



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 13, 2021**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on April 13, 2021, **in person and via zoom due to Covid**, with the following members present, to wit:

Jim Lovell	County Judge
Gary Lovell	**ABSENT Commissioner, Precinct #1
Willie Kitchen	Commissioner, Precinct #2
Gene Stokes	Commissioner, Precinct #3
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4

Also present:

Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Sharon Luker	Assistant to the Commissioners
Janis Omelina	Treasurer
Randy Hargrove	Sheriff
Roger Dickey	Chief Deputy
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Taylor Farmer	Investigator for County Attorney
Heath Murff	Emergency Management Coordinator
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Carolyn Rains	District Clerk
Cynthia Lum	Elections Administrator
Jennifer Kulms	9-1-1 Addressing
Brittani Womack	First Assistant Auditor
Laronica Smith	Tax Assessor Collector
Nathan Turner	IT
Terri Meadows	County Clerk

Media:

Alton Porter	Houston County Courier
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Visitors:

Robert (Bob) Grier, James Gentry (Crockett Economic Development), Ianthia Fisher (Mayor), Jim Kelly (Lincoln Lumber), Gary Keeling (Lincoln Lumber)

- (1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:
Judge Lovell called the meeting to order. Commissioner Stokes led the opening prayer.
Following the prayer Judge Lovell led the Pledge to the American flag and to the Texas Flag.
- (2) Recognition and comments from guests: **NONE**
- (3) **PUBLIC HEARING (Judge Lovell opened at 10:02 a.m.)**
Hearing on creating and designating a Reinvestment Zone currently in existence as Texas Enterprise Zone, 215 W. Austin St., Crockett, Texas as previously designated by the City of Crockett as an enterprise zone. Pursuant to the Houston County Tax Abatement Guidelines and Criteria authorized under Chapter 312, Tax Code, the reinvestment zone will be known as Texas Enterprise Zone and is purposed to provide construction, improvements, and economic development within Houston County.

Hearing to modify or terminate the current Tax Abatement agreement with Houston County and Lincoln Lumber Crockett, L.L.C..

Hearing to enter a proposed Tax Abatement agreement with the City of Crockett, Houston County, and Lincoln Lumber Crockett, L.L.C., relating to real property at 215 W. Austin St., Crockett, Texas pursuant to the Houston County Tax Abatement Guidelines and Criteria authorized under Chapter 312, Tax Code.
- (4) **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING (Judge Lovell closed at 10:11 a.m.)**
- (5) Discuss and consider action on creating and designating Texas Enterprise Zone as a reinvestment zone pursuant to the Houston County Tax Abatement Guidelines and Criteria authorized under Chapter 312, Tax Code. **Daphne Session, County Attorney, announced that this has already been designated and that no action is needed by the Court.**
- (6) **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to terminate the current Tax Abatement agreement with Houston County and Lincoln Lumber Crockett, L.L.C. pursuant to the current tax abatement agreement with Lincoln Lumber Crockett, L.L.C. and Chapter 312, Tax Code. Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (7) **Commissioner Kitchen moved to enter into Tax Abatement Agreement with the City of Crockett, Houston County, and Lincoln Lumber Crockett, L.L.C., relating to real property at 215 W. Austin St., Crockett, Texas pursuant to the Houston County Tax Abatement Guidelines and Criteria authorized under Chapter 312, Tax Code, and for economic development. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (8) **Commissioner Henderson moved to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from March 23, 2021 and March 30, 2021. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (9) Consider approving budget amendments. **Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve budget amendments and Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (10) Consider payment of bills and expenses:
 - a. Accounts payable
 - b. Fund transfers

- c. Ratify Salary expenses
Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to pay all of 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 4 to 0.

(11) Receive information, announcements and reports from County Departments:

- a. Environmental Report
- b. Community Service Report **(not available)**

****In other office reports:**

- **Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, gave an update on SB10 and said that the Bill made it out of committee 5 to 4 and could go to the floor for a vote as early as next week.**
- **Melissa Jeter, County Auditor, talked about the tighter deadlines on adopting tax rate and getting budgets approved and what is going on to try and alleviate this issue.**
- **Commissioner Kitchen, Precinct 2, announced that he was sad to see long time road hand Isaiah McKnight retire.**

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive all of the reports given as information. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(12) Consider approving salaries for new and/or transfer employees:

- (a) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to approve the salary of Dakota Hammock as Part-time Jailer for the HCSO in the amount of \$12.74 an hour, Pay Grade 15 effective 4/12/2021 AND Dakota Hammock as Full-Time Jailer for the HCSO at bi-weekly pay of \$1018.81 in Pay Grade 15 effective 4/14/2021. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (b) Commissioner Kitchen moved to approve the salary of Lonnie Lum as Part-time Deputy for the HCSO in the amount of \$16.68 an hour, Pay Grade 19. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (c) Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve salary of Taylor Farmer as Full-time Investigator/VAC in the County Attorney's Office at bi-weekly salary of \$1605.89 in Pay Grade 21. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (d) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve current position and pay increases for the following:**
 - 1) Schellie Barnett from Probationary Jailer at \$1018.81 to Certified Jailer at \$1069.75.**
 - 2) Dominic McKnight from Probationary Jailer at \$1018.81 to Certified Jailer at \$1069.75**
 - 3) Zackary Fields from Probationary Jailer at \$1018.81 to Certified Jailer at \$1069.75.**
 - 4) Jordan Millican from Probationary Jailer at \$1018.81 to Certified Jailer at \$1069.75.**
 - 5) J'Darius Pruitt Dispatcher a 6 month raise from \$1018.81 to \$1069.75.****Commissioner Stokes seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (e) Commissioner Stokes made a motion to approve the salary of Zachary Neal as Part-time Road Hand in Precinct 2 at hourly rate of \$11.55 in Pay Grade 13. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- (f) Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the correction of Paul Andrew Biscamp salary as Part-time Deputy at the HCSO to \$15.48 per hour in Pay Grade 19. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

(13) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, and vacation time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. **Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to**

approve payment to the following employees of the HCSO: D. Brown \$446.63, J. Hallmark \$662.31, T. Lowery \$133.13, E. Wade \$\$3,178.14, A.C. Rains \$432.50, and B Christian \$5,131.43. Commissioner Henderson seconded this motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(14) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve recommendation from Human Resource Committee to make a change to the Retirement Section of Employee Handbook by taking off the last sentence under "Vesting". Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(15) Commissioner Stokes made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to pass a resolution authorizing an application for funding under the Texas Department of Agriculture's 2021-2022 TxCDBG Community Development Fund. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(16) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to accept a sub-grant issued by Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDFEM) for the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMGP) DR-4466. *Heath Murff, Emergency Management Coordinator that this is the acceptance letter included in the packet.* Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(17) Commissioner Henderson moved to adopt the Secretary of State's Volunteer Deputy Registrar PowerPoint training and place it on the county's website. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(18) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to receive as information a correction to an action taken in 2011 and authorize Private Road 6288 be added to the Houston County Map. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(19) Discuss and consider taking action to award a contract from received bids for:

- (a) AV Gas for Houston County Airport**
- (b) Gas & Diesel delivered to precinct barns**
- (c) Gas & Diesel purchased at pump for County Fleet**

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to award contract to Crockett Farm and Fuel for AV Gas for Houston County Airport, Gas & Diesel delivered to precinct barns, and Gas & Diesel purchased at pump for County Fleet. Commissioner Henderson seconded this motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(20) Discuss and consider action on rental copier agreements with Texas Document Solutions:

- a. Renewing for offices of the Tax Assessor, County Attorney, County Court at Law, Emergency Management, Justice of the Peace Precinct 2 and the Home Delivered Meal Program.**
- b. Adding copier/scanner for Patrol area within the Sheriff's Department, and necessary budget amendments.**

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion and Commissioner Henderson seconded to approve the rental copier agreements as listed in a and b of item 20. Motion carried 4 to 0.

(21) Commissioner Stokes moved to accept donation of unleaded gas and diesel valued at \$127.07 from Crockett Farm & Fuel to County Precinct 2 & 3 and Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

- (22) Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information the FY 2020 submission to the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board pursuant to SEC Rule 15c2-12. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (23) Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve orders allowing retail fireworks permit holders to sell fireworks to the public in celebration of San Jacinto Day and Memorial Day with Commissioner Henderson seconding the motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (24) Commissioner Kitchen moved to receive as information Houston County Appraisal District Audit for FY 2020. Commissioner Stokes seconded this motion. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (25) Commissioner Henderson made a motion to receive office furniture items (1 shelf, 3 office chairs, 3 small benches, 6 large pictures/frames, 2 large chairs, 1 round table, 3 small work tables, 1 directory/glass with letters, 1 desk chair, 1 plant/decorative, 2 desks with returns) from Sam Houston State University surplus department as a donation. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.
- (26) Judge Lovell made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Stokes seconded. Motion carried 4 to 0.

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