

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BREWSTER
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2016 AT 9:00 A.M.**

Judge Cano called the meeting to order and the following Elected Officials were present:

<i>Eleazar Cano</i>	<i>County Judge</i>
<i>Luc Novovitch</i>	<i>Commissioner Pct. 1</i>
<i>Hugh Garrett</i>	<i>Commissioner Pct. 2</i>
<i>Ruben Ortega</i>	<i>Commissioner Pct. 3</i>
<i>Mike "Coach" Pallanez</i>	<i>Commissioner Pct. 4</i>

1. Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

Judge Cano led the Court in an Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public Comment

No public comments.

3. Minutes / additions / corrections / approval

Judge Cano state the minutes that are to be presented are for December 14, 2015, December 22, 2015 and December 29, 2015.

After the discussion the delivery of the minutes and there not being enough time to review the minutes the Court suggested to table the minutes that are up for approval.

Commissioner Pallanez moved to table the minutes for December 14, 2015, December 22, 2015 and December 29, 2015. Commissioner Ortega seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Study Butte Water Supply Corporation Water Facility Improvements / Discuss and consider designating by Resolution administration and engineering service providers for TxCDBG Contract No. 7215049

Jerry Carvajal stated that on October 15, 2015 a grant from Texas Department of Agriculture in the amount of \$168,637.00 for improvements to Study Butte Water Supply Corporation.

Carvajal reviewed the improvements. Carvajal stated that there were 6 proposal were sent out for this project and all proposals were reviewed by a Committee set by the Court.

Judge Cano stated that upon the review of the proposals that it was decided to award GrantWorks, Inc. for the administrative services and that Jacob & Martin for the professional engineering services for the Block Grant Award Contract 7215049.

Judge Cano read into record the Resolution.

Commissioner Ortega moved to approve the Resolution as read. Commissioner Pallanez seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Accept resignation of Brewster County Treasurer Ruth Staton

Judge Cano informed the Court that Treasurer Staton turned into him a letter of resignation. Upon the receipt of the resignation, the Judge accepted. Judge Cano stated that her resignation was due to health issues.

Commissioner Ortega moved to accept the resignation of Treasurer Ruth Staton. Commissioner Garrett seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Discuss process to appoint Brewster County Treasurer

Judge Cano stated that the entire Commissioner Court will be a part of the hiring process along with Auditor Watson. The Court will take their time and make sure the right person was hired and with no mistakes, informed Judge Cano.

The position will be posted soon and will remain available about two weeks.

Commissioner Novovitch suggested that the Commissioners have a right to recommend a candidate for the position and to make sure that anything in the position of the current Treasurer to be handed down to who will remain under her if she would not be at work between now and the resignation date.

Commissioner Garrett stated that the process should be discussed on this date and recommended to lay out the qualifications of the position at this time.

Judge Cano asked Auditor Watson thinks should be some of the qualifications should be.

Auditor Watson stated that the some accounting experience, payroll, and banking.

Commissioner Garrett asked about the level of education and Auditor Watson stated that for an Elected Official there are not requirements and stated that the work history with references would be recommended.

Auditor Watson expressed her thanks to the Court for unifying the hiring process.

7. Recognize Big Bend Livestock Show Association, 4-H, F.F.A., and Texas AgriLife Extension Service for show held on January 7th & 8th, 2016

Logan Boswell of the Extension Office informed the Court that 2015 was the 72nd year and his 26th year. The show went well and the youth worked hard, informed Boswell. He also stated that they tell the kids that "we are not trying to raise champion livestock, but raise champion kids." Boswell said that the auction raised \$150,000 last he heard but the final numbers have not been recorded. Boswell thanked the County for the support that is offered to the Extension Office.

8. Road & Bridge Department / Community Facilities

- A. Road & Bridge Superintendent's Report, General updates on maintenance and repairs for all county roads & state of County Roads System; road materials including, fuel, supplies including usage & inventories & future needs;**

budgetary matters; equipment including heavy equipment, (maintenance repairs, future needs, replacement and additions), pickups, trailers and other light vehicles and accessories, and small equipment, (usage, future needs), equipment rentals; facilities (yards in Alpine, Marathon and S. County) cattle guards, fences and other means of containing livestock; safety issues and equipment; and community facilities (assistance with maintenance and other related issues); assistance to other governmental entities and emergency responders; personnel issues, (vacancies, new hires, discipline, performance, safety and other general personnel matters); permits for boring or trenching for utilities across County Roads / Discussion and appropriate action

Superintendent Frenchie Causey reported that with all the rain and the weather the roads were in bad shape so his crew began to blade roads in the County. The material for the generator pad is ready for the Terlingua Community Center, stated Superintendent Causey. Road & Bridge also took down the Christmas lights around the Courthouse and patched pot holes around the Brewster County.

Commissioner Ortega commended Superintendent Causey for maintaining his budget and for keeping his eye on his expenses.

Judge Cano stated the County has become a member of Arbor Day and received 10 trees for planting.

Commissioner Ortega read into record the use of Community facilities and political office holder and stated that in July 2013 adopted a policy and an amendment was made later that was unclear. Commissioner Ortega stated that he used the facility in Marathon and apologized to the Court for the lime light that it brought and was not his intention.

Judge Cano briefly reviewed the current handbook and stated that all the Commissioners are on the same page.

B. Discuss Road & Bridge Workshop

Judge Cano stated that a workshop will take place so that the work and projects of Road & Bridge will be completed and not go unnoticed.

After discussion the Court will meet in March for a workshop to see what the goals are for 2016.

C. Discussion and appropriate action for general work of Road & Bridge Department to go forward

Nothing further to discuss.

9. County Emergency Management Office

A. General Report including:

Recent emergency responses; emergency planning update; recent work with cooperating emergency responders: (ESD #1, all VFD's and EMS);

update on needs, programs, training, recent work with other governmental entities; equipment for emergency response and updates regarding needs, maintenance, repairs, replacement and additions; emergency management issues related to burn bans; emergency management issues related to communications & public information; emergency management issues related to County insurance coverage; personnel issues related to emergency response, exercises & drills; matters related to pending & future Homeland Security & FEMA Grants and other funding, matters related to 911 EMS in County and matters related to 911 & 911 addressing / Discussion and appropriate action

Emergency Coordinator Matt Van Ostrand reported that the generator in Terlingua is ready to be put into place. There are preparations for setting up emergency locations and having those locations set up with cots, blankets and other needed items in case they are needed, informed Van Ostrand. Also, working with Red Cross for additional cots and blankets in Marathon and Terlingua. Van Ostrand is trying to get a PILOT program with Red Cross and the Marathon Fire Department to install smoke detectors at no charge. Discussions of setting up emergency locations and the chain of command to notify those needed.

B. Discussion and appropriate action for general administrative work of the Emergency Management Department to go forward

10. Treasurer's Office

A. General Bills / Discussion and appropriate action

Assistant Treasure Hatem Merhi read into record the General Bills to total \$143,845.12. Judge Cano asked about the Sheriff Awarded 52927 there is no reference number and asked what the reason was. Auditor Watson was able to answer the question and stated that it was for cameras and annual communication dues. Judge Cano asked if they are grant related items, Auditor Watson stated that is correct. Auditor Watson informed the Court that after the Audit is complete that the County will be reimbursed. Commissioner Novovitch asked if Merhi was able to share the template with all JP Office's so that all reports are the same, Merhi responded, yes. Commissioner Ortega asked how the transition was going since Auditor Watson was here. Auditor Watson stated that there have been a few things that she has come across that need to be corrected and will continue to make the corrections. Commissioner Novovitch asked about the expenditures in the County Jail and after looking Auditor Watson stated she would look at the actual budget amount is and make sure that it is in the budget correctly. Judge Cano informed the Court that in the future, the budget analysis will be placed on the County Website. Commissioner Garrett addressed the signature page at the end of the financial report and asked Auditor Watson if this was something she was recommending for the Court to do. Auditor

Watson stated that it was either sign off on each Purchase Order or sign the report that would list all purchases. This should go with the minutes of the Court, informed Auditor Watson. Commissioner Novovitch asked if a member of the Court had a reserve on paying bill how would that be reflected if a signature is required for approval. Auditor Watson stated it would be reflected in the minutes and you make a note on the actual signature sheet.

Commissioner Ortega moved to approve the General Bills as presented. Commissioner Novovitch seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Pallanez handed the Auditor Watson a refund check for WTG. This check was in his Commissioner mailbox.

B. Financial Reports / Updates, Discussion, Review and appropriate action concerning the following:

Specified Activity Report	Payroll Reports
Cash Flow Predictions	Check Register
Budget Analysis Usage Report	Transfers
Receipt File Listings	Personnel/Overtime Reports
Cash Report	Other Financial Reports as Requested by
Grant Reports	Commissioners

Judge Cano asked if Auditor Watson had anything related to this item.

Auditor Watson wants to add a part-time assistant at \$13.00 an hour to work 27 hours a week.

Judge Cano reminded the Court that this was in the order that was completed by the District Judge Roy Ferguson.

Auditor Watson stated that she would like to put John Suddeth, who is in the Treasurer Office.

Judge Cano asked if he would be paid out of the Treasurer Office and then be supplemented through the Auditors Office.

Auditor Watson addressed this item by stating that with the Treasure's resignation there is one less person who can handle the banking and she would like to see Suddeth in that office the handle the banking.

Judge Cano clarified that the duties of an Auditor and a Treasurer cannot be done by the other.

Commissioner Ortega moved to have John Suddeth work part-time in the Treasurer's Office and in the Auditor's Office. Commissioner Novovitch seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Matters related to 2015 End of Year Closeout

1. Line item transfers & Budget amendments for all County Departments:

County Judge	County Attorney
County Clerk	County Treasurer
County Veteran's Office	Tax Assessor-Collector
Non-Departmental	Courthouse
Contracting Agencies	County Jail

**Community Facilities
Emergency Management
County Court
District Clerk
District Court
Justice of the Peace 1, 2, & 3
County Auditor**

**Constable Pct. 1, 2, & 3
Sheriff
Extension Officer
Exten. Serv. (Home Agent)
Road & Bridge Department
Records Management**

Judge Cano stated there is an amendment request for the Auditor's Office in the supplies. Auditor Watson stated that she would like to cut the supply budget and place it in the fund balance. Auditor Watson suggested that the County begin to look at a salary plan. Judge Cano informed that Court of a salary survey and could look into doing that. Discussion of how this could happen without being so reliant on grant funds. Auditor Watson expressed what has happened to the County's balance with the grants being a source of income and with those grants being frozen until the audit is complete. A plan needs to be in place to not be so reliant on grant funds, Auditor Watson stated. Commissioner Garrett asked if there would be a workshop in a later date to put a plan in place. Judge Cano informed him that would take place.

Judge Cano discussed the salary of the jailers. Julie Morton, Judge Cano's Assistant, informed the Court that the salaries for the jailers were based on an 80 hours per pay period and that is not correct and should be configured on an 86.67 pay period and presented the amendment. Commissioner Ortega asked about the overtime pay and how that would work. Auditor Watson explained for a pay period if there was overtime and that it would be paid on the last pay check if there was any overtime. Court asked for clarity of the amendment for \$41,533.63. Commissioner Novovitch asked if this could be pulled from another item in the budget and transfer it to that payroll. Commissioner Ortega moved to approve the \$41533 from Fund Balance to Salary. Motion dies for lack of a second. Commissioner Garret asked of any other line items have been looked at to transfer from and to see if the Sheriff and the Jailers can find no other resources to pull from.

Commissioner Garrett moved to table this item. Commissioner Novovitch seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously. After a discussion of how this could be done Auditor Watson reviewed the item and stated that it could be transferred from utilities which is \$36,500 to Salary.

Commissioner Ortega motioned to rescind the motion the tabled item for a budget amendment for the jail. Commissioner Garrett seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Auditor Watson showed the Court that the jail utilities are paid out of 409 and the \$36,500 could be transferred to salary with not problems.

Commissioner Novovitch moved to transfer \$36,500 from the Sherriff County Jail utilities to the Sheriff County Jail salary..

Commissioner Pallanez seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Other matters related to close out of 2015 year / Discussion and appropriate action

Auditor Watson stated that the completion of the 2015 budget year will hopefully be done during the conversion. She also informed the Court that bank accounts had not been reconciled all year and are waiting for those to be completed. This will take a while but her assistant is working diligently to complete them, informed Auditor Watson.

D. Other general administrative & procedural matters related to Treasurer's Office / Discussion and appropriate action for work of Treasurer's Office to go forward

Nothing further to discuss.

Court recessed at 10:47 A.M.

Court reconvened at 10:57 A.M.

11. Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott LLP / Discuss and consider tax sale of properties and bids held in March 2015

Martin Lujan of Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott LLP explained the sale held in March 2015. The Trust Property R17488 is the second to the last property of that sale.

Commissioner Garrett moved to approve the bid for Trust Property R17488. Commissioner Ortega seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

13. Recognize BJ Gallego upon his retirement from Brewster County / Resolution in Honor of BJ Gallego upon his retirement

Judge Cano recognized BJ Gallego for his dedication and commitment to the County and for all of the work he has done for the community. Judge Cano read into record the Resolution given in honor of his retirement.

BJ Gallego thanked those in the County and provided some of his family history and his ties to Alpine and explained why he was and is so dedicated to the County.

14. Schedule next Commissioners Court Regular Meeting / January 26, 2016 at 1:00 P.M.

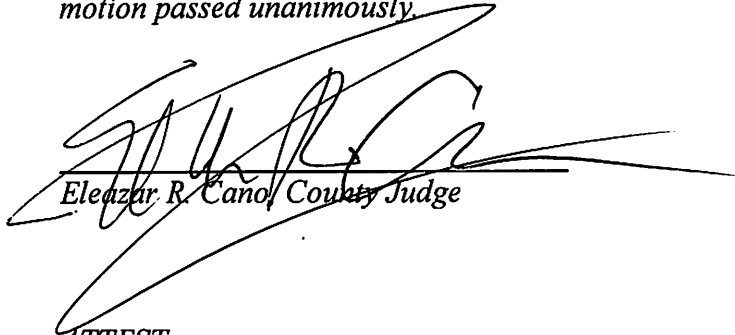
Judge Cano stated that the next meeting is on January 26, 2016 at 1:00 P.M.

15. Attend Retirement Luncheon for BJ Gallego

Judge Cano invited all those in attendance to join the Court in a retirement luncheon in honor of BJ Gallego across the street at the Judge Val Clark Beard Office Complex.

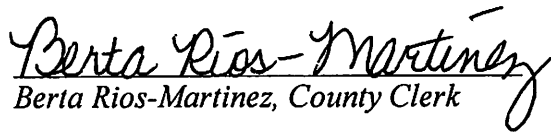
16. Adjourn

Commissioner Ortega moved to adjourn. Commissioner Pallanez seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.



Eleazar R. Cano, County Judge

ATTEST:



Berta Rios-Martinez, County Clerk