



**HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 10, 2019**

The Commissioners' Court of Houston County met in a regular, called meeting on September 10, 2019 with the following members present, to wit:

Jim Lovell	County Judge
Gary Lovell	Commissioner, Precinct #1
Willie Kitchen	Commissioner, Precinct #2
Pat Perry	Commissioner, Precinct #3
Jimmy Henderson	Commissioner, Precinct #4

Also present:

Roger Dickey	HCFM/EMC
Melissa Jeter	County Auditor
Brittani Womack	First Assistant County Auditor
Danette Millican	Tax Assessor Collector
Daphne Session	County Attorney
Sharon Luker	Assistant to the County Commissioners
Jan Pigford	Administrative Assistant to the County Judge
Janis Omelina	County Treasurer
Cynthia Lum	Election's Administrator
Justin Killough	Chief Deputy at S/O
Darrel Bobbitt	Sheriff
Terri Meadows	Houston County Clerk

Media:

Alton Porter	Houston County Courier
Will Johnson	The Grapeland Messenger

Visitors: Obrey Alec (Alabama-Coushatta Tribe), Clint Poncho (Alabama-Coushatta Tribe), Yolanda Poncho (Alabama-Coushatta Tribe), Ian Liscano (Alabama-Coushatta Tribe), Cecilia Flores (Alabama-Coushatta Tribe), Ann Walker (PWFAA), Carl Kellum (American Legion), James Meachen (American Legion), John McMillen (newly approved Veteran's Service Officer), James Jellum (American Legion),

(1) Welcome, Invocation and Pledges:

Judge Lovell called the meeting to order and Commissioner Kitchen gave the opening prayer. Judge Lovell led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and the Texas Flag.

(2) Recognition and comments from guests:

Judge Lovell recognized the guests and asked if there were any comments. There were none.

(3) Consider approval of prior Commissioners Court Minutes:

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the Commissioners Court minutes from September 3, 2019 Special Called Meeting. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(4) Consider approving budget amendments:

Commissioner Kitchen moved to approve the Budget Amendments. Judge Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(5) Consider payment of bills and expenses:

- a. Accounts payable
- b. Fund transfers
- c. Ratify Salary expenses

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to pay the 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 5 to 0.

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

- a. Environmental Report

Commissioner Lovell moved to accept the Environmental Report as presented. Commissioner Kitchen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

- b. Community Service Report
Report not Available

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

Commissioner Kitchen made a motion to approve the hiring of Timmy Johnson as a part-time Road & Bridge hand for Precinct 2 at Pay Grade #13 and \$11.55 an hour. Commissioner Perry seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(8) Judge Lovell introduced John McMillen and recommended he be hired to replace former employee Fred Newtz as the Houston County Veterans Service Officer. Commissioner Lovell moved to hire John McMillen as Part-time Veterans Service Officer at a bi-weekly salary of \$613.15. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(9) Discuss and consider approving payment of compensatory, vacation and holiday time for County employees and necessary budget amendments. There were none.

(10) County EMC Roger Dickey addressed the drought, fire danger, and burn ban and recommended that we continue the burn ban at the current time. Commissioner Kitchen moved to continue the Burn Ban and Commissioner Henderson seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

- (11) Discuss and consider adopting Proclamation in support of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas in its effort for passage of HR 759 to clarify that the Tribe can enjoy the opportunity for tribal economic development on terms that are equal and fair and to protect jobs. At this time several members from the Tribal Council spoke to Commissioners Court about the need of the County's support and what signing this Proclamation would mean to them. They showed a short video about their tribe and the business they conduct and the revenue that it brings into Texas. Commissioner Kitchen made a motion that the Proclamation be signed in support of the passage of HR 759 to protect the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas. Commissioners Lovell and Henderson simultaneously seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.
- (12) Discuss and consider adopting Proclamation in support of Porter Springs Baptist Church to host National Night Out to be held on Tuesday, October 1, 2019 including all emergency personnel, law enforcement and fire and rescue. This agenda item was passed.
- (13) Cynthia Lum, Elections Administrator addressed the need to increase the pay for Election Workers. She checked with surrounding counties and other entities in town and came up with an increase that she believes will help us obtain and retain more workers.

She proposed \$14.00 per hour for Election Judges, Tabulation Supervisors and Early Voting Ballot Board. \$13.00 with for the Alternate Election Judges and Assistant Tabulation Supervisors. \$12.00 per hour for Clerks, Deputy Early Voting Clerks and Central Counting Station Clerks.

On Election Day workers will be paid per hour with a 1 hour minimum and a 13 hour maximum. Central Counting Station personnel will be paid per hour with a 1 hour minimum and a 10 hour maximum. Early Voting Ballot Board will be paid per hour with a 5 hour minimum and 10 hour maximum.

A fee of \$25.00 is received by the Judge or clerk who picks up and delivers the precinct election supplies. Poll workers, who attend and completes a training seminar/class held by the Elections Administrator, shall be at the rate of \$8.00 per hour.

In accordance with Texas Election Code Sec. 32.114(e), 32.092, 32.091 and 87.005 these fees are set by Commissioners Court. Commissioner Kitchen moved to adopt the proposed fees for Election Workers. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

- (14) Commissioner Kitchen moved to approve the request for \$1000.00 by Crockett Lions Club Golf Tournament for Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund for the annual event to be held October 17, 2019, and \$1000.00 for Piney Woods Fine Arts Association for the Mickey Gilley & Johnny Lee/Urban Cowboy Reunion Tour to be held September 28, 2019. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

- (15) Commissioner Kitchen moved to award contracts from received bids on surplus inventory items. Accepting bids 2 (2006 Ford F-250 Pickup, <0247 Prec 4>), \$1000.00 from bidder August Kulms, bid 5 (2015 Chevy Impala Car <8680, S/O>), \$875.00 from bidder August Kulms, and bid 6 (2010 Chevy Silverado C15 <8349, S/O>) \$500.00 from bidder Joe Davis, Jr. There were no bids received on bid items 3 (1989 Chevy C2500 Truck <0444/Prec 2>), and item 4 (1996 Dodge Ram 2500 Pickup <9750/Prec 2>) and these items will be picked up for salvage.

Reject bid 7 (2005 Dodge Ram 2500 Pickup <0851, Emergency Management Dept-Armory>) \$1020.00 from bidder John Kilian. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(16) Conduct Public Hearing on proposed Houston County Budget for Fiscal Year 2020. There was no discussion

(17) Judge Lovell declared the public hearing for proposed Houston County Budget for Fiscal year 2020 closed.

(18) Commissioner Kitchen moved to adopt the Houston County Budget for Fiscal year 2020 as presented. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(19) Discuss and consider action on adopting FY 2019 County Tax Rate of \$0.54 cents

(a) Maintenance and operations tax rate of \$0.4601

(b) Interest and sinking tax rate of \$0.0799.

Commissioner Kitchen moved to adopt the proposed tax rate. Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(20) Discuss and ratify the increase of property tax revenue by 10.9734% in the FY 2020 Budget. Commissioner Kitchen so moved and Commissioner Lovell seconded. Motion carried 5 to 0.

(21) Discuss and consider setting salaries for all officers and employees of Houston County for Fiscal Year 2020. This item was tabled.

(22) Adjourn:

Judge Lovell moved to adjourn the Meeting. Commissioner Kitchen seconded. Motion carried with everyone standing. The meeting was adjourned.

Jim Lovell, County Judge

Gary Lovell, Commissioner, Precinct #1

Willie Kitchen, Commissioner, Precinct #2

Pat Perry, Commissioner, Precinct #3

Jimmy Henderson, Commissioner, Precinct #4

Attest:

Terri Meadows, County Clerk