

**CALLED MEETING OF THE
BREWSTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 2014, AT 9:00 A.M.**

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

**KATHY KILLINGSWORTH
ASA "COOKIE" STONE
RUBEN ORTEGA
MIKE PALLANEZ
JERRY SOTELLO
DELLA SHACKELFORD**

**COUNTY JUDGE
COMMISSIONER PCT. 1
COMMISSIONER PCT. 3
COMMISSIONER PCT. 4
J.P., PRECINCT 1
COUNTY TREASURER**

1. Minutes / corrections / additions / corrections

The minutes from the July 14, 2014, meeting were presented for approval.

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

2. Treasurer

A. General Bills / Discussion and appropriate action

Treasurer Della Shackelford presented one walk-in bill from Pecos County for our portion of the District Attorney contribution in the amount of \$15,450.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to approve the general bills and the walk-in bill, which was seconded by Commissioner Stone, and passed unanimously.

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

Treasurer Shackelford said she delivered up-to-date budgets to each Department Head earlier this week so that they can see where they are for the year.

She reviewed additional reports with Commissioners, including the transfer of \$350,000 to TexPool and current balances. She said we are going to make three debt payments which are due Aug. 15.

*Specified Activity Report
Cash Flow Predictions
Budget Analysis Usage Report
Receipt File Listings
Cash Report
Grant Reports*

*Payroll Reports
Check Register
Transfers
Personnel/Overtime Reports
Other Financial Reports as
Requested by Commissioner*

C. County Credit Card Cancellation / Employee travel procedures

Treasurer Shackelford said the County's credit card has been compromised. There have been several unauthorized Amazon charges on the statement, which the Treasurer's Office has disputed many times. The bank said the easiest thing to do would be to cancel it and start over.

Judge Killingsworth said Department Heads already have their own cards at this time. Other employees can use the new card to make travel reservations, and then physically take a check with them for check-in at hotels. They would continue to be reimbursed for mileage and board as the current procedures authorize.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to authorize the cancellation of the credit card and to establish the new employee travel procedures. Commissioner Stone seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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

Treasurer Shackelford said that we have been paying our grand jurors incorrectly. They should be paid \$20 for the first day and \$40 for each additional day. We have been paying them \$20/day, regardless of the number of days. She said we've also not been applying for reimbursement from the State, until recently. The State Comptroller has suggested that we go back and correct the juror payments from the 3rd Quarter of 2013 forward.

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

3. Officials' Monthly Reports / Discussion and appropriate action

No reports were given.

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

Supt. Frenchie Causey said crews bladed several roads last week, and they are pretty close to caught up with that work for now. They hauled base materials to Mile High Road. He said it is good material and really helped the roads. Crews are mowing the roads in Marathon and doing general maintenance at Post Park. A couple of guys finished up some work at the jail in the last few days. The Dump Day on July 26 was successful, and they have a lot of junk to haul off. The newest dump truck is having some exhaust issues, so they took it to El Paso for repair today.

Judge Killingsworth said they are working on a grant to cover the cost of hauling the tires away which were gathered during Dump Day. They could have it as soon as next month.

Commissioner Ortega thanked the City of Alpine for their help on Dump Day.

B. Terlingua CSD Track Construction Cooperative Project

1. Update

Engineer Travis Roberts said the bill from Kiewit for the asphalt work has been submitted for final payment. They are working on plans for a fence around the track.

2. Discussion and appropriate action to conclude project

C. Recognize donation of caliche road materials from Leoncita Ranch to the County

Commissioner Stone said Leoncita Ranch said they will donate caliche for roads. No amount has been specified at this time.

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

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

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

EMC Betse Esparza reviewed the procedures which were used to split Homeland Security funding between the urban and rural areas of the RGCOG district. After the final dollar amount was announced, the urban areas were underfunded by approximately \$27,000 and the rural areas had an excess of \$50,000. In a phone conference yesterday, it was determined that the urban area wanted the rural area to use their excess to make up the difference. However, it was learned that some of the rural areas have needs for which that money can be used, so they decided to keep it. An official meeting will be held next day so that a vote on the issue can be made.

Judge Killingsworth noted that she had lifted the burn ban last week after recent rains. Commissioners may act to renew the burn ban if they set fit to do so in the future.

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

6. Tax Assessor Collector / Presentation of 2014 Certified Tax Roll / Discussion and appropriate action

Tax Assessor Collector Betty Jo Rooney said our values are up this year by about \$64 million, \$9.3 million of which is new properties, leaving more than \$667 million in total values. Protests should be resolved within the next 30 days.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to approve the 2014 certified tax roll, which was seconded by Commissioner Stone, and passed unanimously.

7. Brewster County Tourism Council

A. Presentation of the 2015 Budget / Discussion and appropriate action

Board Pres. Ron Sanders noted that this budget is not part of the general fund.

He said the total budget is \$700,000, and that they are asking for a part-time on-call employee. They would also like to reimburse board members and volunteers for mileage for traveling to meetings.

Commissioner Pallanez noted that Big Bend National Park was ranked fifth in the nation by USA Today.

Judge Killingsworth pointed out the seven percent administrative cost which is sent to the County to cover bookkeeping and audit costs, and is matched for Historic Preservation.

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

B. Projects and providers that will bill more than \$5000 per year cumulatively

Mr. Sanders noted those that will likely bill more than \$5,000 in the coming budget year, including web maintenance, visitor center maintenance and photography.

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

C. Ariel photography with remote control model aircraft at Post Park and on private property with land owner permission

Executive Director Mike Davidson said this photography method has become popular and is very eye-catching. He explained some of the technicalities of it. One of Visit Big Bend's goals is to keep people on their website for longer periods of time. They are proposing using the photography in and around the Post Park where there are no homes or loss of privacy.

Commissioner Ortega said there is a home being built nearby, and they may need permission from that landowner. Mr. Davidson said he would definitely speak with them.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to grant permission to photograph at Post Park as long as there is no violation of private property and with landowners' written permission. Commissioner Stone seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

8. Texas Community Development Block Grant Program (TX CDBG) grant / Update on Marathon Well Grant, TX CDBG 71304

Mr. Roberts said all the documents and forms have been completed. Two necessary easements have been signed and recorded in the Clerk's Office. He will send a packet of all of the documentation to TCEQ tomorrow. He said the project does not need to be completed until November, although half the funds must be committed by the end of October.

9. Matters related to 2014 Tax Rate & 2015 Budget

A. 2015 Salaries for Elected County Officials

1. Review proposed salaries

Judge Killingsworth said the salaries will be published differently than in the past. They include the five percent increase and longevity stipends. The longevity stipends will not be included in the salaries if the personnel turn over in an elected office.

She reviewed state-paid supplements for the County Attorney and County Judge, and a car allowance for Commissioners.

Commissioner Ortega made a motion to approve the proposed salaries for elected officials, which was seconded by Commissioner Stone, and passed unanimously.

2. Review/Action on Road & Bridge Supervisor Supplement

Judge Killingsworth said Commissioner Stone has indicated that he does not wish to continue as the Road and Bridge supervisor, and would like to move the supplement to the next senior commissioner, Ruben Ortega. The amount is \$3,348.

Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the transfer of the supplement, which was seconded by Judge Killingsworth, and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Ortega abstained from the vote.

3. Propose salaries and appropriate notices / Discussion and appropriate action

B. 2015 Proposed Budget Workshop / Review 2015 Budget

Commissioner Ortega said the Veterans Service Officer is doing a superb job. His office is growing, and he is traveling to Marathon and Terlingua, as well. He is having trouble keeping up with paperwork. He has asked for a

couple of other days to keep up. Commissioner Ortega said he is going above and beyond, and he'd like to compensate him appropriately.

Commissioner Pallanez said the members of the VFW would like for Mr. Gonzales to attend their meetings when possible.

Judge Killingsworth said we could give him four additional days per month, and increase his salary to \$12,000, and other related costs.

Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the increase, which was seconded by Commissioner Ortega.

Some discussion about how the days would be scheduled and where followed. Mr. Gonzales is transporting veterans to El Paso and other places for appointments.

Commissioner Stone said Rep. Gallego's office is working on paid transportation.

The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners agreed that they are pleased with the proposed budget.

With the amendment to the Veterans Service Office, Judge Killingsworth said the budget will be filed with the Clerk's Office tomorrow for public review.

1. Debt Service Schedule

Judge Killingsworth said the total debt for 2015 is \$512,582,72. Debt will be reduced significantly in the upcoming year.

2. Projected 2014 Tax Rate / Maintenance & Operation / Debt Service

Judge Killingsworth said the proposed I&S rate will be .076825. The proposed M&O rate will be .321751. The total will be .398576, which is about one cent higher than last year's rate.

Judge Killingsworth reviewed the notice publication and public hearing schedules, and said it is critical that all commissioners are present for those meetings.

10. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

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

KATHY KILLINGSWORTH, COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

BERTA RIOS- MARTINEZ, COUNTY CLERK