

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

REGULAR MEETING - DECEMBER 09, 2019

On the 9th day of December, 2019, 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: **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 were **Diane Dupnik**, Justice of the Peace, Pct. 1; **Diana McGinnis**, Justice of the Peace, Pct. 2; **Kristen Barnebey**, County District Attorney; **Jeri Cox**, Tax Assessor-Collector; **Alma Cartwright**, Treasurer; **Pam Heard**, District Clerk; **Bill Mills**, Sheriff; **Suzy Wallace**, County Auditor; **Latisha Murphy**, Administrative Assistant to the County Judge; **David Reid**, Road Administrator/Drainage Engineer/Stormwater Management Engineer; **Katherine Comeaux**, Development Services Coordinator; **Collin Jackson**, IT Director; **Linda Doane**, Human Resources Director; **John Strothman**, Pathways Project Manager; **Rene Butler**, Facilities Director; **Carrie Arrington**, Office & Contracts Manager, County District Attorney's Office; **Jacky Cockerham**, First Assistant County Auditor; **Anna Marshall**, Chief Deputy Tax Assessor-Collector; **Amanda Laferney**, Chief Court Clerk, Justice of the Peace, Pct. 1; **Lori Cesar**, Animal Control Director; **John Gutierrez**, Chief Deputy Sheriff;

Long-Term Recovery Specialists: Randall Freeze;

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

City of Rockport Council Members: Barbara Gurtner, Ward 4;

Aransas County Citizens: Russell Cole; Mark Uhr; John Jackson; Lynn Blumenfeld; Toni Post; Karen Ernst; Elizabeth Hattan; Keith Allen; Tomas E. Callan, III; Katy Jackson; Evelyn Guidry; Thad Carothers; Dana Kisel;

Chamber of Commerce: Diane Probst, President/CEO;

Rockport Center for the Arts: Luis Puron, Executive Director;

Agriculture Extension Office: Ginger Easton Smith, County Extension Agent; Megan Glidden, County Extension Agent;

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

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

**Lynn Blumenfeld:** I attended a Meeting this past Thursday to protest the proposed TWIA Rate Hike and was very embarrassed that only two people from Aransas County were present, myself and Mayor Kendrick. There is another meeting scheduled tomorrow morning at the Omni Hotel in Corpus Christi, TX at 8:30 a.m. and I would urge everyone that can attend to be present for this very important meeting.

**Toni Post:** I am here representing the Daughters of the American Revolution in this area of Texas and we are sponsoring, for the first time in Rockport, "Wreaths Across America". If you are not

familiar with this, maybe you've seen the iconic picture of the wreaths on all of the graves at Arlington Cemetery that went viral several years ago, that's what Wreaths Across America is. The non-profit group was founded in 2007 by Morrill Worcester who owns an Evergreen Farm in Maine, he decided that he would create wreaths, when he had an abundance of trees one year, and put them on the graves at Arlington Cemetery. So we are going to have our first annual Wreath Across America in Rockport this Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Veterans Memorial Park with permission from the Navigation District. The American GI Forum will be setting up for this ceremony, the Parks Department will be putting in a podium and a sound system, and the Wreaths Across America approved the park, not being a cemetery, because it is a place where we honor Veterans and that's what they care about and we will place representative wreaths on the monuments. Several ladies from the Daughters of the American Revolution will have short speeches about each monument and then the wreaths will be placed on the monuments by the ROTC. Mayor Rios will be speaking and Judge Mills has been invited, the American Legion and the American GI Forum will be represented and I just wanted the public to be aware of this event, we have a notice in the Rockport pilot and have passed out fliers in town.

**PRESENTATIONS**

1. Presentation by Texas Property Assessed Clean Energy Authority (PACE) - Marina V. Badoian-Kriticos presented a Power Point Presentation.

**(See Insert)**

CONSENT ITEMS

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

2. Minutes from the Regular Meeting and the Workshop Meeting of November 25, 2019.
3. Allowing Environmental Health to seek bids for 2020 Mosquito Control Chemicals.
4. Acknowledge receipt of and record in the minutes of Commissioners Court, a Certificate of Attendance from Texas Association of Counties certifying Alma Cartwright, County Treasurer and Member of the County Investment Academy for successfully completing 07 hours of investment education that satisfies Section 2256.008 of the Texas Public Funds Investment Act. The Texas Public Funds Investment Conference was held on November 07-08, 2019 in Houston, Texas.
5. Accepting a donation in the amount of \$100.00 to be used for the Juvenile Case Manager Program. The donor requested to remain anonymous.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

COUNTY ROADS

6. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve and authorize the Road & bridge Engineer to begin negotiations with Hanson Professional Services, Inc. for engineering services relating

**(Insert)**

to the design and preparation of construction documents for Bahia Bay Watershed Drainage Improvements.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

7. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve Order #0-23-2019, proposed updates to amend Order #0-02-2016 of the Aransas County Floodplain Management and Watershed Protection Order.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

**CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, GRANTS & LEASES**

8. Motion was made by Commissioner Laubach to table, motion died with no second made. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney to approve and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve Resolution #R-41-2019, Aransas County Commissioners Court Resolution of Intent to Establish an Aransas County PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Program and to set a Public Hearing for 9:00 a.m. on Monday December 16, 2019.

Question. Motion carried with three voting for the motion and Commissioner Laubach voting against the motion.

It is so ordered.

9. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve and authorize County Judge to sign revisions to the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Interlocal Agreement for the Aransas County Alliance Local Government Corporation (previously approved by Commissioners Court on May 13, 2019) made by the Aransas

**(Inserts)**

County Navigation District. [Tabled on October 28, 2019, and November 12, 2019, and Workshop held on November 25, 2019.

Question. Motion carried with four voting for the motion and Commissioner Laubach voting against the motion.

It is so ordered.

**PLANNING & BUDGET OFFICE**

10. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve November 2019 Indigent Health Care Report.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

11. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve adopting the Aransas County Fund Balance Policy.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

12. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve adopting the Aransas County Cash Handling Policy.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

13. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve adopting the Aransas County Fraud Prevention and Detection Policy.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

**(Inserts)**

14. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve adopting the Aransas County Fixed Asset Methodology Policy.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

15. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve the proposed revised job description for Civil/Guardianship Court Clerk. This is an upgrade from a pay group 11-2 to a pay group 12-3, effective 12/09/2019, to bring the position more in line with the Court Clerks based on required increase in job responsibilities. The pay group increase was included in the 2020 budget requests and there is money available in the 2020 budgeted Payroll Reserve Fund.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

16. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve changing the Part-Time Agrilife Extension Administrative Secretary to a Full-Time position paying \$13.92 an hour which is roughly \$28,953 a year, and also adding in the health care insurance, which would be a minimal financial change in the 2020 budget. Also, with input from HR, make sure that this fits within the pay scale for this job description, and this would leave roughly \$11,000 in the current budget for one 4-H part-time person. Commissioner Smith also suggested that the need for any additional part-time help could be revisited after the first 6 months of 2020, providing that the court receives the same

**(Inserts)**



reports that the Extension office turns into A&M, so the court can decide if there is justification as to the increase in the work load in this department.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

17. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve authorizing Tyler Technologies, Inc. to implement SB (Senate Bill) 346 mandatory fee changes passed by the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session for all Aransas County Courts into the Odyssey Database. SB 346 becomes effective 01/01/2020 and relates to the consolidation, allocation, classification, and repeal of certain criminal court costs and other court-related costs, fines, and fees. The cost for the system updates will be \$4,200. There are monies available in the County Budget to allow for the additional expense.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

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

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

19. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve Accounts Payable and Payroll/Payroll Liabilities.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

**(Inserts)**



REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS &  
DEPARTMENT HEADS WHEREIN NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN

**Pam Heard:** The Coastal Arts District has an exhibit at Estelle Stair Gallery that everybody needs to come see, it is 46 paintings of Santa Clause, the artist is Billy King, it's beautiful and you can see it Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through December.

**Judge Mills:** I have a sour-sweet announcement, the sour part is this is the last meeting for Suzy Wallace, but the sweet part is the District Judges have appointed Jacky Cockerham as Interim Auditor, she is here and it should be a very smooth transition, she's a hard worker. Also, this is my last meeting for this year because I'm going to England with my wife for Christmas and New Year for my mother-in-law's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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*No further business presenting, the Court adjourned at 10:14 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Laubach.*

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



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