

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

**IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS**

Be it remembered, that on this the 11<sup>th</sup> day of May, A.D., 2020, the Commissioners Court of Zapata County, Texas convened in **REGULAR SESSION** of said Court, at the regular meeting place thereof, in the Courthouse of Zapata, Texas, with the following members of said Court, to-wit:

**PRESENT:**

Hon. Joseph Rathmell	County Judge
Paco Mendoza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 1
Olga M. Elizondo	Commissioner, Precinct No. 2
Eddie Martinez	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Norberto Garza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan	County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Commissioners Court

**VISITORS:** Romeo Salinas, Triunfo Gonzalez, Monica Alanis, Juan J. Meza, Nellie R. Treviño, Daniel Arriaga, Roger Miller, Joyce Currington, Christopher Williams, Manuel Gonzalez, Jr., Ricardo Guevara, and Luis Guevara.

**WHEREUPON**, the following Orders and Proceedings were had by said Court, to-wit:

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:00 A.M.  
ROLL CALL BY MARY JAYNE VILLARREAL-BONOAN, COUNTY CLERK AND  
EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT  
INVOCATION BY REV. ROGER MILLER  
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Judge Rathmell reported on the COVID-19 testing as follows: 262 testes conducted, 232 negative results, 23 pending results and 7 positive cases from the onset and they have all been released from isolation. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> week with no new cases.

Chief Meza reported on Friday's COVID-19 testing done by National Guard as follows: 42 registered and 41 tests were conducted, 1 person did not show up. Results will be available this week. These will be added to the 262 that were previously tested. They will come back to test in San Ygnacio, Lopeño and Falcon. Chief Meza recommended that persons coming into the courthouse continue wearing their masks for the protection of our employees and also continue having 3 doors locked so courthouse security can have a better view of those that are entering the courthouse. Judge Rathmell stated that the new camera system is operational and courthouse security can see those entering.

Judge Rathmell informed the court that he received a phone call and there is a farmer in Iowa who is willing to ship a trailer load of live hogs, almost 150, to our community. It would be the county's responsibility as to how they would be distributed and offered to the public. There is someone here who can process them. There is a possibility that the food pantry can assist. Romeo Salinas added that to distribute they have to be processed by a USDA certified facility.

Commissioner Mendoza added that we should get prices to process the hogs because it will be easier to distribute processed pieces of meat than the live hogs. We can also reach out to more people.

### **ORDER APPROVING INVOICES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve invoices in the amount of \$1,061,107.22 as presented by Triunfo Gonzalez.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **ORDER APPROVING TREASURER'S REPORT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve Treasurer's Report as requested by Hon. Romeo Salinas, County Treasurer.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **ORDER APPROVING CHECKS ISSUED**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve checks issued in the amount of \$1,061,108.90 as requested by Hon. Romeo Salinas, County Treasurer.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **TAX / ASSESSOR COLLECTOR'S REPORT**

Tax Assessor/Collector's office reported Hotel-Motel tax collections in the amount of \$6,574.01 for the month of April with a year-to-date total of \$65,932.76. Tax collections at a rate of 81.92% for a total base tax collected of \$5,347,777.31.

Mrs. Figueroa will be installing plexiglass to her counter; it will be glued on using silicone and can be removed in the future. The office is currently open, but not face to face.

### **ORDER ALLOWING FOURTH AMENDED SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER FOR ZAPATA COUNTY TO EXPIRE AND FOLLOW GOV. ABBOTT'S EXECUTIVE ORDER AND GUIDELINES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to allow the Fourth Amended Shelter In Place Order for Zapata County to expire and follow Governor Abbott's Executive Order and guidelines, as needed as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge. We can recommend the wearing of a mask, but cannot be enforced; private businesses can require wearing a mask. We can request a 50% occupancy for businesses, because we do not have active cases. Certain businesses have not been addressed.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **ORDER ALLOWING FOURTH AMENDED ORDER REGARDING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GATHERINGS IN ZAPATA COUNTY TO EXPIRE AND FOLLOW GOV. ABBOTT'S EXECUTIVE ORDER AND GUIDELINES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to allow the Fourth Amended Order Regarding Public and Private Gatherings in Zapata County to expire and follow guidelines as set forth by Governor Abbott as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER EXTENDING CLOSURE OF ALL SENIOR NURITION CENTERS RUN BY ZAPATA C OUNTY AND PROVIDE ALL ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS WITH HOME DELIVERED MEALS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve to extend the closure of all Senior Nutrition Centers run by Zapata County and provide all eligible participants with home delivered meals until May 30, 2020 as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER ALLOWING CLOSURE OF ALL PUBLIC SPACES RUN BY ZAPATA COUNTY TO EXPIRE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to allow closure of all public spaces run by Zapata County to expire and follow Governor Abbott's guidelines, does not include pavilion, community centers, library and museum, as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER TO TABLE REQUEST BY JUDGE RATHMELL REGARDING PAYMENT TO GLOBAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR INSTALLMENT OF COURTHOUSE SECURITY CAMERAS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to table request by Judge Rathmell regarding payment of \$44,369.30 to Global Technologies for installment of courthouse security cameras.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER TO TABLE REQUEST BY JUDGE RATHMELL REGARDING FUNDING FOR BASS CHAMPS FISHING TOURNAMENT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to table request by Judge Rathmell regarding funding of \$5,000 for the Bass Champs Fishing Tournament scheduled for May 30, 2020 and to allow the use of the pavilion at the county boat ramp.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING THE ASSIGNMENT OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH TO OPEN THE COUNTY LANDFILL AT NO FEE FOR ZAPATA COUNTY RESIDENTS FOR DISPOSAL OF LARGE HOUSEHOLD ITEMS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve the assignment of the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month to open the county landfill, at no fee for Zapata County residents, for disposal of large household items (no household trash) as requested by Hon. Olga Elizondo, Commissioner Pct. 2.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER ACCEPTING RESIGNATION OF RAFAEL BENAVIDES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to accept the resignation of Rafael Benavides, Labor/Maintenance, 15-012-slot #6, effective May 4, 2020, as requested by Hon. Olga Elizondo, Commissioner Pct. 2.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING HIRING OF CORANDO GARCIA, JR. AS LABOR MAINTENANCE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve hiring of Corando Garcia, Jr., as Labor/Maintenance in 15-012-slot #6, at \$9.48 per hour, effective May 4, 2020, as requested by Olga Elizondo, Commissioner Pct. 2.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING REQUEST FROM THE LAREDO SECTOR – U.S. BORDER PATROL TO SET UP AN AUTONOMOUS SELF-POWERED TOWER**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve a request from the Laredo Sector – U.S. Border Patrol to set up an autonomous self-powered tower as requested by Hon. Olga Elizondo, Commissioner Pct. 2.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**MOTION DIED DUE TO TIED VOTE - REQUEST BY ADRIANA FIGUEROA, TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR FOR SALARY ADJUSTMENT FOR ANNA JUAREZ**

Motion was made by Commissioner Elizondo, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve request by Adriana Figueroa, Tax Assessor-Collector for salary adjustment for Anna Juarez to \$16.92 per hour. No additional funds or amendments to the budget will be required as funds are available and currently in the budget.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of Commissioners Elizondo and Martinez. Judge Rathmell and Commissioner Mendoza voted against. Motion died.

**ORDER APPROVING INVOICE AND REVIEW OLD LANDFILL SURVEY**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve invoice in the amount of \$5,640, payable to Premier Engineering, to be paid out of non-department consulting fees. Mr. Gonzalez reported that the old landfill will be decommissioned. A survey had been made along with a topological map.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICE AND STATUS REVIEW OF ZAPATA COUNTY JAIL PLAN REPAIR**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve payment of invoice payable to Premier Engineering in the amount of \$6,200.00 for Zapata County Jail Plan Repair as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering. Mr. Gonzalez reported that there is an issue with ponding on the exterior, splash blocks will need to be installed,

this is out for bids. Topographic survey and grating plans have also been prepared. Roof issues are being bid out. Jail has been inspected and is structurally safe to be occupied.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICE AND STATUS REVIEW OF FALCON SHORES DRIVE 6” WATERLINE INSTALLATION PROGRESS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve payment of invoice payable to Guzman Backhoe in the amount of \$12,250.00; and invoice in the amount of \$3,500.00 payable to Premier Engineering for the Falcon Shores Drive (Nicholson Subdivision) 6” waterline installation as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering. Mr. Gonzalez reported that water pressure issues are due to having a 2” line and more homes than the line can handle. A 6” line has been added on the East side of Falcon Shores Drive and are making connections at both ends. Waterworks staff has informed Premier Engineering that there is already a 6” line a block and a half away on the end of Nicholson Subdivision, not extended all the way to the last street. There is a 4” line on Villarreal Street. They are interconnecting the middle of Martinez Street.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICES AND REVIEW OF ZAPATA COUNTY WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT PROGRESS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve payment of invoice payable ACP in the amount of \$21,403.61 (invoice #29) and invoice in the amount of \$42,807.21 (invoice #30) for installation of pumps and communications that were added on change order. They have indicated that some of the pumps are still on back order due to deliveries taking longer. They are working on a small piece of paving and seeding.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICES AND REVIEW OF FALCON MESA PAVING PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve payment of invoices in the amount of \$1,330.40 and \$1,039.00 payable to Terracon for testing on caliche; and payment for retainage fee to REIM Construction in the amount of \$30,692.27, to be paid out of Precinct 3 project funds. Project is 100% complete

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING LINE ITEM TRANSFERS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve the following line item transfer to meet departmental needs:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE-ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	Sheriff’s County Jail	10-561-335	Computer Expense	\$2,000.00
TO	Sheriff’s County Jail	10-561-462	Miscellaneous and Rental	\$2,000.00
FROM	Sheriff’s County Jail	10-561-336	Law Enforcement Supplies	\$2,000.00
TO	Sheriff’s County Jail	10-561-462	Miscellaneous and Rental	\$2,000.00
FROM	Sheriff’s County Jail	10-561-337	Prisoner Supplies	\$2,000.00

<b>TO</b>	Sheriff's County Jail	10-561-462	Miscellaneous and Rental	\$2,000.00
<b>FROM</b>	Sheriff's Regional Jail	10-567-336	Law Enforcement Supplies	\$1,500.00
<b>TO</b>	Sheriff's Regional Jail	10-567-456	Equipment Rental	\$1,500.00
<b>FROM</b>	Sheriff's Regional Jail	10-567-337	Prisoner Clothes	\$3,000.00
<b>TO</b>	Sheriff's Regional Jail	10-567-456	Equipment Maintenance	\$3,000.00
<b>FROM</b>	Sheriff's Regional Jail	10-567-391	Prisoner Medication	\$5,500.00
<b>TO</b>	Sheriff's Regional Jail	10-567-456	Equipment Maintenance	\$5,500.00

as requested by Sheriff Alonso M. Lopez, Sheriff's Office.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve the following line item to meet departmental needs:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE-ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
<b>FROM</b>	County Judge	10-400-330	Fuel/Maintenance	\$1,000.00
<b>TO</b>	County Judge	10-400-310	Office Supplies	\$1,000.00

as requested by Roxana Elizondo, County Judge's Office

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MENDOZA,  
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MARTINEZ,  
TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MARTINEZ,  
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ELIZONDO,  
TO RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION**

**ORDER AUTHORIZING COUNTY ATTORNEY TO DRAFT A LETTER WITH  
LANGUAGE FOR PROVISIONS REGARDING EXCLUSIVITY RIGHTS REGARDING  
INDUSTRIAL WASTE DISPOSAL**

Motion was made by Commission Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, authorizing county attorney to draft a letter with language for provisions regarding exclusivity rights regarding industrial waste disposal as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

*Closed Session/Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Subchapter D, Section 551.071 (A)(B) Consultation with Attorney.*

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of Commissioner Mendoza, Martinez, and Elizondo. Judge Rathmell abstained. Motion carried.

**ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, and being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

There being no further business for disposition at this term, the Court adjourned.

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JOSEPH RATHMELL, COUNTY JUDGE  
OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

ATTEST:

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MARY JAYNE VILLARREAL-BONOAN,  
COUNTY CLERK AND EX-OFFICIO  
CLERK OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS