

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HUTCHINSON

On this 22nd day of July 2024, 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)

Public Comment – Matt Chisum addressed the court regarding a culvert recently installed on CR F west of Hwy 136. Mr. Chisum would like to have the culvert removed or the south bar ditch cut deeper to have the water drain to the west. Commissioner Bentley and R&B Superintendent Duane Chisholm are aware and have a plan to resolve the issue.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Correction to the Regular Minutes on July 8, 2024. Dwight Kirksey pulled Consent Agenda 1 and made a motion to approve the correction to Regular Minutes on July 8, 2024, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Correction has been made part of the minutes.

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 the Consent Agenda Items 2-7, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Documents have been made part of the minutes.

REGULAR AGENDA

INTRODUCE NEW AFLAC REPRESENTATIVE EVAN SCHMIDT

Amy Back, Treasurer introduced our new AFLAC representative Evan Schmidt out of Panhandle. Open enrollment is August 1st through August 31st. The schedule for the 2 Mandatory Employee Meetings has been sent out for August 7th and August 13th.

PUBLIC HEARING: CONSIDER, HEAR AND/OR APPROVE ANY AND ALL PERSONS CONCERNING THE COUNTY CLERK'S RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVE PLAN

No comments.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE COUNTY CLERK'S RECORDS MANAGEMENT, ARCHIVE AND VITALS PLAN

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE 2025 SHERIFF AND CONSTABLE'S FEES

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ORDER CREATING COUNTY ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATOR

Kelly Ratliff, County Clerk presented information requested from Craig Jones our County Attorney on what the Commissioners Court role is in establishment of County Elections Administrator Position. This memorandum has been made part of the minutes. Mrs. Ratliff did mention that in the 2023 legislative session, Texas lawmakers expanded all Texas counties the authority to appoint an election administrator showing this could be the direction the state is going due to Nationwide spotlight and requirements to do elections increase daily. 151 of the 254 counties in Texas have appointed an EA and this number could be increased as we know a hand full in the panhandle that have appointed in this budget session, around 70 have the same population as our county or lower population. Mrs. Ratliff feels this would benefit the county to have someone dedicated 40hrs plus a week to elections/voter registration to streamline the process and have someone 100% dedicated to these duties. Judge Irwin presented the Order Creating County Elections Administrator. Commissioner Prock stated during the discussion a few weeks ago he was for it but after further looking into it he feels that elections is one of her main job functions as elected to do so. He feels that creating an Election Administrator adds another layer and takes the power away from the voters. Mrs. Ratliff understands she was elected to conduct elections but is also willing to make change with the times. When she took office TAC approached her with why we don't have an Election Administrator as our county population would justify. She thought try to make the change now as the General Election would be a collaborative effort and with the position in place 2025 is an odd year and the EA could streamline processes. Commissioner Kirksey asked what an EA normally makes. She said after researching these numbers vary by county. Judge Irwin did mention at her Judges Conferences this is the way many counties are going and as previously presented moving someone from the County Clerks office into this position. Commissioner Bentley asked who will help the EA during elections when the polls close etc. Mrs. Ratliff advised that the Judges within the polling places are responsible for getting the equipment and all back to the Courthouse on election night. They also budget for election workers, get help from maintenance and inmate workers. Discussion was had on where the EA would office out of. Commissioner Kirksey asked about the Election Commission that would appoint the EA and was advised it is made up of the County Judge, County Clerk, Tax Assessor-collector and each political party chair. Voter Registrar can submit information for Chapter 19 Funding that can fund part-time help, alleviate election worker cost for state mandated extended hours and other things. Since this position does include Voter Registrar, Carrie Kimmel spoke as not being for creating the EA position and does not see the need with 13,000 registered voters. As of Thursday, she only saw Potter, Randall and Gray as counties having an EA in the panhandle. Judge Irwin has spoken with some judges in the panhandle that are moving in the

direction of creating an EA this budget year that may not be reflected yet. It was discussed as job security to keep elections within the County Clerk Office. Mrs. Ratliff also let the court know there are many important job functions in the County Clerk's office including all vital statistics, real property records, probate, criminal and civil courts and the trainings that go with it and how having someone dedicated to these functions as well as one person dedicated to elections how it could benefit the citizens. After discussion the Commissioners do not see the need to create a new position also with the County Clerk and Voter Registrar not agreeing on creating the EA position. No motion, agenda item dies for lack of motion. Memorandum and Order have been made part of the minutes.

DUE TO THE "LAME DUCK" POLICY, CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THREE (3) NEW COMPUTERS FOR THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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

DUE TO THE "LAME DUCK" POLICY, CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF A NEW LIVE SCAN/FINGERPRINT MACHINE FOR THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF MS. JANIS ROBINSON TO THE TEXAS PANHANDLE CENTER BOARD

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ANY ARP GRANT PROJECTS

Julie Winters; United Way: Provided an update on the ARP Fund contributions they receive for the Peer Support Program. She gave an example of how someone has been helped on the program. They are also working with Frank Phillips College, if anyone is battling addiction etc. there is a Peer Support Agent available to help. They are also working with the faculty at the college on WRAP Training to assist and acknowledge possible mental health cases. They have a meeting in August with the college to also possibly offer this as a class for students on campus as well. Ms. Winters is applying for a Grant to help fund this project when ARP Funds run out.

Jennifer Rhoden/Jeremy Sharp; Adult Probation/Juvenile Probation: \$55,910.35

Jerry Langwell; EMC/County Fire Marshall: \$1,500.00

BOTH TOTALING: \$57,410.35 – Countywide Critical incident notification system including 2 portable radios. WAVE Plus Control System by SecureTech Systems/2 radios from Public Safety Upfitters LLC. Craig Jones, County Attorney has approved this contract. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve TIPS quote regarding WAVE Plus including the 2 radios totaling \$57,410.35 out of ARP, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Documents have been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ANY ACTION FROM THE FEBRUARY/MARCH WILDFIRES

Judge Irwin presented the Republic Services invoices for the wildfire debris, not including the concrete. Judge Irwin spoke with the Carson County Judge on how to split the invoices as they include the debris from both counties together. Judges Irwin presented a 70/30 split. 70% Hutchinson County, 30% Carson County. The invoices are Hutchinson Counties' responsibility, so they need to be paid and after an Interlocal Agreement is presented with more information, Carson County can then repay us what is decided. Ben made a motion to pay the 2 Republic Services invoices for \$3,757.68 and \$33,746.43, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Invoices have been made part of the minutes.

Judge Irwin provided an update from Jerry Langwell on the concrete removal. He forwarded her an email from TCEQ stating there is an individual with Small Business and Local Government Assistance that has been in touch with a company willing to do it. This company has contracts to finish before they can come take a look at the concrete in Fritch. Judge Looten is also looking for possibilities. TCEQ is extending our permits on the concrete.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE BURN BAN OR RESCIND BURN BAN

Chris Prock, Commissioner Pct. 4 reported that the drought index is 355. No action taken at this time.

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

Chris Prock, Commissioner Pct. 4; had no requests for the Borger Library Clubroom. Dwight Kirksey, Commissioner Pct. 2; presented the calendar for the Fritch Library Clubroom through August 3, 2024. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. 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 Dwight Kirksey. 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

Duane Chisholm, R&B Superintendent presented 3 quotes for a belly dump trailer. He would like to go with the CTS trailer from Bruckner's for \$44,540.00. Commissioner Bentley brought up the milage report and these not getting used much. Mr. Chisholm stated this is a 2007 model he is replacing, and he has had to start maintenance and replacing things on this trailer. He budgeted for this purchase, and it was approved. The 2007 trailer will be auctioned off through Purple Wave. Chris Prock made a motion to approve the belly dump trailer through Bruckner's in the amount of \$44,540.00, seconded by Dwight Kirksey. Voting in favor: Judge Irwin, Chris Prock, Dwight Kirksey and Gary Alexander. Abstained: Ben Bentley. Motion carried.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor presented the Airport Manufactured Home bids. 5 were received and 2 were disqualified based on specs. There is a tabulation sheet to summarize the bids as well as a bid scoring sheet that needs to be used for all bids, we receive to show open and fair competition. The sheet will also help award the bid to the most qualified vendor. Baltazar Medrano, Airport manager recommended the Amarillo Home Center Palmer Model. Judge Irwin asked if these homes are on the lot or must be ordered. Mr. Medrano stated that the Amarillo Home Center homes are on the lot. Solitaire Homes there is a 6–8-week turnaround time. Solitaire also provided a quote for utility hookups an additional \$13,150.00. Solitaire also comes with a 12-year structural warranty. Amarillo Home Center did not make it clear about the warranty. After discussion about the Score Sheet, utility hook up, square footage and warranty they agree the Solitaire Home is the best option. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to award the bid to Solitaire Homes of Amarillo based on the warranty, tabulated cost and square footage, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Bid information has been made part of the minutes.

Judge Irwin spoke regarding 15 refrigeration units that are still inside the Ranch Annex to see if we need to go out for bids for someone to pick up for salvage. It was suggested to put them on Purple Wave for Auction. Judge Irwin offered to call Purple Wave about this. Discussion was had about the process and who the county contact for the items on Purple Wave is and how they want to go about it.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE DONATIONS TO HUTCHINSON COUNTY

None at this time.

DISCUSSION OF COUNTY JUDGES' AND COMMISSIONERS' PRECINCTS DAILY OPERATIONS

Ben Bentley, Commissioner Pct. 3. reported the chiller is currently working but needs an update on some valves sticking that is a 3-day project. He hopes to complete this without having to take the chiller 100% down. He mentioned the LED light bulbs have come in and will be changed out throughout the Courthouse.

Dwight Kirksey, Commissioner Pct. 2 gave us an update on Robin's custom desk at the Fritch Annex Tax Office and asked how we get rid of office furniture an office doesn't want anymore. Judge Irwin said if he will get her a picture she can see if any of the offices need the item and if not put it in the auction.

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

Terry A and Lisa Kelly Homan submitted an offer of \$100.00 for Lot 60, Double Diamond Estates Unit 8, Hutchinson County, Texas. The appraised value of the property is \$840.00. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to counteroffer at \$250.00, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Offer has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ANY ACTION ON 2024-25 BUDGET

Lesha Krieg, Auditor, is hoping to get Certified Values at the end of the week. Judge Irwin reminded everyone about the Special Budget Meetings on July 29th and August 5th with a schedule of departments. The recommended budget will be sent out Thursday for review.

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 11:13 a.m.




CINDY IRWIN – COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:


KELLY RATLIFF – COUNTY CLERK

