

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

Be it remembered, that on this the 13^h day of October 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
Norberto Garza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan	County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Commissioners Court

ABSENT:

Eddie Martinez	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
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VISITORS: Romeo Salinas, Triunfo Gonzalez, Roxana Elizondo, Joyce Currington, Nicolas and Elsa Gutierrez, Juan J. Meza, Daniel D. Arriaga, Jose F. Mendoza, Ramona Martinez, Leslie Vela, Ralph Treviño, Children’s Advocacy Center, Monica L. Benavidez and Sandra Moore.

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 results as follows: there are currently 18 active cases, 340 have tested positive, 1 pending, 320 have been released from isolation and 7 deaths.

Chief Meza advised that there will be testing on October 13 – 15, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the community center, the test will be performed as an oral swab.

Commissioner Mendoza noted that early voting has started.

Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan, County Clerk added, that early voting will also be conducted on Saturday, October 17 and Saturday, October 24.

Commissioner Mendoza added that the Census deadline has been extended to October 31; Zapata County only shows 24.7% participation.

Judge Rathmell and Commissioner Elizondo commented on the decorations at the County Plaza.

ORDER APPROVING INVOICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve invoices in the amount of \$524,671.76 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 Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve checks issued in the amount of \$524,671.76 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 – not present report submitted

Tax Assessor/Collector's office reported Hotel-Motel tax collections in the amount of \$3,973.32 for the month of September with a year-to-date total of \$94,198.33. Tax collections at a rate of 89.10%.

UPDATE ON CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS SATELLITE OFFICE

Ed Rodriguez of the Children's Advocacy Center was present for Severita Sanchez. He reported that 160 therapy sessions were conducted for a total of 10 children. They are currently doing telehelp visits due to COVID-19. All children were able to continue with assistance.

ORDER APPROVING MEASURES TO ADDRESS SURGE IN LOCAL COVID-19 CASES

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve measures to address surge in local COVID-19 cases. Curfew is lifted, however, school curfew remains in place; business occupancy 70%; private venues can open at 75%; softball field can open; library can open depending on recommendation of Chief Meza, which is to wear masks and continue with social distancing, 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 REAPPOINTING COMMISSIONER GARZA AS MEMBER TO ZAPATA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT BOARD

Motion was made by Commissioner Elizondo, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve Commissioner Garza as a member to the Zapata County Appraisal District Board 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 TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF KENNEDY STREET AND ALLOW FOR ONE-WAY TRAFFIC ON NORTH 5TH AVENUE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB HALLOWEEN CANDY DRIVE-THRU EVENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve the temporary closure of Kennedy Street and allow for one-way traffic on North 5th Avenue on October 31, 2020 from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m. for the Boys and Girls Club Halloween Candy Drive-thru event 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.

**BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB REPORT
(NOT ON THE AGENDA)**

Leslie Vela reported that they have continued with the meal services for kids serving approximately 500 meals per week. They are reopening on Monday, October 19, 2020 with only 35 members. They have been giving books to kids as well as craft activities. An emergency plan is in place. The San Ygnacio facility has been vacated. They participated in the back-pack program via the Guadalupe and Lilia Martinez foundation. Kids Café snacks/meals are being provided; once school reopens school will provide lunch and the Boys and Girls Club will continue providing snacks and dinner.

**ORDER APPROVING USE OF SOFTBALL FIELDS FOR
TRAVELING TEAM SCIMMAGES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve the use of the softball fields for the traveling team scrimmages as requested by Hon. Olga M. 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 USE OF SAN YGNACIO CIVIC CENTER FOR
YOUTH HUNTING PROGRAM**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve the use of the San Ygnacio Civic Center for a youth hunting program as requested by Hon. Olga M. 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 PAYMENT FOR EQUIPMENT IMPROVING
INTERNET ACCESSABILITY TO JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PRECINCT 1
AND JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PRECINCT 4**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve payment of an invoice totaling \$2,093.83 from COVID-19 funds for equipment improving internet accessibility to the Justice of the Peace, Pct. 1 office as requested by Hon. Anna Guerra, Justice of the Peace Pct. 1. and invoice totaling \$2,093.83 from COVID-19 funds for equipment improving internet accessibility to the Justice of the Peace, Pct. 4 office as requested by Hon. Ramon Benavides, Justice of the Peace Pct. 4.

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

ORDER APPROVING PURCHASE OF A WALK-IN COOLER FOR FOOD PANTRY

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve the purchase of a walk-in cooler for the Food Pantry using COVID-19 funds from KaTom Restaurant Supply, Inc., to facilitate distribution of 500 gallons of milk monthly, for the amount of \$12,148.07. GSA pricing provided for County government, as requested by Hon. Romeo Salinas, County Treasurer.

ORDER APPROVING TO HIRE GLORIA THATCHER

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve to hire Gloria Thatcher as Administrative Assistant at \$9.00 per hour in 15-021-slot#10, effective October 12, 2020 as requested by Jose Mendoza, County Shop Supervisor.

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

**ORDER ALLOWING DEMOCRATIC PARTY TO HOST A
“RIDIN’ WITH BIDEN” PARADE THROUGH ZAPATA COUNTY**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to allow the Democratic Party to host a “Ridin’ with Biden” parade through Zapata County on October 17, 2020 as requested by Jorge Montes, Zapata County Democratic Chairman.

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

**ORDER APPROVING USE OF FRONT STEP OF ZAPATA COUNTY COURTHOUSE
FOR THE NATIONAL PILL TAKE BACK EVENT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve the use of the front steps of the Zapata County Courthouse on October 24, 2020 and April 24, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the National Pill Take Back event as requested by Sonia Sanchez Montes, SCAN.

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

**ORDER APPROVING ANNUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN
ZAPATA COUNTY AND SCAN**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve the annual agreement between Zapata County and SCAN for the use of office space and utilities as requested by Sonia Sanchez Montes, SCAN.

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

**ORDER APPROVING RATIFYING RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
ZAPATA COUNTY PARK MASTER PLAN 2020 AND SUBMISSION TO
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve ratifying a resolution to approve the Zapata County Park master plan 2020 and its submission to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) as requested by Carlos Colina Vargas, Consultant.

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

**ORDER APPROVING USE OF ZAPATA COUNTY ARENA FOR THE
NICK GUTIERREZ, JR. MEMORIAL ROPING**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve the use of the Zapata County Arena for the Nick Gutierrez, Jr., Memorial roping on October 17, 2020, with social distancing, as requested by Elsa Gutierrez, Zapata County resident.

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

ORDER APPROVING INSTALLATION OF STREETLIGHT

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve the installation of a streetlight at the following address:

- a. 2501 Glenn Street
- b. 1901 Miraflores Street

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 AND AUTHORIZING RESALE OF PROPERTIES ON ATTACHED AND INCORPORATED EXHIBIT A

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve and authorize the resale of properties on the attached and incorporated Exhibit A, which were all foreclosed on, upon more than six (6) months ago for failure to pay ad valorem taxes due to the County of Zapata, in accordance with Sec. 34.05 (C) of the Texas Property Tax Code as requested by Jaime E. Gonzalez, Linebarger, Goggan, Blair & Sampson, LLP.

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

ORDER APPROVING RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TEXAS FEEDING TEXANS HOME-DELIVERED MEALS GRANT PROGRAM

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve resolution authorizing submission of Texas Department of Agriculture Texas Feeding Texans Home-Delivered Meals Grant Program as requested by Carl Esser, Esser & 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 PROCLAMATION FOR DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve Proclamation for Down Syndrome Awareness Month as requested by Annette Arambula, Border Region Behavioral Health Center.

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

ORDER APPROVING PROCLAMATION FOR MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve Proclamation for Mental Illness Awareness Week as requested by Annette Arambula, Border Region Behavioral Health Center.

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 GARZA,
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MENDOZA,
TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

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

25/31. To discuss issues related to Wastewater Department as requested by Ralph Treviño, Water Plant Supervisor.

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

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Garza, 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.

JOSEPH RATHMELL, COUNTY JUDGE
OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

ATTEST:

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