

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING - JUNE 30, 2020

On the 30th day of June, 2020, there was a Budget Workshop Meeting of the Commissioners' Court in the Commissioners' Courtroom, 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; and Valerie K. Amason, County Clerk.

Other County Officers present were Kristen Barnebey, County District Attorney; Jeri Cox, Tax Assessor-Collector; Anna Marshall, Chief Deputy Tax Assessor-Collector; Richard P. Bianchi, County Court At Law Judge; Jacky Cockerham, Interim County Auditor; Tana Taylor; First Assistant County Auditor; David Reid, Road Administrator/Drainage Engineer/Stormwater Management Engineer; Michael Geer, Airport Manager; Collin Jackson, IT Director; Christopher Randall, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor; Michele Carew, Elections Administrator; Virginia Easton Smith - AgriLife Extension Agent;

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

156<sup>th</sup> Judicial District: Patrick Flanigan, District Judge

Aransas County Citizens: Amanda Oster, County District Attorney Elect;

Allegiance Mobile: Stephanie Roth, South/Central Regional Vice President;

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:

ITEMS FOR DELIBERATION AND/OR ACTION

TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR

Jeri Cox: I have received numbers from Jacky and Tana on my budget and I guess I'm here to answer any questions.

Commissioner Smith: So you're going up from \$98,111 to \$113,174 on billing other entities based on their percentage of last year's tax roll?

Jeri: What Commissioner Smith is referring to is a handout that I gave everyone. At the top it's the cost of collecting 2020 taxes and I'm required to take my over-all budget and determine how much of that goes to collecting taxes. I came up with \$299,795 as my total with \$186,621 being the County's portion, leaving \$113,174 to be pro-rated out to the other entities that the County collects taxes for. So, that was \$98,000 last year's charge. So I'm looking at, what did you say that number was Charlie?

Commissioner Smith: \$15,063 is the difference that you've gone up on the billing.

Jeri: Down at the bottom of that handout I pro-rated out what each entity would cost based on their percentage of last year's tax roll and I present that to you as part of the budget because these numbers down here in the gray, where it says "Estimated Share Based on % of 2019 Levy Totals", that's the amount that I am suggesting be put into the Tax Collection Contracts that we renew in August.

Commissioner Smith: Jeri, I remember you schooled me on this once before, you can only charge the excess that it costs to collect taxes from these other entities so that we still bear the burden for them.

Jeri: We bear the majority of the costs because I am constitutionally required to collect this County Taxes.

Commissioner Smith: Well under salaries, all deputies are \$196,518 and you allocated \$98,259, that's almost 50% of them.

Jeri: That's not the total salaries, that \$196,518, I think that was 50% of the salaries because the other 50% I pro-rated over to motor vehicle and the other things that we do in our office. Then I did the \$98,259, I just split that in half again and then I looked at it and I compared it. In the past two deputies have been close to that same cost, looking at my formula, and because we added another person, I looked at the cost of two and a half deputies and it's much higher than the \$98,259.

Commissioner Smith: The net increase then to run the, the \$22,094 minus the \$15,061, so seven, but we've also given that new person back during this year, so.

Jeri: Yes, and the salaries in this, for the tax collection, is not based on projected salaries for the County's 2021 budget. I use what they are currently in this year.

Commissioner Smith: Ok, let's go back to the additional person, let's go back to that for a second, how much of that was due to unfunded mandates?

Jeri: I can't tell you, I just know that we needed another person in our office to be able to try to keep up with the flow of work.

Commissioner Smith: You also mentioned, I think when you came in...

Jeri: Yes, there are unfunded mandates but I don't have time to calculate all of that.

Commissioner Smith: What if the taxpayer wanted to know how much is coming out of the Legislature?

Judge Mills: Nothing, it's an unfunded mandate.

Commissioner Smith: What I'm talking about is to be able to tell the taxpayers why the tax rates are going up. It's a legitimate question.

Jeri: Oh, I understand that.

Commissioner Smith: And it's particularly legitimate when we are now held to a 3½ % rate increase.

Jeri: But I went back and I calculated all of those numbers, or not numbers per say, but the things that we were doing, that were mandated, and things that are being required, the flow of traffic, I presented that all in our last Commissioner's Court meeting.

Commissioner Chaney: Jacky, where you have \$3,895 for Bond Premiums, what is that?

Jacky: That's their performance bonds or security bonds that they have every year.

Commissioner Chaney: So where have they been paying for that in the past?

Jacky: They should have been in insurance and we moved it out, but I don't see anything in insurance.

Jeri: Yeah, we had bond and insurance together and in this last year's budget ya'll split them. And Bond Premiums is a new Line Item 459 but I think it used to be in 460.

Jacky: Well it was higher, and it reduced down. I would have to look at it Jack and see what happened in the last year.

Commissioner Chaney: Ok.

Jeri: Well I'll tell you what it is. The \$3,895 is budgeted for 2020, that's because we have a new Tax Assessor-Collector coming in. I paid \$3,895 every four years so normally that figure is there every four years for a bond. \$100,000 to Commissioners' Court and \$100,000 to the Governor of Texas, having said that, I requested that amount, the \$3,895 for the 2020 budget and that will cover Anna's bonds for the next four years. Normally, in the past, we have been able to drop down to 2021, but you will see that we put that in 2021 because we are requesting that bond amount for the Chief Deputy. The Chief Deputy is just now currently protected under a blanket bond that I have for my employees. Across the State of Texas there are many that bond their Chief Deputies for the same amount as the Tax Collector and more are trying to get that in their budget because what happens is, if the Tax Collector were to get hit by a truck and does not make it then the County will have to shut down the Tax Office until somebody is appointed and bonds are given. This is because the State of Texas won't allow their supplies to be sold, the registrations and that type of thing, unless a bond is in place for somebody in charge.

Commissioner Chaney: And so the blanket bond covers that.

Jeri: No, the blanket bond does not.

Commissioner Smith: The \$3,895 is budgeted to be spent this year for four years out into the future, right? Can't it be transferred between the two of you?

Jeri: No, this \$3,895, I think includes \$345 for the blanket bond, so whatever the difference is, \$3,550, that's a four year bond that will have to be purchased the end of this year so that it will be in place on January 1, 2021 when Anna is sworn in.

Commissioner Smith: But in the past we've only been paying one of those bonds, so now you're saying we need two, right?

Jeri: Yes, I'm requesting two. So next year Anna would get this bond for her Chief Deputy and then everybody is protected.

Commissioner Smith: Ok, let's assume the unthinkable happens, how long does the Tax Office stay shut down in order to replace that person?

Jeri: Until an appointment is made by the court and a bond is in place, so it's up to the Insurance Company, how fast they get the bond in place.

Commissioner Laubach: How long does that usually take?

Anna Marshall: It could be weeks.

Judge Mills: Thank you Jeri.

#### DISTRICT COURT

Judge Flanigan: There is only a \$44.00 change. For about 40 years now we have not had a change in our personnel requirement, we have not added any personnel, they only changes we've got are very minor. It looks like in retirement contribution it's the worker's comp and I think it's under a miscellaneous expense which is funds that we sent to the region for the work of the regional courts and regional presiding judge. This does not yet incorporate any kind of salary increase if there is going to be one, either a percentage increase on the salaries or if it's going to be a flat rate, we've got to deal with all of the counties and see what they are doing. Some counties may be permitting a salary increase for personnel, some counties may not have any increase at all, some have historically had a one-time lump sum kind of a payment scheme

along those lines, we don't have that worked out from any of the five counties yet. I think Bee County, which is on a fiscal year, that's different than everybody's calendar year, they're the first ones and we are still trying to negotiate and find out what's happening with the other counties. Since our San Patricio County employees and the other four counties just sent some support funds on a proportional share we try not to take advantage of what's happening in any one county but try to assess that which is happening district-wide before we make any decisions on what we are hoping to have happen with our employees and their compensation.

Commissioner Smith: The salary of regular full-time employees, part-time, and temporary help, that's all subject to San Patricio County?

Judge Flanigan: Well, what comes out our District Court like our Court Reporters, Court Administrators, those folks, that's in Line Item #116, that's the 127<sup>th</sup>, the Lines 103, 110, 115, those are folks that are employed here in Aransas County. They are bailiffs, part-time accounting for the constables, folks that actually work in our courts. Those are not direct employees of the District Judges, they are not our Court Reporters, not our Court Administrators, those are the folks assisting with the work of the District Court.

Commissioner Smith: If they are over here, then you are talking about our bailiff, who pays for these folks.

Jacky: We do.

Judge Flanigan: Aransas County does.

Commissioner Smith: But you've got them in your budget?

Judge Flanigan: Well, they charge our budget for the work that they do in our courts.

Commissioner Smith: Really?

Jacky: Yes, sir.

Judge Flanigan: Yes.

Commissioner Smith: Then you bill it back to us?

Judge Flanigan: No, it's separate and apart from what goes to San Patricio County to pay for the over-all operation of the District Courts and District Personnel.

Jacky: We split their time up when they are paid, if they worked in the District Courts then it's charged to District Courts, so their salaries are split between their job duties.

Judge Flanigan: If they are spending 40% of their time working in the District Court for the District Judges, then 40% of their salary for that pay period comes out of this budget.

Commissioner Smith: What are the professional services? Refresh my memory on that.

Judge Flanigan: Things like visiting Judges.

Commissioner Smith: Have you had any visiting Judges this year?

Judge Flanigan: Yes, we have one visiting Judge that's assigned to one case in particular that I know of, she's been sitting on that case because the other sitting District Judges recused themselves from it. Also coming out of that, the County has contracted with an organization for capital murder defense. That premium, so to speak, is part of the professional services as well, off-hand I can't think of anything else that might be professional services that's not taken care of in some other budget. The psychologists and mental health experts, that has a separate line item. Since I've been on the bench we've taken out of professional services any expenses for court reporter services. We've got a separate budget for that that I'll talk about in just a minute, we used to have that coming out of the General Budget. Since I came on the bench I noted that we have a pile of money available for that and it ought to be able to take care of that. So, I think basically, its' those two items, Capital Defense and visiting judges that come out of professional services.

Commissioner Smith: Jacky, you know this year the court took and approved that Capital Defense Insurance.

Jacky: Yes sir.

Commissioner Smith: What department does that go into?

Jacky: That would go into the District Courts. I believe it was about \$7,000 - \$8,000.

Commissioner Smith: They paid it?

Jacky: The District Court's budget paid it. We fund the District Court, it recognizes all of the expense for the court and so it's all in one place and it knows what the court costs. It's an unfunded mandate and we're just keeping track of it.

Judge Flanigan: Where that came from is, a number of years ago, somebody at the Sheriff's Office, somebody at the Constable's Office, said "Look this is all coming out of my budget but I'm not doing my Constable work, I'm working at the District Courtroom, that ought to be charged off to the District Court." I was fine with that, it made no change in the bottom line for that office, you just have different funds that are being added together for that.

Jacky: This just gives a clear picture of what the District Court costs.

Judge Mills: Ok, what else have you got?

Judge Flanigan: The only other thing is on page 130, there is a special dedicated fund for Court Report Service Fee, this is the one that I brought some attention to when I came on the bench here. Along with the filing fees, both Criminal and Civil cases, when a case gets filed there is a small portion of those fees that go to a Court Reporter Service Fee. Rather than having expenses for a visiting court reporter, or an indigent record that's prepared by a court reporter, and have that expense go to the County out of the General Fund, we've, for the last few years it looks like, been using this Court Reporter Service Fee to keep that from coming out of this fund. And it's still got \$60 to \$80 thousand dollars in it, so we have plenty of funds to take care of all of those expenses rather than have that be coming out of the General Fund. It's not a lot, it may be \$4 to \$7 thousand dollars a year.

Commissioner Smith: How do we free up that \$97,822, that's the amount of the fund balance?

Judge Flanigan: It's even more than I thought. We can't free it up, because as I said it's a dedicated fund.

Commissioner Smith: So that is strictly limited to a court reporter fee?

Judge Flanigan: As I understand, it is only for those expenses.

Commissioner Laubach: If you decrease the court reporter budget, could you then apply the \$97,000 to cover the shortfall?

Judge Flanigan: Frankly, we don't have a Court Reporter Budget, other than the salary for the Court Reporter, as we have been utilizing in this fund right now.

Jacky: This fund is also for the County Court at Law, not just the District Court.

Commissioner Smith: What is the source of the revenue?

Judge Flanigan: It's a small portion of any filing fee.

Judge Mills: Ok, any more questions, if not, thank you Judge.

#### COUNTY COURT AT LAW

Judge Bianchi: I essentially have two budgets to talk about, the Court at Law Judge Budget and the Collections Budget. The budget for the County Court at Law this year has a proposed \$68,000 increase and I would point out that \$56,000 of that is for Indigent Attorney Fees. We keep it pretty close to the best on other items in the budget, but that was just the best guess.

Commissioner Smith: That is an unfunded mandate, right?

Judge Bianchi: Yes it is, and I wanted to point out, as Judge Flanigan did, this does not include any kind of pay raise, be it merit or across the board, or whatever. The \$56,000 increase is just very unpredictable, what we did was took the average for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019, and added 10%, is that right or wrong, it's just a guess.

Commissioner Smith: Jacky, how much have we spent year to date, this year?

Jacky: I don't have that with me at the moment.

Judge Bianchi: We've spent about \$95,000 year to date. What we are experiencing, every year is different, our CPS cases for instance, we had an increase in the number of filings last year. Those things play out for a year and the biggest expenses come at the end of those cases and then, of course, they frequently get appealed. We are generally successful in the appeals, but then we have to pay attorneys for that as well. We also, this last year, had another mandate, or expression, that when we have "missing fathers", this frequently happens, we just don't know where they are and nobody else does either, or at least they are not giving us the information. We have to appoint attorneys to represent those absent fathers, even if they haven't had any contact with that child for 10 years.

Commissioner Chaney: What fund does the Ad Litem for the children come out of?

Judge Bianchi: It comes out of that same fund.

Commissioner Chaney: You've got \$6,000 for Conference & Dues?

Judge Bianchi: There is an increase there because that include one conference for the Court Manager, one for the Court Reporter, and the rest is me. The increase is not in conferences, it's because the sponsoring entities for those seminars in the past had significantly funded or reimbursed us for attendance. They are not doing that anymore.

Commissioner Smith: If the court reporter submits a bill to us for a conference, can we run it through that fund that we were talking about earlier?

Judge Bianchi: I don't know but it would be a good question to ask our Auditor.

Jacky: We would have to look at the statute and see if that is an eligible expense.

Commissioner Smith: Professional Services?

Judge Bianchi: Professional Services, out of our budget, primarily it's going to doctors for Psych Exams, we have "Are they competent to stand trial".

Commissioner Smith: Is this based on your experience this year, where did you come up with \$750? It's been running \$1,500, I don't know what the actual expenditures are?

Judge Bianchi: I don't know what that actual expenditure is for this year.

Commissioner Smith: And Food? All of the sudden it just magically appears on our budget?

Judge Bianchi: Travel and Meals?

Commissioner Smith: No, food, under supplies.

Judge Bianchi: We put that in there, I've never used it, that's not to say I wouldn't for a Jury situation. You just don't know until it happens. Most of my jury trials are short, one or two days.

Commissioner Laubach: You pay for Jury lunches?

Judge Bianchi: No.

Commissioner Casterline: Would that be for if you sequestered a jury?

Judge Bianchi: It would or occasionally what could happen is, not lunch so much as an evening meal. If I'm in here and I've got a jury and they are deliberating and it's 6:00 p.m. and they say we would rather keep working and maybe we could finish this evening and not have to come back the next day, then it might be appropriate to do that. And if there's nothing more on that.

#### COLLECTIONS

Judge Bianchi: This budget has an increase of \$3,800, and I would point out that this includes absorbing a \$6,000 budget for a maintenance agreement which was previously carried in the IT Budget and it got carried over to this budget. So, collections are down, as you would expect, we pressure collections by either calling people in that aren't paying and after appropriate procedures, put them in jail, we can't do that right now. Secondly, we push them on community service and currently there are not many community service opportunities around. Or we increase their fine, well if they are not working it doesn't matter what the fine is.

Commissioner Smith: If you put them in jail, how does that help our collections?

Judge Bianchi: It only helps if the threat of putting them in jail encourages them to find a way to pay.

#### FLEET MAINTENANCE

Chris Randall: I have asked for an increase in parts, everything is just getting more expensive and I asked for an additional \$25,000. There was also some equipment I was looking for, I was wanting to replace one our trucks, an F150, it's close to 140,000 miles and about 10 years old. The transmission is starting to slip on it and I think I wrote in \$35,000 for that. A couple of other things, we need a new welding machine, the Mig welder decided it didn't want to work anymore, it needs internal parts and it's not something that is repairable, I wrote in \$4,000 for that. Our regular hand tools, we have a \$1,500 budget this year and I wrote in \$3,000 for that.

Commissioner Chaney: You had talked to us about getting a new Analyzer or something?

Chris: Yes, I have that on here too, I wrote in \$5,000 for a scan tool. The technology in vehicles is just rapidly advancing and we've got a computer reader that will talk to vehicles, but there's a lot of things that it won't do. We can't reprogram tire sensors so a lot of the new Dodge stuff we are finding out that it has to go to Dodge because the machine we have won't work on that and there's just a lot of stuff that we can't diagnose with the machine that we currently have.

Commissioner Smith: I got a quick question, how much have you spent on repair parts in the first 6 months of this year?

Chris: Oh, about \$100,000.

Commissioner Smith: Is that about right Jacky?

Jacky: Yes.

Commissioner Smith: And the \$60,000 in machinery and equipment, there is a truck in there?

Chris: Yes sir. The truck was \$35,000 and the rest was \$25,000.

Commissioner Smith: You've never spent that much on other stuff. I would assume back in 2015, that was a truck purchase as well?

Chris: No, we have two trucks, that was our service truck.

Commissioner Smith: I mean, you've been running around, between \$2,500 and \$5,800 a year. Have you just kind of built that up and had it in there to be safe?

Chris: No.

Commissioner Smith: So you've got an actual detail to come up with that \$60,000?

Chris: Yes sir. I have a truck for \$35,000, the scanner is \$5,000, welding machine is \$4,000, a the tire machine is about \$7,000.

Commissioner Smith: And the truck has about 140,000 miles on it?

Chris: Yes sir, the transmission is slipping on it.

Commissioner Smith: How much does a transmission cost?

Chris: On that one, about \$2,800.

Commissioner Smith: I don't have any more questions.

Judge Mills: Anybody else, no, ok, thank you Chris.

ALLEGIANCE AMBULANCE - HEALTH CARE SALES TAX

Judge Mills: Some time ago we noticed that our cost was supposed to go up and we disputed that, somewhere in my office is the paper work and the City came up with our share as \$196,000, do you have any new numbers on what you think we should be paying?

Stephanie Roth: I don't, based on that, I guess the City and the County had an agreement when you signed a contract in early 2014 or 2015 and that was strictly between you and the City. I've gone back and looked for something that stated that we had it and we don't.

Commissioner Smith: It was based on calls originally and even using a five year average, we can't come up with \$196,000.

Stephanie: I've never seen the agreement so I don't know where they are getting their numbers from, so I don't have any input on that.

Commissioner Smith: I've got another question, let's assume, for instance, that our emergency room opens back up again here and you don't have to transport all the way over to Corpus Christi, it's going to free up some of your personnel and some of your vehicles, right?

Stephanie: It should decrease some our extended call times to where we are not leveling out as much, yes.

Commissioner Smith: Do you have any idea how much that would actually save in terms of cost.

Stephanie: Depending on, say if we have an ER that is based off of like Spohn System or CCMC System, that can actually take Governmental Insurance and that we can actually go to, it should decrease this quite a bit, but some of them we would still have to transport whether it be like an OB or something like a major trauma or accident where they need to be in the O.R., we still have to go straight in to Corpus for those situations.

Commissioner Smith: But the vast majority of your calls that you take to the Emergency Room over there are local.

Stephanie: It shouldn't be any different than when we had Care Regional, we were still busy and Care Regional took quite a bit of our call volume.

Judge Mills: The Portland ER, aren't they taking quite a bit of your call volume?

Stephanie: It's about 50/50 right now, with all of the COVID stuff it's kind of limited on what they can take because they are trying to adjust and they are not just taking ours, they are taking Tri-County's, Sinton, and some of the surrounding areas as well.

Commissioner Smith: The contract that we have, is this a year to year contract now?

Stephanie: I believe so.

Judge Mills: Yes.

Commissioner Smith: So if in fact, there was a change in the usage of your service, we're never more than twelve months away from hitting an adjustment?

Stephanie: Right.

Commissioner Casterline: Stephanie, what's happening in the area that has been or is planning on being annexed by Aransas Pass? Are you still making calls?

Stephanie: Very few on the current, there's maybe even three. Actually Tri-County has been picking up a lot more calls over here because of Code3 being shut down and our call volume has increased. So it kind of balances it out at that point.

Commissioner Casterline: So Aransas Pass, they're still using Tri-County?

Judge Mills: Yes.

Commissioner Chaney: I asked that question 4 months ago and at that time there had been 4 calls in the last 12 months that went to Allegiance.

Stephanie: And I had about three last year and I think I've had about three this year so far in this month and those are mutual aids, one to Ingleside Ambulance...

Commissioner Casterline: You're backing up the other and they are doing the same for you?

Stephanie: Yes, it kind of balances it out because they are over here more than we are over there.

Commissioner Smith: Judge, I noticed they are supposed to be reporting, I don't know if it's on a quarterly basis, the response time by district here?

Judge Mills: They report once a month.

Commissioner Smith: Are they doing all right, as far as the contract goes with response time.

Judge Mills: Yes. They've had a few hiccups but that's because of fog, a breakdown in equipment, or a wrong address.

Commissioner Chaney: Yes, I checked and there are multiple calls, what was it, about 20% where they were having more than three calls at a time.

Commissioner Smith: So let me see if I have this right, when we asked the question about the difference in the billing, the split of it, you were saying that you don't have any information.

Stephanie: I don't have any information, that is an agreement between the City and the County.

Commissioner Smith: Have we gotten an explanation from the City on the numbers?

Judge Mills: Not since we argued about the first one, and we haven't changed the amount of what we are paying them, so.

Stephanie: I think part of that conversation, when we had it, I think it was in January, was when they did the numbers based on the year before, 12 months before, because the Nursing Homes had not completely opened up after Harvey, that's why the City's call volume was decreased. And that's what the budget changes were based off of, that is what I remember of the conversation. But I have not seen the agreement.

Commissioner Smith: Well the agreement is not very explicit as to what period of time this is based upon. I mean this was the first time in five years, the original split was done on a five year basis. If we look at the number of calls, I mean, consistently I tried to figure as many different ways as I could to justify the \$196,000 and I could never get it.

Commissioner Casterline: Well, this doesn't have anything to do with Allegiance.

Judge Mills: Yeah, we'll have to get back to the City and figure this out. Does anybody have any more questions for Stephanie? No, thank you.

Commissioner Laubach: Jacky, I think we have another problem with columns not footing, some of the changes don't seem to match the previous columns. The bottom line, it's about a \$100,000 change, page 124, bottom right, it can't be a \$438,000 difference, it looks like about \$100,000. Some of them above it, the variance doesn't match.

Commissioner Chaney: Well, you've got a \$450,000 dollar positive change in Code3, we're not budgeting anything there.

Judge Mills: Let's go on. David, come on up.

#### ROAD & BRIDGE

David Reid: I think the big increase in my budget is for equipment. We haven't had equipment in the budget since Harvey and my equipment is not cheap. I don't know if you saw the list of what I'm asking for, but the big stuff, Crew Truck, Dump Truck, mower decks, recycler, and a tanker, and that is \$570,000.

Commissioner Casterline: All of that money is coming out of your reserve fund, right? None of it is coming out of the General Fund?

David: It doesn't come out of the General Fund, it comes out of my budget unless it gets to the point where I need to have in the reserve, I mean, I'm not recommending that it come out of the reserve at this time, not yet anyway. You know Chris talked about his parts bill going up, it's probably a lot to do with my old equipment, some of this stuff is 20 years old.

Judge Mills: And it's been in the shop a lot.

Commissioner Smith: So if you buy new equipment, we can reduce his parts budget?

David: Absolutely, I'll let him know that. (Laughter) But like that recycler, they're welding new teeth on it right now and it's thousands of dollars for the teeth. And then we use it and then they break off again, it's a vicious cycle.

Commissioner Casterline: Does Chris keep an itemized log on each vehicle where he can tell you on that particular vehicle, what he spent in a period of time?

David: I believe he does, yeah.

Judge Mills: Machinery and Equipment \$570,000, just a drop in the bucket, right?

Commissioner Smith: Yeah, that's like right here, your fund balance of about \$1,300,000 down to less than a half a million.

David: If that's what we need to do.

Commissioner Smith: You can start building it back up again. Maybe Jacky can come up with an appreciation fund for you, I'd sure like to see that.

Jacky: This will be ideal for what he's looking at.

Commissioner Smith: He's a poster child for that particular problem.

Jacky: Exactly. There are also still some funds in the bond issue that he has if he chooses to use those funds to fund some of it, there's probably another couple of hundred thousand.

Commissioner Smith: Have they been allocated on this here?

Jacky: No sir.

Commissioner Smith: So it's somewhat better than I think, he may be down to \$700,000.

Judge Mills: How much is he talking about?

Jacky: He has about \$200,000 left of what was allocated for the Road and Bridge. Also, it doesn't have anything additional in the ad valorem tax, it's based on last years, so there will be some increase there, should be.

Commissioner Casterline: He's been doing a lot of stuff since the storm.

David: We have done a lot of stuff, we've gone through a lot of things, you know, the Hurricane, the Floods.

Commissioner Chaney: You've done a lot considering the amount of rain that we've had too.

Commissioner Casterline: Relative to the Allegiance deal, he's fixed a lot of roads, where you know in the areas that we were

having problems, he's actually fixed a large number of those roads to where they can go directly to the property.

Jacky: And now you're going to get \$38,000,000.

David: Maybe, we'll see.

Commissioner Smith: David, how much of this projected 2020 budget for improvements to the Navigation District property, City of Rockport, Town of Fulton, how much of that work have we done this year?

David: We've done some work for all three of those entities.

Commissioner Smith: I mean, you budgeted \$228,000 for this year, is that a fair number?

David: Yeah, we should be pretty close to that.

Commissioner Casterline: Have they already requested that amount?

David: Yes, well they haven't really requested that amount for next year. My conversation was about the same as they did this year, so, that's kind of what we are looking at. They haven't actually told me what they are going to want, they probably haven't figured that out just yet, but they are going to want something.

Commissioner Smith: The last time we did work for the ACISD was back in 2016, but you've got them down for \$50,000 next year, is that a project that they have been talking to you about?

David: Parking lots, we've done work for them this year and they've got some more that they want to get done also.

Judge Mills: Ok, any more questions for David and his wish list?

Commissioner Smith: Under Revenue you talk about fine collections there, how are collections coming?

Jacky: Really bad.

Commissioner Smith: So that \$140,000 that we have budgeted for this year, do you think we are going to hit that?

Jacky: I would be surprised if we hit that, we will have to take another look at that. That's where we are getting hit the hardest, sales tax seems to be doing fine but fines are really...

Commissioner Smith: Interest on Investments is probably lagging behind as well, right?

Jacky: It is going to start, yes. I think everything has dropped.

Commissioner Casterline: I'd like to see you get with Valerie Gonzalez and try to get our policy changed to where, I mean we have a lot of stuff that is getting abandoned in the road right-of-way, and identify at what level, and get us a building and pick it up and either take it to an impound yard, get it off of the street, whether we have to come up with a place to store it and give the required time for them to come and claim it, whatever. It seems like more and more we are getting junk on the right-of-way and the hoops you have to go through to get it..

David: Right, we are doing some of that work this morning.

Commissioner Chaney: Johnson street.

#### FLOOD CONTROL

David: I don't know that I have anything particularly different in Flood Control.

Commissioner Smith: Well that particular fund balance seems to be just sitting there pretty stable.

David: It is, I do have several drainage projects that we are working on, hopefully getting the easements finalized for, and they will be big ticket projects. We've done several big drainage projects this year and probably will still be working on them this year.

Commissioner Smith: How much of that fund balance, Jacky, is still outstanding under money that was borrowed, bond money?

David: There's about \$500,000.

Jacky: But it's not in this fund balance, there is a separate account. That's at \$240,000.

Commissioner Smith: We probably need to clean that out.

David: Yeah, and I'm at the position now to where I'm looking at these projects and I can't start just yet but I know I'm going to wipe that money out as soon as I get those projects underway. It might be best to go ahead and spend it.

Commissioner Casterline: Because we have some time constraints.

Jacky: We need to use that first.

Commissioner Casterline: How is the money that's coming from your part of the grants that we got, I know a lot of them are going to have to be contracted out, but are you going to be able to do any of that or is it all going to be contracted?

David: I suspect most, if not all of it will be contracted out. Probably not all of it but it will be kind of a juggling act. I'm a little afraid that we're going to run out of enough contractors to do the work in the time frame that we have to do it in, so I think Road & Bridge probably is going to have to pitch in just to expedite things.

Commissioner Smith: David, the money that you are going out for equipment this year, is any of that equipment used for flood control purposes?

David: I don't have Grade-All on the list, no this is probably all road stuff. I'd be glad to buy some more excavators if you'd like me to.

Commissioner Smith: I was just trying to find a way to cut down the impact on the other budget.

David: Yeah, let me look at that again.

Commissioner Smith: Because if you're buying equipment that is going to be used for flood control it seems to me that would qualify.

Jacky: You had asked about the fund balance on the capital for the drainage, they have about \$750,000.

Commissioner Smith: I knew it was up there, you've got to spend it.

David: All right.

Commissioner Casterline: If we use that money for drainage on the state road, can we use that money there?

Jacky: Well drainage projects, it depends on how the bond issue was written, normally Bob and them write them general enough that it would qualify for it but..

Commissioner Casterline: One of the biggest issues in the whole county and other counties too is that the state doesn't put enough drainage through the road so it creates a dam.

David: As you probably recall we have that Bahia Bay Drainage project that is in design right now. Right now that construction is not funded, it's not part of the grants. But it is project that's close to a million dollars to construct, and at some point in the next few months, when those plans are ready we will have to figure out, do we put it on the shelf or do we find the money to..

Commissioner Smith: Yeah, part of this is, if you use other funds to do the project you can't recoup them in a grant.

David: True, I mean I'd rather use other people's money, but I'd rather get the project done no matter whose money I have to use.

Commissioner Smith: What's your overall feeling about grants?

David: I hate grants, it's inefficient.

Judge Mills: Alright, any other questions for David? Thank you David.

#### IT DEPARTMENT

Commissioner Chaney: Page 418, maintenance agreements.

Collin: So, this line is going up because a couple of years ago we renewed for multi-year term and so it's coming due for some of that equipment to get the renewal. And so I put that back into the budget to renew those items and that's basically the increase in that line. Most of it is our Cisco contracts for the hardware.

Commissioner Chaney: We talked earlier, do you have anything in there for additional monitors and things like that, if we stay with ZOOM?

Collin: I have put some in there additional audio/video, especially if we stick with ZOOM for courts. I'm trying to get this a little more functional, where more people can see it, where we get more people in here, but also just to have better visual capabilities.

Commissioner Chaney: What does ZOOM cost us?

Collin: Right now it's only about \$400 something a month, I think. But we continue and the OCA, which is currently paying

for the District Courts, County Courts, JP Courts, if they stop paying for it, it's probably going to go up to \$5,000 a year.

Commissioner Casterline: Aren't there some other options, other than ZOOM?

Collin: There are some other options, Go To Meeting, other services. I think for simplicity ZOOM is the simplest of all of them that we've come across and that's partly why the state went with it. But I'd also not want to rock the boat and completely disrupt the courts that are currently using ZOOM and that have figured out, mostly, to use it. By suddenly dropping a different software in it, here, whereas the rest of the State is possibly using ZOOM? I'm trying to keep that uniformity rather than be the odd man out.

Commissioner Smith: Collin, your 2020 budget, line 570 for furniture and equipment, \$260,337, how much of that have you spent of that in the first 6 months?

Collin: This year, I actually have not spent much of it, most of it is dedicated to my large projects.

Commissioner Smith: You don't have an exact number?

Collin: I don't.

Jacky: I can give you a number.

Commissioner Casterline: Dedicated to what, did you say?

Collin: Dedicated to a couple of my large projects, one is the RFP that we are actually about to open today.

Commissioner Chaney: What is an RFP?

Collin: Request For Proposal.

Commissioner Smith: That's such a great budgeted number, the same \$260,337 is budgeted for next year. Is that just a convenience number, you got a detail on that?

Collin: That number I rolled in, I put in some different projects into that figure, and I shifted some money that... I didn't want to ask for less.

Commissioner Smith: And you didn't ask for any more.

Collin: I couldn't come up with anything at the time that needed to be asked for right now, I mean, with COVID though, that could change.

Commissioner Casterline: What are the projects that you have coming up for?

Collin: Replacing quite a bit of our server architecture, some of our servers are beyond their end of life.

Commissioner Chaney: What is end of life on a server, we talked about that about 3 years ago?

Collin: About 8 years, most of these servers are pushing 12 years. Some of them survived Harvey and they are now pushing it to where we have got to get them all, if we don't do something..

Commissioner Chaney: Do we have, you know we put the Ufer grounding in several years ago, and I know that helped with dispatch, and stuff like that. In whatever building we continue to be in, this one, the new one, whatever, is that something that, in this budget, that you need protection, surge suppressors?

Collin: So part of the RP and part of the replacement of the server stuff is replacing battery backup and surge suppression equipment that is attached to that equipment, we are planning to replace that and that is part of this project.

Commissioner Chaney: I know that we've gone to LED in our electrical stuff and they highly recommend the good quality surge protection on any LED stuff. So for this building or another building, are we protected with surge suppression throughout?

Collin: So this building, when they put it together, they did put in transient surge protection devices on the main panels, in addition to our individual equipment, the racks have their own surge suppression equipment, as well as dedicated grounding.

Commissioner Chaney: Ok.

Commissioner Smith: Collin, going forward, the fiber optic grant, I think that has been awarded?

Collin: The fiber optic has been awarded to do the engineering of it, to do the study.

Commissioner Smith: How is that going to impact your budget?

Collin: So, I am working on a project, I presented some of the numbers to the Judge, if that moves forward, while it would be a 10 year type plan, we could ultimately save about \$80,000 a year out of our telecommunications and network.

Commissioner Smith: Based on when the fiber optic is laid?

Collin: Based on the fiber optic installation.

Commissioner Smith: How long will it take to do the fiber optic?

Collin: It would take 10 years to see the return on our investment. To do the installation, some of the companies that we've been talking to, they are pushing orders out. They are booked up through August but they can get it in the ground, once they go through TxDOT permitting and make sure they are not going to be moving roads or right-of-ways.

Commissioner Laubach: Collin, do you mean it would take a few months to do the work and they couldn't start until at least August because they have a back log now?

Collin: Right. Pretty much they've said, if we don't get something going by August it will probably be pushed to 2021 before they can actually start doing construction work.

Commissioner Smith: So is there a possibility that we can get it started by August?

Collin: I guess that depends on how quickly the court can move and how quickly we can move contracts.

Commissioner Casterline: Well I think, if you've only got a grant for doing design work...

Collin: So the design work for the grant, that's part of William Whitson and Long Term Recovery, but that is kind of a multi-jurisdictional, that is a much larger project. This internal project is just a part of our fiber. The City is moving with a company to go ahead and have them buy and install their fiber between their Service Center off of the by-pass and their Laurel Street building where all of their utility and their City Yard is at. But part of the larger study would include getting out to Lamar, the radio towers at the Sheriff's Office, the Fire Departments, and stuff.

Commissioner Smith: What about the new Courthouse location?

Collin: The new Courthouse location would already be served by fiber optic that exists in that area because the County, several years ago, ran fiber between the Public Safety Center, the old Courthouse, and the Detention Center. So we already have a fiber ring in that location, all we would have to do is extend it from the parking lot of the old Courthouse, which is currently under-

ground. We pulled it out and stuck it up in the radio tower room so they will be able to pull that back through and take it over to the Courthouse.

Commissioner Chaney: Do we have anything in here to get better service out to the Transfer Station?

Collin: So, part of the fiber project that I was just talking about, not the grander study and engineering work, but part of this would get fiber to the Transfer Station and the Environmental Health area. But it would also increase, we are in the process of getting a new surveillance camera to finally replace the one out at Animal Control by Harvey. Then we are adding some cameras because we've got some new construction on new fencing and stuff out there, to put cameras on the gates so they can keep track of people going in.

Commissioner Casterline: They continually have severe cell phone issues out there.

Collin: They do, this would allow us to put additional, to actually put wireless action points out there, then they could use their cell phones over that wireless connection to make their phone calls.

Commissioner Casterline: What kind of range does that have?

Collin: Inside the building, if the wireless is done properly and you have multiple antennae's throughout the building, then it would have a much better range.

Commissioner Casterline: Is there any other way to get just regular cell phone service improved on that?

Collin: To do regular service you would have to build basically an indoor repeater to get the signal inside the metal building.

Commissioner Casterline: What about out there on the grounds, out there in the open, you still have bad service?

Collin: That would be up to the individual carrier to put more towers up. Part of this fiber network could get carriers to, because they don't have to pay, because that's the biggest thing, to put a tower up you have to have connectivity to that tower. So, if we have fiber in the ground it's a little bit cheaper for them, all they have to do is find a place to put a tower. That's more of going back to the grand study though, that we would be able to lease excess power that we are not using back to phone carriers and other communication carriers that want to use it.

Kind of make a revenue generating item for the county to self-fund that fiber network.

Judge Mills: It sounds to me like we need to get started on this fiber optics that you have done some research on, it sounds like a viable deal. Any other questions for Collin? If not, thank you very much.

COUNTY/DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Amanda Oster, County/District Attorney Elect: I'm here to present the 2021 Budget, I know Ms. Barnebey is also present, if you have any questions about her current budget or previous year's budgets. So, I'd like to start with the smaller budget which is the Law Library, there are no employees and there are no requested changes there. I will let you know that moving forward to next year I will be looking at all of these expenses to see if there is anywhere that would be appropriate cuts. I don't have access to that information now and it would be inappropriate for me to say that we are over spending. It might very well be the exact amount that we need. Now I will move on to the County/District Attorney's Budget, the only changes that are requested have to do with the additional pay period. No additional spending is requested at this time. I also will be looking at all of these next year so that I am able to give you a better assessment when we have this meeting next year. Are there any questions?

Commissioner Smith: I have a question for Kristen, you passed out some information this morning...

Kristen Barnebey: Right, and I have a presentation, I just wanted to give that to you ahead of time so that you could look at it.

Amanda Oster: And just to let you know, this current budget has the ability to cover the necessary expenses of the County Attorney's office without adding an additional Attorney to cover Civil matters. I do not intend on adding any extra employees next year, there may be some reallocation of duties depending on turnover, but I do not intend on adding any additional employees. Thank you.

Judge Mills: Ok, thank you.

Kristen: Alright, so what is in the packet that I handed out, are facts. So currently that is what the office looks like, that's

my, you know, last minute, but truthful rendition of what it is so you don't have to go back and look it up through the job descriptions and everything else. Does anybody have any questions about our office make-up? Alright then, case levels, attached to that packet is the OCA's representation of the case load, you'll see that about until 2016 our case load were up at about 54% and now they are sitting at about 33%.

Commissioner Smith: So, we got the information through 2017 and it's showing a 54.4% increase.

Kristen: Excuse me 2017.

Commissioner Smith: And what you are saying now is 2018 and 2019 is available?

Kristen: 2018 and 2019 brought it down, of course, because of Hurricane Harvey, so it's down to about 33%, if you look at 2015...

Commissioner Smith: It's still a 33% increase though?

Kristen: Yes sir, the filings.

Commissioner Smith: And our population hasn't really gone up that much.

Kristen: It has not.

Judge Mills: Are there other counties in the District that have gone down?

Kristen: Either stayed stable or gone down. Some of them fairly significantly.

Commissioner Smith: Why do you think ours has gone up here?

Kristen: Uh, we have quite a few more Family Law cases, we have quite a few more Mental Health, I believe, frankly, that people have more access to the Court System now that we have an office here, so they make use of it. We've filed quite a few more Protective Orders, CPS, there's just, everything.

Commissioner Smith: Well Family Law cases, even through 2017 are up 82%, but the Criminal cases are up 67%, almost 68%. So two different areas right there.

Kristen: Right. So I do think that is a positive, or negative, of the access that people have to the court system.

Commissioner Smith: Is that Petty Larceny or is that really, when you say Criminal cases? When you say Criminal case, could you be more specific than what is here?

Kristen: I did not bring those with me from the OCA, but we definitely do, CJIS does break it up.

Commissioner Smith: I know the uniform crime report, I used to look at it, and we had a lot of Petty Larceny and minor Theft, which is pretty typical in a community where you leave stuff out, you have a lot of visitors coming into you're community.

Kristen: Right, I do know that our Sexual Assaults are up, because if you know, before I came in 2015 there were none in the City of Rockport, and those do take quite a bit of time, of course. But the standard, pretty much 78% drugs, still rings true, there's more of it.

Commissioner Smith: Yeah, according to our County Court at Law Judge, most of our CPS cases are drug related as well. So certainly we have some drug problems in our county.

Kristen: We absolutely do, but we have a new Police Chief from Lubbock, he was the head of the Drug Task Force while he was there, that's his specialty. Hopefully he will get to where he is balanced and he can start working on that. So those are the facts on the cases, the budget itself, with a new DA coming in, I would not suggest decreases, just because you're going to have all kinds of different things. And if you remember Charlie, working on the thing when I first came in, it's difficult and it's going to be difficult to make all of this work, so I would suggest leaving it. So, moving forward, I was also asked to divide out how much time I spend on, or our office spends on County Attorney work versus District Attorney work. So in your packet you have a mug shot of Kevin Cullen, I talked to him about what he would quote, or how much he would charge and he said about \$250 an hour and I think that is fairly inexpensive, but you would talk to him about who, what, when, or where. Then also another option for the court is Desiree Both, works for San Patricio county, I included her job description. She gets paid about \$95,000, give or take, and I can find that information for you. She does all kinds of things, she is just the Judge's attorney, so she's also the PIO, you know all of this is fluid, so it can all be done through that. So, if I were estimating, the two offices at this point, taking out the Misdemeanors, the County Attorney portion, post hurricane, takes about 2 and a quarter people, which runs about \$200,000, just ballpark. So, if you know, a Criminal Attorney usually charges

anywhere from, in our county, \$80 - \$100 an hour. If you know the work that a County Attorney does, it's about \$275, the cheapest, to as high as \$525, I found. Another thing that you want to calculate and put in there are things like the assignment that I got last Friday, which is, "In the next two weeks you need to tell us how FEMA can say that the \$800,000 of matching funds that comes from the Bureau of Land Management does not come from appropriations, it actually comes from money that is directed and diverted through the Federal Government, and therefore it can be used". Those kinds of things, there's all kinds of different things, those are more specialty items and I would suggest they are more on the higher end. So currently, as the County Attorney, and know also that the law is, the County Attorney doesn't have to do anything, if you remember, it is only to respond, it's that one thing, only to respond to written questions. If you remember I came to the Commissioner's Court, way back when, and said, "What do you want me to do?" Then it just kind of became hodge podge, so our office does open records requests, specialized work, and contracts, so any department head or anyone who wants to talk about a contract, maybe they are not versed in that, or maybe they've got one that they want to get out of, whatever, so we work on contracts. We also do Long Term Recovery claims, so William (Whitson) needed to know, you know, facts, and we turn those around fairly quickly if we can. The other was a water law question at one point, of course we also do questions and everything else from you guys, so that's really the gist of it, if you were going to divide it out.

Commissioner Smith: So you think it's about \$200,000 a year.

Kristen: It would be around that, if you hired somebody to do it, it would be about \$100,000, if you could find somebody like Desiree who would do it. If you used a Kevin Cullen, he quoted \$250, just because he knows our county. Typically the County Attorney work, for instance, from Port Lavaca, he comes from Port Lavaca.

Judge Mills: Kevin is the Victoria County Attorney, right?

Kristen: He is by default, he is and apparently I didn't realize that he had been there for so long.

Judge Mills: But he doesn't attend meetings?

Kristen: No, he does not. Victoria does not have, they have a Criminal District Attorney, they don't have a County Attorney.

Commissioner Smith: Wait a minute, Kevin is the elected County Attorney?

Kristen: No, he is not elected, they have only a Criminal District Attorney. So, that's what he's done, he does open records requests, I think when I said meetings, he said if we scheduled meetings on Fridays he could come. (Laughter)

Commissioner Smith: Well, he also has a house here.

Kristen: That's exactly what I was alluding to, yes. So there's that, it would just be a matter of finding one, but we are also talking about counties that have Assistants for their Commissioners.

Commissioner Casterline: We don't even have an office here.

Kristen: Right, so there are all kinds of things to consider. So, I'm open for any questions.

Amanda: I would like to respond on that. I just want you to know that I have taken into consideration all of the responsibilities that the County Attorney's office needs to provide. I have spoken with other offices where they have joint County/District Attorneys, I've looked at job descriptions, job postings, and I have every intention of filling my office with appropriate people who can fulfill all of these tasks. If I'm not personally able to come to every single meeting someone will be there. Before you spend another \$100,000 or \$200,000, you need to really consider the fact that I've taken that into account.

Commissioner Smith: When you say you'll have somebody from your office, will you have an attorney?

Amanda: Yes.

Commissioner Smith: Fair enough.

Kristen: And please don't, I only brought this up because somebody asked me to do this, I'm not making any representations.

Judge Mills: I know. Thank you Amanda.

#### AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Virginia Easton-Smith: So we are just asking for \$1,600 more.

Commissioner Laubach: What is the increase for?

Virginia: \$600 for cell phone allowance because we use our cell phones constantly for our jobs, including doing things like making videos, doing Facebook live, more digital education. And of course more contact with clientele, of course, that would be split between Meagan and I. \$800 more for conference and association dues and \$200 more for travel and meals.

Commissioner Smith: It looks like that variance column on there is kind of screwed up.

Commissioner Laubach: Yeah, you don't really want \$35,000 more.

Jacky: If you'll look at the screen it has been corrected and what I gave you this morning reflects that.

Commissioner Laubach: Ok, thank you.

Jacky: For Personnel, it's a decrease of the \$21,017.

Commissioner Smith: I don't have any questions.

Judge Mills: Thank you.

#### ELECTIONS

Michele Carew: So when I submitted my budget request, under Line 570 I had put in this \$16,000, that was reflective of our match for the last grant that we just approved. Because it wasn't on last year's budget and I wasn't sure if it was going to make it for this year, I was asking for next year, so you can scratch that, I no longer need that dollar amount. The only thing I might make a suggestion on is, there is talk that additional funds may be coming, I don't know if it's going to be this year or next year, so I don't know if you want to go ahead and plan for it, but there is an additional Federal money coming, we just don't know when or where, the talks just began on that. So I don't know if you want to include it in next year's budget, but if you don't need to then...

Judge Mills: If you're betting on what's coming down from the Federal Government, don't bet too much.

Michele: Right. The only other increase that I had was on Line 418, Maintenance Agreements, our License and Support Fees have, they go up 4% every year, so from the time that we purchased our new equipment you'll notice, like in 2018 our Maintenance

Agreements were \$11,000 and then 2019 is when we paid for our License and Support for our new voting equipment and it went up. So, I added up everything with the 4% increase and it brings us to the additional \$8,000 for License and Support money, it also includes extended warranty for our voting equipment. So, our vendor offers us an extended warranty where you pay a flat rate and any time you have equipment repairs it's covered in that.

Commissioner Smith: One question, the \$20,500 this year, that's a good number?

Michele: No, it's not, we've already paid, well actually I don't have the column to tell you what we've already paid this year, but everything we pay we pay at the beginning, so we've already maxed out on that money. We are closer to \$28,000, because if you look and 2019 we had \$26,531.

Commissioner Smith: So essentially we've been under budgeted for 2020, right?

Michele: Yes sir.

Jacky: If you'll look at the screen I have year to date on the Maintenance Agreements, it's \$20,427 is what we've spent.

Commissioner Smith: That's for 6 months?

Jacky: Yes sir, but as she said most of that is paid up-front, so that's probably pretty close to what all it's going to be.

Michele: For this year.

Jacky: For this year, for 2020.

Commissioner Smith: Why is it going up \$8,000 this next year?

Michele: Because we've since added programs that we are going to have to pay a License Support on next year, such as our Ballot by Mail program that we are currently using. Also on our Easy Vote system, which is what we do Campaign Finance on, so we have additional licenses that are going to be paid next year.

Commissioner Smith: So it's not just the regular maintenance costs, you've got different programs.

Michele: That's right.

Commissioner Smith: Well, why didn't you just say that to start off with?

Michele: I apologize.

Commissioner Smith: Well it almost leaves me with a feeling that I'm not getting the straight scoop here.

Michele: I don't have a reason to lie to you, these are the figures that I've received from our vendors.

Commissioner Smith: I didn't say that.

Michele: One thing that I have not paid for this year, because I did not budget it in for last year, was the extended warranty on our equipment. We've since had repairs and that's what I was getting at, we can either do the extended warranty where we pay a flat fee to cover all of the equipment or you can pay by the piece, so after the Primary I personally took pieces of the equipment to our vendor in Austin and dropped them off, and we paid out of pocket for that and it cost about \$600 per piece of equipment. So we have 50 pieces of equipment.

Commissioner Chaney: So what does the extended warranty cost?

Michele: It's like \$2,500 a year.

Commissioner Chaney: So you spent \$600, but this is all new equipment too?

Michele: It's all new equipment but, you know, things do happen. The only other thing that I asked for was in Line 425, Conference and Association Fees, as you guys all know, I did the Sierra Program and graduated last year and I was wanting to put Julie through it and the classes are not cheap. So this year they have cancelled all of the classes, so the money that we budgeted this year for her to take additional classes, they've cancelled them all due to COVID. So I was hoping that, to stay on schedule, that we could add a little bit more money to it so she could finish all of her classes next year to stay on target to graduate.

Commissioner Chaney: Other than increased knowledge, what is the advantage to the County to do that program versus just is what is minimally required?

Michele: Besides all of the information that you get, you actually for these relationships with people who are in this line of profession. We all get together, we talk about things, you form this relationships to where, like if we had an additional question or we wanted to bring in something new, you could reach out to other people. It's a constant thing, it's like year round, they

ask us to turn in like something you did in your county, you have like all of these symposiums that is just continuing education to keep us in line with all of the election changes that are occurring throughout the United States, not just in Texas. So, if I had to say, other than just the classes, I get more from meeting other people and learning from them than I do from a textbook. I think it would be beneficial for Julie to do it.

Judge Mills: And the \$16,000 in Office Furniture & Equipment, that's out, right?

Michele: That's out.

Commissioner Laubach: You've got an increase in personnel services, is that pretty much just the 27 pay periods issue?

Jacky: It is.

Judge Mills: Any more questions? If not, Michele thank you.

*Rick Martinez, Parks Director - City of Rockport (Pool) was not present.*

Commissioner Casterline: Did they ask for more than what we had in there?

Jacky: Oh yes, \$80,000 or so.

Commissioner Casterline: So was it our intention to leave it the way it was? (NO COMMENTS MADE)

*Joe Reikers - Crimestoppers was not present.*

Commissioner Smith: You know, I talked with Mr. Reikers after the Election, he took me through his entire program and it's a worthy project, and we haven't been making any contributions to it at all. Amanda, have you had any experience with Crimestoppers?

Amanda Oster: Not with our local, I've met people who were part of it but I don't have any idea...

Commissioner Smith: No, I mean, have they been of assistance to you in the past?

Amanda: In the larger counties, not in this County, personally. They are able to come in contact with normal people, people who may not feel comfortable going to the Police Department, and they

can kind of anonymously give information, which is really beneficial to some people, especially if it's your spouse or your loved one and you're not comfortable going to the Police Department.

Kristen: So Charlie, I go to their meetings, periodically, and I agree their program is awesome. And then the forfeiture funds paid for an apt to go on the phones at the school and so we worked with the school to do that as well.

Commissioner Smith: I made the offer to the City Manager, that if they still want to participate I would certainly bring it up in Commissioner's Court here. I never heard back from him but I do think it's a good program and I'd like to get participation from the City as well.

Commissioner Casterline: Do we have any funds besides the General Fund where we could take the money from?

Jacky: Not that I'm aware of. They have requested \$5,000, there was a fund that I looked at that was a special revenue fund but there's not any money in there.

Judge Flanigan: You know a number of years ago I think Aransas County and the City of Rockport did supply some funds to Crimestoppers, I used to be on board back when I was the District Attorney, and I know that we have a Crimestoppers fee that's assessed against almost all of the folks that are on probation that supports the program. So the District Judges certainly approved that one, the probation fee and the continuation has been very successful, all I can say is we support them.

Commissioner Smith: You support it in the County's that ask you to put it in?

Judge Flanigan: Yes, the two counties that we have the Tri-County Crimestoppers, both Aransas and San Patricio counties, I think those Crimestoppers fees are directed to that organization. In the other counties I think that the Crimestoppers fee goes to the State Umbrella organization, I can't say that for sure but I think that's how it works.

Commissioner Smith: How much is the fee?

Judge Flanigan: It's a straight \$50 fee for each person that is placed on probation.

Kristen: And just another plug for Crimestoppers, they had their troubles for a while, and for whatever reason Probation wasn't paying, so they do have some debt. But there are some really good people who have been working tirelessly.

Commissioner Casterline: Have they made a request.

Jacky: Yes sir.

Judge Mills: Alright, so we'll put some money in that.

Jacky: Ok.

#### AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Jacky: As far as our salaries go, you know we did include the new employee, it is included in this budget. Other than that we really don't have anything, I had requested an additional scanner just because, with the new employee helping with accounts payable and stuff, we do scan all of the invoices in and that will help with the work load that we have.

Commissioner Smith: That's close to 15%, are you going to be able to live in the future with just 3 ½%?

Jacky: Yes sir.

Commissioner Smith: We're sure not going to live with it this year, are we?

Jacky: No, but we do have an additional employee, who is being funded by Admin Fees and DAC, and we will have those fees for at least 2 or 3 years for sure.

Commissioner Casterline: Do we have them or will we get them in the next 2 or 3 years, we don't get that money until we get the money for the grant, do we?

Jacky: No, we've got several projects that we are already going to be able to do. We are working with Cone Resment right now, to get that program all funded. We've got, basically about \$2,500,000 available to us to draw on from projects now and that's not including Cedar Bayou. Cedar Bayou will be, probably, another \$500,000 or so because it is a percentage, it's like 5% of the total project.

Jacky: Our next Budget Hearings will be August 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Judge Mills: Ok, I think we are done here.

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*No further business presenting, the Court adjourned at 11:02 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Laubach.*

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



VALERIE K. AMASON,

EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT