

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

Be it remembered, that on this the 14th of June 2021, 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
Jose A. Solis	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Norberto Garza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Celica A. Rodriguez	Chief Deputy County

VISITORS: Nellie R. Trevino, Ramon R. Benavides, Daniel D. Arriaga, Delia Mendoza, Flo Chambers, Nancy Umphres, Raymundo Del Bosque, Ricardo J. Lopez, Edgar Botello, Roberto VanNest, Aaron Solis, Austin C. Brandon, Laura Garza, Berta Gonzalez, and Adriana C. Figueroa.

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 CELICA A. RODRIGUEZ, CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK AND
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

COMMUNICATIONS

Judge Rathmell commented that they had a successful trip to Austin a few weeks ago. The county had applied for TPWL grants and they were approved. Projects will include a park in Precinct 2 at 20th and Mira Flores, Los Ebanos Golf Course. The county will move forward with the purchase and some enhancements, including a 22-acre tract to expand land for the county. They are still working on the purchase price and other details.

Gov. Abbot is very frustrated with the ongoing border security crisis and has declared 34 counties to be disaster areas throughout the Rio Grande Border. He is requesting cooperation from county governments to support the effort by issuing local disaster declarations. Zapata County has issued a disaster declaration as of Friday, which will be taken on by the court and it will allow us the ability to access federal and state funds. Gov. Abbot has allocated a billion dollars for border security from the Texas State Budget. The declaration is only effective for 7 days; however, the court may extend it for a longer period to participate in funding. We have seen the numbers in stash houses and other crimes.

Sheriff Del Bosque reported 179 apprehensions, 6 weapons, and assisted in apprehending 1600 rounds of 50 caliber rounds in the San Ygnacio area.

Commissioner Elizondo stated that the Hwy 16 expansion project is something Zapata really needs due to high-speed chases and its only one-way traffic with nowhere to go. Judge Rathmell added that he was told by the district engineer that said project should be bid out in the future. The county has requested surplus materials. The local TxDot yard will remain open; however, employees will have to clock-in in Starr County.

Fire Chief Daniel Arriaga reported that we lost Jose Alejandro, area coordinator with TDEM who passed away on June 5. Covid-19 testing is held Wednesdays and Thursdays. Vaccinations at Fire Department are taking place Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. still getting a lot of first doses.

COVID-19 report:	12 + 1 dose 64.39%
17,085 tests	12 + fully vaccinated 53.90%
1,587 positives	65 + 1 dose 82.10%
15,498 negatives	65+ fully vaccinated 73.47%
36 deaths	3 positive cases last week

ORDER APPROVING INVOICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve invoices in the amount of \$1,371,015.58 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 \$1,371,015.58 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 \$9,473.09 for the month of May with a year-to-date total of \$84,146.32. Tax collections at a rate of 86.86% for collections in the amount of \$148,906.80.

PRESENTATION OF RETIREMENT PLAQUES

Presentation of retirement plaques to Florence Chambers and Rosalinda S. Gonzalez.

ORDER APPROVING TO HIRE REBECCA GUTIERREZ

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve to hire Rebecca Gutierrez on Slot #2 at the Zapata County Public Library 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 ISSUANCE OF DISASTER DECLARATION AND DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN ZAPATA COUNTY DUE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING ON BORDER WITH MEXICO

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve issuance of a disaster declaration and declare a state of emergency in Zapata County due to human trafficking on the border with Mexico, to coincide with Governor Abbott’s declaration 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 TO NET DATA

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve payment of balance owed to Net Data to be paid out designated line item 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 PROPOSAL FROM SCS ENGINEERS FOR GEOTECHNICAL SOIL TESTING

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to table request by Judge Rathmell regarding a proposal from SCS Engineers for Geotechnical Soil Testing at the proposed San Ygnacio Landfill expansion site.

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

ORDER APPROVING SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES COUNTY INFORMATION RESOURCES AGENCY (TAC CIRA) FOR STANDARD WEBSITE PACKAGE

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve service agreement with Texas Association of Counties County Information Resources Agency (TAC CIRA) for Standard Website Package for the Zapata County website as requested by Hon. Joe Joseph 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 PURCHASE OF COMMERCIAL MOWER FOR WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve purchase of a commercial mower for the wastewater department for the approximate purchase price of \$9,000 to be paid out of non-department 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 TO HIRE PART-TIME TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PRECINCT 4 OFFICE

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve to hire part-time (4 hours) temporary assistance for 3 months at a rate of \$9.00 per hour for Justice of the Peace Precinct 4 Office to be paid out of administrative assistant line item 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 THE OPENING OF ALL COUNTY FACILITIES

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza to approve the opening of all Zapata County facilities as requested by Hon. Jose A. Solis, Commissioner Pct.3.

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

ORDER APPROVING REQUEST OF \$70,000 FOR FOOD FOR BOTH JAIL FACILITIES

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve request of \$70,000.00 for food for both jail facilities for the remainder of the FY20/21 as requested by Sheriff Ray Del Bosque.

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

ORDER APPROVING REQUEST TO GO OUT FOR BIDS FOR REPAIRS FOR 25 SHOWERS AND TOILETS INCLUDING FLOORS AND WALLS FOR REGIONAL JAIL

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve request to go out for bids for the repairs for 25 showers and toilets, including floors and walls for the regional jail, to meet requirements for the next jail inspection as requested by Sheriff Ray Del Bosque.

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

ORDER APPROVING REIMBURSEMENT OF \$72,700 TO COMMISSARY FUNDS TO COVER EXPENSES INCURRED BY BOTH JAILS IN REPAIRS TO FACILITIES TO MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE DURING THE PANDEMIC MONIES WILL BE INCLUDED IN NEW BUDGET

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza to approve reimbursement of \$72,700.00 to commissary funds to cover expenses incurred by both jails in repairs to the facilities to maintain compliance during the pandemic, monies will be included in new budget as requested by Sheriff Ray Del Bosque.

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

ORDER APPROVING \$529,854.44 TO PURCHASE 10-2022 UNITS FOR ZAPATA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve \$529,854.44 to purchase 10-2022 patrol units for the Zapata County Sheriff's Office Fleet as requested by Sheriff Ray Del Bosque. Units will be 2022 at 2021 prices, units are Tahoe's and 4 x 4 pickup trucks. Units will be delivered by the 1/1/2022.

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

ORDER APPROVING \$22,550 TO PURCHASE 30 BULLET PROOF VESTS FOR ZAPATA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PATROL

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve \$22,550.00 to purchase 30 bullet proof vests for the Zapata County Sheriff's Office Patrol as requested by Sheriff Ray Del Bosque.

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

24. To adjust employee salaries on General Order 10-560 as requested by Sheriff Ray Del Bosque.

ORDER APPROVING TO RESCHEDULE COMMISSIONERS COURT MEETING FOR JUNE 25, 2021, DUE TO ATTENDANCE OF 87TH ANNUAL SOUTH TEXAS JUDGES' AND COMMISSIONERS' CONFERENCE

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve to reschedule the next Commissioners Court Meeting for Friday, June 25, 2021, due to the attendance of the 87th Annual South Texas Judges' and Commissioners' Conference as requested by Nellie R. Trevino, Personnel Director.

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

ORDER APPROVING USE OF WALKING TRAIL IN FRONT OF FALCON LAKE NURSING HOME FOR HEALTH FAIR

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve the use of the walking trail in front of the Falcon Lake Nursing Home for a Health Fair on July 15, 2021, as requested by Racheal Luna, Nursing Home Director.

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 AND LINE-ITEM TRANSFERS

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

a. 105 E. 5th. Ave. (Lot 48, Block 26, Zapata Townsite)
as requested by Hon. Paco Mendoza, Commissioner Precinct 1.

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 Solis, to approve the following line-item transfer to meet departmental needs:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	Commissioner Pct. 4	10-004-395	Parks & Buildings Pct. 4	\$2,000.00
TO	Commissioner Pct. 4	10-0040430	Travel Pct. 4	\$2,000.00

as requested by Hon. Norberto Garza, Commissioner Precinct 4.

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 Solis, to approve the following line-item transfer to meet departmental needs.

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	J.P. Pct. #1	10-455-427	Workshop & Travel	\$700.00
TO	J.P. Pct. #1	10-455-461	Equipment	\$700.00

as requested by Hon. Anna M. Guerra, Justice of the Peace, Precinct #1.

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 Solis, to approve the following line-item transfer to meet departmental needs.

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	Library	10-650-335	Computer Maintenance	\$1,000.00
TO	Library	10-650-463	Books	\$1,000.00
FROM	Library	10-650-462	Repairs & Maintenance	\$1,000.00
TO	Library	10-650-463	Books	\$1,000.00

as requested by Amelia Navarro, Librarian.

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

ORDER TO TABLE THE FOLLOWING LINE-ITEM TRANSFER

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to table line-item request by Guillermo Saenz, Environmental Department.

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	Environmental	10-595-330	Fuel	\$5,000.00
TO	Environmental	10-595-456	Repairs & Maintenance	\$5,000.00

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

ORDER APPROVING TO SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN SOUTH TEXAS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND CONFIRMING APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM COUNTY OF ZAPATA, TEXAS TO SERVE ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SOUTH TEXAS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Mendoza, to approve to support and participate in the South Texas Development Council and confirming the appointment of representatives from the County of Zapata, Texas, to serve on the Board of Directors of the South Texas Development Council for the period of October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021, 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.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER GARZA,
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SOLIS,
TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

ORDER TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY JUDGE TO OFFER A COUNTEROFFER AS PER EXECUTIVE SESSION PARAMETERS

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to authorize County Judge to offer a counteroffer as per executive session parameters for the acquisition of the Los Ebanos Golf Course 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.

[Closed Session/Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Subchapter D, Section 551.071 (BJ {Consultation with Attorney})

ORDER APPROVING HIRING OF BERTHA GONZALEZ AT NUTRITION CENTER POSITION

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve hiring of Berta Gonzalez at the Nutrition Center Position, as per the recommendation by the committee, as requested by Nellie R. Trevino, Personnel Director.

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

[Closed Session/Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Subchapter D, Gov't Code Ann 551.074, Personnel Matters

ADJOURN

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