

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HUTCHINSON

On this 24th day of August 2026, A.D., the Commissioners' Court met in a Regular Session with the following members present to wit:

Cindy Irwin	County Judge
Gary Alexander	Commissioner Precinct #1
Dwight Kirksey	Commissioner Precinct #2
Ben Bentley	Commissioner Precinct #3
Chris Prock	Commissioner Precinct #4
Kelly Ratliff	County Clerk & Ex-Officio Clerk of Commissioners Court

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER FOR REGULAR MEETING, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Judge Irwin called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Dwight Kirksey led the pledge and prayer.

PUBLIC COMMENT; 5 MINUTES PER PERSON (WITH SIGNED PARTICIPATION FORM)

2 Participation Forms were submitted and will be heard during the Public Hearing for Proposed Tax Rate and Budget Workshop.

CONSENT AGENDA

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COMMISSIONERS' COURT MEETING

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE COUNTY AUDITOR'S TABULATED REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS COURT PURSUANT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE 114.024

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE PAYROLL

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE DISPOSAL OF OBSOLETE OFFICE EQUIPMENT AS REQUESTED BY DEPARTMENTS

ACCEPT CERTIFICATES OF COMPLETION FROM ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICIALS

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE REPORTS FROM ELECTED/APPOINTED OFFICIALS REQUIRED BY STATE LGC 114.044

Judge Irwin added 1 additional disposal item, a broken electric stapler from the 84th District Attorney's Office. Gary Alexander made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items with addition, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Reports have been made part of the minutes.

REGULAR AGENDA

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE UPDATED AIRPORT LEASE AGREEMENT WITH TFS

Judge Irwin presented the updated Airport Lease Agreement. Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Agreement has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE UNIFORM POLICY

Judge Irwin presented the updated Uniform Policy. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Uniform Policy has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE JOINT ELECTION AND ELECTION SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN CITY OF SANFORD AND HUTCHINSON COUNTY

Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Agreement has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE CHANGES TO TCDRS EMPLOYER MATCHING AND/OR COLA

Amy Back, Treasurer, presented the proposed plans. The last review was done in 2014, and they suggest it to be done about every 10 years. Her suggestion is the 200% PF and 3% COL. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the suggested raise as presented, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Current and proposed plans have been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE 2026-2027 RURAL SHERIFF'S OFFICE SALARY ASSISTANT PROGRAM GRANT AGREEMENT

Judge Irwin presented this agreement. Chris Prock made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Agreement has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE DECLARING SEPTEMBER 2026 HUNGER ACTION MONTH

Judge Irwin presented that September is Hunger Action Month and this is a call for observance. Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Observance of Hunger Action Month has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE MOVING \$20,000.00 FROM CONTINGENCY TO JP #1 AUTOPSY LINE ITEM 100-457-4050

Judge Ford presented this request as she has gone over in her Autopsy line item. This line item can be unpredictable. Ben Bentley made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Order has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE \$1,000.00 BOND FOR JESSICA HIBERD, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT JUVENILE DEPARTMENT

Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Bond has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE CONSTRUCTION OF OH ELECTRIC LINE APPROXIMATELY 0.16 MILES EAST OF THE INTERSECTION OF CO RD X AND CO RD 25

Judge Irwin presented this item and Duane Chisholm; Road & Bridge Superintendent has gone out and looked at this. Chris Prock made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Notification has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE FUNDS RECEIVED FROM AN INSURANCE CLAIM FROM THE CANADIAN BRIDGE FIRE IN THE AMOUNTY OF \$14,110.00

Alan Wells, EMC/County Fire Marshall, presented this item. Commissioner Kirksey asked where these funds go and it's the General Fund. There is a line item for Insurance claim proceeds. Chris Prock made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

UPDATE ON ARP GRANT PROJECTS

None at this time.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE BURN BAN OR RESCIND BURN BAN

Alan Wells, EMC/County Fire Marshall, reported that the drought index is 668. No action taken at this time.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE REQUESTS FOR USE OF CLUBROOMS AT BORGER LIBRARY OR FRITCH

Chris Prock had no requests for the Borger Library Clubroom.
Dwight Kirksey had no requests for the Fritch Library Clubroom.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE LINE ITEM CHANGES, TRANSFERS, AND/OR BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Orders have been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ADVERTISING, OPENING, ACCEPTING OR AWARDING BIDS

Alan Wells, EMC/County Fire Marshall presented to go out for sealed bid for installing the generator at the Borger Annex. Ben Bentley made a motion to go out for bid for installing the generator at the Borger Annex, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Invitation for Sealed Bid and packet has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE DONATIONS TO HUTCHINSON COUNTY

Chief Trahan with the Sheriff's Department presented a donation from Hutchinson County Responders Foundation in the amount of \$6,500.00. Chris Prock made a motion to accept the \$6,500.00 donation, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF COUNTY JUDGES' AND COMMISSIONERS' PRECINCTS DAILY OPERATIONS

Judge Irwin recognized the Hutchinson County Clerk's Office for receiving an award for a rating of outstanding for 2026 election website review from the League of Women Voters. As well as the Hutchinson County Library for the outstanding attendance at the summer reading program.

Alan Wells, EMC/County Fire Marshall reported that the camera project at the jail is completed.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE SALE OF STRUCK OFF TAX PROPERTIES AND TAX DEEDS

Juan Nicolas Duran Lopez submitted an offer of \$500.00 for Lot 1-2, Block 128, Original Townsite Stinnett, Hutchinson County, Texas. The appraised value is \$3,600.00. Ben Bentley made a motion to approve the offer of \$500.00, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Offer has been made part of the minutes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – SECTION 551.071 (CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY)

Convened into Executive Session at 9:56 a.m.

Reconvened into Regular Session at 10:09 a.m.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ANY ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chris Prock made a motion to approve the County Attorney to create a claim in the amount of \$5,000.00 from contingency funds for pending federal litigation, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – ON PROPOSED TAX RATE AND PROPOSED SALARIES

Received Public Participation Form from Michael Adams, item to address taxes. Mr. Adams said that he has done research on over 26 properties that have back taxes owed and wanted to express concern on taxes being raised when so many properties are out there with back taxes owed.

BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR BUDGET 2026-2027

Bobby Stein, President of the Fritch Volunteer Fire Association, is requesting an increase of \$10,000.00 to their budget. He expressed a 63% increase in calls for county customers outside of the city limits. All agreed to increase this line item 100-543-4861 to \$55,000.00.

Ashley Keeney, Museum Director, presented her proposal for a salary increase requesting \$60,000.00. She is also requesting a salary increase for her administrator Deborah Reece. After discussion it was agreed to increase Ashley Keeney to \$59,800.00 and Deborah Reece to the Deputy 1 rate.

Angelica Hartranft, Constable Pct. 2, requesting a part-time deputy as previously discussed on July 27th Commissioners' Court meeting. Constable Hartranft presented a comparison of fees of office and revenue from other offices that serve citations reflecting that her office continues to increase revenue. She also explained the different courts and out of county she serves for. She has received multiple recommendations for her office. She wanted to reiterate that this part-time deputy position she is requesting is only a little over \$5,000.00 a year to help her do her job successfully. Commissioner Kirksey asked how this got done prior to her taking office and could she decline some of the requests. Constable Hartranft stated she is not sure how it got done prior but if papers come to her, she has to serve them, she is accommodating and will work with citizens schedule and serve them on the weekends if needed. She stated she is a Police Officer 1st and add the duties she is bound to by law then add the civil process to that. After discussion they denied the part-time deputy position. Constable Hartranft also presented a salary comparison for some law enforcement positions within the county. All have been made part of the minutes.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor inquired about a Nuisance Officer stipend for Alan Wells, EMC. Commissioner Kirksey suggested leaving the Abatement Line item at \$25,000.00 as the Nuisance Policy has not been approved. Amy Back, Treasurer stated this policy was reviewed in the policy meeting and sent to Craig Jones, County Attorney, for review. This position would include septic and property nuisance inspection. There has been property clean up completed in the past but proper steps were missed which is why we need a policy in place to protect the county. Ms. Back stated septic complaints come in and letters are sent out but we aren't taking action as there is no policy in place which puts the county at risk. She understands the policy has not been approved but would like to budget for this in hopes that it is approved. Commissioner Kirksey suggested a case by case pay out. He understands the need but there has been a stipend awarded in the past and there was no accountability. Lesha suggested establishing a nuisance salary line item for case by case or stipend pay and put \$15,000.00 in that line item and keep \$10,000.00 in the Abatement Expense line item. All agreed. Judge Irwin will place the Nuisance Policy on the next agenda.

Judge Irwin presented the previous decision to drop the District Attorneys Supplement to \$17,000.00 but by law it can't be less than the compensation it pays its highest paid district judge. This was updated to \$25,000.00.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor, reported adding an additional \$6,000.00 for Odyssey for the IT department she received a letter from Tyler on what they will be charging us next year.

Judge Irwin reported the Stinnett Annex Capital Improvement has \$225,000.00 in this line item. Commissioner Bentley provided a cost element from the architect. After discussion it was decided to go out for bids this year to get more concrete numbers and budget for this project next year. It was decided to reduce this line item to \$125,000.00 for painting etc.

Judge Irwin asked if they wanted to discuss setting base salaries and tiers for newly elected officials. Some said that budget workshop is not a good time. Commissioner Prock said hard decisions will have to be made eventually. Commissioner Kirksey reminded all we should discuss this in non-electoral years, including evaluations moving someone to the next tier.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor asked if they wanted to discuss the scenarios she sent out for tax rates including the \$150.00 raise. She suggested, as the auditor, financially the \$0.50 tax rate.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES FOR ELECTED COUNTY AND PRECINCT OFFICIALS

Judge Irwin presented what was published in the paper and announced that the Commissioners and County Judge elected not to take the raise. Dwight Kiksey made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Notice of Public Hearing including the salary increases have been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE MOTION TO ADJOURN

Gary Alexander made the motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Adjourn 11:22 a.m.



Cindy Irwin

CINDY IRWIN – COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

Kelly Ratliff

KELLY RATLIFE – COUNTY CLERK

