # 0650      Icom, Model F9511HT Radio  
SN 0101310      Surplus**

**Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (10) Discuss and consider donating VHF Radio declared as surplus from Sheriff's Office to Houston County Search & Rescue per LGC §263.152. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to donate VHF Radio declared as surplus from Sheriff's Office to Houston County Search and Rescue. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0. Commissioner Kitchen amended his motion to donate VHF Radio Bar code # 0650, Icom, Model F9511HT Radio, SN 0101310 that was declared as Surplus in Agenda Item 9 from Sheriff's Office to Houston County Search & Rescue per LGC §263.152. Commissioner Lovell seconded the amended motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (11) Discuss and consider approving resignation of Veterans Service Officer, Milton Ladnier effective date of December 30, 2022. **Commissioner Kitchen moved to approve resignation of Veterans Service Officer, Milton Ladnier effective date of December 30, 2022. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (12) Discuss and consider action to appoint Houston County Veterans Service Officer. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to appoint Joshua Caldwell to the position of Veterans County Service Officer. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (13) Discuss and consider action on an application request for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund and Agreement with Latexo Baptist Church for a Valentine Banquet to be held on February 11, 2023 at the Latexo Baptist Church. **PASS**

- (14) Discuss and consider approving agreement with NCR for on line & over the counter credit card transactions for payment of taxes and registration/titling transactions for the Houston County Tax Office at no cost to county, all fees will be passed to the customer. (resubmitted with change). **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve agreement with NCR for on line & over the counter credit card transactions for payment of taxes and registration/titling transactions for the Houston County Tax Office at no cost to county, all fees will be passed to the customer. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

- (15) Discuss and consider contract agreement cancellation notifications for Forte payment Systems Inc., Merchant Multiservices, LLC DBA Gov-Pay, Sturgis Webservices, official payments (ACT) & PayPal. **\*\*At this point Judge Lovell stepped out of the meeting and Commissioner Kitchen took over. Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve contract agreement cancellation notifications for Forte payment Systems Inc., Merchant Multiservices, LLC DBA Gov-Pay, Sturgis Webservices, official payments (ACT) & PayPal. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Commissioner Stokes amended the motion to state this item applies only to the Houston County Tax Office. Commissioner Lovell seconded the amendment. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

- (16) Discuss and consider appointing a new member to the Human Resource Committee.  
**Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to appoint Laura Goolsby, District Clerk to the Human Resource Committee. She is replacing Carolyn Rains. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (17) Discuss and consider action on authorizing the following items through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Fund and necessary budget amendments: **\*\*Judge Lovell returned to the meeting, but Commissioner Kitchen continued to preside over this agenda item**
- a. Add Budget item and approve purchase of (12) VHF 5W 260 Channel radios and programming for Jail/Dispatch from Nalcom Wireless Communications under DIR State purchasing contract #DIR-TSO-3979 – TOTAL \$4,748.40. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to add Budget item and approve purchase through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of (12) VHF 5W 260 Channel radios and programming for Jail/Dispatch from Nalcom Wireless Communications under DIR State purchasing contract #DIR-TSO-3979 – TOTAL \$4,748.40. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
  - b. Approve purchase and authorize payment of (1) 2012 Mack CHU 613 truck for Road & Bridge Precinct 4 from three written quotes – TOTAL \$45,000.00. **Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve purchase and authorize payment through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of (1) 2012 Mack CHU 613 truck for Road & Bridge Precinct 4 from three written quotes – TOTAL \$45,000.00. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (18) **\*\*Judge Lovell took over presiding over the meeting** Authorize the County Grant Administrator to apply for a grant through the Texas General Land Office Community Development and Revitalization CDBG-MIT Funds for the County's Local Share of the Houston County Hazard Mitigation action Plan Update. **Commissioner Henderson made a motion to authorize the County Grant Administrator to apply for a grant through the Texas General Land Office Community Development and Revitalization CDBG-MIT Funds for the County's Local Share of the Houston County Hazard Mitigation action Plan Update. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (19) Discuss and consider action on beginning renovations on former Jail (110 E. Houston Ave.) to prepare for relocation of county offices and necessary budget amendments.  
**Commissioner Stokes made a motion to begin renovations on former Jail (110 E. Houston Ave.) to prepare for relocation of county offices (Elections Administrator, Environmental/Community Service Officer, Secure Records Building for all County Records, Designate building name as "Annex II"). Necessary budget amendments will be addressed at a later date. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
- (20) Discuss and consider action on authorizing the renovation of the office space located in the former JP building (112 E. Houston Ave), authorizing the move of JP 2 and Constable Precinct 2 from the Courthouse to the JP building and necessary budget amendments. **Working on getting 3 bids/quotes for the work. Commissioner Stokes made a motion to designate as the Justice of the Peace Precinct 2 offices and authorize move from the courthouse to 112 E. Houston Ave., update flooring, paint, lighting, ceiling tiles, cabling and phones, use inmate labor for cleaning and demo, and authorize budget amendment of \$35,000 from contingency to pay for expenses. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(21) Discuss and consider action on budget amendment request from Contingency of \$15,709 for boiler pump repairs and tank insulation in County Jail. **Commissioner Lovell made a motion to approve budget amendment request from Contingency of \$15,709 for boiler pump repairs and tank insulation in County Jail. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

(22) Hear from Kris Klein, Guadalupe County Auditor, Immediate Past President of the Texas Association of County Auditors, in the presentation of the Jerry Ware Award. **Kris Klein was present to present our Houston County Auditor, Melissa Jeter, with the Jerry Ware Award. Congratulations to Melissa Jeter for her hard work and dedication.**

(23) Adjourn. **Judge Lovell made a motion for the Commissioners Court Meeting to Adjourn at 10:15 a.m. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

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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