

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BREWSTER
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2015 AT 9:00 A.M.**

*Eleazar Cano
Luc Novovitch
Hugh Garrett
Ruben Ortega
Mike "Coach" Pallanez*

*County Judge
Commissioner Pct. 1
Commissioner Pct. 2
Commissioner Pct. 3
Commissioner Pct. 4*

1. Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

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

2. Public Comment

No Public Comments

3. Minutes / additions / corrections / approval

Judge Cano stated the minutes ready for approval were October 27, 2015, November 9, 2015, Supplement for November 9, 2015, November 24, 2015 and December 1, 2015.

Commissioner Garrett moved to approve the minutes for October 27, 2015, November 9, 2015, Supplement for November 9, 2015, November 24, 2015 and December 1, 2015. Commissioner Ortega seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

4. 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 they cleaned up around the Courthouse and hung the Christmas lights. Road & Bridge bladed Cottonwood Creek Road, and Agua Fria, cleaned up Pena Park and fixed the leak again at the jail. At the EOC Office they patched an area in front of the bay where the water draining has softened the pavement and fixed the exhaust in the bay area. Road & Bridge also cleared and mowed roadways in Marathon.

Commissioner Pallanez asked if there were more lights on the large tree in front of the Courthouse. Superintendent explained that the tree has grown so much and they would need to rent a high lift to get it all the way to the top and get more lights to make it brighter. A bucket truck would help out with a lot of the work that Road & Bridge does around the County if they could find a good deal on one.

Discussion of trimming the trees took place and the purchase of a bucket truck would help to do that and not have to contract that out.

Commissioner Novovitch and Commissioner Pallanez asked if a list of things to do could be provided to the Court based on Precinct. Superintendent Causey stated he could get that for them.

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

Nothing further to discuss.

5. 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 generators for Marathon Community Center and Terlingua Community Center have been ordered and should be delivered sometime around December 23, 2015.

Van Ostrand met with City Manager Zimmer regarding the AT&T outages and suggested a letter be written to Texas Public Utility Commission to encourage AT&T to provide more redundancy in the area. Van Ostrand will communicate with the surrounding Counties to have them sign the letter and have all areas on board.

Emergency Management Coordinator Matt Van Ostrand stated there is a Winter Weather meeting in Marfa and he suggested Brewster County host State Training Classes to help the surrounding Counties meet required training.

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

Nothing further to discuss.

6. Treasurer's Office

A. General Bills / Discussion and appropriate action

In the absence of Treasurer Ruth Staton, Assistant Treasurer Hatem Merhi reported the General Bills to total \$169,218.14.

Commissioner Garrett asked about the "Other" line item and Merhi stated he will get with him later after he reviews. Merhi determined the line item was Brewster County Historical Commission.

Justice of the Peace Precinct 3 Suzanna Gonzales voiced her concerns regarding her money not getting deposited into the JP # 3 Account but getting deposited into General Funds and stated that it looks like she is "not doing her job."

Commissioner Novovitch asked how long this has been going on and Judge Gonzales stated she was told that it has been about three (3) months. Judge Gonzales stated for the record that she is submitting the proper information for the monies to be deposited.

Judge Cano stated that in 2016 he hopes to have all JP offices following the same procedures. A discussion of solving the problems took place. Merhi stated that he has a template for the JP 1 office and that makes it easier. Commissioner Novovitch asked if the template was shared with all the JP offices and Merhi stated no but would share the process.

Commissioner Garrett asked about the AT&T bills and when we will see a decrease since we have changed over to Big Bend Telephone. Auditor Watson informed the Court the bill was past due charges from August, September and October. Julie Morton, County Judge Assistant, explained that the Treasurer's Office was the only one allowed to make any changes on the account and she is now an authorized user to make those changes and will begin reviewing all numbers. The Sheriff's Office and the Jail will remain on the AT&T bill along with a couple of other departments, stated Morton. Suggestions and further discussion took place to help the process and an update on the account should be provided so that everyone knows where the County stands with AT&T.

Commissioner Novovitch asked about the Purchase Order Policy and if it will be required beginning January 1, 2016. Auditor Watson stated the purchase order policy will be implemented in 2016.

Commissioner Pallanez asked about the River Rock Solar Project and if the check has been received. The \$10,000 sign on fee has been received and will be deposited into the proper account.

Commissioner Ortega moved to approve the General Bills as presented abstaining from 93157. Commissioner Garrett seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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

Nothing reported.

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	Constable Pct. 1, 2, & 3
Emergency Management	Sheriff
County Court	Extension Officer
District Clerk	Exten. Serv. (Home Agent)
District Court	Road & Bridge Department
Justice of the Peace 1, 2, & 3	Records Management

Judge Cano stated that the department heads have not received a budget analysis in order for line items transfers to be complete. Auditor Watson stated that she was prepared to provide the report but was informed by Treasurer Staton she had already provided the information to each department head. Merhi stated that Treasurer Staton sent them this morning. Commissioner Novovitch stated that if that is the case, we should be able to present this item at next meeting.

Auditor Watson asked what the policy is on credits in each department at the end of the year. Does the County ask for a credit or let it roll over, Auditor Watson asked?

The Court asked Commissioner Ortega since he has been there the longest and he stated that we have never had this problem. He then suggested getting the money back and putting it into the appropriate account.

Auditor Watson informed the Court the report of the accounts does not reflect the expenses from those accounts so they are not accurate, but she will come up with the balance based on the expenses.

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

Nothing further to discuss.

**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 to report.

Court recessed at 10:06 A.M.

Court reconvened at 10:19 A.M.

7. Officials' Monthly Reports

Reports will be at the next meeting.

**8. 2015 Audit / Selection of Auditor / Discussion concerning means of selection of Auditor
and discussion and appropriate action concerning selecting auditor for 2015**

Judge Cano explained we needed a letter of engagement with GRP as the 2015 Auditor for Brewster County. GRP has an increased fee due to the events that have accrued this year and Judge Cano suggested keeping GRP as the Auditor for Brewster County.

Commissioner Ortega moved to keep GRP as the Auditors for Brewster County. Commissioner Garrett seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**9. County Holiday Schedule for 2016 / Proposal to keep number of holidays the same as in
2015 / Discussion and appropriate action**

Judge Cano informed the Court that the Holiday Schedule for 2016 will be the same as the 2015 year. This will include 16 days for the year, stated Judge Cano.

Commissioner Ortega moved to accept the 2016 Holiday Schedule. Commissioner Novovitch seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**10. 2016 Brewster County Commissioners Court Meeting Schedule / Discussion and
appropriate action to set meeting schedule for 2016**

Judge Cano recommended changing the Commissioner Court meetings from the second Monday and fourth Tuesday to the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month.

Commissioner Ortega moved to approve the Brewster County Commissioners Court dates for 2016 to the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Commissioner Novovitch seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

11. Brewster County Tourism

A. Ron Sanders Awarded the Texas Destination Marketing Certificate

Judge Cano recognized the certificate awarded to Ron Sanders and congratulated him on his accomplishments. (See the attached recorded hours of the trainings that Sanders has attended in order to receive this award).

Sanders introduced the new staff of the Tourism Council, Executive Director Robert Alvarez and Assistant Jessica Baker.

B. Request to Donate to the Museum of the Big Bend and Archives of the Big Bend \$5,000 each / Discussion and appropriate action

Sanders asked for \$5000 to be donated to the Museum of the Big Bend and \$5000.00 to the Archives of the Big Bend. Sanders explained that these venues and Sul Ross have played important roles in the Tourism of the area.

Commissioner Garrett moved to donate \$5000 to the Museum of the Big Bend and \$5000.00 to the Archives of the Big Bend. Commissioner Novovitch seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Sanders suggested holding the checks and a presentation be done. Commissioners Court agreed.

C. Present to Commissioners Court advertising and article books

Ron Sanders reviewed and summarized the type of advertising that the Tourism Council engages in, both paper and online. Online seems to be the preferred modality. Judge Cano asked for Sanders to present some of the advertising for the Court to see.

12. County Clerk/Elections / Discuss and consider the Joint 2016 Primary Elections Service Contract and Resolution / Discussion and appropriate action

Judge Cano explained the Resolution is for the Election and the Service Contract for the Joint Primary based on the meeting held by the Election Commission Board.

Commissioner Garrett asked about Exhibit A and the Court was informed that it was submitted online by the Party Chairs.

Commissioner Ortega moved to approve the Resolution for a Joint Primary in 2016. Commissioner Pallanez seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

13. Brewster County Groundwater Conservation District/ Appointment of Board Members

A. Executive Session Pursuant to Section § 551.074, Government Code, VTCA, to discuss the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, compensation, or dismissal of a public officer or employee

Court went into Executive Session at 11:04 A.M.

Reconvene in Open Session 11:24 A.M.

B. Discussion and appropriate action resulting from Executive Session

Commissioner Garrett informed the court that there are 3 of 7 positions open January 1, 2016 on the Brewster County Groundwater Conservation District Commissioner Garrett moved to reappoint Virgil Clark and Tim Leary and to appoint Kevin Ulrbanczyk effective January 1, 2016 for 3 year terms.

Commissioner Novovitch seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

*Judge Cano read into record those who will be serving on the board as follows:
Tom Beard, Virgil Clark, Joan Johnson, Tim Leary, Ike Roberts, Kevin Ulrbanczyk and Homer Mills.*

**14. Schedule a Commissioners Court Called Meeting / December 29, 2015, 10:00 A.M.,
Marathon Community Center, Marathon, Texas**

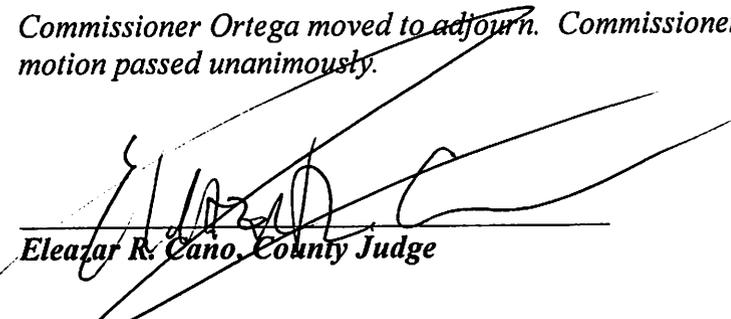
Judge Cano announced the next meeting will be held on December 29, 2015 at 2:00 P.M. in Marathon at the Community Center.

**15. Schedule next Commissioners Court Regular Meeting / December 22, 2015, at 9:00
A.M., Commissioners Courtroom**

Judge Cano announced the regular meeting will be held on December 22, 2015 at 9:00 A.M. in Commissioners Courtroom

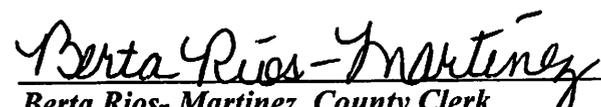
16. Adjourn

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



Eleazar R. Cano, County Judge

ATTEST:



Berta Rios- Martinez, County Clerk