

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

Be it remembered, that on this the 25th of July 2022, 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
Olga M. Elizondo	Commissioner, Precinct No. 2
Jose A. Solis	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Norberto Garza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan	County Clerk and Ex Officio Clerk of Commissioners Court

ABSENT:

Paco Mendoza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 1
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VISITORS: Nellie R. Treviño, Roger Miller, Daniel D. Arriaga, Ralph Treviño, and Gabriella 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, COMMISSIONERS COURT CHAPLAIN
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

COMMUNICATIONS

Judge Rathmell reported that Congressman Cuellar was here on Friday to make a check presentation to Zapata County Independent School District for the Summer meal program.

Judge Rathmell also announced that Congressman Cuellar set up a conference call with the Judge, IBWC, TCEQ, Texas Department of Agriculture Officials, and other agencies to discuss pumping station and critical lake levels at Falcon Lake. There may be USDA emergency drought grants available, the County will be working on the application.

Triunfo Gonzalez, Zapata County Auditor, addressed the Court and reported on the online auction. Four items were auctioned, equipment was obsolete; total sales were in the amount of \$184,930.20.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Anna Holcomb addressed the court and asked several questions; has windmill abatement been paid and are monies for the county fair being withheld? Copies of distribution of funds provided for the record (newspaper clippings). She also questioned how new funds are being distributed. She stated that people are being told that the county is holding the money. Judge explained that monies come in early in the year and it is in the possession of the county; the livestock committee decided that the monies would be spent on the smaller projects. A list is needed of how monies were spent. Mrs. Holcomb was told that the monies were disbursed as add-ons to all the kids; however, in 2021 at least 6 did not receive monies. In 2022, \$25,000 were allocated, but \$50,000 were requested; she wants to know what is going to happen to the additional \$25,000.00. County fair needs to provide a list of how the monies are being distributed.

ORDER APPROVING INVOICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve invoices from July 8 – July 21, 2022 in the amount of \$596,661.55, plus an invoice in the amount of \$3,330.83 for irrigation system to be paid out of Certificate of Obligation, 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.

COMMUNICATIONS

Judge Rathmell reported on Covid-19 as follows:

- + 20 positive cases for a total of 2,497
- + 53 probable cases for a total of 1,459
- no deaths were reported

Danny Arriaga thanked Gateway Clinic for providing self-test kits; he also reported that the Fire Department held a drive and distributed 630 self-test kits. Self-test results are not being reported, therefore; Covid-19 reports are inaccurate. Only positive results need to be reported. Self-tests are available at the Fire Department. Vaccinations are still being held at Community Center Wednesdays from 9 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.; self-test kits are available at this time as well. He added that a new vaccine is now available.

ORDER APPROVING CHECKS ISSUED

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve checks issued July 8 – July 21, 2022 in the amount of \$596,661.55, plus a check in the amount of \$3,330.83 for irrigation system to be paid out of Certificate of Obligation, 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 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ZAPATA COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ZAPATA COUNTY FOR USE OF LOS EBANOS GOLF COURSE

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between the Zapata County Independent School District and Zapata County for the use of Los Ebanos Golf Course, pending review by County Attorney; annual fee is \$40,000 for three years, 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 EXTENSION OF DROUGHT DISASTER DECLARATION

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve extension of drought disaster declaration issued by the County Judge on July 8, 2022 by 60 days to allow the county to apply for emergency funding, 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 MARTINEZ ELECTRICAL SERVICES
FOR INSTALLATION AND REPLACEMENT OF LED LIGHTS AT
ZAPATA COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve payment to Martinez Electrical Services in the amount of \$4,965.12 for the installation and replacement of LED lights at the Zapata County Courthouse 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 PURCHASE TRAILERS
AND MOWER FOR PRECINCT 2**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to purchase 3 trailers and 1 mower for Pct. 2 from Ron Hoover Co. of Laredo, Inc. in the amount of \$20,110.50. Amount to be paid from the Certificate of Obligation, Series 2021 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 TO DENY REQUEST BY HON. ROMEO SALINAS
REGARDING HIS OPPOSITION OF ITEM APPROVED ON JULY 11, 2022
GIVING TEMPORARY COUNTY EMPLOYEES HIRED WITH GRANT FUNDS
MEDICAL HEALTH COVERAGE BENEFITS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to deny request by County Treasurer Romeo Salinas to rescind approved item #15 during Commissioners Court held July 11, 2022 which was not requested by County Treasurer, Romeo Salinas. Let Court records reflect my total opposition of giving temporary Zapata County employees hired with grant funds medical health coverage benefits. This action would be a VIOLATION of the Zapata County Employee Handbook Policies. (Reference page 7).

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 ITEM #13 - TO INVESTIGATE AND
STUDY THE BEST FISCAL OPTIONS TO PROVIDE
WATER SERVICE TO CUSTOMER LOCATED ADJACENT TO
ZAPATA HIGH SCHOOL AS REQUESTED BY RALPH TREVINO,
WATER PLANT DIRECTOR**

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICE AND REVIEW OF
CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS OF FLORES DRAINAGE PRECINCT 1**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve payment of invoice in the amount of \$4,500.00 payable to Guzman Juarez Backhoe and invoice in the amount of \$5,000.00 payable to Premier Engineering for work performed on the Flores Drainage Project Precinct 1, as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering.

Mr. Gonzalez reviewed the construction progress of Flores Drainage Project Precinct 1 – Cleaned out channel, fill out and poured 15' x 20' section and added a retaining wall. Improvements will be made to cover \$27,900.00 budget only.

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

ORDER APPROVING INSTALLATION OF STREET LIGHT

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve installation of the following street light:

- a. 2409 Lincoln Street

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 LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve the following line-item transfer:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE-ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	NON-DEPARTMENT	010-33640-409	Supplies General	\$500.00
TO	NON-DEPARTMENT	010-31140-409	Postage	\$500.00

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 Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve the following line-item transfers:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE-ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	49 th District Court	010-435-402	District Criminal Court	\$2,000.00
TO	49 th District Court	010-435-427	Travel	\$2,000.00
FROM	49 th District Court	010-435-402	District Criminal Court	\$1,500.00
TO	49 th District Court	010-435-464	Fuel	\$1,500.00

as requested by Hon. Jose A. Lopez, District 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 approve the following line-item transfers:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE-ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	County Attorney	010-31047-475	Supplies	\$950.00
TO	County Attorney	010-39547-475	Misc. Maint. Exp.	\$950.00
FROM	County Attorney	010-31147-475	Postage Expense	\$150.00
TO	County Attorney	010-39547-475	Misc. Maint. Exp.	\$150.00
FROM	County Attorney	010-45447-475	Vehicle Expense	\$950.0
TO	County Attorney	010-39547-475	Misc. Maint. Exp.	\$950.00
FROM	County Attorney	010-49947-475	Equipment Rental	\$950.00
TO	County Attorney	010-39547-475	Misc. Maint. Exp.	\$950.00

as requested by Hon. Said A. Figueroa, County Attorney.

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 APPROVING TO OFFER \$3,500.00 TO ACQUIRE PRIVATE
PORTABLE BUILDING SITUATED ON COUNTY PROPERTY NEAR ANIMAL
CONTROL SHELTER**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve to offer \$3,500.00 to acquire private portable building situated on county property near the animal control shelter as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Sub Chapter D, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney).

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 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