

MINUTES OF THE

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

REGULAR MEETING - JANUARY 13, 2020

On the 13th day of January, 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: **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 **Jerry Brundrett**, County Surveyor; **Kristen Barnebey**, County District Attorney; **Alma Cartwright**, Treasurer; **Bill Mills**, Sheriff; **Linda Garcia Haynes**, Executive Assistant to the County Judge; **Barbara Hanson**, Administrative Assistant to the County Judge; **Jacky Cockerham**, Interim County Auditor; **Tana Taylor**, First Assistant County Auditor; **David Reid**, Road Administrator/Drainage Engineer/Stormwater Management Engineer; **Michael Geer**, Airport Manager; **Valerie Gonzalez**, Environmental Health Director; **Rene Butler**, Facilities Director; **John Strothman**, Pathways Project Manager; **Collin Jackson**, IT Director; **Linda Doane**, Human Resources Director; **Carrie Arrington**, Office & Contracts Manager, County District Attorney's Office; **Lois White**, Chief Deputy Treasurer; **Lori Cesar**, Animal Control Director; **John Gutierrez**, Chief Deputy Sheriff;

Long-Term Recovery Specialists: **Randall Freeze**, **Vicki Foley**, Executive Secretary; **Deanna Spruce**, Public Information Officer;

Jennifer Heard, IA, Recovery Hotline/Volunteer & Donations Coordinator;

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

City of Rockport Council Members: **Bob Cunningham**, Ward 3; **Barbara Gurtner**, Ward 4;

Aransas County Citizens: **J. Mark Wagnon**, Attorney At Law; **Katy Jackson**; **Lynn Blumenfeld**;

Texas Department of Public Safety: **Marvin Baker**, DPS Officer serving Aransas and Refugio Counties;

Texas General Land Office: **Simone Sanders**, Community Outreach Coordinator, Intergovernmental Relations;

KCS Public Relations/Corpus Christi, TX: **Casandra Loventson**, Senior Public Relations Associate;

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: There was a nice turnout at the TWIA meeting, we got our way, and there is no new rate hike for this year. Come August there will be another meeting at which they could possibly put a rate hike for the following year, but we are going to worry

about that in August. What I'm here to talk about is the House of Representatives Public Hearing on the TWIA Insurance Committee to be held at the Saltwater Pavilion on January 15, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. and since the meeting is going to be in Aransas County it's very important that Aransas County makes a good showing to talk to the representatives so they can go back and talk to the other representatives so in November they can start filing bills in our favor, this is very important. Some of the things that are going to be discussed is getting rid of TWIA and changing the composition of TWIA because it's very one sided, against us. There are two openings on the board and Todd Hunter very much wants the consumer position to be filled by someone from Aransas County, how that's going to be done, we don't know. There is also an opening for an insurance agent but I don't think we can get them both from Aransas County, but some of the other things we are going to discuss are getting more people from the coastal counties involved and people talking about an insurance problem that they had, and it does not have to be TWIA related, so come with your complaints and let's have a good meeting. I know that we already have a couple of speakers from this county, I believe the Judge is going to speak, Jimmy Kendrick is going to speak, I'm not sure who else but we had a whole lot of speakers that we had lined up at the meeting we had about this on Friday. It's terrible when we have to have a pre-meeting to go to a meeting and plan what we are going to say, but that's the way it is with this, the whole thing is rehearsed. How long anyone will have to speak we don't know because it depends on the amount of people who sign up to speak and we don't know how long the meeting is supposed to last, Representative Lucio is running the meeting, he's in our favor. At the meeting on Friday we went down the list of the Representatives on that committee and

we went down the list of the Representatives on that committee and we think we have at least 90% support so we really have to put on a good show and we have to show that Aransas County is involved because they are coming here instead of going to Nueces, or Victoria, or elsewhere on the coast, so please come to the meeting, get others to come, and lets just make a good showing and what Aransas County is doing.

Judge Mills: Thank you. I do have something to announce before we get the meeting started, on a good note I'm very excited for Aransas County, I'm pleased to let the Commissioners Court and the public know that the partners that we have at the Texas Land Commission have recently granted us a preliminary approval of 49.8 million dollars CDBG Grant funding and this represents 12 of the 14 total projects that we requested. Right now, moving forward with the final contract approval at the General Land Office, the approved 49.8 million represents 92.5% of what the county was asking for to begin with which was 53.8 million. We believe that the remaining projects will also be moving forward for approval as soon as the team answers some of the remaining questions and for those of you who think this is something that happens, it's not. Hundreds and hundreds of hours by several dedicated people on the Long Term Recovery Team, would you all stand up, Will Whitson and Kim Foutz couldn't be here today, but we were just notified of this Thursday afternoon, it's kind of hard to get here from where they are that quick. Thank you very much for all of your time, dedication, and hard work, we do appreciate it and we have a lot more to come. Because of this I also want to thank Grantworks and the Auditor's Department for all of their hard work, they've done a great job, so stay tuned we have more good news coming.

CONSENT ITEMS

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

1. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of December 23, 2019.
2. Accepting a donation in the amount of \$1,265.65 from Keep Aransas County Beautiful to the Aransas County Transfer Station for Vessel Turn in Program Expenses.
3. Acknowledge receipt of and record in the minutes of Commissioners Court, 2019-2020 Continuing Education Transcript of Completion and Compliance with Texas Property Tax Code Section 6.231(d) for Jeri Cox, Tax Assessor-Collector.
4. Acknowledge receipt of and record in the minutes of Commissioners Court, a Certificate of Completion awarded to Valerie Amason, County Clerk, from the County & District Clerks' Association of Texas, for completing the 20 hours of Continuing Education for 2019 as prescribed in Section 51.605 Texas Government Code.
5. Acknowledge receipt of and record in the minutes of Commissioners Court, a Certificate of Completion awarded to Pam Heard, District Clerk, from the County & District Clerks' Association of Texas, for completing the 20 hours of Continuing Education for 2019 as prescribed in Section 51.605 Texas Government Code.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

COUNTY APPOINTMENTS

6. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by

(Inserts)

Commissioner Chaney to approve naming the appointment of Mark Wagnon as C6 board member to the Aransas County 501C6 Corporation of the Economic Development Corporation.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, GRANTS & LEASES

7. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline and seconded by Commissioner Chaney to approve and authorize the County Judge to sign United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) permit for Cedar Bayou.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

8. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve soliciting Request for Qualifications (RFQs) for engineering support services to provide preliminary engineering and United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) permit for Shoreline Resiliency Project Fulton Beach Road extended North from Mesquite Street to the Kon-Tiki Condos. Funding through Coastal Management Program (CMP) Grant.
- Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

9. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve solicitation of Request for Proposal (RFP) for Grant Administration Services, RESTORE ACT Bucket 1 Grant, Shoreline Resiliency Project - Bay Shore Drive.
- Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

10. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Laubach to approve and authorize County Judge to accept and sign Texas Department of Transportation Airport Project Participation Agreement, a Federally Assisted Airport Development Grant for pavement rehabilitation to Runway 18-36, Runway 14-32, along with surface treatment and the marking of taxiways at Aransas County Airport.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

11. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the County Judge signing an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Refugio County to share a Department of Public Safety Area Administrative Assistant.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

PLANNING & BUDGET OFFICE

12. Motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Casterline to approve the December 2019 Indigent Health Care Report.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

13. Motion was made by Commissioner Chaney and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve creating a Long Term Recovery Administrative Assistant Position at a Group/Step 12-4 and approve the job description to continue the Long Term Recovery effort for Aransas County.

Question. Motion carried unanimously.

It is so ordered.

(Inserts)

14. 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.

15. Motion was made by Commissioner Casterline 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**

John Strothman: I just want to point out that Jacky Cockerham and her team have been absolutely vital to this operation.

Commissioner Chaney: Talk about that, is there a way to, since we have a change in Auditors, can we get some sort of long range plan of things that might be coming to the court? There are a lot of Grants out there, do we have a definitive list?

John Strothman: Will Whitson is coming in for the next Commissioner's Court meeting and we are going to go through what is in the pipeline and the number is \$200 million total, something in that range. There's another whole GLO CDBD MIT funds that could add up to future amounts of money on big projects.

Commissioner Smith: John, on the 48 or 49 million we've already received tentative to improve on, to go to the contracting phase

to actually start seeing some construction out there, how long do you estimate that to be?

John Strothman: Could be another year or so, we are going to create check lists starting this week of what we have to do to get to the point where we can start going to that part.

Commissioner Smith: I would like to make a comment, thinking about that, the US Congress appropriated funds in February 2018, for 4.2 billion dollars in an additional funding method to come to the various coastal counties here, and along Texas, and they are still working on a plan of how to distribute that money, so we are talking about almost 2 years just to come up with the rules, if they think this is really responding to a disaster, they've got a problem with the definition, in my opinion.

Judge Mills: While we are at it, I failed to recognize the fact that our partner with GLO, Simone Sanders, we appreciate you and your people, thank you.

Linda Haynes: Read a letter from Judge Mills to Toby Baker, Executive Director, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

(See Insert)

No further business presenting, the Court adjourned at 9:38 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Chaney.



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



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