



CARRIE GREGOR
AUSTIN COUNTY CLERK

COMMISSIONERS COURT MINUTES

On **August 29, 2011** Austin County Commissioners Court met in the Basement Meeting Room at the Austin County Courthouse with the following present:

Carolyn Bilski, County Judge
David Ottmer, Commissioner, Precinct 1
Robert "Bobby" Rinn, Commissioner, Precinct 2
Randy Reichardt, Commissioner, Precinct 3
Douglas King, Commissioner, Precinct 4
Cyndi Gomez, Deputy County Clerk

Opening – 9:00 a.m.

Call to Order
Invocation
Pledges of Allegiance
Certification of Quorum

Consideration/Adoption of Agenda

Motion to Adopt: Commissioner Ottmer, 2nd Commissioner Reichardt, passed (4-0).
Order #11-323

1. Discussion regarding Settler's Crossing – Section 2, and action as appropriate

Postponed due to lack of information.

ADDENDUM

1. Consideration and possible action to renew burn ban.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reichardt, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0).
Order #11-324

2. Update by Austin County Historical Commission Chair Grace Holtkamp

Per Grace Holtkamp, budget for Texas Historical Commission (THC) has been cut 50%, losing 47 staff positions. She discussed preservation of cemeteries, historical markers and dedications throughout the county. There will be a Cemetery Records office in the Annex

building open on Tuesday's, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. They will answer questions regarding cemetery locations, cost of burials and historical markers in Austin County.

3. Consideration and possible action to accept Texas Department of Rural Affairs Community Development Block grant for \$350,000 on behalf of New Ulm Water Supply Corporation

Vicky Schultz-Spiess discussed sewer and water improvements.

Motion to Authorize: Commissioner Rinn, 2nd Commissioner King, passed (4-0).
Order #11-325

4. Consideration and possible action to authorize proposals for EMS billing service

Ron Dille updated the Court on billing for EMS. He feels it is time to explore a new billing company due to increased rates. Requirements are interfacing with their ESO, EPCR and maintaining electronic reports. He is requesting to look for companies with Statement of Qualifications and advertising in the newspapers.

Motion to Authorize: Commissioner Reichardt, 2nd Commissioner Ottmer, passed (4-0).
Order #11-326

5. Consideration and possible action to authorize purchase of official record binders and three (3) compact workgroup scanners out of Records Management 137-010-0000 in the amount of \$2,696.17

Motion to Authorize: Commissioner Ottmer, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0).
Order #11-327

6. Consideration and possible action to authorize Title IV-E Child Welfare/Legal Services contract with Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Judge Bilski discussed contract and eligibility for return money, and asked for authorization to sign/complete paperwork and designate Betty Jez, Fiscal Officer.

Motion to Authorize: Commissioner Ottmer, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0).
Order #11-328

7. Discussion to consider request for meetings after 5:00 p.m., and action as appropriate

Per Commissioner Reichardt, there have been two complaints. Evening meetings will be up to the citizen's attendance. If they do not come, meetings will return to normal hours.

Commissioner Rinn's concern is the participation of people that will show depending on agenda items. We had this problem on the Redistricting Public Hearing, attendance was low. He would like to have a poll.

Per Commissioner Reichardt, after hours meetings will cost us more money. We will have to pay our people to be here, and the taxpayers need to understand this.

Commissioner Ottmer questioned if the people on the agenda would be able to be here after hours?

Per Dan Anderson, a taxpayer, if you schedule evening meetings there will be people who would come and don't, this does not mean they will never come. One trial meeting is not good enough. He suggests meetings should be quarterly or monthly for the people with day jobs.

Judge Bilski reviewed the Commissioners Court meeting dates calendar.

*Motion to Table/Postpone: Commissioner Ottmer, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0).
Order #11-329*

8. Petitions or Requests from the Public

Cathy Frank, County Treasurer, read a letter regarding payroll and duties.

Odis Haynes, taxpayer, requested a reply regarding comp-time from last week's meeting.

Ron Dille explained comp-time and scheduling for his employees.

9. Budget Workshop with action as appropriate

a. County Department Requests

Focusing Families sent a letter for the Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program. They are in Sealy every Thursday, providing services and support groups for sexual assault victims. They have provided over \$6,620.98 for victims in safe places.

b. Review revenue and expenditures, and action as appropriate

The Court reviewed the Statement of Revenue for each department and needs to come up with \$148,796.00.

Judge Bilski suggested going ahead with the current budget. If there is money, we will figure out priorities. Need to get EMS revenues up and leave a salary adjustment line item. Started last year with \$2.3 million for the jail. We were \$304,000.00 in the hole, and budgeted \$384,299.00 for Indigent Health Care.

c. Sick leave accrual

Judge Bilski questioned sick leave accrual. The Court discussed the amount of hours given each month and the amount of hours employees are allowed to accrue. Limiting accrued hours, grandfathering those with accumulated hours and capping hours accrued were considered. Judge Bilski suggested options from Travis Koehn and Debra Mergel.

d. Longevity pay

Per Judge Bilski, other counties have capped at 25 years for new hires. She is suggesting to grandfather current employees. She will check on the numbers of employees who are at 25 – 30 years to see where we could cap.

Court recessed at 12:07 p.m.

Court reconvened at 9:24 a.m. Tuesday, August 30, 2011

9. Budget Workshop with action appropriated (CONTINUED)

d. Longevity Pay

Judge Bilski ran a list of 13 employees who have 25 years plus. We need to account and set future liabilities for the budget. There is a need to discuss grandfathering current employees.

c. Sick leave accrual

Research by Judge Bilski shows 1 employee with 1,148 and 1 employee with 1,184 accumulated hours of sick time. Comp time/holiday time/vacation time needs to be accounted for in budget.

b. Review revenue and expenditures, and action as appropriate

Betty Jez prepared new revenue and expenditures from yesterday's meeting.

Per Judge Bilski, year to date revenues received are minus \$400,000.00, need to find \$200,000.00. Banking on Indigent Health Care, while not using the full \$400,000.00. In July received \$358,000.00 and have spent \$1.4 million, with two months to go. We will not have extra money in the General Fund to jump start this budget.

The Court reviewed budget and adjusted money in multiple line items.

Ron Dille, EMS considered a 10% budget cut and will rerun his numbers.

Judge Bilski suggested being brave, and raising our sales and mixed beverage taxes.

Judge Bilski and Betty Jez, County Auditor, would each run numbers and bring back to court.

Court recessed at 10:55 a.m.

Court reconvened at 11:10 a.m.

After rerunning budget with approximate/estimated adjustments, Judge Bilski and Betty Jez came up with nearly equivalent amounts (Judge Bilski - \$74,126.00, Betty Jez - \$75,626.00), still needed to balance proposed budget.

Per Judge Bilski, need to figure out how to make sure payroll informs department heads of liability on comp and vacation time, with a notice being sent out next week. Department heads may consider reviewing again, prior to final budget, concerning comp, holiday, other time and vacation guaranteed to be paid if employee leaves. This is liability in the department's budget.

She feels there is enough to file a proposed budget.
Will post on internet and set a hearing.

Discussion to cut some holidays, and the birthday holiday for 2012.

Per Judge Bilski, will leave all holidays for 2012. We will have an agenda to consider capping the sick and longevity before the fiscal year starts.

10. Commissioner Court Inquiry

The Court will meet Tuesday after Labor Day to review. Captain Green will have someone here regarding "Inmate Out of Jail Medical Care."

Court adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ON FILE WITH COUNTY CLERK AS PROVIDED BY COMMISSIONERS COURT

I, Carrie Gregor, Austin County Clerk, attest to the accuracy of the record of the Commissioners Court proceedings for August 29, 2011.

Date: September 19, 2011

Carrie Gregor
Carrie Gregor, Austin County Clerk
Clerk of Commissioners Court
Austin County, Texas
By: Cyndi Gomez, Deputy

FILED

11 SEP 19 AM 7:57

Carrie Gregor

COUNTY CLERK
AUSTIN COUNTY, TEXAS