

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF VICTORIA §

Be it remembered that on this the **18th day March A.D., 2024**, the Commissioners Court convened in **Special Session** at the Victoria County Courthouse in the City of Victoria, Victoria County, Texas, with His Honor, Ben Zeller, County Judge, presiding and the following Commissioners attending:

Danny Garcia,	Commissioner Precinct No. 1	Absent
Jason Ohrt,	Commissioner Precinct No. 2	
Gary Burns,	Commissioner Precinct No. 3	
Kenneth Sexton,	Commissioner Precinct No. 4	
and		
Heidi Easley,	County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk	

and the following orders were passed:



COUNTY OF VICTORIA

MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS' COURT OF VICTORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

Monday, March 18, 2024, 10:00 AM, SPECIAL TERM

VICTORIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

115 N. BRIDGE ST., ROOM 241, SECOND FLOOR, VICTORIA, TX

1. Call to Order.

(1-0:00)

1. March 18, 2024. Ben Zeller, County Judge, called to order the Commissioners Court Special Term for Monday, March 18, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

2. Invocation and Pledges.

(2-0:00)

2. March 18, 2024. Judge Ben Zeller opened the meeting with prayer and the reciting of the Pledges of Allegiance of the United States of America and the State of Texas.

3. Citizens Communication.

(3-1:13)

3. March 18, 2024. Judge Ben Zeller opened the meeting to anyone wishing to address general County business which was not on the meeting agenda.

Cynthia Ramirez and Nicole Nguyen with Belong updated the Court on their services, goals and upcoming events for their organization, which serves children removed from their homes by the Courts.

Animal Services Director Mark Sloat stated there was a second rabid skunk case this past week in the Raisin area and recommended pets and livestock get vaccinated. Mr. Sloat mentioned Victoria Animal Services will be at Petsmart all week for in-store adoptions to celebrate the 30th anniversary for Petsmart Charities.

Fire Marshal Richard Castillo informed the Court of the Nursery Volunteer Fire Department fundraiser on Sunday at KB's from 11:00 a.m to 2:00 p.m.

Hearing no further comments, Judge Ben Zeller continued with the next agenda item.

4. Consider approval of minutes and take appropriate action.

(4-9:50)

4. March 18, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the minutes of the Commissioners Court meeting held on March 11, 2024. Motion adopted.

5. Consider approval of accounts payable and take appropriate action.

(5-10:06)

5. March 18, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the accounts payable as presented by Michelle Samford, County Auditor.

Regular Accounts	3/18/2024	\$658,914.31
Supplemental Accounts	3/8/2024 – 3/14/2024	\$187,127.31

Motion adopted.

6. Receive monthly and quarterly reports from various county officials and departments and take appropriate action.

(6-10:34)

6. March 18, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court received the monthly reports from the District Clerk and Constable, Precinct No. 1. Motion adopted.

7. Consider approval of bond forfeiture releases and take appropriate action.

(7-10:52)

7. March 18, 2024. None. No action taken.

8. Consider approval of CMC Interim vendor payments and take appropriate action.

(8-11:00)

8. March 18, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the interim vendor payment for Citizens Medical Center dated March 14, 2024, in the amount of \$753,790.26 and the ACH report dated March 14, 2024, in the amount of \$2,025,514.77. Motion adopted.

9. Hear a proclamation regarding the 50th Anniversary of the University of Houston - Victoria and take appropriate action.

(9-11:42)

9. March 18, 2024. Judge Zeller read the Proclamation in which Victoria County Commissioners Court hereby honors and congratulates the University of Houston-Victoria on its 50th Anniversary by proclaiming March 2024 as UHV Month in Victoria County. Judge Zeller presented the Proclamation to Mrs. Jennifer Ortiz-Garza and Ms. Kelsey Norgard from the University of Houston-Victoria. No action taken.

10. Consider approval of the scope of work with Centurion for tracts A and B at the Victoria Regional Airport and take appropriate action.

(10-15:27)

10. March 18, 2024. Victoria Regional Airport Executive Director Lenny Llerena provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the scope of work with Centurion for tracts A and B at the Victoria Regional Airport. Motion adopted.

- 11. Ratify the Victoria County Criminal District Attorney Rural Law Enforcement Salary Assistance Grant Program Contract Award No. IA-0000000442, Senate Bill 22 and take appropriate action.**

(11-25:12)

11. March 18, 2024. Criminal District Attorney Constance Filley Johnson provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court ratified the Victoria County Criminal District Attorney Rural Law Enforcement Salary Assistance Grant Program Contract Award No. IA-0000000442, Senate Bill 22. Motion adopted.

- 12. Consider approval of the following in connection to the Victoria County Old Jail Demo and new parking lot project and take appropriate action:**
a. Victoria County Old Jail Demo and New Parking Resolution 2024-0023 Delegation of Authority.

(12a-27:19)

12a. March 18, 2024. County Judge Zeller stated the County timeline for the Victoria County Old Jail Demo and New Parking Lot has been modified to include a 3-month time period in which no contracts would be signed or action taken on the demolition of the old jail and new parking lot. Judge Zeller stated this will allow Victoria Preservation Inc. (VPI) work group to do their assessment and time to present an alternate proposal for the old jail. John Griffin, Victoria resident, thanked the Court for hearing the public during last week's meeting. Mr. Griffin suggested the Court get an understanding of what the cost would be to demolish the jail and find out the value of the jail. County Engineer John Johnston provided probable costs for demolition of the jail. Mr. Griffin mentioned his group is asking the Court to not approve agenda items 12a (Victoria County Old Jail Demo and New Parking Resolution 2024-0023 Delegation of Authority and 12b (Authorization to Advertise for Competitive Sealed Proposals) and if the Court's intent is to approve 12a and 12b, then they ask the Court to not take action on accepting bids for the 180 days and not to demolish the jail within the 180 days. Commissioner Gary Burns questioned if the master study could be done sooner than 180 days. Mr. Griffin responded. John Kisalus with Victoria Preservation, Inc. (VPI) and Victoria County Historical Commission (VCHC) informed the Court that they will commit to give the Court the report as soon as it is available. Commissioner Kenneth Sexton voiced his opinion to table this at this time and give VPI six months and after that, VPI will accept the Commissioners Court decision. Commissioner Jason Ohrt spoke about getting some information from Mr. Scott's report. County Engineer John Johnston stated how extending the timeline would affect this project. Stephanie Mueller of VPI addressed the parking situation. Mr. Bill Murphy questioned the Public Defender's Office, old jail, and funding for a parking garage. The Court discussed grants and ways to receive funding for these projects. The Court will present a new timeline at next Mondays meeting to include an additional three months, making the timeline for 6 months total, and there will not be any contracts signed or any final decisions made within the 6 months. The Commissioners Court passed on the Victoria County Old Jail Demo and New Parking Resolution 2024-0023 Delegation of Authority in connection to the Victoria County Old Jail Demo and new parking lot project. (1:27:37) Rick Collie, Victoria County resident, stated it would be a mistake to use the old jail as a museum and the property should be used for parking. Alys Jarvis, Calhoun County resident, thanked the Court for the tour of the old jail and spoke about leasing the jail or use items in the jail for revenue. No action taken.

Consider approval of the following in connection to the Victoria County Old Jail Demo and new parking lot project and take appropriate action:

b. Authorization to Advertise for Competitive Sealed Proposals.

(12b-27:19)

12b. March 18, 2024. The Commissioners Court passed on the authorization to advertise for Competitive Sealed Proposals in connection to the Victoria County Old Jail Demo and new parking lot project. No action taken.

13. Consider approval of the following items by the Victoria County Public Health Department and take appropriate action:

a. Immunization/Locals Grant Contract HHS001331300049 Amendment No. 1.

(13a-1:22:38)

13a. March 18, 2024. Public Health Director David Gonzales provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the Immunization/Locals Grant Contract HHS001331300049 Amendment No. 1 for the Victoria County Public Health Department. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following items by the Victoria County Public Health Department and take appropriate action:

b. Receive for the record a fully executed Texas Health and Human Services Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

(13b-1:22:38)

13b. March 18, 2024. Public Health Director David Gonzales provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court received for the record a fully executed Texas Health and Human Services Indirect Cost Rate Agreement for the Victoria County Public Health Department. Motion adopted.

14. Consider approval of a contract for Psychoeducational/Counseling Services with Hope of South Texas, Inc./Hope Child Advocacy Center for the Victoria Juvenile Justice Center and take appropriate action.

(14-1:24:26)

14. March 18, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved a contract for Psychoeducational/Counseling Services with Hope of South Texas, Inc./Hope Child Advocacy Center for the Victoria Juvenile Justice Center. Motion adopted.

15. Consider approval of the appointment of Rick Collie to the Victoria County Child Welfare Board and take appropriate action.

(15-1:25:03)

15. March 18, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the appointment of Rick Collie to the Victoria County Child Welfare Board. Motion adopted.

16. Consider approval of the following 2024 budget amendments and take appropriate action:

(16-1:38:04)

16. March 18, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the 2024 budget amendments for:

- a. Health Department, Expenditures – Line item transfer
- b. Airport Capital Projects Fund, Revenues and Expenditures - Line item transfer
- c. Airport Fund, Expenditures - Increase
- d. Capital Projects Fund, Expenditures - Increase
- g. Elections Administrators Special Fund, Expenditures - Increase

Motion adopted.

17. Consider approval of personnel changes and take appropriate action.

(17-1:38:25)

17. March 18, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved that payroll be processed in compliance with policy and personnel changes:

- a. Kim Plummer, District Clerk - District Clerk's Office:
 - 1. Employment of Caitlyn Velasquez, Deputy Clerk, at a rate of \$18.00 per hour, Budget Code 100-450-1105, effective March 19, 2024. Remarks: Grade 4 General.
 - 2. Employment of Maria Trejo, Asst. Chief Deputy (Dep. Clerk), at a rate of \$18.00 per hour, Budget Code 100-450-1104, effective March 19, 2024. Remarks: Grade 4 General.
- b. Constance Filley Johnson, Criminal District Attorney - Criminal District Attorney's Office:
 - 1. Employment of Jessica A. Shawver-Savino, at a rate of \$51.92 per hour, Budget Codes 100-475-1104 \$40.87 and 288-475-1104 \$11.05, effective April 2, 2024. Grade 18 Plan General.
- c. Richard Castillo, Fire Marshal - Fire Marshal's Office:
 - 1. Correction: Employment of Drew Pilkington, Deputy Fire Marshal-ARFF, at a rate of \$30.24 per hour, Budget Codes 100-550-1108 \$30.24 HR and 100-550-1137 Cert. Pay-Master \$69.23 BiWkly, effective March 12, 2024. Grade 14 Plan General.
- d. Justin Marr, Sheriff - Sheriff's Office:
 - 1. Employment (Rehire) of Isaac Ramirez, Extra Help, at a rate of \$25.31 per hour, Budget Code 100-563-1130, effective March 19, 2024.
 - 2. Position/other code change for Christian Martinez, from Mental Health Officer, at a rate of \$27.39 per hour, Budget Codes 356-560-1108-\$27.39 and 356-560-1137-\$69.23 Cert. Pay to Admin Deputy, Budget Codes 100-562-1125-\$27.39 and 100-562-1137-\$69.23 Cert Pay, effective March 23, 2024. Grade 7 Plan Law Enforcement Tier 5.
 - 3. Position/other code change for Jennifer Wheelen, from SRO, at a rate of \$27.39 per hour, Budget Codes 395-560-1109-\$27.39 and 395-560-1137-\$69.23 Cert. Pay to Courts/Extradition, Budget Codes 100-565-1110-\$27.39 and 100-565-1137-\$69.23 Cert. Pay, effective March 23, 2024. Grade 7 Plan Law Enforcement Tier 5.

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4. Retirement of Richard Morales, Maintenance Supervisor, with 80.0 PTO and 136.14 Compensatory hours due, effective April 26, 2024.
5. Retirement of Mariano Garza, Detention Officer, with 80.0 PTO and 288.39 Compensatory hours due, effective April 5, 2024.
6. Resignation of Jonathan West, Patrol Deputy, with 80.0 PTO and 468.78 Compensatory hours due, effective May 19, 2024.
7. Dismissal of Samantha Partida, Patrol Deputy, with 80.0 PTO and 118.92 Compensatory hours due, effective March 12, 2024.
8. VCSO Salary Adjustment Certification for Edward Briseno, to be paid Intermediate Certificate Pay of \$23.08 per pay period, effective March 28, 2024. Certification date for Edward Briseno is March 6, 2024. Budget Coding: Enforcement/CID Certificate Pay 100-563-1137. Remarks: Deputy Briseno received his Intermediate Jailer's Certificate on 03/06/2024.
- e. Kenneth Sexton, Commissioner, Precinct No. 4 - Road and Bridge, Precinct No. 4:
 1. Employment of Caleb Ellison, Extra Help, at a rate of \$12.50 per hour, Budget Code 204-614-1130, effective March 19, 2024. Other Remarks: 90-day project.
- f. David Gonzales, Public Health Director - Victoria County Public Health Department:
 1. Salary change for Sharon Taylor, Accounting Clerk, from a rate of \$18.37 per hour, Budget Codes 800-631-1174 (94.56%) \$17.37 and 800-628-1174 (5.44%) \$1.00 to a rate of \$19.00 per hour, Budget Codes 800-631-1174 (91.42%) \$17.37 and 800-628-1174 (8.58%) \$1.63, effective March 9, 2024. Grade 3 Plan General.

Motion adopted.

18. Adjourn.

(18-1:38:39)

18. March 18, 2024. The Commissioners Court adjourned the meeting of March 18, 2024.