

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

REGULAR MEETING - JUNE 8, 2020

On the 8th day of June, 2020, there was a Regular Meeting of the Commissioners' Court in the Commissioners' Courtroom, 2840 Hwy 35 N, Rockport, Aransas County, Texas, with the following members present in person, via ZOOM, and/or via YouTube: **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 in person, via ZOOM, and/or via YouTube were **Jerry Brundrett**, County Surveyor; **Kristen Barnebey**, County District Attorney; **Alma Cartwright**, Treasurer; **Tracy Orr**, Administrative Assistant to the County Judge; **Jacky Cockerham**, Interim County Auditor; **Tana Taylor**, First Assistant County Auditor; **Latisha Murphy**, Assistant Auditor; **David Reid**, Road Administrator/Drainage Engineer/Stormwater Management Engineer; **Michael Geer**, Airport Manager; **Valerie Gonzalez**, Environmental Health Director; **John Strothman**, Pathways Project Manager; **Rene Butler**, Facilities Director; **Collin Jackson**, IT Director; **Linda Doane**, Human Resources Director; **Elizabeth Guerra**, Human Resources Assistant; **Carrie Arrington**, Office & Contracts Manager, County District Attorney's Office; **Michele Carew**, Elections Administrator; **Lori Cesar**, Animal Control Director; **John Gutierrez**, Chief Deputy Sheriff;

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

**Aransas County Historical Commission: Betty Stiles, Chair; Mike Geer, Vice Chair; Collin Jackson, Secretary; Other members: Jerry Brundrett; Pat Rousseau; Wendy Laubach, Court Appointed Liaison;**

**GSM Insurors: Travis McDavid;**

**The Rockport Pilot Newspaper: Mike Probst, Editor and Publisher;**

**Aransas County Citizens: Pat Rousseau;**

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**

Pat Rousseau - To comment and/or ask questions concerning Agenda Item #'s 8 and 14 during discussion.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve:

1. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of May 26, 2020.
2. Acknowledge receipt of and record in the minutes of Commissioners Court, Certificate of Course Completion presented to Christy Gibson for completing training on Acknowledgment of Paternity provided by the Paternity Opportunity Program.

**(Inserts)**

3. Acknowledge receipt of and record in the minutes of Commissioners Court, a Certificate of Course Completion presented to Gayle Otto for completing training on Acknowledgment of Paternity provided by the Paternity Opportunity Program.
4. Accepting a \$50 K-9 Fund donation from Robert Hester and recognizing his generous contribution.
5. Accepting a \$1,000 K-9 Fund donation from Paul and Helen Thomas and recognizing their generous contribution.  
Question. Motion carried unanimously.  
It is so ordered.

**COUNTY REPORTS**

6. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve 2019 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly 2020 Report for the Aransas County Historical Commission.  
Question. Motion carried unanimously.  
It is so ordered.
7. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve certifying Cyber Security Training completion report, as required by HB3834; and authorizing the County Judge to sign and submit completion report to the Texas Department of Information Resources.  
Question. Motion carried unanimously.  
It is so ordered.

**(Inserts)**

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, GRANTS & LEASES

8. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve and adopt the Aransas County Local Government Corporation (LGC) agreement, which will work to organize, coordinate, and lead the expansion of Aransas County area's economic base through actions and programs that encourage and cause retention, expansion, and recruitment of businesses.

Question. Commissioner Chaney: Did we decide on a Director?

Judge Mills: Yes, Neill Amsler. Pat Rousseau: I know the newspaper has covered the meetings that have been held, pretty extensively, but I wanted to know if there was an actual copy of this agreement that is available for members of the community to read or have access to? Judge Mills: I'll get that to you today. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

9. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve and authorize the County Judge to sign a contract with Gray & Pape Consultants to provide a Marine Archaeological Survey for Shell Ridge Road Hazard Mitigation Project, require by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for permitting (funded through FEMA 404 Hazardous Mitigation Grant).

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

10. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve and authorize the County Judge to sign a Professional Services Contract with Tetra Tech to provide Phase 2 Benefit Cost Analysis (BCAs) for Lamar Beach Road and Shell Ridge Road Hazard Mitigation Projects in order to move to Phase 2 construction.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

11. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve and authorize the County Judge to sign a contract with Mott MacDonald for data collection, analysis, design services, regulatory coordination, final engineering, and United States Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit documents for Little Bay Drainage Improvement Project Phase I (funded through FEMA 404 Hazardous Mitigation Grant).

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

12. *Motion made by Commissioner Smith to approve and seconded by Commissioner Chaney was withdrawn after discussion.* Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Laubach to **TABLE** authorizing the County Judge to purchase Cyber Insurance for Aransas County for an annual premium of \$14,490. This will give the County \$5,000,000 in coverage for costs incurred due to hack attacks, ransom or data breach, and system failures.

Question. Motion carried with three voting for and Judge Mills and Commissioner Chaney voting against tabling this item.

It is so ordered.

**(Inserts)**

13. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve allowing the Aransas County Animal Control Director to seek and apply for Hills Disaster and Relief grant to help organizations get through disruptions created by the pandemic and continue to support animals in foster care, in shelters and in the community.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

PLANNING & BUDGET OFFICE

14. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve the creation of a temporary Elections Coordinator position within the Aransas County Elections Department through November 30, 2020, funded by CARES Act reimbursements (20% match), to assist with the influx of work and additional preparations due to COVID-19 (job description attached).

Question. There was discussion on whether the position has to be posted. Pat Rousseau: If this is just going to be a temporary position, and if Michelle has identified the qualified candidate, why not bring this person in through a Temp Agency and then the position does not have to be posted, you could just identify that this is the preferred candidate and set it up with a Temp Agency, and let them handle all of the paperwork, the pre-hire drug screen, and the concern about benefits. You would probably pay an overhead fee to the agency but it would be less than what the benefits would be and we had that kind of an agreement with an agency when I was

(Inserts)

working in the county and I believe they would still be willing to do that, they were giving this county a discounted rate over what they were charging other clients, then you don't have to post the position. There was more discussion concerning the Grant and that it probably would not reimburse the county if this person were to be hired through the Temp Agency. It was also decided that the job would still have to be posted.

Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

15. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve the May 2020 Indigent Health Care Report.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

16. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve Budget Line Item Transfers and Amendments, of which there were none.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

17. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve Accounts Payable and Payroll/Payroll Liabilities **subject to including the acceptance of additional funds obtained through the COVID Cares Act. These funds will provide assistance to four local non-profit organizations, which are: Hands of Hope; Children's Coalition; Good Samaritans; and St. Vincent De Paul; the amount of \$142,500 will be distributed according to the number**

(Inserts)

*of clients each serves. These entities will be required to report to the County on a monthly basis to justify the funds are only being spent on COVID related assistance.*

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

**REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS &**

**DEPARTMENT HEADS WHEREIN NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN**

**Jacky Cockerham:** We do have a Fees Report and based on revenues from last year comparison shows revenues are down \$103,000 and this is due to the courthouse being closed to the public during the COVID epidemic.

**Alma Cartwright:** *(Brought her employees into the courtroom)* It's a rare occasion when you have an employee who has worked for the county 29 years, so I would like to recognize **Brenda Rodriguez** in our Indigent Healthcare department. She has done an excellent job serving our Indigent and has worked diligently with the jail in getting bills paid for inmate care. We are sad to lose her, but on the other hand we are glad that she will get to enjoy retiring and spending time with her children and grandchildren. On Friday we will have cake and sandwiches, etc. set up here in the courtroom, we will practice social distancing, so for the people that want to come in and say goodbye this will be going on from 11:30 until 1:30.



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*The Court entered into closed session at 9:45 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 10:01 a.m. with all members present, and further proceedings were had and done to wit:*

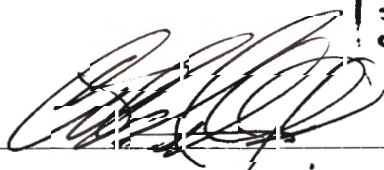
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**No action taken.**

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*No further business presenting, the Court adjourned at 10:02 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline.*

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

The seal of the Commissioners' Court is circular. It features a five-pointed star in the center, surrounded by a ring of smaller stars. The words "COMMISSIONERS' COURT" are written along the top inner edge, and "TRAVIS COUNTY TEXAS" is written along the bottom inner edge.

*Valerie K. Amason*

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