



DIANE DAY
AUSTIN COUNTY CLERK

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BELLVILLE, TEXAS 77418

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COMMISSIONERS COURT MINUTES

Order #25-174

August 25, 2025 Austin County Commissioners Court met in the 2nd floor Courtroom at the Austin County Courthouse with the following present:

Tim Lapham, County Judge
Greg Mikel, Commissioner, Precinct 1
Robert "Bobby" Rinn, Commissioner, Precinct 2
Leroy Cerny, Commissioner, Precinct 3
Chip Reed, Commissioner, Precinct 4
Allison Gerik, Deputy Clerk

9:00 A.M. OPENING

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

- 1. Public Hearing on FY 2025-2026 Budget**
- 2. FY 2025-2026 Budget Discussion**

Billy Doherty (County Auditor) presented budget binders to the court for review.

Per Judge Lapham, total General Fund Budget is \$26,631,058.00.

Judge Lapham believes there will be some reprieve if lowering from 3.5% to 2.8%. The no new revenue rate might have to go to voters for approval.

Creation of fire marshal position was discussed.

Commissioner Reed believes this could really benefit the growth of Austin County.

Billy Doherty inquired on the hourly rate of an educated fire marshal.

Commissioner Reed spoke with a fire marshal making \$80k-\$90k yearly.

Billy Doherty (County Auditor) advised hourly breaks down to \$38.46 on low end and \$43.00 on the high end.

Commissioner Rinn expressed to make sure everything is in the permitting department.

Judge Lapham requested Roy Mercer (Emergency Management Coordinator) to explain the 2 sides of a Fire Marshal position.

Per Roy Mercer (Emergency Management Coordinator), the planning side handles building environmental control and this is the side we should focus on. Response will fall on the investigation of fire or arson and for planning purposes. The county can narrow down what exactly we want the fire marshal to focus on.

3. Consideration and action to approve the 2025-2026 FY Budget

Judge Lapham recommends to not vote on budget or salaries.

4. Consideration to approve 2025-2026 FY salaries for elected officials and action as appropriate

No action.

5. Consideration and action to approve proposed FY 2025-2026 tax rate and schedule public hearing.

Commissioner Reed motions to go with proposed tax rate for General (M&O) at 0.31700, F/M & Lateral at 0.07379, R&B Special at 0.07575, Debt Requirement at 0.03723 creating a total of 0.50377.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

Vote will occur after tax hearing on September 8, 2025. Public hearings will take place in morning at 9:00 am and evening at 6:00 pm.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Rinn, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

6. Petitions or request from the public.

None.

7. Consideration and action to approve resolution regarding The Southeast Texas Housing Finance Corporation Single Family Mortgage Origination Program.

Per Judge Lapham, this is to allow permission.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

8. Consideration and action to accept 911 District Budget for FY 2025-2026.

Roy Mercer (Emergency Management Coordinator) thanked the court for allowing him to present the 911 District Budget for the 2nd year. He has served 2 years on the 911 District Board. The board has been very busy after the untimely death of the previous director. The board has not hired a new director currently. The budget holds \$80,000 for a director position. An agency has been hired to map out the county and confirm placement of addresses are correct. This amount is paid monthly

Roy Mercer (Emergency Management Coordinator) thanked Administrative Assistant, Vicki Strieder, for the tremendous job she does for the 911 District. Support from the Judge and Sheriff is appreciated.

Commissioner Reed expressed it sounds like the board has it planned well.

Commissioner Rinn motion to approve 2025-2026 Proposed Budget for Austin County 911 District.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Rinn, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

9. Open bid proposals and action as appropriate for the following:

- a. Road Materials/ Gravel**
- b. Hauling (Road Materials)**
- c. Asphalts, Liquid Asphalts, Emulsions & Dust Control**
- d. Corrugated Culverts**
- e. HDPE Culvert Pipe**
- f. Concrete/ Cement**
- g. Fuel (Gasoline & Diesel)**
- h. Surface Treatments, Asphalt Laydown and Asphalt Milling**

Proposals opened to the court. Shannon Hannath (Road and Bridge Administrative Assistant) will put together the proposals and bring back to court.

10. Discussion regarding Road Bond and Renewal of ROW Permit 20-009 between Austin County and Carr Resources and action as appropriate.

Commissioner Rinn motion to accept \$100,000 bond for approval of road bond improvement.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Rinn, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

11. Discussion regarding Austin County Investment Policy and action as appropriate.

Per Judge Lapham, no changes made.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0)

12. Consideration and action to approve Resolution of Annual Review of Investment Policy of Austin County.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Cerny, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

13. Discussion regarding Ditch Waste Waiver and action as appropriate.

Commissioner Mikel stated Precinct 1 will be doing ditch cleaning. Have been looking at how other counties handle ditch clearing. Commissioner Mikel suggest a waiver be created to transfer dirt from ditch to private property instead of hauling into town using tax payer money. Property owner will fill out the waiver which will help with liability in case damage would occur. Jesse Skinner (County Attorney) was provided a copy of this waiver to look over and believes it will be a great idea.

Commissioner Mikel motions to adopt this form as County Form for precincts to use.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Mikel, 2nd Commissioner Reed, passed 4-0

Per Judge Lapham, this is not required to use.

Commissioner Rinn stated the county use to do this in the past but had issues with landowners complaining.

Commissioner Mikel expressed that he is just trying to cover the counties liability.

14. Consideration and action to authorize a one-time variance from Subdivision Regulations to divide a 2.0-acre tract from a 38.497-acre parent tract and a variance of staff length of said 2-acre tract on Gosler Road, Pct 1.

Per Jonathan Hopko (County Engineer) request has been received appearing acceptable and road length appears slightly longer. The court is requested to approve and grant variance on roadway.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Mikel, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

15. Consideration and action to authorize a one-time variance from Subdivision Regulations to divide a 1.8-acre tract, 1.622-acre tract, a 1.711-acre tract and a 100'x100' jointly owned tract required for access from a 5.337-acre tract on FM 949 Road, Pct. 1.

Per Jonathan Hopko (County Engineer), originally tract would be broken into three tracts and 1 timed. TxDot is requiring one entrance with joint ownership available. Court is requested to allow this division.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

16. Discussion regarding Texas Department of Motor Vehicles Imposition of Optional Fees for Calendar Year 2026 and action as appropriate.

Per Judge Lapham, this is a routine vote that occurs yearly.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Cerny, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

17. Discussion regarding the purchase of FLOCK Cameras and action as appropriate.

Sheriff Brandes and Lt. Donald Darracq (Sheriff Office) spoke on the importance of the FLOCK Cameras. Currently FLOCK cameras are placed on the south end of the county. The Sheriff Office is now wanting to purchase additional cameras to cover all major roadways entering and exiting Austin County.

The Flock Cameras work as a License Plate Reader. In the event a crime occurs the investigator will be able to put the information in the system for the time frame it occurred generating results of vehicles captured by those cameras that match the vehicle's description. Access will also be given to other cameras in our region. Per Lt. Donald Darracq (Sheriff Office), the current Flock Cameras in Austin County has been a tremendous asset in solving crime in Austin County.

The contract will be 2 years and if approved execute September 1, 2025. If not approved, there will be a price increase.

Per Judge Lapham, will wait till next court when we get bid.

18. CONSENT AGENDA - items listed are of routine nature and may be acted on in a single motion unless requested otherwise by member of Commissioners Court.

a. Consideration and action to approve Commissioners' Court Minutes:

i. March 10, 2025 Revised

ii. July 14, 2025

iii. August 01, 2025

b. Consideration and action to accept executed County Health Authority documents:

i. Statement of Elected/Appointed Officer

ii. Oath of Office

iii. Certificate of Appointment

c. Consideration and action to approve 2025-2026 timesheet calendar.

d. Consideration and action to approve Private Roadway Name Request for Guss Lane to be added to the Austin County 911 Road Map, Pct. 1.

e. Consideration and action to approve Private Roadway Name Request for Saint Jude Lane to be added to the Austin County 911 Road Map, Pct. 2.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Rinn, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

19. Budgetary and Financial Claims- action as appropriate.

a. Payment of Claims

Total: \$1,670,402.19

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, Passed (4-0)

b. Fund Transfers

Total: \$ 1,132,891.75 (August 25, 2025)

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

c. Budget Amendments

d. County Auditor's review of finances

Billy Doherty (County Auditor) provided summary as of August 25, 2025.

**e. County Treasurer's
i. Payroll and Escrow Report- 08.22.25**

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0)

20. Written end-of-the-month reports submitted by County Offices.
a. Criminal Court- July 2025
b. Civil Court- July 2025
c. Family Court – July 2025
d. OSSF – July 2025
e. AgriLife Extension- July 2025

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0)

Court Recessed at 11:06 am.

21. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A closed meeting will be held concerning the following items:

a. Personnel Matter

Court Reconvened at 11:48 am.

22. Action as Appropriate on Executive Session Items

No action.

23. Building Projects Update

Daniel Sanchez (Shellback Construction) provided building project update on all current county projects.

Current air conditioning issues at Wendt St building were discussed. The estimated repair cost will be \$47,000.

Judge Lapham stated being the plan is to move the EMS offices out we should make our decision or wait it out and see what the future holds.

Commissioner Reed feels we should wait to see what the plan is with the building.

Commissioner Rinn expressed we have tried everything.

Per Commissioner Reed, this is the 3rd time changing AC on the building.

Commissioner Rinn request to hold off.

Commissioner Reed requested Daniel Sanchez (Shellback Construction) to hold off for now.

24. Discussion regarding personnel policy revisions and action as appropriate.

Policy reviewed and revised by the court.

25. Commissioner Court Inquiry

Billy Doherty (County Auditor) and Shannon Hannath (Road and Bridge Administrative Assistant) will leave Wednesday for the Legislative Session.

Court adjourned at 12:52 pm

Motion to Adjourn: Commissioner Cerny, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

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

I, Diane Day, Austin County Clerk, attest to the minutes of the Commissioners Court proceedings for August 25, 2025.

Date: September 30, 2025
Diane Day, Austin County Clerk
Clerk of Commissioners Court
Austin County, Texas

By: Allison Gerik
Allison Gerik, Deputy Clerk



FILED

2025 SEP 30 PM 4:42

Diane Day
COUNTY CLERK
AUSTIN COUNTY, TEXAS