

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

WORKSHOP MEETING - MAY 8, 2014

On the 8th day of May, 2014, there was a Workshop Meeting of the Commissioners' Court held in the Aquarium Education Center, Rockport, Aransas County, Texas, with the following members present: C. H. "Burt" Mills, Jr., County Judge; Leslie "Bubba" Casterline, Precinct 2; Richard Bianchi, County Attorney and Joy M. Dias, Chief Deputy, County Clerk.

The Meeting was convened at 2:00 p.m. WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had and done to wit:

Judge Mills stated the purpose of the workshop was to discuss future plans for the Aquarium.

Also present at the meeting were Don Sheets, President of the Aquarium Board and Ed Hegen. The architect firm of Garza/Bomberger & Associates was represented by Vaughn B. Bomberger and Jose A Videla.

Don Sheets started the discussion with how to continue to improve the present aquarium. It has about 35,000 visitors annually. The board does have a 5 year plan which includes a new facility for the aquarium. He would like to expand the educational aspect of the aquarium. His idea is to put a new building at the current site with some expansion and making it 2 story.

Richard Bianchi asked if the idea is to use Venue Tax, it must be suited to attract tourists, not just for students educational programs.

Mr. Vaughn explained the difference between our tourists and the Corpus Christi tourist. He gave a review of the planning process and schedule. All participants agreed we should not look or target anything like the Corpus Christi Aquarium.

Ed Hegen wants to keep it personal as it is now. All agreed we need to keep exhibits as it pertains to local waters and habitat.

Mr. Casterline does not know if we have the money for the building right now. He said about half of the Venue Tax is going to reduce the current bond and maintenance. He also talked about the difference in a metal building compared to wood or concrete.

Mr. Vaughn did question about insurance and FEMA. He will need more information.

Many participants thought of using an existing building may be a better way to go. It would benefit the community.

All participants did agree we need to know the market better before we

design a building and program for the Aquarium. All believe the Chamber of Commerce could help with that information.

Mr. Vaughn said in order for him to proceed with concept work, he needs \$30,000.

Other questions asked were what kind of total money are we looking at. In the 5 year plan, the cost of the building and and exhibits were estimated at 2-3 million dollars. Mr. Vaughn thinks the estimate of the building at 1.5 to 2 million is low.

Mr. Hegen asked if the \$30,00 seed money could come down some and not include the design exhibitor in the concept work? Mr Vaughn said he needs the design exhibitor to help with the concept.

In conclusion, Judge Mills stated perhaps he can give an answer about the seed money in 3 weeks.

No further business presenting, the Court adjourned was adjourned by Judge Mills duly seconded by Commissioner Casterline.

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

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