

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

WORKSHOP MEETING - MARCH 13, 2017

On the 13th day of March, 2017, there was a Workshop Meeting of the Commissioners' Court in the Courthouse, 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 **Lynn Doane**, Administrative Assistant to the County Judge; **David Reid**, Road Administrator/Drainage Engineer/Stormwater Management Engineer; **Collin Jackson**, IT Director; **Diana Espinoza**, Drainage Engineer; Members of Local City Government, Community Groups and other Interested Parties present:

**Mike Probst**, Editor and Publisher of the Rockport Pilot Newspaper;

The Meeting was convened at **11:00 a.m.** at which time a quorum was declared by Judge Mills, WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had and done to wit:

ITEM FOR DELIBERATION AND/OR ACTION

Discussion regarding County Road issues with County Road Engineer.

David Reid opened discussion stating he wants to talk about the roads that we have and the roads we don't have and think about

what we want as we move forward. There are about 150 miles of paved roads with 300 miles of drainage ditches and they are mowed three or four times annually. Roads are on a five year rotation for a new seal coat but they are maintained as needed and they are in pretty good shape. The cement is stabilized for the most part. There is also another 20 miles of unpaved roads that they are working towards getting paved. Those are the roads that they receive the most calls on and there is much more maintenance involved. The court authorized spending about \$200,000 a year on building these. A couple were built this year and Copano Retreat was built last year. There are also the "no county maintenance roads" or "paper roads", these are roads that have been grown over with brush and/or trees, some of them people live on but there are signs posted that say "county maintenance ends".

Commissioner Casterline stated that when the County went to the Unit Road System, you basically took an inventory of the all of the roads that were being worked on and those roads that are basically referred to as in the system. They have the ability to be worked on and upgraded as money is available. I don't know if the code tells you what to do with the other ones, but you have to get all of the roads that were in the system, when it was created, finished before starting on the others.

David replied, the ones that are in the system, basically, are these 150 and the 20 unpaved roads. We've probably added a few like Janecek and there have probably been some others that have been subtracted from annexation, so it's a fluid number.

We do have private roads and our subdivision regulations now require that these be built to meet county standards which is a good thing because they tend to become county roads at some point. Some of those private roads, like Goose Island and St. Charles Bay Estates, they are built well, we are not going to have any problems with them if the owners decide not to take care of them.

Commissioner Stiles asked, Bayberry Circle wouldn't be one of them, would it?

David replied, no.

Commissioner Stiles went on to say, one thing I wanted to ask about that particular road is, and we have done this in the past a couple of times, if the residents purchase the material, that we can come in and packed it down?

Commissioner Casterline replied, not on private property.

Commissioner Stiles said we did it on Lakeside and...

David interrupted, I don't think Lakeside is really private property and I don't know what Bayberry was, maybe it was platted, but that is a road that something really needs to be done and the County is really the only entity that can get things done like that. Maybe there is something legal that has to happen, maybe it can be given to the County, I don't know, I'm not an attorney.

Also, another road that we tend to forget about is loop 1781, this is a county road now. It was designed for a 60 miles an hour speed limit, wider than we normally have, it's a long road and it is striped (center and edges). It's been there a while

and will probably need repairs at some point, not that it needs to be fixed right now, but it's going to cost some money later on and it needs to be maintained. Last year we seal coated the lanes and left the striping alone, once is fine, but probably not another time.

Now our standard road has a 60 foot right of way, two ten foot lanes, cement stabilized subgrade, eight inches of crushed limestone base, two course surface treatment, it costs about \$50 a linear foot, it's a really good county road. It's not cheap, now I did on 12<sup>th</sup> Street try an alternate road just to see how it would hold up. It was basically a little more cement than we'd been using and less limestone, we actually used crushed concrete, we milled it in together, it compacted really well and it seems to be a pretty good road and that road cost 21 a foot.

Commissioner Casterline asked, have you asked on that point there? Your predecessor felt that legally if we set a standard for people or private developers to build a road, that on a new road it had to be a standard, so I would suggest that you get Kristen to look into that.

David replied, I'm not suggesting we change our standard road, but it may be that under certain circumstances, and this is kind of one of the things that we need to work out, a lesser quality road may be appropriate to help some people out at a lot less money.

Commissioner Olsen inquired, what product were you considering for Rattlesnake?

David replied, that road has not been cement stabilized, if we were going to do something, I would suggest that we rebuild it

completely, that we cement stabilize it and add another three feet on each side which would squeeze the ditch room that we have, so we would need to look at drainage really hard and carefully. We also have that real sharp curve, too tight for any speed, even the way it's banked. We might consider taking that curve out and create a T intersection or a four way stop.

Cape Valero is another road that is kind of an issue, really sharp curves that are too sharp for the speed posted out there and it's more complicated with wetlands on both sides, so even doing something to flatten out those curves will probably take Corp permits and things like that.

Corpus Christi road is another one that has a lot of traffic and may benefit from widening and having center line stripes. Now, getting back to Rattlesnake, there's nothing wrong with the center line stripe and nothing wrong with it engineering wise, but I think the real problem is the width.

Commissioner Casterline asked, did you get a cost on striping?

David replied that it was about \$11,250 but that it was not the thermo plastic that the state uses, it wears out and you have to re-do it about every three years. The thing about striping is it opens the door, everyone will want it.

Commissioner Casterline pointed out that the cost of striping compared to making it three foot wider is a big difference, but that's not solving the problem. Also, the problem is, every year this is something that would be a budget item in your funding, so when you do a major project, that means that the guy that is at the end of the road who doesn't have any pavement and is in line to get it has virtually no chance because you have used all

your money on those kinds of projects. So it's a toss-up, which one do you do for, because it's not an unlimited pot of money.

David said, I understand, but there is also a safety issue involved especially with Rattlesnake.

Commissioner Chaney added, the problem with Rattlesnake is, it does need to be striped and it's going to have to be widened.

Commissioner Stiles said, I just want to throw out another thought process, I was going the back way through the Country Club and there are some curves coming off of Champions, they just did a small section of the stick um reflectors and it's something that you wouldn't have to do the whole thing, but where the danger curves are then the reflectors were used.

David agreed that reflectors are very nice at night, but Rattlesnake is not a curvy road, it only has the one curve, but what the residents are really asking for is the stripe. You could use the buttons, but you can't seal coat over them, you would have to pull them up.

Commissioner Casterline questioned, David, don't you think, like we have a bunch of different policies, to me, you need to review all of them and come up with a proposal to change them.

David conceded, that was my intent, get a feel for what the court is looking for and then we can go write a policy and come back with it.

Judge Mills suggested that David look into doing something about the roads where the "County Maintenance Ends" signs due to safety issues. There are some people out there that an ambulance



or fire truck cannot get to safely, if nothing else just a grade road.

Commissioner Casterline commented, something else is when we clean the ditches we pile it up at these locations and we give the dirt away because of the cost to haul it to the yard. We should just dump it on the right of ways and use it for sink holes and stuff like that.

Commissioner Chaney pointed out, we have about 400 miles of drainage and we can't maintain this with the people we have and we cannot continue to improve roads and gain more and more drainage without a long term plan to increase equipment and personnel.

David clarified, it's not really the maintaining of it that is the issue, it's the re-establishing of those drainage ditches that's going to take a lot of money and manpower. Re-establishing should be a priority, we do 200 to 300 linear foot a day to dig out the 300 miles is going to take a while. I think if we can change out more of the 12" pipe with the 15" pipe and establish these ditches, I think if we get to that point, the maintenance won't be so bad.

So, I think we need a policy that allows us to use a lesser type road in certain circumstances without lowering the minimum and lowering what we ask developers to do.

Commissioner Casterline affirmed, so you need to go through the policies and the transportation code and come up with some recommendations for change. Also, the rating and scoring system needs to be re-worked.

David surmised, so what I'm hearing is that we want to eliminate some of the no county maintenance roads. If we are going to take in more roads we need to make them more maintenance free.

Commissioner Casterline re-asserted, I still think if you're going to take in roads you need to consider those that are already in the system and if they are wanting to participate in the cost of getting their roads done.

Commissioner Chaney advised, we also need to keep in mind that the County is growing and we will be getting more subdivisions.

Judge Mills added, and more RV Parks.

Commissioner Casterline also suggested that David come up with something in the policy that keeps him from having to come to Commissioners' Court to get approval for putting up stop signs.

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*No further business presenting, the Court adjourned at 11:42 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Olsen.*

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

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VALERIE K. AMASON,

EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT