

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HUTCHINSON

On this 26th day of August 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. Ben Bentley led the pledge and prayer.

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

Bill Sheldon with the Kiwanis Club spoke about the Diamond Reveal an annual community service award dinner & ceremony, this will be held at the Frank Phillips College Library Saturday, September 7th 6-8pm. Sponsored by the Borger Kiwanis Club.

Mary Kay Phelan expressed concern regarding salary increases for Elected Officials. After conducting salary comparisons of counties with similar populations. She feels the Elected Officials in Hutchinson County are overcompensated in comparison to other counties with the same population and revenues. She suggested reducing the wages and adding the savings to a savings account etc.

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

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

REGULAR AGENDA

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE PROCLAIMING SEPTEMBER 2024 AS HUNGER ACTION MONTH

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

LAME DUCK POLICY – CONSIDER AND OR APPROVE INVOICES ON ALLEN’S TRI-STATE MECHANICAL AND AXON ENTERPRISE TO PAY

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ORDER OF ELECTION – NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION FOR COUNTY OFFICERS

Dwight Kirksey 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 JOINT ELECTION SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN BORGER ISD AND HUTCHINSON COUNTY

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE BOND FOR SHASTA KAY HUGHES, JUVENILE PROBATION FOR \$1,000.00

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE TRANSFER OF JUVENILE PU TO IT DEPARTMENT

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

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE APPLICATION FOR DOLLAR GENERAL CREDIT CARD

Judge Irwin presented the request for a Dollar General Credit Card for supplies for Grand Jury etc. Auditor Lesha Krieg will keep it in her office and issue out if someone needs it for county supply purchases. This card is also tax exempt. 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.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE WESTLAW 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.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH SANFORD-FRITCH ISD FOR ELECTION EQUIPMENT

Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item with Attorney Craig Jones approval, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Agreement has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE ANY ARP GRANT PROJECTS

None at this time. Financials have been made part of the minutes.

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

None at this time.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE BURN BAN OR RESCIND BURN BAN

Jerry Langwell, EMC/County Fire Marshall, reported that the drought index is 446. He recommended implementing the Burn Ban. Ben Bentley made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Gary Alexander. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Order has been made part of the minutes.

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 presented the calendar for the Fritch Library Clubroom through August 24, 2024. Dwight Kirksey made a motion to approve the event on August 24, 2024, at the Fritch Library Clubroom, 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 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

Lesha Krieg, Auditor reported the Sheriff Department Firearm Bid is going until Sept 3rd. The Courthouse Blinds Bid opens on Sept 9th. There is a request to go out for bid for some work at the Annex on flooring, texture and paint in the hallways and County Attorney's Office. Gary Alexander made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Ben Bentley. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Request for proposal has been made part of the minutes.

CONSIDER AND/OR APPROVE DONATIONS TO HUTCHINSON COUNTY

None at this time.

DISCUSSION OF COUNTY JUDGES' AND COMMISSIONERS' PRECINCTS DAILY OPERATIONS

Dwight Kirksey, Commissioner Pct. 2 gave an update on the Fritch Tax Office desk and painting. He also sent out 2 nuisance letters for vegetation over 36 inches high.

Gary Alexander, Commissioner Pct. 1 gave an update on the Borger Annex Tax Office front desk remodel. He is also calling someone to mow at the Borger Annex.

Chris Prock, Commissioner Pct. 4 reported he has been mowing at the Borger Library as there have been issues with invoicing and communication.

Kelly Ratliff, County Clerk reported Pct. 11 Election Day Polling Place will be moving from Faith Covenant Church to Grace Fellowship Church on Gardner Street due to Faith Covenant Church being bought out by a daycare. This change will take place during the General Election, November 5, 2024.

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

William Simpson submitted an offer of \$2,700.00 for Lots 15-20, Block 115, Original Town of Stinnett, Hutchinson County, Texas. The appraised value of the property is \$66,320.00. Ben Bentley made a motion to approve the above stated agenda item, seconded by Chris Prock. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously. Offer has been made part of the minutes.

PUBLIC HEARING – ON PROPOSED TAX RATE AND PROPOSED SALARY INCREASES

No comments.

BUDGET WORK SESSION FOR BUDGET 2024-2025

Lesha Krieg, Auditor reported there were some changes with the employee insurance that will need to be updated since open enrollment, but they are minimal.

Angelica Hartranft, Constable Pct. 2 via Zoom asked if she needs to add her part of the Axon body cameras and software into her budget request or an ARP Funds request. She will need to have her own contract with Axon not included with the Sheriff's Department so the access to evidence is separate since they are separate agencies. She sent the quotes for review this morning with and without the TAP Program for body cams, tasers and fleet. After discussion of various options with the Axon quotes, other companies such as WatchGuard for an additional body cam for her Reserve Officer and as a backup for herself, it was decided to go with Axon with the TAP Program for body cam, taser and fleet for 1 Officer to be added into her budget paying each year for 5 years. Constable Hartranft will look into a lower end new body cam though WatchGaurd to have a backup in the future.

Commissioner Kirksey wanted to discuss SB22 employees and the county raise. Commissioner Prock asked if the District Attorney and County Attorney have a plan for the SB22 funds to present to the court. Mark Snider, DA stated he supplements 3 of his staff and to possibly use the funds for part-time help and or an intern. The SB22 Funds are for smaller counties to be used to hire such as an Assistant District Attorney and bump up pay to get and retain quality employees if needed. He cannot justify using all the funds and sends what he cannot use back to the state as does the County Attorney. After discussion the employees receiving the SB22 supplement will also get the county raise onto their base salary. SB22 Grant Funds are not always guaranteed and can only be used to supplement, not used for bonuses, overtime or as a stipend.

Judge Irwin advised they will set the budget and tax rate at the September 9, 2024, Commissioners Court Meeting.

Lesha Krieg, Auditor wanted to discuss possibly adding another maintenance position to assist with other county buildings/locations. It was decided this would be a future discussion.

Commissioner Bentley did look into salaries in 254 counties in the state of Texas. Counties with populations under 50,000 have substantially lower salaries. It was discussed to freeze raises for elected officials to allow salaries to catch up and be comparable, possible longevity raises, job performance evaluations, cut pay and ensure department heads are hiring employees in at the lowest tier. It was also discussed having to compete with Phillips 66 and the surrounding plants to get quality employees. They feel what is going on now is not sustainable for the county. After lengthy discussion Judge Irwin will set up a meeting with elected officials and department heads to discuss the salary issue and resolution. They appreciate the willingness to discuss and figure out a solution for the future.

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. Adjourned 11:37 a.m.



Cindy Irwin

CINDY IRWIN – COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

Kelly Ratliff

KELLY RATLIFF – COUNTY CLERK

