

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF VICTORIA §

Be it remembered that on this the **14th day October A.D., 2024**, the Commissioners Court convened in **Regular 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
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, October 14, 2024, 10:00 AM, REGULAR TERM

VICTORIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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

1. Call to Order.

(1-0:00)

1. October 14, 2024. Ben Zeller, County Judge, called to order the Commissioners Court Regular Term for Monday, October 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

2. Invocation and Pledges.

(2-0:00)

2. October 14, 2024. County 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.

(3-1:31)

3. October 14, 2024. Judge Ben Zeller opened the meeting to anyone wishing to address general County business which was not on the meeting agenda.

Ernie Byrd, a Victoria resident, voiced his concerns regarding the log jam and debris buildup at the relief bridges and South of Victoria.

Michael Vonderau of 2204 E. North Street spoke about homeless people living at the car wash by the Salvation Army.

Criminal District Attorney Constance Filley Johnson informed the Court of an incident in the 377th District Courtroom last week and thanked all the agencies and individuals for their assistance.

District Judge Eli Garza voiced his concerns regarding the recent incident in his courtroom and commended those that assisted during and after said incident.

Jennifer Ortiz-Garza spoke about the safety of employees and individuals in courtrooms.

Commissioner Danny Garcia asked what the next steps would be to secure the courtrooms.

County Clerk Heidi Easley commended the Sheriff's Office Deputies that work at the security station in the Courthouse.

Human Resources Director Giani Cantu informed the Court of open enrollment this week for Victoria County employees.

County Judge Zeller stated there would be a meet and greet for his new Chief of Staff Robin Harkey on Thursday starting at 2:00 p.m.

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

4. Consider approval of minutes and take appropriate action.

(4-22:50)

4. October 14, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved the minutes of the Commissioners Court meeting held on October 7, 2024. Motion adopted.

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

(5-23:09)

5. October 14, 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	10/14/2024	\$406,194.30
Supplemental Accounts	10/04/2024 – 10/10/2024	\$146,731.42

Motion adopted.

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

(6-23:45)

6. October 14, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court received the monthly reports from the County Judge, County Treasurer; District Clerk; County Clerk; County Auditor; Sheriff; Fire Marshal; Justices of the Peace, Precincts Nos. 1 and 3; and Constables, Precincts Nos. 1 and 2. Motion adopted.

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

(7-24:13)

7. October 14, 2024. None. No action taken.

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

(8-24:21)

8. October 14, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the Citizens Medical Center interim vendor payments dated October 10, 2024, in the amount of \$514,480.40 and the ACH report dated October 10, 2024, in the amount of \$2,203,868.69. Motion adopted.

9. Consider an Order Enacting a Burn Ban in Victoria County and take appropriate action.

(9-24:51)

9. October 14, 2024. Assistant Fire Marshal Drew Pilkington provided information to the Court. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved Order No. 2024-0080 Enacting a Burn Ban in Victoria County. Motion adopted.

10. Receive an executed copy of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Interlocal

Agreement for the FY2025 Feral Hog Abatement Program and take appropriate action.

(10-27:29)

10. October 14, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court received the executed copy of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Interlocal Agreement for the FY2025 Feral Hog Abatement Program. Motion adopted.

- 11. Consider approval of request for payment to Billy T. Cattin Recovery Outreach, Inc. in the amount of \$28,437.50 for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Subrecipient Project No. VICT-10 and take appropriate action.**

(11-27:58)

11. October 14, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the request for payment to Billy T. Cattin Recovery Outreach, Inc. in the amount of \$28,437.50 for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Subrecipient Project No. VICT-10. Motion adopted.

- 12. Consider the following items for the Victoria Office of Emergency Management and take appropriate action:**

a. Approval of Resolution 2024-0079 accepting a donation of Customer Premise Equipment (CPE) for the value of \$14,966.00 from Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC).

(12a-28:27)

12a. October 14, 2024. The Commissioners Court passed on Resolution No. 2024-0079 for a donation of Customer Premise Equipment (CPE) for the value of \$14,966.00 from Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) for the Victoria Office of Emergency Management. No action taken.

Consider the following items for the Victoria Office of Emergency Management and take appropriate action:

b. Receive a fully executed Interlocal Agreement with the Harris County Universal Radio Services.

(12b-28:27)

12b. October 14, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court received a fully executed Interlocal Agreement with the Harris County Universal Radio Services for the Victoria Office of Emergency Management. Motion adopted.

- 13. Consider the request from the Victoria Office of Emergency Management to designate a 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe, VIN 1GNSKLED3PR275276 as an emergency vehicle and take appropriate action.**

(13-29:14)

13. October 14, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the request from the Victoria Office of Emergency Management to designate a 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe, VIN 1GNSKLED3PR275276 as an emergency vehicle. Motion adopted.

- 14. Consider approval of letters of engagement from Harrison, Waldrop & Uherek for**

Victoria County and Victoria County Juvenile Probation Department audits and take appropriate action.

(14-29:58)

14. October 14, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved the letters of engagement from Harrison, Waldrop and Uherek for Victoria County and Victoria County Juvenile Probation Department. Motion adopted.

15. Consider approval of the following items related to the Victoria County Health Insurance Plan for the plan year 2025 and take appropriate action:

a. Benefit Plan Amendment will reduce the waiting period of an eligible employee.

(15a-30:29)

15a. October 14, 2024. Human Resources Director Giani Cantu provided information to the Court. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the Benefit Plan Amendment to reduce the waiting period for employee eligibility, related to the Victoria County Health Insurance Plan for the year 2025. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following items related to the Victoria County Health Insurance Plan for the plan year 2025 and take appropriate action:

b. Add-on benefit of High Touch/Member Advocate program.

(15b-30:29)

15b. October 14, 2024. Laura Gwaltney with Walker and Associates and Denise Andrew with Boon Chapman spoke about available benefits for Victoria County employees. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the add-on benefit of High Touch/Member Advocate program related to the Victoria County Health Insurance Plan for the year 2025. Motion adopted.

16. Consider approval of changes to the Sick Leave Pool and Sick Leave Reserve policies effective for 2025 and take appropriate action.

(16-45:19)

16. October 14, 2024. The Commissioners Court held a discussion with Human Resources Director Giani Cantu regarding changes to the Sick Leave Pool and Sick Leave Reserve policies effective 2025. Victoria Regional Executive Director Lenny Llerena, Human Resources Specialist Loria Proctor and County Clerk Heidi Easley spoke to the Court regarding changes to the policies. No action taken.

17. Consider approval of purchasing a 2024 Chevrolet 1500 from Caldwell Country Chevrolet for Road & Bridge, Pct. 2 and take appropriate action.

(17-1:18:06)

17. October 14, 2024. Commissioners Court passed on purchasing a 2024 Chevrolet 1500 from Caldwell Country Chevrolet for Road and Bridge, Precinct No. 2. No action taken.

18. Consider the following in regard to the Portside Energy Center, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement and take appropriate action:

a. Hold a public hearing.

(18a-1:18:28)

18a. October 14, 2024. County Judge Zeller opened the public hearing at 11:18 a.m. regarding the Portside Energy Center, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement. Jonas Titas, President of Victoria Economic Development Corporation, spoke about the status of the Tax Abatement Agreement. County Judge Zeller closed the public hearing at 11:20 a.m. No action taken.

Consider the following in regard to the Portside Energy Center, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement and take appropriate action:

b. Authorize the County Judge to execute the Portside Energy Center LLC. Tax Abatement Agreement, contingent on legal review.

(18b-1:18:28)

18b. October 14, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court authorized the County Judge to execute the Portside Energy Center, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement, contingent on legal review. Motion adopted.

19. Consider approval of the following detention and/or residential contracts for the Victoria Regional Juvenile Justice Center and take appropriate action:

a. Navarro County.

(19a-1:22:16)

19a. October 14, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the Detention and Residential Contracts between Victoria Regional Juvenile Justice Center and Navarro County. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following detention and/or residential contracts for the Victoria Regional Juvenile Justice Center and take appropriate action:

b. Yoakum County.

(19b-1:22:16)

19b. October 14, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the Detention and Residential Contracts between Victoria Regional Juvenile Justice Center and Yoakum County. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following detention and/or residential contracts for the Victoria Regional Juvenile Justice Center and take appropriate action:

c. Maverick, Dimmit, & Zavala Counties.

(19c-1:22:16)

19c. October 14, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the Detention and Residential Contracts between Victoria Regional Juvenile Justice Center and Maverick, Dimmit, and Zavala Counties. Motion adopted.

- 20. Consider approval of Resolution No. 2024-0082 for road donation in Pct. 3 from Jill Lindsey for installation of a driveway and pipe culvert to improve drainage at 3120 Old Goliad Road at the value of \$756.00 and take appropriate action.**

(20-1:23:05)

20. October 14, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved Resolution No. 2024-0082 for a road donation in the amount of \$756.00 from Jill Lindsey at 3120 Old Goliad Road, Victoria County, in Precinct No. 3 for installation of a driveway and pipe culvert to improve drainage. Motion adopted.

- 21. Consider approval of the following 2024 budget amendments and take appropriate action:**

(21-1:23:33)

21. October 14, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved the 2024 budget amendments for:

- a. General Fund, Various Departments, Revenues and Expenditures - Increase
- b. 4/H Activity Center Fund, Expenditures – Line item transfer
- c. Road and Bridge, Precinct No. 2, Revenues and Expenditures - Line item transfer

Motion adopted.

- 22. Consider approval of personnel changes and take appropriate action.**

(22-1:24:01)

22. October 14, 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. Giani Cantu, Human Resources Director - Human Resources:
 - 1. Request to pay out overtime to Jena Banda, Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator, for work related to the disaster and recovery efforts for Hurricane Helene in North Carolina in accordance with section 6.04.02 of the adopted personnel policy.
- b. Justin Marr, Sheriff - Sheriff's Office:
 - 1. Employment of Emmitt Phillips, Extra Help, at a rate of \$25.31 per hour, Budget Code 100-563-1130, effective October 14, 2024. Plan Law Enforcement.
 - 2. Resignation of Jonathan Billman, Interdiction Deputy, with 353.45 PTO and 478.24 Compensatory hours due, effective October 11, 2024.
 - 3. Resignation of Valarie McGuill, Extra Help-TC, effective October 7, 2024.
- c. David Gonzales, Public Health Director - Victoria County Public Health Department:
 - 1. Employment of Kimberly Green, Assistant Director (Public Health), at a rate of \$35.00 per hour, Budget Code 800-631-1141, effective October 22, 2024. Other Remarks: **ADD** Cell Phone Allowance \$1080.04 Annual (\$41.54 bi-weekly) 800-631-1139. Grade 16 Plan General.
 - 2. Resignation of Thomas E. Fairley, Sanitation Inspector, effective October 10, 2024.

- d. Pama Hencerling, Juvenile Chief Probation Officer - Juvenile Services:
1. Resignation of Vera LeBlanc Abernathy, Clerk III, effective October 11, 2024.

Motion adopted.

- 23. Closed meeting pursuant to V.T.C.A. Government code §551.074 to discuss personnel in various departments; §551.072 to discuss real property; §551.087 to discuss economic development, and §551.071 to conduct a private consultation with the County's attorney regarding matters protected by the attorney-client privilege.**

(23-1:24:37)

23. October 14, 2024. The Commissioners Court went into closed session at 11:28 a.m., pursuant to V.T.C.A. Government Code §551.074 to discuss personnel in various departments, §551.072 to discuss real property, §551.087 to discuss economic development, and §551.071 to conduct a private consultation with the County's attorney regarding matters protected by attorney-client privilege.

- 24. Pursuant to V.T.C.A. Government Code §551.102, return to an open meeting and take any action deemed necessary based upon discussion in the closed meeting.**

(24-1:25:38)

24. October 14, 2024. The Commissioners Court returned to open meeting at 12:16 p.m., pursuant to V.T.C.A. Government Code §551.102, with no action taken.

- 25. Adjourn.**

(25-1:25:38)

25. October 14, 2024. The Commissioners Court adjourned the meeting of October 14, 2024.