

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

REGULAR MEETING - DECEMBER 11, 2017

On the 11th day of December, 2017, there was a Regular Meeting of the Commissioners' Court at the Aquarium at Rockport Harbor Education Center, 706 Navigation Circle, 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; **Brian Olsen**, Commissioner, Precinct 3; **Betty Stiles**, Commissioner, Precinct 4; and **Valerie K. Amason**, County Clerk.

Other County Officers present were **Kristen Barnebey**, County Attorney; **Alma Cartwright**, Treasurer; **Suzy Wallace**, Interim County Auditor; **Bill Mills**, Sheriff; **Linda Garcia**, Executive Assistant to the County Judge; **Sue Pash**, Chief Deputy Treasurer; **David Reid**, Road Administrator/Drainage Engineer/Stormwater Management Engineer; **Jacky Cockerham**, Assistant County Auditor; **Collin Jackson**, IT Director; **Linda Doane**, Human Resources Director **Michael Geer**, Airport Manager; **John Strothman**, Pathways Project Manager; **Diana Espinoza**, Drainage Engineer; **Rene Butler**, Maintenance Director; **Michele Bennett**, Elections Administrator; **Will Whitson**, Long Term Recovery Specialists; Members of Local City Government, Community Groups and other Interested Parties present:

Russell Cole, Wendy Laubach, Billy Burke, Aransas County Residents;

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:

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were none.

PRESENTATIONS

1. AgriLife Extension Activities: **Virginia Easton-Smith** and **Bethany Hammond** brought the Court up to date on events they hosted throughout the year. **Bethany:** I want to start with Family Community Health, which includes our "Stroll through Rockport". We had over 120 registered to participate with people choosing 2 or 4 mile routes and the benefits were physical activity and learning history about the Rockport area. We hosted a five series program "Do Well, Be Well" at the Public Library to educate people about Type 2 Diabetes and we had 25 registrants for that event. We had our "Dinner Tonight Program" in Aransas Pass with the San Patricio County Extension office. We had the chef from Harrison's Landing in Corpus Christi and Aransas Pass Food Blogger, Vianney Rodriguez, who demonstrated healthy recipes using beef, grains, and seafood, then they also made a healthy desert. We also did our "Kids in the Kitchen Summer Camp" in partnership with Calhoun County Extension Office and there were 19 kids in attendance. We taught them how to make butter using Mason Jars, homemade pasta & also how to can strawberry jam. We had a "Car Seat Check-Up" event at the Wal-Mart parking lot, checking 22 child safety seats and most of the kids in Aransas County were retrained properly. We also had our "Food Protection Managers Certification Class", a two day course for people who want to work in Restaurants and Day Cares. **Virginia:** One of the things I do every year is the Master Gardeners Training and that started in August and we had 4

Classes with 15 students, but after Hurricane Harvey hit some of them were not able to continue, but we did start it back up and we are going to have graduation this week. Master Gardeners do a lot of volunteer work, they put on programs, and they have a design team that designs science tapes for government agencies and non-profits. They also have a tree team that goes out and takes samples to help people figure out problems with their trees. I've been doing education classes for landscapers to focus on the best fertilizers to use because of the drain-off on our bays and estuaries. I put on a public education series which is a Brown Bag each month on all kinds of different topics. Stephanie and I share writing for a news column every week in our paper, several of the area papers and in the Corpus Christi Caller-Times. We also have a Community Garden on Ann Street which is a joint project between myself and Stephanie, we also teach food preparation and nutrition in an 8 week long series of classes with a focus on horticulture. We also have our "Learn, Grow, Eat, Go" program which teaches kids about growing plants, preparing them, nutrition and physical activity which we do in the Life Skills class at the High School. We had two other locations before the Hurricane, now this is the only one that is active. The "Stroll through Rockport" also visited the Community Garden where we gave out seeds. We have about 64 Master Gardeners right now.

Bethany: For our 4-H and Youth Development program, Ginger & I both share, I focus mainly on homemaking side and she focuses on the livestock and agricultural side. We have five 4-H Clubs in our county with over 70 members and 17 adult volunteers. Commissioner Olsen is our Public Speaker volunteer. We also have a Clover Kids Club at Odyssey after School Program, for

Kids under the 3rd Grade level, between kindergarten and 2nd grade for kids that want to be in 4-H. They can't participate in competition but they still get the 4-H education. We also hold County & District contests, this year we had our County Round-up where the kids participated in clothing and textiles contests, public speaking, consumer decision making, and educational presentation to name a few. The kids that compete at county, most of them will advance to the District competitions and that's where they will compete with kids from 17 other counties. We also have kids who participate in the San Patricio and Aransas County A&H Show. This year we had over 100 projects which includes homemaking & animal projects, a few of the kids also go to the Major Shows like San Antonio, Houston and Austin Livestock Shows. We also do a community service in 4-H which stands for Hand, Heart, Health, and Home, the Hand means Community Service, your helping other people. Some of the Community Service that we did, we had a Hurricane Clean-Up for some of our 4-H members and we did that in partnership with Guadalupe County 4-H, also constructing stockings that will be handed out to others that lost their Christmas decorations as a result of the Hurricane.

Virginia: We took six kids to 4-H Day at the Capital for the first time this year and met with Representative Morris and Senator Kolkhurst. The kids had programs to learn about how things work in Austin. We hosted our Junior Leader Lab here in Rockport and our District has 18 other counties so there were about 108 kids that came. We do about 5 different programs with the kids rotating through each program. We hosted a 4-H Fun Camp this year, we had 35 kids, third through eighth grade, that came for a week in the summer, and we took field trips and

had various speakers come in, we had a lot of fun. 4-H Statewide put together a Hurricane Harvey Rebuilding Fund, got donations from around the State, we applied for several Grants and ended up receiving about \$17,000 for our Clubs. One is to do some work on the County Shooting Range, we need a new generator, shed and lights.

We have one our 4-H members here with us today and I'll let her introduce herself.

My name is **Kaehlen Ramos**, I've been in 4-H for three years, my favorite project that I do is Archery, but I also enjoy sewing, baking, cooking and I love Community Service Projects. Today we are finishing the stockings and will be handing them out to needy families. Thank you.

Virginia: She's been doing a great job. Since Harvey we have been involved in Rebuild Texas, passing information on to the Governor's Commission. We have also been working with our 4-H families in the Community that have suffered losses and we've given out about 600 of these bags which have items such as bug spray, hand sanitizer, and information on recovery. Thank you.

Judge Mills: As you can see these ladies have been busy this year. They do a lot of good things for the Community and we appreciate you and all that you do. **Bethany:** Thank you for your support.

2. Friends of the History Center: Vickie Moon Merchant,

President: (Handed papers to the Commissioner's) This is our activities since August. We are so excited to have Judge Dupnik over in the History Center, where she is holding court behind an 1871 Courthouse table. We just finished our 10th Annual Tour of Homes, one of our visitors said this is the

best tour yet. We had over 100 docents and over 400 visitors for the 2 day tour, 50% were from Rockport, 20% from Texas nearby, 20% from Texas Distant and 10% were Winter Texas and we really appreciate the 5 homeowners who helped us out. Of course, we had the History Center open the 2 days also. Right after the Hurricane a friend of Carla Rinche's from A&M Agrilife, contacted her and said what do you need? She said we need humming bird plants, so they brought a whole trailer full, people were lined up at 7:30 in the morning to get the free plants to take to their homes to attract hummingbirds, this was on October the 19th, by 9:20 a.m. all of the plants were gone. We were fortunate to get a small Grant from Humanities Texas from the Harvey Recovery Grant which helped revitalize our Herb Garden and the grounds and our volunteers added those plants. We have some new retail offerings: beautiful note cards and then Pat Garland wrote a book about herbs in the garden, so we have these for sale. Right after the Hurricane, Lloyd Matthews, one of our board members, was contacted and people from Massachusetts said, "How can we help the people in Rockport"? He told them just send money, so he contacted the "Kids Care" at Good Samaritans and the money collected at the History Center will be given to them this week. One of our 5-year plan goals is to have a permanent exhibit, so when people do come into the History Center, they get an idea of the rich history. We will still rotate the other exhibits. Our tentative exhibits for next year are Foodways Culinary Traditions of Aransas County, a Salute to the Aransas County Military efforts, the Barrier Islands and Archaeology, and we are continuing to see privately funded grants for our support. We

have some honorees here today, Linda Garcia-Haynes, Jackie Shaw, and Janet Taylor, who have been here since the beginning and we want to honor them for all of their vision, foresight, hard work and guidance for the History Center as it began and continues.

3. New Voting System "Verity": Felice Liston with Hart

InterCivic, the County uses our current Harte System and what I have here is the new Verity System. Harte and its headquarters is located in Texas and we have over 100 years of Election experience. We design, develop and manufacture our systems in Texas so our roots and legacy are very strong here. We are one of the premier voting systems across the United States, so although Texas is our primary community and where we have the most business, we have our Voting System installed coast to coast across the U.S. and some of those places that we have are actually state-wide systems. Here in Texas, Elections are run at the County level so each County can choose which voting system to use. The entire states of Oklahoma and Hawaii use our voting system and Hawaii uses the Harte system which you currently use, so again our experience is vast and wide. Our Verity system is new, we are actually the only vendor in the U.S. who has a system that is new from the ground up, so all the components that you see here is the latest and the greatest. Unlike other vendors we chose to start from the ground up with the design of this voting system because your total cost of ownership is lower if you're able to buy something that is all new. We didn't take

(Inserts)

one of the systems that you are voting with and simply update it or attach a new component to it and call it new.

Everything you see here is new from the ground up so you're able to get the pieces and parts longer, the total life of the system will last longer. Sixty percent of the most populace counties in Texas use the Harte voting system and 58% of the registered voters are able to vote on the Harte voting system, so we are proud of the commitment that we bring to Texas. Of the Counties that have purchased Verity in Texas and since December of last year, we've shipped over 7,100 of these devices just in Texas alone and 100% of those using the Verity System in Texas have given Harte a high mark of satisfaction. We are ready to assist on the phone or hop in the car and be here in just a few hours and that's what you need is customer service and support. Now let's talk about Security, you hear it a lot in the Media today, about Elections and security, so I have some things to point out. First and foremost, our system is not connected to the Internet, the voting system, the workstation that brings in the results are not connected to the Internet, the system provides for triple redundancy. So what that means is, there is a media device in the brains of the voting device that the poll worker uses, that media device is what Ms. Bennett uses at the end of the night to put together all of the results and have one result for the entire county. If something happens to the media device, Ms. Bennett would be able to pull the results from the centralized command control that the poll worker uses, she can also pull the results from each individual voting device, so that's three different places that she can bounce off of each other to make sure the tabulations of all three are the same. The system is also white

listed which means that if some other application was trying to be installed on the device which wasn't approved on the white list, the device would not accept the new software application. Another thing that we provide to you is the kiosk mode, which means the only applications that are allowed for the voting system software are the only ones that can be used or pulled up on the device. So if Ms. Bennett wanted to get to the operating system on the tabulation PC for some reason, she would actually need to call in to our customer support center at our headquarters and ask for the passwords to get to that operating system, so we would have that on file. There is no reason for her to get to the operating system, everything she needs is on the devices themselves, but we have the ability to do that should something occur. Another thing that is available to her, after an election should something need to be hand counted, all of the cast vote records could be printed out and she could hand count all of those paper ballots, so that's actually a fourth redundancy. So let's talk about the system itself and the biggest thing that the voters are going to notice. Just like today, you've got the centralized command and control device that the poll worker is responsible for in the polling location. The voter now has touch screen ability on this system and instead of the four digit code that the voter was getting, you now have a five digit code, just one more added layer of security. The one centralized command and control device can have up to twelve voting devices hooked to it. The first screen will have the choice to vote in English or Spanish. Once they have made that choice they will enter the five digit code. The instructions are on the left hand side of the screen and these move with you as you go through the ballot. Another really nice

new feature is that they can change the language at any time during the voting process and they can also change the size of the font. After the voter has cast the vote, all of the changes made by that person, default back to the original device setting. Another new feature is that the Cast Ballot Button is not available until they get to the Summary Ballot Screen, they can go back to the ballot to make changes and then return to the Summary Screen, once they are satisfied that the ballot is ready they can cast the voted ballot by hitting the blue button, the machine will again ask if they want to cast their vote and they still have the choice of returning to the ballot or completing the voting process. Once the ballot is cast as it is today, you see the American Flag. Once this happens the vote is stored in the three separate locations, the voting device they voted on, in the memory of the centralized command and control device, and the media device that Ms. Bennett uses at the end of the Election to tabulate the results. Another nice feature is curbside voting, today the poll worker can only take the very last device on the line of machines out to the curb, with Verity you can remove any unit and take it out to the curb, so you could assist several curbside voters at the same time. You let them vote, cast their ballot, and take the device back into the polling location and lock it back into the docking station, verify that the total votes increased by one vote on the centralized command and control device, that the ballot was recorded in the system, and then the unit it is ready for the next voter. These units can also be converted to use with paper ballots, if needed. So, essentially Verity is purpose built, more compact, cost savings re-chargeable batteries and paper to machine or machine to paper

capabilities. Thank you so much for the opportunity to show you the system.

CONSENT ITEMS

Motion was made by Commissioner Olsen and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve:

4. Minutes from the Special Meeting of December 5, 2017.
5. Allowing the Airport Manager to put out request for bids to replace three (3) airport crew vehicles that were damaged by Hurricane Harvey.
6. Allowing the Aransas County Airport to accept a donation from AEP for \$8,743.00 for repairs.
7. Recognize a donation from Earl Webb to be used at the Linda Castro Birding and Nature Venue.
8. Allowing the Sheriff permission to go out for bids to replace mobile terminals in patrol cars that were damaged by Hurricane Harvey.
9. **This item was pulled for closed session.**
10. Surety Bonds for the Auditor's office for the Internal Auditor, First Assistant Auditor and three (3) Assistant Auditors.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

COUNTY REPORTS

11. Motion was made by Commissioner Olsen and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve Quarterly 2017 HOT Fund Report for the Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce.

(Insert)

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

12. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Olsen to approve Quarterly 2017 Report for the Friends of the History Center.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

COUNTY ROADS

13. Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve Preliminary Road Closure for Rockport Terminals' request to close Ocean Drive within Rockport Terminals' property boundaries. Ocean Drive cuts through the property starting on the Northeast corner, adjacent to the property Marshall's Landing (Legal description of property: Marshall's Landing Lot 1, Block 1) and ending at Rockport Terminals' Southeastern boundary.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

14. Motion was made by Commissioner Olsen and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve adopting the Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan in order to receive hazard mitigation assistance grants effective today, with the stipulation that all future additions to the plan must go through the Judge's office for approval.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS & GRANTS

15. Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve authorizing the County Judge to sign a one year Inter-local Agreement with San Patricio County regarding the Intoxilyzer Program and Technical Supervisor Services.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

16. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to TABLE the purchase of Hart InterCivic's Verity Voting System.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

17. Motion was made by Commissioner Olsen and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to TABLE authorizing the County Judge to sign the Hart Verity Master Agreement.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

PLANNING & BUDGET OFFICE

18. Motion was made by Commissioner Olsen and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve reclassification of Environmental Health Director from Pay Group 22 to Pay Group 23; added responsibilities of position and market comparison require a higher pay group. No new money.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

19. Motion was made by Commissioner Olsen and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve accepting donations made to Aransas County in the amount of \$1,300 from Coastal Bend Community Foundation for payment of a generator rental for Aransas County Municipal Utility.
Question. Motion carried with Commissioner Chaney abstaining.
It is so ordered.
20. Motion was made by Commissioner Stiles and seconded by Commissioner Olsen to approve adopting the Aransas County Fund Balance Policy.
Question. Motion carried unanimously.
It is so ordered.
21. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve adopting the Aransas County Fraud Prevention and Detection Policy.
Question. Motion carried unanimously.
It is so ordered.
22. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to approve adopting the Aransas County Fixed Asset Methodology Policy.
Question. Motion carried unanimously.
It is so ordered.
23. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Olsen to approve November 2017 Indigent Health Care Report.
Question. Motion carried unanimously.
It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

24. There were no Budget Line Item Transfers.

25. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Casterline 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: Last Friday John Johnson from the American Jail Association came to Rockport and visited with Detention Officers and to recognize them and in support them in a way that they had collected donations across the Nation for Detentions officers and presented checks to 41 detention officers in Aransas County to assist them for the time that they lost due to Hurricane Harvey. Chris Kirk from Brazos County also presented 42 other officers with certificates of appreciation and a patch from Brazos County recognizing Honorary Detention officers there for the time that they served during the recovery efforts.

Commissioner Chaney: Sheriff, do you think we could have an Item on the Agenda after the first of year so that we can show appreciation to Sheriff's and other services where we can officially thank them? **Sheriff Mills:** Absolutely.

Judge Mills: If we do as suggested by Ricky McLester, declare a day of appreciation for everyone that helped us after Hurricane Harvey, we'd have to have about five other days. **Commissioner Chaney:** Let's do a week anyway.

(Inserts)

Commissioner Olsen: Thursday night my wife and I went to Wal-Mart and ran into 4 groups of Mennonite Women shopping for their men who are here to help with recovery efforts and as they walked by they had two shopping carts that had more food than I could believe that they would ever use, so not only are coming in to help, they are also stimulating our economy.

Alma Cartwright: To add to your note, actually the sales tax for November was up by 1 percent.

Commissioner Chaney: The Chamber has really stepped up during this time for the Seafair to be the 6th most attended, that's a prime example that the Chamber's efforts is really working & I would like to publicly thank them.

Commissioner Stiles: Well you know, there was a lot of rumor out there that they were doing it for profit and they didn't, I sit on the board at the Chamber. Seafair did not make any money, they let the kids in for free but it was successful as a great boost to our moral.

The Court entered into closed session at 10:20 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 10:40 a.m. with all members present, and further proceedings were had and done to wit:

9. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Stiles to go with the Sheriff's recommendation to award the contract for the Replacement Tower to Victoria Communications.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

No further business presenting, the Court adjourned at 10:41 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Olsen and seconded by Commissioner Casterline.

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

VALERIE K. AMASON,
EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE
COMMISSIONERS' COURT