

ORIGINAL

MINUTES OF THE
COMMISSIONERS' COURT

SPECIAL MEETING - AUGUST 7, 2014

On the 7th day of August, 2014, there was a Special Meeting of the Commissioner' Court held in the Commissioners' Court, 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; Betty Stiles, Commissioner, Precinct 4; and Peggy L. Friebele, County Clerk.

Other County Officers present were Richard Bianchi, County Attorney; Bill Mills, Sheriff; James Jackson, Director of Environmental Health; Pam Heard, District Clerk; and Lezlie Kirk, County Auditor.

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

ITEMS FOR DELIBERATION AND/OR ACTION

ARANSAS COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Judge Mills stated Commissioner Smith had brought up some interesting facts regarding this contract. Commissioner Smith stated the entities had decided to do individual contracts. Michael Saski with Allegiance replied the County wanted its own contract. Smith stated the County did want its own separate contract. Smith stated some adjustments needed to be made regarding the "donut hole" and Lamar. Smith stated 62% of the 2013 calls occurred in the "donut hole" which is property that has not been annexed by the City of Rockport but is bounded on three sides by the City. He stated the County wants a fair rate and "one size does not fit all." There was a question on additional response time; Allegiance stated they have additional costs to respond to outlying areas. Smith stated in computing the calls they are charging an extra hour for every five calls and their numbers do not make sense. Smith also stated the County has never been in a budget constraint when it comes to emergency services. Allegiance stated the mileage is based on national standards.

Commissioner Chaney asked Mr. Saski if they had made any inquiries to Port Lavaca to handle response on the North side of the County if Copano Causeway Bridge is closed. Saski replied "no." Chaney also stated he is worried the price will go up every year because of increase in gasoline prices.

County Attorney Bianchi stated the 3% increase is negotiated every year.

Commissioner Casterline asked if they had finalized a location for housing their ambulances. They had not. He suggested they put an ambulance at the Lamar Fire Station in the event the bridge is closed and wanted this to be in their contract.

Mr. Saski agreed percentages should be renegotiated if the City of Rockport annexes any of the County.

Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve contract with Lonestar Ambulance 1, LLC (dba Allegiance Ambulance) for Aransas County Emergency Medical Services addressing response time, mandatory ambulance in Lamar if Copano Causeway is closed, and subject to final review with changes.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Contract inserted)

Commissioner Chaney stated "it breaks my heart" that this has to be done and thanked the current EMS for their thirty-five (35) years of service.

The Court recessed at 10:10 a.m. and returned to Open Session at 10:20 with further proceedings had and done to wit:

2015 BUDGET DISCUSSION

County Auditor Kirk revisited the Transfer Station budget stating professional services had been reduced. Commissioner Chaney stated the Transfer Station should increase fees especially for taking brush. Commissioner Smith stated the County would have a \$743,749.00 deficit at this point in budget negotiations if they go with the effective tax rate. Kirk told the Court the HR Director requested \$12,000.00 for part-time held; Airport Manager wanted to change his employees from Grade 11 to Grade 14; IT Director wanted an additional full-time employee and to fill current part-time position; Auditor wanted an additional full-time employee for auditing; and Community Services wanted a part-time employee. Judge Mills stated the Auditor should get a part-time employee and Commissioner Smith stated Auditor's step increase costs should be taken out of the \$50,000.00 pool and placed in her budget. Commissioner Chaney stated he was not sure about the training position in the Sheriff's budget.

Smith stated they needed to discuss the IT Department budget requests in closed session. County Clerk Friebele and Judge's Administrative Assistant Linda Garcia stated they did not believe the Court could go into closed session because it had not been posted. Judge Mills left the Courtroom to confer with County Attorney Bianchi who told the Judge they could go into closed session.

The Court entered into closed session at 11:00 a.m. to discuss

personnel items on the budget and returned to open session at 11:50 a.m. with further proceedings had and done to wit:

The Court discussed giving a 1.5% or 2% raise to employees and increasing the effective tax rate by \$.02. Chaney stated the Court should go with a 1.5% raise since they assumed the total increase for additional health insurance and did not pass it on the employees.

Airport Manager Johnson returned to discuss his request for grade increases for his employees which would amount to \$4,000.00 per year per each of his four (4) employees. Casterline asked Johnson why his employees merited this increase. Johnson stated they handle money, credit cards, and deal with the public daily. The Court reminded Johnson of the policy regarding step increases but agreed to give Johnson's employees a one grade increase from a Grade 11 to a Grade 12. This would amount to approximately \$1,000.00 per year more each.

No further business presenting, the Court adjourned on a motion made by Commissioner Casterline duly seconded by Commissioner Chaney.

C. H. "Burt" Mills, Jr. COUNTY JUDGE

PEGGY L. FRIEBELE, COUNTY CLERK &
EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE
COMMISSIONERS' COURT