

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF VICTORIA §

Be it remembered that on this the **12th day November 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	Absent
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

Tuesday, November 12, 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. November 12, 2024. Ben Zeller, County Judge, called to order the Commissioners Court Regular Term for Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

2. Invocation and Pledges.

(2-0:00)

2. November 12, 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.

(3-1:58)

3. November 12, 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, asked questions of Judge Zeller and Commissioner Burns regarding their elected positions.

Michael Vonderau of 2204 E. North Street thanked the local restaurants that provided Veterans' free meals yesterday for Veterans Day and voiced his concerns regarding the trailer park he lives in.

County Fire Marshal Richard Castillo thanked the community for their support at their fundraiser this past Saturday.

County Engineer John Johnston provided an update on the mental health hospital and downtown parking lot projects.

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

4. Consider approval of minutes and take appropriate action.

(4-10:15)

4. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the minutes of the Commissioners Court meeting held on November 4, 2024. Motion adopted.

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

(5-10:31)

5. November 12, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the accounts payable as presented by Michelle Samford, County Auditor.

Regular Accounts	11/12/2024	\$683,001.91
Supplemental Accounts	11/1/2024 – 11/7/2024	\$99,712.43

Motion adopted.

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

(6-10:55)

6. November 12, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court received the monthly reports from the County Judge; County Commissioners, Precincts Nos. 1 - 4; District Clerk; County Clerk; Criminal District Attorney; Tax Assessor Collector; County Auditor; Justices of the Peace, Precincts Nos. 2 and 3; Constables, Precincts Nos. 1 and 2; and Pre-Trial Services. Motion adopted.

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

(7-11:27)

7. November 12, 2024. None. No action taken.

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

(8-11:32)

8. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the interim vendor payments dated November 7, 2024, in the amount of \$773,838.35 and the ACH report dated November 7, 2024, in the amount of \$1,159,297.59. Motion adopted.

9. Recognize third-quarter employee anniversaries.

(9-32:00)

9. November 12, 2024. County Judge Zeller recognized Victoria County employees' anniversaries for the 2024 third quarter. Judge Zeller presented each of the following employees with a certificate for their years of service.

NAME	YEARS
SZILAGYI, SHELLY E	1
MORALES, MARY H	1
WAGNER, KIMBERLY N	1
GALVAN, AGUSTIN M	1
HIGDON, PAUL W	1
FAUTH, BRAYLEE N	1
MARTINEZ, ISABELLA R	1
AMARO, MEAGAN R	1
KOEHL, JUDD R	1
RODRIGUEZ, ERIKA Y	1
MORENO, DILLON A	1
PYLE, AMBER D	1
TATE, JORDAN N	1
KAINER, LISA M	1
NEESE, TYLER J	1
PARTIDA JR, ALEJANDRO	1
RIVERA LOPEZ, BETSI D	1
TREVINO, AMELIE N	1
OWEN, TYLER P	1
MCBRIDE, JODY D	1
WILLIAMS, RICHARD A	1
ORDONEZ, JACOB L	5
KOSLER, KELLY L	5
AGUIRRE, REBECCA D	5
PENA II, JOSE L	5
GAYTAN, HERLINDA	5
ROGERS, SHAMISHA D	5
JOHNSTON, JOHN A	5
NOVOSAD, THERESA B	15
RODRIGUEZ, YOLANDA O	15
HILL, MARGETTA S	20
RODRIGUEZ, ANTONIO	25
BIANCHI, ROBERT	35

No action taken.

10. Hear a presentation from the Victoria County Veteran Services Office and take appropriate action.

(10-12:26)

10. November 12, 2024. Veterans Services Director John Williams provided the number of Veterans they assisted in October and reviewed the services that are provided through the Victoria County Veterans Services Office. Mr. Williams responded to Commissioner Danny Garcia. MVPN Certified Peer Service Coordinator Oscar Pulido spoke about the Military Veteran Peer Network program. No action taken.

11. Receive and approve the Prohibited Technologies Policy (TikTok Ban) on all county devices per Senate Bill 1893 Local Code Chapter 620 and take appropriate action.

(11-39:46)

11. November 12, 2024. David Solis, Assistant IT Director, provided information to the Court. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Jason Ohrt, pursuant to Senate Bill 1893 and Local Government Code 620, the Commissioners Court received and approved the Prohibited Technologies Policy (TikTok Ban) on all county devices. Motion adopted.

- 12. Receive notice of a Budget Adjustment for the 2023 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) Grant Award, Grant No. 3186209, and take appropriate action.**

(12-42:47)

12. November 12, 2024. Robin Knipling, Grant Administrator, provided the Court with information. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court received a notice of a Budget Adjustment to transfer funding from the overtime line item to the equipment line item for the 2023 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) Grant Award, Grant No. 3186209 to cover vehicle cost overruns. Motion adopted.

- 13. Consider approval of High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Program Modification 1 for G24HN0020A and take appropriate action.**

(13-43:22)

13. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Program Modification 1 to decrease Grant No. G24HN0020A for a new award total of \$126,920.00. Motion adopted.

- 14. Consider approval of the FY25 Operation Lone Star (OLS) grant award from the Office of the Governor and take appropriate action.**

(14-44:12)

14. November 12, 2024. Grant Administrator Robin Knipling provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved the FY25 Operation Lone Star (OLS) grant award from the Office of the Governor. Motion adopted.

- 15. Consider approval of the following in relation to the October 15th large grass fire, repairs for County Brush Truck 3 and take appropriate action:**

a. Payment of repairs from the General Fund.

(15a-45:27)

15a. November 12, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the payment of repairs in the amount of \$9,204.85, to be paid from the General Fund, in relation to the October 15th large grass fire for repairs on County Brush Truck 3. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following in relation to the October 15th large grass fire, repairs for County Brush Truck 3 and take appropriate action:

b. Submission of the Texas Forest Service Emergency Grant for up to 100% reimbursement of repair costs.

(15b-45:27)

15b. November 12, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the Submission of the Texas Forest Service Emergency Grant for up to 100% reimbursement of repair costs for County Brush Truck 3, due to the

October 15th large grass fire. Motion adopted.

16. Receive notice of FY24 Operation Lone Star Grant Program (OLS) Time Extension and take appropriate action.

(16-46:54)

16. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court received notice of the FY24 Operation Lone Star Grant Program (OLS) Time Extension approval from the State of Texas of the Governor for the new grant end date of April 30, 2025 and the new liquidation date of July 29, 2025. Motion adopted.

17. Consider approval of a request for \$4,000 in cost-share assistance from the Fordtran Volunteer Fire Department to repair the fire station entrance and driveway and take appropriate action.

(17-47:35)

17. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the request from the Fordtran Volunteer Fire Department for in cost-share assistance of \$4,000.00 to repair the fire station entrance and driveway. Motion adopted.

18. Consider approval of Resolution No. 2024-0089 accepting a donation of supplies valued at \$940.29 from Sherry McShaffry, owner of Regional Steel Products, Inc., for the helicopter display at Patriot Park in Pct. 3 and take appropriate action.

(18-50:01)

18. November 12, 2024. Commissioner Gary Burns provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, pursuant to Local Government Code §81.032, the Commissioners Court approved Resolution No. 2024-0089 accepting a donation of supplies valued at \$940.29 from Sherry McShaffry, owner of Regional Steel Products, Inc., for the helicopter display at Patriot Park in Precinct No. 3. Motion adopted.

19. Consider approval of Order No. 2024-0090 Ratifying Purchases of Certificates of Deposit and take appropriate action.

(19-48:53)

19. November 12, 2024. County Auditor Michelle Samford provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved Order No. 2024-0090 Ratifying Purchases of Certificates of Deposit. Motion adopted.

20. Receive the adopted 2024-2026 Victoria County Tax Abatement Guidelines and Criteria, effective November 4, 2024, and take appropriate action.

(20-51:29)

20. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court received the adopted 2024-2026 Victoria County Tax Abatement Guidelines and Criteria, effective November 4, 2024. Motion adopted.

21. Consider approval of the following for the Victoria County Sheriff's Office and take appropriate action:

a. Grant a Discretionary Bid Exemption pursuant to Local Government Code 262.024(a)(2) for an item necessary to preserve or protect the public health and safety of residents of the County.

(21a-51:59)

21a. November 12, 2024. Grant Administrator Robin Knipling provided information to the Court. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved to grant a Discretionary Bid Exemption pursuant to Local Government Code 262.024(a)(2) for an item necessary to preserve or protect the public health and safety of residents of the County for the Victoria County Sheriff's Office. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following for the Victoria County Sheriff's Office and take appropriate action:

b. Authorize the purchase of annual subscriptions from Cellebrite, Inc.

(21b-51:59)

21b. November 12, 2024. Robin Knipling, Grant Administrator, provided the Court with information. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court authorized the purchase of annual subscriptions from Cellebrite, Inc. for the Victoria County Sheriff's Office. Motion adopted.

22. Consider approval of the recommended updates to the Tuition Reimbursement Policy and take appropriate action.

(22-53:00)

22. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the recommended update to the Tuition Reimbursement Policy. Motion adopted.

23. Discuss and consider the purchase of an Animal Services truck and take appropriate action.

(23-53:48)

23. November 12, 2024. Animal Services Director Mark Sloat discussed the purchase of another truck for the department with the Court. After discussion, the Commissioners Court passed on the purchase of the 2017 Ford truck for Victoria County Animal Services. No action taken.

24. Receive a letter of permission to enter the private property of Jack Loep located at 2243 Coletoville Rd. East, Victoria, Texas 77905 for the purpose of improving drainage off a county road in Pct. 3 and take appropriate action.

(24-58:10)

24. November 12, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the letter of permission to enter and work on private property in Precinct No. 3 from Jack Loep at 2243 Coletoville Road East, Victoria, Texas 77905 for the purpose of improving drainage off a county road. Motion adopted.

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

(25-58:54)

25. November 12, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the 2024 budget amendments for:

- a. General Fund, Various Departments, Revenues and Expenditures - Increase
- b. Child Welfare Board, Revenues - Decrease
- c. General Fund, Sheriff's Office, Expenditures - Line item transfer
- d. Health Department, Expenditures - Line item transfer

Motion adopted.

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

(26-59:25)

26. November 12, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved that payroll be processed in compliance with policy and personnel changes:

- a. Justin Marr, Sheriff - Sheriff's Office:
 - 1. Request to payout 129.40 compensatory hours for Germanique Hernandez at \$40.39 per hour for a total of \$5,226.47 from 100-563-1104.
- b. Gary Burns, Commissioner, Precinct No. 3 - Road and Bridge, Precinct No. 3:
 - 1. Correction: Retirement of Leeroy Creager, Asst. Foreman, effective November 28, 2024.
- c. Mark Sloat, Animal Services Director - Victoria County Animal Services:
 - 1. Correction: Employment of Maritza Gutierrez, Animal Control Officer, at a rate of \$16.57 per hour, Budget Code 100-630-1107, effective November 13, 2024. Grade 4 Plan General Tier n/a.
- d. David Gonzales, Public Health Director - Victoria County Public Health Department:
 - 1. Salary change for Jeffrey Herring, Sanitation Inspector, from a rate of \$19.00 per hour, Budget Code 809-631-1109 to a rate of \$21.87 per hour, effective November 2, 2024. Grade 6 Plan General Tier n/a.
- e. Pama Hencerling, Juvenile Chief Probation Officer - Juvenile Services:
 - 1. Employment of Brittney Tresselt, Clerk III, at a rate of \$17.52 per hour, Budget Codes 231-588-1109 \$16.48 and 231-577-1108 \$1.04, effective November 19, 2024. Grade 3 Plan General Tier n/a.
 - 2. Salary change for Misty Green, Cook, from a rate of \$15.75 per hour, Budget Codes 100-573-1174 \$5.25 (33.33%) and 392-573-1174 \$10.50 (66.67%) to a rate of \$16.35 per hour, Budget Codes 100-573-1174 \$5.45 (33.33%) and 392-573-1174 \$10.90 (66.67%), effective November 16, 2024. Grade 1.

Motion adopted.

27. 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.

(27-59:48)

27. November 12, 2024. Prior to going into closed session, Fire Marshal Richard Castillo provided KBDI numbers and stated the burn ban is still in effect. The Commissioners Court went into closed session at 11:05 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.

28. 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.

(28-1:01:53)

28. November 12, 2024. The Commissioners Court returned to open meeting at 11:40

a.m., pursuant to V.T.C.A. Government Code §551.102, with no action taken.

29. Adjourn.

(29-1:02:04)

29. November 12, 2024. The Commissioners Court adjourned the meeting of November 12, 2024.