

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

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

Be it remembered, that on this the 8<sup>th</sup> day of June, 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, Myrna Primeaux, Clarence Morgan, Joyce Currington, Roger Miller, Luis Gonzalez, Rolando Garza, and Juan Galindo.

**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**

Commissioner Mendoza stated that considering the amount of damage that we got, the commissioners got together and contributed a certain number of employees forming a special crew, which will work using large equipment, one day per precinct. They started Friday with Pct. 1. Commissioner Mendoza asks constituents to please be patient. The crews are also doing regular maintenance while trying to recover from the storm.

Judge Rathmell reported that USDA Rural Development was here last week. There were almost 70 applicants looking for loan grants and applied through USDA Rural Development; they will return next Thursday to try to get new applicants. Unfortunately, the storm was not large enough for the area to be considered a disaster, the threshold is \$37,000,000.

Chief Meza reported that the National Guard performed 44 COVID-19 tests at King's Way Church. He will submit a request for National Guard to return.

Judge Rathmell added that Zapata has had 12 positive COVID-19 cases; 8 have been released from isolation, leaving only 4 active cases. However, there may be 1 false positive within the 4 active cases. Judge Rathmell asked Zapata County department heads to encourage employees to get tested, it will not cost them anything.

Judge Rathmell also reported that last week about 200 ranchers in our county received notices from the International Boundary and Water Commission advising Zapata ranchers, whose families have operated under these lease agreements for nearly 70 years, that they were given until June 30 to vacate their cattle and any fencing from these pastures. Judge Rathmell reached out to Congressman Cuellar for assistance. IBWC contacted Judge Rathmell and given the COVID-19

crises, the cattle market collapsed and there won't be any enforcement of these notices and ranchers do not have to vacate the premises.

Judge Rathmell also commented on the milk distribution that was discussed in the last meeting; a local business man volunteered a refrigerated truck and a driver to facilitate distribution of the milk. Distribution of 2,000 gallons is scheduled for June 10, to provide for the public, free of charge and at no cost to the county.

Myrna Primeaux, spokesperson for Falcon Station Game Room, addressed the court and stated that they are hoping they can open the "maquinitas" on June 10. There are 640 machines; all precautions have been taken and they are ready to start.

#### **ORDER APPROVING INVOICES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve invoices in the amount of \$911,186.36 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 Elizondo, 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 Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve checks issued in the amount of \$911,186.36 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 \$2,620.32 for the month of May for a year-to-date total of \$68,553.08. Tax collections at a rate of 83.10% for a total base tax collected of \$5,796,622.39.

#### **ORDER ALLOWING AND ENCOURAGING ZAPATA COUNTY EMPLOYEES TO VOLUNTARILY SUBMIT TO COVID-19 TESTING**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to allow and encourage all Zapata County employees to voluntarily submit to COVID-19 testing 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 APPROVING PAYMENT OF \$44,369.30 TO GLOBAL TECHNOLOGIES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve payment of \$44,369.30 to Global Technologies for installation of Zapata County Courthouse security cameras 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 DENYING REQUEST BY JUDGE RATHMELL ON REQUEST FOR FUNDING OF \$5,000.00 FOR BASS CHAMPS FISHING TOURNAMENT SLATED FOR MAY 30, 2020 AND ALLOW USE OF PAVILION AT COUNTY BOAT RAMP**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to deny request by Judge Rathmell on request for funding of \$5,000.00 for the Bass Champs Fishing Tournament slated 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 TO TRANSFER CARLOS RAMIREZ TO SPECIAL ROAD AND BRIDGE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to transfer Carlos Ramirez, Pct. 1 Equipment Operator, 14-011-slot#3 at \$12.00 per hour to Special Road and Bridge 15-621-slot #7 at \$13.98 per hour, effective June 8, 2020, as requested by Hon. Paco Mendoza, Commissioner Pct. 1.

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

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT TO HILL COUNTRY SOFTWARE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve payment to Hill Country Software for Justice of the Peace, Pct. 2, 3, and 4 in the amount of \$8,650. Money to be taken from the Technology Fund line-item 62-582-392 as requested by Triunfo Gonzalez, County Auditor.

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

**ORDER APPROVING BID FOR ZAPATA COUNTY JAIL REPAIRS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve bid by Deep South Haulers, in the amount of \$27,701.50, and bid by Campos Construction in the amount of \$55,000; to be paid out of the fund balance, for the Zapata County jail repairs as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering.

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

**ORDER APPROVING INVOICE AND STATUS REVIEW FOR FALCON SHORES WATERLINE PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve payment of 2 invoices payable to Guzman-Juarez Backhoe, in the total amount of \$12,250.00, and retainage fee payable to Premier Engineering, in the amount of \$2,500.00 for Falcon Shores Waterline Project as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering. Construction is completed and final review was done. The pending connection was connected and water pressure and volume are good.

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

**ORDER APPROVING ZERO COST CHANGE ORDER AND STATUS REVIEW FOR ZAPATA WASTEWATER PLANT PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve zero cost change order, contractor has brought in pending pumps and has submitted for final payment retainage fee for Zapata Wastewater Plant project as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering. End of contract is July 1, 2020.

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

**ORDER APPROVING TO SUBMIT TXCDBG GRANT APPLICATION TO TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR THE FAST FUNDS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve submitting TxCDBG Grant Application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the FAST Funds, including all other actions necessary thereto; for purchase of an ambulance, as requested by Carl Esser, Esser and Company Consulting, LLC.

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

**ORDER APPROVING INITIATING PROCUREMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATION CONSULTANT AND ENGINEER FOR POSSIBLE COLONIA CONSTRUCTION ROUND 2 ASSISTANCE PROJECT FOR PCT. 2.**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve initiating the procurement of an administration consultant and an engineer for possible Colonia Construction Round 2 assistance project for Pct. 2 as requested by Carlos Colina-Vargas.

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

**ORDER APPROVING RETAINING FIRM OF CARLOS COLINA-VARGAS, AICP & ASSOCIATES TO PROCURE FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve retaining the firm of Carlos Colina-Vargas, AICP & Associates to procure funding for community improvement projects, as selected by the Zapata County Commissioners Court, pending review by County Attorney, as requested by Carlos Colina-Vargas.

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

**ORDER APPROVING PREPARATION OF A PARK MASTER PLAN AS RECOMMENDED BY TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT BY FIRM OF CARLOS COLINA-VARGAS, AICP & ASSOCIATES AND TO APPOINT SIX MEMBERS TO AN AD HOC COMMITTEE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve the preparation of a Park Master Plan, as recommended by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, by the firm of Carlos Colina-Vargas, AICP & Associates; and to appoint Commissioner Martinez, (appointment of 5 members is pending) to an Ad Hoc Committee for

providing citizens input in the preparation of the Park Master Plan as requested by Carlos Colina-Vargas.

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 Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve the following line-item transfer to meet departmental needs:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
<b>FROM</b>	Non-Department	10-409-311	Postage Express	\$997.50
<b>TO</b>	County Judge	10-400-462	Rentals & Maintenance	\$997.50

as requested by Roxanna 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 Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve the following line-item transfer to meet departmental needs:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
<b>FROM</b>	Texas A&M AgriLife Ext.	10-665-312	Communications & Progress	\$1,000.00
<b>TO</b>	Texas A&M AgriLife Ext.	10-665-427	Workshops & Travel Expenses	\$1,000.00

as requested by Jesus F. Rodriguez, AgriLife Extension Agent.

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 GARZA,  
TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

**ORDER APPROVING AMENDMENT OF APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR  
AMUSEMENT MACHINE REDEMPTION ORDINANCE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve amendment of the application deadline for the Amusement Machine Redemption Ordinance as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge. All machines, whether operational or not must be paid for; they are to reopen based on state recommendation and guidelines at a rate of 75% capacity. Permit date will be June 8, 2020 – June 30, 2021, and can open as soon as payment is received.

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

**ORDER TO DENY REQUEST TO CONSIDER TAKING OVER OPERATIONS  
AT LOS EBANOS GOLF COURSE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to deny request to consider taking over operations at the Los Ebanos Golf Course, pending further discussion and further funding, as requested by Hon. Eddie Martinez, Commissioner Pct. 3.

*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 all members of the Court.

**NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON THE FOLLOWING ITEM DISCUSSED  
IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

24./29. to discuss damages from storm on county property as requested by Nellie R. Treviño, Personnel Director.

*Closed Session/Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Subchapter D, Section 551.074(B) Personnel Matters.*

**ORDER APPROVING TO SEND MEMORANDUM TO ALL COUNTY OFFICIALS  
AND DEPARTMENT HEADS REMINDING THEM OF EXISTING POLICIES FOR  
USE OF COUNTY VEHICLES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve order to send memorandum to all county officials and department heads reminding them of existing policies for use of county vehicles as requested by Nellie R. Treviño, Personnel Director.

*Closed Session/Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Subchapter D, Section 551.074(B) Personnel Matters.*

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

**ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, 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