

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HUTCHINSON

On this 9th day of March 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)

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

Gary Alexander made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items including the added Library and JP1 Monthly Reports, 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 HIRING NEW AG EXTENSION AGENT

Josh Brooks, AgriLife Extension District Administrator, introduced Caitlynn Budd for the new Ag Extension Agent position. Ms. Budd has a degree from WT in General Agriculture and was an intern in Randall County last summer and did a fantastic job. Her start date would be April 1, 2026. Hutchinson County's portion of the salary would be \$30,000.00 with budgeted travel. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve this hire with a \$30,000.00 salary as budgeted, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR LEASE OF ELECTION EQUIPMENT FOR THEIR MAY 2, 2026 UNIFORM ELECTION

Kelly Ratliff, County Clerk presented this Interlocal agreement between PSPCISD and the County for the lease of election equipment. Craig Jones, County Attorney, has no issues with this agreement. Dwight Kirksey 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.

MUSEUM DIRECTOR REPORT

Ashley Keeney, Museum Director, presented the HCHM Museum Director's Report. Report has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE MARK UP SALES PRICES ON ITEMS IN THE HCHM GIFT SHOP

Ashley Keeney, Museum Director, presented Book Inventory and HCHM Gift Shop Mark Up Prices for the gift shop. She spoke with other gift shops in the area such as the Hospital gift shop and they have a 50% markup. She is asking the Commissioners for the percentage they suggest for markup. Lesha Krieg, Auditor, advised the mark up percentage is profit regardless of price fluctuations of the items. Chris Prock made a motion to approve the 50% Mark Up, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Price lists are made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE PURCHASE OF A REFURBISHED COPY MACHINE FOR THE MUSEUM

Ashley Keeney, Museum Director, introduced Maggie with Visual Edge, the county's Xerox provider. The county has an agreement with Visual Edge; they are introducing a proposal with Visual Edge IT for a refurbished Xerox that will renew when all the other Xerox machines are up for renewal within the county in 2028. In the past the previous Museum Director used an Epson Printer and to replace the ink it is \$1,000.00 and while it should be used for certain things it is not practical for general use. There is a Xerox printer in the museum, it just was not getting used until Ms. Keeney took over as Director for brochures, posters etc. The Xerox copier has started to give Ms. Keeney problems, so she called Visual Edge and had a tech come out and they let us know that the machine is outdated. Commissioner Kirksey asked why this wasn't evaluated when the county entered into the new agreement with Visual Edge. But at the time the museum director then was not using the Xerox copier. For a refurbished Xerox with 500 regular copies and 300 color copies it will be \$255.34 per month and the machine would be co-terminous to end 9/27/2028 when the counties lease is up for renewal. She feels with the new number of copies allowed she should not go over. Commissioner Kirksey also asked if this has been run through Richard, our IT Director. They were trying to get this on the agenda as it goes up each month so they will send all information to IT for approval as well. This would be effective April 1, 2026. Ms. Keeney has \$562.00 in her budget but will need more to get her through this budget year. Lesha Krieg, Auditor, suggested moving the total she needs from Contingency into that line item. It was decided to table in order to get the total to move from contingency and clear this copier with IT. Chris Prock made a motion to table the approval of the copy machine until the next Commissioners Court Meeting on March 23, 2026, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Proposal has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE WATER LINE CROSSING FOR CHRIS BOGNER ON COUNTY ROAD F

Duane Chisolm, R&B Superintendent, presented this permit and would like to waive the fee associated for a local farmer. Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the permit and waive the fee, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Permit has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE FIRE MARSHALL OFFICE FOR HUTCHINSON COUNTY

Alan Wells, EMC reported that currently the Fire Marshall Office is under the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement. Since he could not complete the law enforcement training there is another option which is to put the Fire Marshall Office under the Texas Commission on Fire Protection. This still allows Mr. Wells to investigate fires within the county; he could not investigate if there was criminal activity. If he did identify criminal activity, he would contact local law enforcement to assist with the investigation. Currently under TCOLE Jason Pendor is listed as the Fire Marshall for Hutchinson County. The process would be to abolish the Texas Commission of Law Enforcement/Fire Marshall Office side and create the Texas Commission on Fire Protection/Fire Marshall Office and appoint Allan Wells as the Fire Marshall due to regulations with only 1 person being an employee under this TCFP as department head. The Commissioners requested to see this all in writing and the exact process to make this happen. Commissioner Prock asked if this had been sent to Craig Jones, County Attorney, for review. He also asked what it would mean to abolish a position for the future of that office/position. Sheriff Langwell advised the court that the TCOLE piece was abolished prior to when he took the Fire Marshall position and it took about a year and a half to get the office back with the Texas Commissioner on Law Enforcement including inspections of the office and policies etc. Sheriff said with TCFP Mr. Wells can determine the cause and origin of the fire and if he determines any criminal activity he will forward that report to local law enforcement. Dwight Kirksey would like to table this item until more information can be presented, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE SENDING AN INVOICE TO A RESPONSIBLE PARTY WHEN AN EMERGENCY INCIDENT OCCURS

Alan Wells, EMC, presented that individuals that are not county taxpayers and are determined the cause of a fire or emergency incident they could be subject to an invoice as the party responsible. City of Borger and Skellytown have a policy like this in place where they send an invoice to try and recoup some of the cost. For example, the Canadian River Bridge Fire was started by a contractor and the amount so far for that response is between \$30,000.00-\$40,000.00. The invoice is built off the same criteria as the FMAG grant when its sent to FEMA for reimbursement for the cost. It is an attempt to recoup cost for response. City of Borger has had some success with this. If they don't pay, a suit would need to be filed to proceed. Commissioner Kirksey asked how it would work if the contractor is working for a taxpayer. The Commissioners would like to see an example of an invoice, policy and process. Craig Jones, County Attorney, has reviewed an example invoice that the City of Borger uses. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to table this item until more information can be presented, seconded by Chris Prock. 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, reported that the drought index is 555 max. with the medium being 475. With predicted upcoming fire danger/weather no action taken at this time.

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

Chris Prock submitted a schedule through March 14, 2026, for the Borger Library Clubroom. Dwight Kirksey submitted a schedule through March 10, 2026, including every Saturday in March 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

Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. 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

Judge Irwin presented a donation from TXDOT for asphalt. Commissioner Bentley explained this material has to be donated to the county before it can then be donated to an entity such as City of Borger who would like the material. Judge Irwin asked if the county needs it and they don't at this time. The estimated value of the donation is \$10,000.00. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to accept the donation from TXDOT, seconded by Ben Bentley. Request for materials has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT TO TRANSFER ROAD MATERIALS TO THE CITY OF BORGER

Judge Irwin presented this Interlocal Agreement, Craig Jones, County Attorney created this agreement. Commissioner Bentley added if this comes up again, we can use this agreement as a template for the future to be presented. Ben Bentley 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.

DISCUSSION OF COUNTY JUDGES' AND COMMISSIONERS' PRECINCTS DAILY OPERATIONS

Commissioner Alexander reported there are snack machines and coke machines at the Borger Annex.

Commissioner Kirksey reported on the influx of Nuisance Properties; there are 4 complaints going to the state regarding Hutchinson County and nuisance properties. He has sent 10 approved certified letters to citizens. Roughly 50% do something about it and the other 50% may be returned or no action taken. The amount of reporting has doubled. He is talking to PRPC with some possibly grant money if the Fire Marshall can sign off on some of the buildings. Also, GrantWorks is going to look into funds for these issues. The county has no ordinances. When it comes to Health and Safety we use state statutes. We can send a letter for weeds 36in or higher. We have budgeted for this year \$20,000.00 for nuisance abatement. It was raised from \$15,000.00 to \$20,000.00. This may not even pay for one property. There was a situation where the process was not completed properly after a cleanup, when a lien should have been placed on the property. In the future a spreadsheet will be brought to court with properties reported including septic. Amy Back, Treasurer added a sample policy including letters on nuisance that was provided over a year ago for review to be approved in Commissioners Court but has not been. The last time they completed a nuisance project they got 4 bids and it was around \$17,000.00. The country does not have the resources to complete the work without outside help.

Sheriff Langwell reported that with the contract for inmate housing with Moore County, they have invoiced over \$14,000.00 in 2 months to put in the Jail Fund.

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

Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve Jarrod & LaTrina Gerstberger's Tax Deed (R9003) in the amount of \$2,500.00, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Tax Deed has been made part of the minutes.

SECTION 551.076 (DELIBERATIONS ABOUT SECURITY DEVICES)

Convened into Executive Session at 10:33 a.m.
Reconvened into Regular Session at 10:47 a.m.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ANY ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the Interlocal Cooperation Contract between Angelo State University and Hutchinson County, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Contract has been made part of the minutes.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

None at this time.

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 10:49 a.m.



ATTEST:


CINDY IRWIN – COUNTY JUDGE


KELLY RATLIFF – COUNTY CLERK

