

**CALLED MEETING OF THE
BREWSTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MONDAY MAY 2, 2011, AT 10:00 A.M.**

Judge Beard called this meeting to order. Officers present are listed as follows:

VAL CLARK BEARD	COUNTY JUDGE
KATHY KILLINGSWORTH	COMMISSIONER PCT. 2
RUBEN ORTEGA	COMMISSIONER PCT. 3
WACKY PALLANEZ	COMMISSIONER PCT. 4
JERRY SOTELLO	J.P., PCT. 1
BERTA RIOS MARTINEZ	COUNTY CLERK
CAROL OFENSTEIN	COUNTY TREASURER

1. Treasurer

A. General Bills / Discussion and appropriate action

Treasurer Ofenstein noted the quarterly reports, fuel and utilities. She also noted some grant payments for which the County has been reimbursed.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to approve the general bills, which was seconded by Commissioner Killingsworth, which passed unanimously.

Judge Beard abstained from 70164.

B. Infrastructure Projects bills /Discussion and appropriate action

No infrastructure projects bills were presented.

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

Treasurer Ofenstein noted that she will make three payments for the roll-off containers to Duncan Disposal once an account has been set up. This is pursuant to the County's solid waste grant through the Rio Grande COG.

2. Emergency Management Department

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 public and private insurance coverage, personnel issues related to emergency response, matters related to pending & future Homeland Security Grants / Discussion and appropriate action

EMC Tom Santry said wildfire preparedness training will be held next Tuesday. The training is open to the public. Mr. Santry said he think it is a good opportunity to give the public information they don't have. He is hoping for a good response.

B. Situation concerning threat of wildfires in County

1. Renewal of County Burn Ban and Discussion of Fire / Discussion and appropriate action

Mr. Santry would like to re-new the ban for 90 days. He said that the burn ban should be "all inclusive." He wanted to modify the language in the proposed notice. Judge Beard suggested that Mr. Santry talk with the County Attorney about modifying the language in the ban to include all outdoor burning; legal advice is needed.

Mr. Santry spoke with the County Attorney, who said that pursuant to the law in place, there ought to be absolutely no outdoor burning of anything – welding, barbecuing, trash.

Commissioner Killingsworth asked about those trying to fix burned fences. Judge Beard said a plan needs to be devised, and the County Attorney has some ideas.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to extend the burn ban as discussed, which was seconded by Commissioner Killingsworth, and passed unanimously.

Judge Beard said it is a no waiver situation at this point, until conditions change.

2. County Response / Update / Discussion and appropriate action concerning wildfire preparedness and response

On April 9-10, the AVFD had all 30 members responding to fires in the tr-county area.

On April 26, Mr. Santry got a call from Balmorhea asking for help. The AVFD responded with two trucks, and stayed until 3 a.m.

Judge Beard added that Marathon and Terlingua VFDs, the Road & Bridge Department, law enforcement and ranchers also responded to various fires. Mr. Santry said the BBARC HAM Radio Club also responded.

Commissioner Killingsworth talked about moving resources. She said she wants to help our neighbors, but thinks it's prudent to leave some resources in

place to make sure coverage is available in all areas. Judge Beard said that in these fires, each VFD had kept a contingent of people and equipment at home during each “out of area” response.

Commissioner Ortega said a rancher has agreed to donate his machine to blade a fire guard around the entire town of Marathon. He is working on getting permission from all of the property owners.

Judge Beard said she stepped out and ordered two water pumps to be carried in both an R&B and Sheriff’s Office vehicle because they have been responding. These units are here now.

The water truck has been taken to El Paso for installation of a “water cannon.”

Commissioner Pallanez said he would like to start planning for a barbecue or some kind of fundraiser for the fire department. Commissioner Ortega suggested making the fundraiser county-wide to benefit all of the volunteers.

3. Update on acquisition of replacement brushtruck chassis by AVFD / Discussion and appropriate action

Mr. Santry said the AVFD has located a chassis for \$19,000. Mr. Santry said he looked into a Homeland Security grant this morning for \$20,000 this morning.

Since it is a County grant, Judge Beard thinks the order should be placed by the County. Road & Bridge Superintendent Frenchie Causey has found a chassis in Odessa. Judge Beard said the purchase needs to be made ASAP.

She said the County is responsible for the grant funds, and the County needs to be responsible for the acquisition. Commissioners concurred.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Killingsworth, and passed unanimously.

VAL CLARK BEARD, COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

BERTA RIOS MARTINEZ, COUNTY CLERK