

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HUTCHINSON

On this 11th day of August 2025, 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
Jacquelyn Ortiz	Deputy 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. Chris Prock led the pledge and prayer.

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

None at this time.

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

Ben Bentley made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Reports have been made part of the minutes.

REGULAR AGENDA

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME TO 2025-2026 4-H COUNTY COUNCIL

Racheal Oeleis, County Extension Agent, introduced 4-H members announcing they are here to observe parliamentary procedures for when they run their monthly meetings.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE MONTHLY AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING JUNE 30, 2025

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE ISSUANCE OF US BANK CREDIT CARDS TO VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AND/OR INDIVIDUALS

Lesha Krieg, Auditor, presented an updated list as a late application came in, County Attorney, Craig Jones added his at \$1500.00 and Judge Irwin wanted hers changed from individual back to a department card. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. US bank credit card requests have been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ACCEPTANCE OF THE GENERAL LIABILITY AND AUTO INSURANCE POLICY FROM THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES FOR THE PERIOD OF 10/01/2025-10/01/2026

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE LIFI EXPANSION APPLICATION FOR THE LIBRARY

Judge Irwin reported the LIFI Grant was approved. Nancy Criswell, Library director said it was approved for \$283,000.00 to run fiber optic to all 3 branch locations. After her meeting with them they asked if she could fill out an expansion application. They thought \$75,000.00 per branch would be enough but it was not, it would be closer to \$127,060.00 per branch. This expansion application is for the difference. Once this is approved the total for the grant will be \$381,182.00. She has been working very closely with Region 16 on the application process. She is getting the a statement of work to go out for bid for this project. The county would pay for this up front and then get reimbursed. If the expansion grant is not awarded then they will be able to do 2 library locations, Borger and Fritch. Richard Hein, IT Director, will be consulted on this project. Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the LIFI expansion application for \$169,300.00, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Documents have been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES IMPOSITION OF OPTIONAL FEES FOR 2026

Chris Prock made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Imposition of Optional fees calendar has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE SALVAGE OF THE SHERIFF DEPARTMENT'S 2024 FORD EXPLORER OR DISPOSING OF THE VEHICLE WITH TAC

Sheriff Langwell reported that he spoke with a 3rd party that comes in from TAC to report the damage. He was also able to get ahold of CoPart/IAA and they are a salvage auctioneer like Purple Wave. Sheriff Langwell recommends turning it over to the insurance for \$5,000.00. Gary Alexander made a motion to approve disposing of the 2024 Ford Explorer with TAC, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE UPGRADE OF COPIER IN THE MUSEUM AND ADDING A COPIER IN THE JAIL

Discussion was made, no action taken at this time.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE CONSTABLE PCT. 2 TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT TO JPCA IN EL PASO

Angelica Hartranft, Constable Pct. 2 attended the JPCA Conference in El Paso, Tx. She drove her personal vehicle because her county vehicle was in the shop. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the milage reimbursement, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Reimbursement form has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE PRPC MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

Gary Alexander 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.

UPDATE ON ARP GRANT PROJECTS

Commissioner Bentley reported Cummins pushed the generator startup for the Courthouse to September 4th and 5th, it was originally August 21st.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE BURN BAN OR RESCIND BURN BAN

Alan Wells, EMC, reported that the drought index is up a little but recommended no action at this time.

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

Chris Prock has submitted a schedule through September 20th for the Borger Library Clubroom. Dwight Kirksey has submitted a schedule through August 30th for the Fritch Library Clubroom. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

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

Dwight Kirksey 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 ADVERTISING, OPENING, ACCEPTING OR AWARDING BIDS

None at this time.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE DONATIONS TO HUTCHINSON COUNTY

None at this time.

DISCUSSION OF COUNTY JUDGES' AND COMMISSIONERS' PRECINCTS DAILY OPERATIONS

Commissioner Kirksey reported he has had multiple calls from his precinct about needing to mow. He appreciates everyone calling, they are behind and please know they are trying to get caught up.

Commissioner Alexander reported they fixed the car port at the Borger Annex and he has bids coming in for the flooring in Adult Probation. The A/C in the Juvenile Probation office is down.

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

Savanna Bible and Holly Hollis submitted an offer of \$500.00 for Lots 1-2, Blk 112, Original Town of Stinnett, Hutchinson County, Texas. The appraised value is \$43,270.00. 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 551.076 (DELIBERATIONS ABOUT SECURITY DEVICES)

Court convened into Executive Session at 10:11 a.m. and adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ANY ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Court reconvened into Regular session at 10:55 a.m. No action taken at this time.

BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR BUDGET 2025-2026

Child Welfare budget. Michelle Griffin with the Child Welfare Board presented the Expense Report as of August 10, 2025. She explained they have 56 kids and 22 are in Hutchinson County, the funds are primarily used for clothes for the kids. Expense Report has been made part of the minutes.

Sheriff budget. Sheriff Langwell presented a step-based pay scale for the Sheriff's Department. This presentation has been made part of the minutes.

Fire Protection budget. Alan Wells, EMC reported on adding Skellytown back into our response area. Response area maps have been made part of the minutes. Skellytown is now part of ESD (Emergency Services District) and now considered part of a municipality and we can contract with them for fire services in that area of Hutchinson County. Judge Irwin suggested putting them back in our response area and fund them the \$15,000.00 and leaving Crutch Ranch at \$11,000.00 as they are for wildland fire services only. Commissioner Kirksey asked if there is reporting from the other entities on when they have assisted with fires in our area. Mr. Wells has not requested reports currently. Commissioner Prock asked how we justify \$15,000.00 when Crutch is getting \$11,000.00 but they are wildland fire response only. Skellytown would be full response, structure, vehicle and wildland fires. All agreed to contract with Skellytown for \$15,000.00 and leave Crutch Ranch at \$11,000.00.

Maintenance budget. Lesha Krieg, Auditor, wanted to discuss the Samsara Fleet Management Contract for all county vehicles. Since this is a countywide monitoring system rather than breaking it up in different departments it could be classified as Maintenance. She would add the Sheriff Department Samsara into Maintenance as well as the countywide vehicles and equipment since it will invoice all together totaling \$17,500.00. There was discussion on improving the process for budgeting for countywide programs vs individual departments. All agreed to add the Samsara Fleet Management to the Maintenance budget.

Budget discussion. Commissioner Kiksey wanted to discuss when a Department Head leaves budgeting for a salary to hire the replacement prior to the department head leaving so they can provide training to the replacement. Judge Irwin responded that some departments have come to the Commissioners' Court to request this approval. Commissioner Kirksey suggested this be something to think about for Department Heads not Elected Officials. If these Department Heads are planning to retire or leave October 1, 2026, and we needed to hire someone 3 months prior it would put the additional salary into this budget session. Commissioner Kirksey also wants to implement an Onboarding Process in the future. Just some things to think about.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor, reported she needs to update the budget for the Appraisal District and the City of Borger for Dispatch Services.

Judge Irwin reported that a decision has not been made on Angelica Hartranft, Constable Pct. 2 salary increase or a clerk position for that office. Commissioner Kirksey is not a fan of adding a clerk position but suggested raising the salary to \$60,000.00 the same as a 1st year Sheriff Deputy. He has viewed the additional work she provides as self-inflicted because she chooses to go above and beyond but in speaking with the City of Borger and City of Fritch, they view the additional work that she does is valuable for their departments as well and she can provide the numbers to back it up. Ms. Krieg said the base salary for a Sheriff Deputy is \$64,066.32. You also must think about what we do for one we may have to do for all. Commissioner Prock mentioned they have tried to discuss the same elected officials making different salaries in the past. After discussion Commissioner Prock agrees with the base salary for a Sheriff Deputy. Commissioner Kirksey

suggests if the salary increase is approved and a raise is approved; she would only receive the salary increase this year not the raise. Judge Irwin mentioned the Justice of the Peace makes \$68,000.00. Constable Hartranft is currently making \$56,633.00, Judge Irwin asked if everyone could agree on \$60,000.00. Ms. Krieg suggested for example a \$5,000.00 raise, bringing her salary to \$61,633.00. Commissioner Bentley agrees Constable Hartranft does a fantastic job but he does not agree with increasing the salary. Judge Irwin says they know what the job entails and the salary when they were appointed and they then ran for the position knowing the salary. After discussion this could be placed on the next Commissioners Court agenda for a vote. The issue with this is it will not give enough time to publish the public hearing on the proposed tax rate and proposed salary increases. They held an unofficial vote: Judge Irwin, Commissioner Bentley, Commissioner Alexander – Against raise. Commissioner Kirksey, Commissioner Prock – For raise. They are leaving the salary as is for now.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor, sent out Budget Scenarios for county raises for discussion and they have been made part of the minutes. According to the scenarios the Tax Rate is \$0.53 and No New Revenue Rate is \$0.49. Voter approval rate is \$0.57. They discussed the projected rate of living increase of around 2.6%. \$150.00 raise per month averages out to 3.09%. \$125.00 raise per month is a 2.38% increase from no raise. This will help absorb insurance increases and inflation. They all agree on the \$125.00. Scenarios have been made part of the minutes.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor, brought up the Capital Projects Fund. If a Capital Projects Fund is set up General Funds can be moved into a Capital Projects Fund to build up for projects. If needed and not specified for a specific project, it could be moved back into the General Fund. There will be a need for a new jail at some point. This will help with not having such a big bond election. This would be to make improvements to provide services to our citizens and taxpayers. There is \$500,000.00 in contingency now and at the end of the budget year what is left over could be moved over to the Capital Projects Fund was the thought. Judge Irwin and Ms. Krieg will come up with a plan for Capital Projects Fund so that it can be started now and plan ahead for those to understand in possibly 10 plus years.

Judge Irwin said they need to set the Proposed Tax Rate. The current tax rate is \$0.53 and if you kept it at \$.053 Proposed Tax Rate that still shows \$1.1 million in surplus. Historically when a proposed tax rate is set the actual comes in lower. Certified Values have been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE PROPOSED TAX RATE FOR 2025-2026

Ben Bentley made the motion to approve setting the Proposed Tax Rate at \$.530, seconded by Gary Alexander. The vote of record: Dwight Kirksey – aye; Chris Prock – aye; Judge Irwin – aye; Ben Bentley – aye; Gary Alexander – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

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 at 12:34 p.m.



ATTEST:


CINDY IRWIN – COUNTY JUDGE


JACQUELYN CORTIZ – DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK

