

**CALLED MEETING OF THE
BREWSTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
MONDAY, JULY 30, 2012, AT 9:00 A.M.**

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

VAL CLARK BEARD	COUNTY JUDGE
ASA "COOKIE" STONE	COMMISSIONER PCT. 1
KATHY KILLINGSWORTH	COMMISSIONER PCT. 2
RUBEN ORTEGA	COMMISSIONER PCT. 3
BETTY JO ROONEY	TAX ASSESSOR
CAROL OFENSTEIN	COUNTY TREASURER
JERRY SOTELLO	J.P., PRECINCT

1. Recognition / Congratulate Pecos County Commissioners Court upon completion of New Pecos County Emergency Services Building

Judge Beard said Pecos County is going to dedicate the Emergency Services building tomorrow. Significantly, Pecos County is going to house the Texas Forest Service, which keeps them close by.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to send a letter of recognition, which was seconded by Commissioner Stone, and passed unanimously.

2. Tax Assessor Collector

A. Presentation of 2012 certified Tax Roll

Judge Beard noted that the State held up the process this year, and the values weren't ready until the last minute. She said it was no fault of the Tax Assessor's office, or the Appraisal District.

Tax Assessor Collector Betty Jo Rooney said the total appraised value is \$652,596,627. The total assessed value is \$651,382,160. The total taxable value is \$594,400,264.

The Chief Appraiser says the value went up by 1/10 of a percent.

B. Discussion and appropriate action regarding Tax Roll

Commissioner Killingsworth made a motion to approve the 2012 certified tax roll, which was seconded by Commissioner Ortega, and passed unanimously.

3. Treasurer

A. General Bills / Discussion and appropriate action

Treasurer Ofenstein said the general bills include the PILT payments to San Vicente and Terlingua for a total of \$136,000.

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

One walk-in bill was presented from the County Clerk for meals and travel for \$509.79. Commissioner Ortega made a motion to approve the walk-in bill, which was seconded by Commissioner Killingsworth, and passed unanimously.

B. Administrative Matters / County Dedicated Funds / Administrative directives for Treasurer concerning allocation, capping circumstances under which transfers can be made and related issues / Discussion and appropriate action

Treasurer Ofenstein reviewed the County dedicated funds.

Commissioners discussed that they had agreed before to cap the jail infrastructure fund at some point, with additional funds going back to the General Fund. The infrastructure fund would be used for large capital repairs and equipment purchases, etc., for items that cost \$5,000 or more.

Of the \$18/per prison/per day increase, \$9 goes to the jail infrastructure fund, and \$9 goes the General Fund.

Commissioner Killingsworth made a motion to move \$100,000 from the General Fund to a TexasClass account for use as a jail infrastructure fund, which will be reimbursed as needed from the \$9 per day increase to keep it at the \$100,000 level. Commissioner Stone seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (Excess over \$100,000 goes in the General Fund.)

Treasurer Ofenstein asked if Commissioners want to move the other dedicated funds from the General Fund.

Commissioner Killingsworth said we should wait until we have a better handle on cash flow. Commissioners concurred, and no action was taken.

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

4. 2013 Budget Workshop / Discussion concerning all aspects of 2013 County revenues/expenditures and upcoming financial needs for all county departments and other entities funded by the County / Review of compensation and benefits and discussion concerning adjustments to

compensation, scheduling issues related to adoption of Budget and setting Tax Rate and other matters related to 2013 Budget / No action

The Treasurer provided several calculations related to the tax rate, and to payroll increases.

Judge Beard said she had provided the Treasurer's Office with five different scenarios related to pay increases. She said she doesn't advocate any of them, but they are a starting point for discussions.

Judge Beard said she is concerned with the sales tax number due to the state of the economy. It cannot be counted on until the economy bounces back.

Using the current tax rate, Treasurer Ofenstein said the current pass at the budget is \$29,000 short. She reviewed the cost of the different pay increase scenarios which were provided by Judge Beard. The scenarios involved different increases for those who make below \$40,000 and those who make above \$40,000.

Treasurer Ofenstein said each departmental budget is flat.

Raising the M&O rate by two cents would be for three percent payroll increases. That increases the tax on a \$100,000 by \$40.61.

Judge Beard said she didn't think that was acceptable for taxpayers.

Commissioner Stone suggested a three percent increase for everybody making under \$40,000 only. People making more than that amount, including elected officials, would not receive a pay increase.

The cost of that would be \$37,000.

Commissioner Stone asked about 1.5 percent. The cost would be \$27,000.

The cost on a \$100,000 house would be just over \$20.

Commissioners used that number to begin discussions of the rest of the budget. Using the \$27,000, plus the \$29,000 that the Treasurer came in with, the budget is \$56,000 short.

Commissioners discussed revenue sources, followed by expenditures.

Only one election is expected in 2013, which will bring the elections budget down significantly.

Commissioners discussed unemployment claims history to determine how to budget for unemployment insurance.

They also discussed property insurance. The premium is about \$90,000.

Legal advertising was also discussed.

Jail overtime was discussed.

Commissioners were able to cut some small amounts throughout the budget to bring it into the black by \$3,000.

Commissioners recessed for lunch, and agreed to meet again at 1:45 p.m.

Following lunch, and after a few corrections and changes, Treasurer Ofenstein said she calculated the current pass at the budget to be \$1,500 in the black.

Courthouse Security will be moved from the Sheriff's budget and put into the Courthouse budget. Judge Beard conferred with counsel about this. There was some discussion about how the clerks' offices track the Courthouse Security fee.

The total budget for this pass is \$6,286,213. That is a difference of \$121,000 over last year.

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

VAL CLARK BEARD, COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

BERTA RIOS MARTINEZ, COUNTY CLERK