

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

REGULAR MEETING - APRIL 13, 2020

On the 13th day of April, 2020, there was a Regular Meeting of the Commissioners' Court in the Commissioners' Courtroom with County Clerk, other County Officers, Personnel, and Public Members, some present via ZOOM, 2840 Hwy 35 N, Rockport, Aransas County, Texas, with the following members present: **C. H. "Burt" Mills, Jr.**, County Judge; **Jack Chaney**, Commissioner, Precinct 1; **Leslie "Bubba" Casterline**, Commissioner, Precinct 2; **Charles Smith**, Commissioner, Precinct 3; **Wendy Laubach**, Commissioner, Precinct 4; **Valerie K. Amason**, County Clerk; and **Christy Gibson**, Deputy County Clerk - Executive/Administrative Support.

Other County Officers present were **Jerry Brundrett**, County Surveyor; **Kristen Barnebey**, County District Attorney; **Alma Cartwright**, Treasurer; **Pam Heard**, District Clerk; **Bill Mills**, Sheriff; **Diana McGinnis**, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2; **Tracy Orr**, Administrative Assistant to the County Judge; **Jacky Cockerham**, Interim County Auditor; **Latisha Murphy**, Assistant Auditor; **David Reid**, Road Administrator/Drainage Engineer/Stormwater Management Engineer; **Michael Geer**, Airport Manager; **Katherine Comeaux**, Development Services Coordinator; **Valerie Gonzalez**, Environmental Health Director; **John Strothman**, Pathways Project Manager; **Rene Butler**, Facilities Director; **Collin Jackson**, IT Director; **Carrie Arrington**, Office & Contracts Manager, County District Attorney's Office; **Michele Carew**, Elections Administrator; **Lori Cesar**, Animal Control Director;

Members of Local City Government, Community Groups and other Interested Parties present:

Aransas County Citizens: Mark Pinter; Pat Rousseau;

Aransas County Navigation District: Malcolm Dieckow,
Commissioner, Precinct 3;

Rockport Center for the Arts: Luis Puron, Executive Director;

The Rockport Pilot Newspaper: Mike Probst, Editor and Publisher;

The Meeting was convened at 9:00 a.m. at which time a quorum was declared by Judge Mills, WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had and done to wit:

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation by DataBank for the Conversion and Preservation of County Voter Registration Files.
Charles Bass, Senior Account Manager gave presentation.
(See Power Point attached)

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Pat Rousseau: Thank you for giving me this opportunity, I have just a couple of items that I wanted to feature, I guess. When I was here about a month ago I noted that several times during my campaign people had said that they wanted more information from the court before decisions were made, and they saw on the last agenda that that information was provided, however on this agenda I was disappointed in that Items 14 & 16 really provide no information about what will be discussed, other than it's a grant or it's something that will be administered for engineering services, but nothing explaining what the projects are for which those grants or contracts will be used. Also

under Item 22, to establish the Task Force, I think this is something, and maybe EDC is working with the County and the City and Fulton on this issue, but this certainly seems like something that the Economic Development Corporation would be very interested in working on and also that there were two hospital systems in Corpus Christi that were interested in Code 3 ER before it unfortunately closed, and also the current facility is not in operation and the hospital systems may still have interest in that. One of the hospitals has purchased land here, well over 10 years ago, that I believe they still own and are still interested in possibly having a hospital or some sort of ER or out-patient clinic and I'm hoping that those two sources will certainly be invited to participate in this, and that there will also be some long term thought given, and not just the nature of reaction, because we are in the middle of a health care crisis right now. Finally, on Item 24, about creating another position, this time in the Auditor's Office, it seems that a few months ago there were two positions that were approved for creation for the long term recovery team, and those two positions, I believe, were going to cost the county about \$240,000, almost a quarter of a million dollars a year, and although their salaries and benefits ideally will come from grants that are approved, they will still be getting paid while the grants are in process, and then hopefully approved or perhaps rejected, and I was wondering why those two positions can't administer the grants and provide the additional assist that's needed by the Auditor's office, rather than bringing another position onto the County's workforce, for salaries, for benefits, and all of the other cost that will be for the taxpayer. Thank you very much. .

Malcolm Dieckow: I would like to speak on Item 12 when you get to it.

CONSENT ITEMS

Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve:

2. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of March 23, 2020.
3. Public Official Bond and Oath for Tracy A. Orr, Administrative Assistant to the County Judge.
4. Official Public Bond Renewal Certificate for Aransas County Facilities Director & Maintenance Supervisor Rene Butler and Maintenance Custodian David Cruz.
5. Reimbursement from the forfeiture funds in the amount of \$301.46 to Kristen Barnebey for expenses incurred for Texas District and County Attorneys Association (TDCAA) continuing education class "DWI Updates on Legislation, Cases and Countering Defenses".

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

COUNTY REPORTS

6. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve 1st Quarterly 2019 Report for the Rockport Center for the Arts.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

COUNTY LIBRARY

7. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve allowing the Aransas County Library Director to seek and apply for a \$500 HEB grant(s) to be used for summer reading programs.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

8. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve allowing the Aransas County Library Director to seek and apply for a \$1,000 Wal-Mart grant(s) to be used for summer reading programs.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

COUNTY ROADS

9. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve Order #0-04-2020, an Order to close, abandon, and vacate the 20-foot Alleyway in Block 319, Manning Addition, Aransas County, Texas.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

10. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve variance on floodplain regulations to allow use of fill for structural support for new construction at 121 Dockside Drive in the Sunset Bay Subdivision.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, GRANTS & LEASES

11. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Smith to TABLE authorizing the County Judge to sign an amended medical services Agreement with Lone Star Ambulance 1, d/b/a Allegiance Ambulance, for a one year period with a cost of \$196,674.00 [Tabled from 3/9/2020, Tabled from 3/23/2020].

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

Judge Mills: Malcolm Dieckow, would you like to address Item #12 now?

Malcolm Dieckow: I urge you to go ahead and approve the MOU so that I can bring it before the District at our next meeting, I think that we've all worked diligently to get this to where it is and how important it is and this is the first step for Little Bay's future.

12. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve and authorize the County Judge to sign an Intergovernmental Agreement between Aransas County and the Aransas County Navigation District for Phase 1 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Project 4332-069 Little Bay Grant. The Grant is for circulation study, final engineering and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Permit.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

13. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve and authorize the County Judge to sign an Engineering Services Agreement between the County of Aransas and Sample Engineering Inc., d/b/a John D. Mercer & Associates for the Texas Community Block Grant (TxCDBG), program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), Contract number 7219025.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

14. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve and authorize the County Judge to authorize the issuance of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) as required, for professional services such as environmental, engineering, architectural, feasibility studies, appraisals, etc., related to the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grant funded and administered by the Texas General Land Office (TxGLO) for Hurricane Harvey Recovery.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

15. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve issuing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Administrative services and Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for Engineering services related to the 2020 County Transportation Infrastructure (CTIF) administered by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

Question. Motion carried unanimously. It is so ordered.

(Insert)

16. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve and authorize the County Judge to sign a Contract for Professional Services between the County of Aransas and LNV, LLC for engineering services for the Texas Community Block Grant (TxCDBG) program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), Contract Number 7219490.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

17. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve and authorize the County Judge to e-sign a Substance Abuse Testing Services Agreement with Quest Diagnostics for pre-hire and post-accident drug screening.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

18. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Laubach to MOVE authorizing the County Judge to sign a Contract with DataBank for the conversion of voter registration files to digital format for the preservation of county documents, **expense to be considered in the 2021 budget.**

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

19. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to MOVE authorizing the County Judge to sign a Contract with Vista Solutions for professional services - including license subscription and

(Inserts)

support to Data Bank - needed to complete the conversion of voter registration files to digital format, **expense to be considered in the 2021 budget.**

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

20. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to TABLE approving and authorizing the County Judge to sign an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Rockport regarding Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) grant funds budgeted from RESTORE ACT BUCKET 1 grant program for final engineering and shoreline restoration along Bay Shore Drive.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

21. Discussion on the status of the health authority in Aransas County went into closed session.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

22. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve establishing a Task Force charged with bringing back viable options and/or plans for establishing an emergency health care services/solutions to meet the needs of the County. If established, the Task Force should report back at the earliest possible date and identify sustainable solutions and options for addressing our emergency care needs (short to mid-term) the next 6 months to 1 year.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

PLANNING & BUDGET OFFICE

23. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve the March 2020 Indigent Health Care Report.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

24. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve the Auditor, Jacky Cockerham's request for the creation of an additional Assistant Auditor position to the County Auditor's Department. Salary and benefits will be funded by Grant Administrative Fees and FEMA reimbursements. The new position is necessary in order to assist with the influx of workload to the County Auditor's Department due to ongoing Accounts Payable/Grant/FEMA/COVID-19 applications and processing. A job description is attached.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

25. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve combining JP1 and JP2 part-time positions into a full-time position that works in both departments at a group/step 11-3, no new monies.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

26. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve Budget Line Item Transfers and Amendments of which there were none.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

27. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve Accounts Payable and Payroll/Payroll Liabilities.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS &

DEPARTMENT HEADS WHEREIN NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN

Sheriff Mills: I got a letter Saturday, I just wanted to bring it to the courts attention that the Department of Criminal Justice for the State of Texas represent the Prison Systems have shut down intake to their entire system, effective today. They have over 300 confirmed cases within the system, employees and prisoners, and so their only option to control the spread was to shut down intake until further notice.

Commissioner Smith: Sheriff, do we have any in our jail?

Sheriff Mills: I'm sure we do.

Commissioner Smith: Have they been tested and verified?

Sheriff Mills: No, I'm sorry, I thought you were talking about people on chain, no we don't have any confirmed cases in the hill, no sir. Nor did we have any that were tested, I had two employees that we had to send back home because they presented with a fever, but no other symptoms that warranted testing, we have been pursuing that whole procedure as well, but try to find a way to get them back in the gang sooner than 14 days, that's kind of, the frustrating part is whether you confirmed positive or whether you are self-quarantining, it's working days, so.

(Insert)

Commissioner Smith: What is your jail population now?

Sheriff Mills: I'm going to say 180.

Commissioner Smith: 180, so we've got space available?

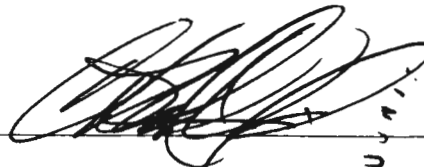
Sheriff Mills: Yes sir, that and we have completed some engineering changes within the facility, created more negative pressure cells on a temporary basis so that we would have the ability to deal with any positive test if we did have one, we could quarantine them within the system and not have the air recycle back into the facility.

The Court entered into closed session at 10:03 a.m. to discuss and review potential litigation issues and other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071(1)(a); and to discuss real estate negotiations, including Pathways Projects pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.072; and resumed Open Meeting at 10:16 a.m. with all members present, and further proceedings were had and done to wit:


No action taken.

No further business presenting, the Court adjourned at 10:17 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline.

April 13, 2020



C. H. "BURT" MILLS, JR., COUNTY JUDGE



VALERIE K. AMASON,

EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

By: 

CHRISTY GLEASON, DEPUTY CLERK - EXECUTIVE/ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT