

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF VICTORIA §

Be it remembered that on this the **18th day November 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
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, November 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. November 18, 2024. Ben Zeller, County Judge, called to order the Commissioners Court Special Term for Monday, November 18, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

2. Invocation and Pledges.

(2-0:00)

2. November 18, 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.

(3-1:15)

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

Ernest Montez of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 898 thanked the Court for their help and support of Veterans and for the helicopter at Patriot Park.

Les Weaver of VVA Chapter 898 invited the Court to the dedication of the helicopter at Patriot Park this Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

Public Health Director David Gonzales introduced the new Assistant Public Health Director, Kim Green.

Michael Vonderau of 2204 E. North Street spoke about Patriot Park and evictions.

Paul Janda of the Victoria County Historical Commission invited the Court to the dedication of Zion Lutheran Church Mission Valley, as an official Texas State Historical Site this Sunday at 11:15 a.m.

Human Resources Director Giani Cantu thanked all the Walk Across Texas participants.

County Judge Zeller spoke about the courthouse closures next week and invited everyone to the retirement party for Commissioner Gary Burns on December 3, 2024, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at El Patron restaurant.

County Clerk Heidi Easley informed the public of the County Clerk's office closure at noon on Friday and asked the public to file documents or get a marriage license by 11:45 a.m.

Tabre Houston, partner of Teens Grounded, spoke about the Support Our Schools Teen summit that was held this past weekend.

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

4. Consider approval of minutes and take appropriate action.
(4-16:35)

4. November 18, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the minutes of the Commissioners Court meetings held on November 12, 2024. Motion adopted.

5. Consider approval of accounts payable and take appropriate action.
(5-16:49)

5. November 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	11/18/2024	\$417,583.65
Supplemental Accounts	11/8/2024 – 11/14/2024	\$78,458.37

Motion adopted.

6. Receive monthly and quarterly reports from various county officials and departments and take appropriate action.
(6-17:18)

6. November 18, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court received the monthly reports from the County Treasurer; Fire Marshal; Justices of the Peace, Precincts Nos. 1 and 4; County Extension Agent-4-H Youth Development; County Extension Agent-Ag/Natural Resources; and County Extension Agent-Family Community Health. Motion adopted.

7. Consider approval of bond forfeiture releases and take appropriate action.
(7-17:48)

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

8. Consider approval of CMC Interim vendor payments and take appropriate action.
(8-17:53)

8. November 18, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the interim vendor payments dated November 14, 2024, in the amount of \$635,911.65 and the ACH report dated November 14, 2024, in the amount of \$2,211,006.47. Motion adopted.

9. Consider approval of Resolution No. 2024-0091 to commend the Victoria County Groundwater District Board of Directors and take appropriate action.
(9-18:34)

9. November 18, 2024. Tim Andruss, General Manager of Victoria County Groundwater Conversation District, spoke to the Court regarding the services of the Board of Directors. Mr. Andruss introduced board members, Jerry Hroch, Mark Meek, and Kenneth Eller. Judge Zeller read the resolution and presented a certificate to the board members. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved Resolution No. 2024-0091 to commend the Victoria County Groundwater District Board of Directors. Motion adopted.

- 10. Consider reappointment of the Victoria County Fire Marshal, approve the official bond and oath of office and take appropriate action.**

(10-27:24)

10. November 18, 2024. Judge Zeller swore in Richard Castillo as Victoria County Marshal, effective December 4, 2024 and approved the official bond. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the Official Bond and Oath of Office for Richard Castillo, Victoria County Fire Marshal. All as filed in the minutes of this Court and the Official Records of the County Clerk. Motion adopted.

- 11. Canvass the November 5, 2024 Joint General Election results and take appropriate action.**

(11-30:27)

11. November 18, 2024. Elections Administrator Margetta Hill certified the November 5, 2024 election results and provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved to canvass the November 5, 2024 Joint General Election. Motion adopted.

- 12. Consider the following regarding the Green Energy Origin, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement and take appropriate action:**

a. Hold a public hearing.

(12a-34:05)

12a. November 18, 2024. County Judge Ben Zeller opened the public hearing at 10:35 a.m. for the Green Energy Origin, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement. Jonas Titus, President of Victoria Economic Development Corporation, introduced two members Luis Mendonca and Olivia Byrne, and informed the court of a correction to the agreement. Jim Allison, attorney for Victoria County, gave recommendations regarding the correction. Judge Zeller closed the public hearing at 10:41 a.m. No action taken.

Consider the following regarding the Green Energy Origin, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement and take appropriate action:

b. Approve the Green Energy Origin, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement.

(12b-34:05)

12b. November 18, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the Green Energy Origin, LLC Tax Abatement Agreement with the correction of ten (10) years with a forty (40) year option. Motion adopted.

- 13. Consider and approve the Tyler-ProPhoenix eCitation Integration to benefit the Justice of the Peace Courts in the amount of \$27,750 and take appropriate action.**

(13-43:17)

13. November 18, 2024. IT Director Matt Schneider provided information to the Court. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the Tyler-ProPhoenix eCitation Integration to benefit the Justice of the Peace Courts in the amount of \$27,750.00. Motion adopted.

- 14. Consider the following associated with the Regional Operations Community Safe Room project under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) DR-4485-0005 administered by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) and take appropriate action:**

a. Approval of the engineering services agreement from Rawley McCoy and Associates (RMA) in support of the design and completion of Phase I deliverables, including any changes recommended by legal counsel upon review.

(14a-45:16)

14a. November 18, 2024. Grant Administrator Robin Knipling provided information to the Court. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the engineering services agreement from Rawley McCoy and Associates (RMA) in support of the design and completion of Phase I deliverables, including any changes recommended by legal counsel upon review associated with the Regional Operations Community Safe Room project under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) DR-4485-0005 administered by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). Motion adopted.

Consider the following associated with the Regional Operations Community Safe Room project under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) DR-4485-0005 administered by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) and take appropriate action:

b. Authorize the County Judge to sign an engineering services agreement with Rawley McCoy and Associates (RMA).

(14b-45:16)

14b. November 18, 2024. Robin Knipling, Grant Administrator, provided the Court with information. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court authorized the County Judge to sign an engineering services agreement with Rawley McCoy and Associates (RMA) associated with the Regional Operations Community Safe Room project under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) DR-4485-0005 administered by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). Motion adopted.

15. Consider approval of a request for plat exemption from Cory Sifford at 4437 Coletoville Road West, located in Precinct 3, and take appropriate action.

(15-48:01)

15. November 18, 2024. County Engineer John Johnston spoke to the Court about the plat exemption. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved the plat exemption request from Cory Sifford at 4437 Coletoville Road West in Precinct No. 3 with the following conditions:

- * Shall secure and verify the 911 addresses for the tracts with the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission.
- * The tract conveyed must be greater than 10-acres.
- * No future tract created shall be less than 1-acre, excluding easements.
- * All created/revised tracts, new property deeds and ingress/egress easement(s) must be created and filed in the Victoria County Clerk's Public Records.
- * Further subdivision of tracts shall comply with the requirements of the effective published version of the VCDSM at the time of subdivision.
- * Each tract will have its own water well and Onsite Sanitary Sewer Facility (OSSF) (septic system).
- * Each tract shall have public right of way frontage or access to a public right-of-way through an ingress/egress easement with the following requirements:
 - ~Any private/public ingress/egress easements to a public ROW shall be constructed and maintained as an all-weather roadway capable of supporting any/all emergency service vehicles as determined by the Sheriff and the Fire Marshal of Victoria County.
 - ~Maintenance of ingress/egress easement(s) shall be the sole

responsibility of the developer and/or property owners.
~The developer/property owners shall install Knoxbox(es) at all gates across private/public access easements. The placement and installation of all Knoxbox(es) shall be approved by the Victoria County Fire Marshal.

Motion adopted.

16. Consider approval of Resolution No. 2024-0092 accepting a donation from the South Plains Community Action Association for WIC and take appropriate action.

(16-48:37)

16. November 18, 2024. Public Health Director David Gonzales provided information to the Court. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, pursuant to Local Government Code §81.032, the Commissioners Court approved Resolution No. 2024-0092 accepting a donation of a 2024 Chevrolet Suburban with 5 miles valued at \$60,146.81 from South Plains Community Action Association to be utilized for and dedicated to WIC. Motion adopted.

**17. Consider the following from Victoria County Animal Services (VCAS) in regard to the Best Friends Animal Society Grant Programs and take appropriate action:
a. Receive notice of grant allocation in the amount of \$10,000.00.**

(17a-49:34)

17a. November 18, 2024. Robin Knipling, Grant Administrator, provided the Court with information. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court received a notice of grant allocation in the amount of \$10,000.00 from Victoria County Animal Services (VCAS) in regard to the Best Friends Animal Society Grant programs. Motion adopted.

**Consider the following from Victoria County Animal Services (VCAS) in regard to the Best Friends Animal Society Grant Programs and take appropriate action:
b. Execute grant agreement for an award in the amount of \$19,800.00.**

(17b-49:34)

17b. November 18, 2024. Grant Administrator Robin Knipling provided information to the Court. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved to execute the grant agreement for an award in the amount of \$19,800.00 from Victoria County Animal Services (VCAS) in regards to the Best Friends Animal Society Grant programs. Motion adopted.

18. Consider approval of the purchase of an Animal Services truck and take appropriate action.

(18-51:50)

18. November 18, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court approved the purchase of a 2017 Ford F250 truck for Victoria County Animal Services. Motion adopted.

19. Consider approval of a request for \$2,000 in cost-share assistance from the Mission Valley Volunteer Fire Department to replace the current water storage tank and take appropriate action.

(19-53:14)

19. November 18, 2024. Fire Marshal Richard Castillo provided information to the Court. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court

approved a request for \$2,000.00 in cost-share assistance from the Mission Valley Volunteer Fire Department to replace the current water storage tank. Motion adopted.

- 20. Consider approval of an annual contract renewal for Stephanie Whitley, RDN, LD to provide professional dietitian services to the Victoria County Juvenile Justice Facility and take appropriate action.**

(20-54:35)

20. November 18, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved an annual contract renewal for Stephanie Whitley, RDN, LD to provide professional dietitian services to the Victoria County Juvenile Justice Facility. Motion adopted.

- 21. Consider approval of the following contracts for the Psychoeducational/Counseling Service Contracts for the Victoria Juvenile Justice Center and take appropriate action.**

a. David Ross Braune, M.A. LPC.

(21a-55:13)

21a. November 18, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved the Psychoeducational/Counseling Service Contract with David Ross Braune, M.A. LPC for the Victoria Juvenile Justice Center. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following contracts for the Psychoeducational/Counseling Service Contracts for the Victoria Juvenile Justice Center and take appropriate action.

b. Allison Besio, M.A. LPC-S.

(21b-55:13)

21b. November 18, 2024. Moved by Jason Ohrt and seconded by Danny Garcia, the Commissioners Court approved the Psychoeducational/Counseling Service Contract with Allison Besio, M.A. LPC-S for the Victoria Juvenile Justice Center. Motion adopted.

- 22. Consider approval of the following resolutions for road donations in Pct. 3 for the installation of a driveway and pipe culvert to improve drainage and take appropriate action:**

a. Resolution 2024-0093 from James Brent Ortego at 202 Camino Dr. Victoria, Texas 77905, in the value of \$609.20.

(22a-55:55)

22a. November 18, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved Resolution No. 2024-0093 for a road donation in the amount of \$609.20 from James Brent Ortego at 202 Camino Drive, Victoria, Texas, 77905 in Precinct No. 3 for installation of a driveway and pipe culvert to improve drainage. Motion adopted.

Consider approval of the following resolutions for road donations in Pct. 3 for the installation of a driveway and pipe culvert to improve drainage and take appropriate action:

b. Resolution 2024-0094 from Aaron Delgado at 709 Quail Creek Dr. Victoria, Texas 77905, in the value of \$163.90

(22b-55:55)

22b. November 18, 2024. Moved by Gary Burns and seconded by Kenneth Sexton, the Commissioners Court approved Resolution No. 2024-0094 for a road donation in the amount of \$163.90 from Aaron Delgado at 709 Quail Creek Drive, Victoria, Texas, 77905

in Precinct No. 3 for installation of a driveway and pipe culvert to improve drainage.
Motion adopted.

23. Receive for the record 2024 Discretionary Fund Budget Amendment (380) and take appropriate action.

(23-56:46)

23. November 18, 2024. Moved by Danny Garcia and seconded by Jason Ohrt, the Commissioners Court received for the record the 2024 Discretionary Fund Budget Amendment for the Sheriff's Commissary Fund (380) as an increase to expenditures.
Motion adopted.

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

(24-57:13)

24. November 18, 2024. Moved by Kenneth Sexton and seconded by Gary Burns, the Commissioners Court approved the 2024 budget amendments for:

- a. General Fund, Various Departments, Expenditures - Increase
- b. Road and Bridge, Precinct No. 3, Expenditures - Line item transfer
- c. Airport Fund, Expenditures – Line item transfer
- d. National School Lunch Program, Expenditures - Line item transfer
- e. Health Insurance Fund, Expenditures - Line item transfer
- f. Health Department, Expenditures - Line item transfer
- g. General Fund, Sheriff's Office, Expenditures – Line item transfer

Motion adopted.

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

(25-58:08)

25. November 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. Matthew Schneider, IT Director - IT Department:
 - 1. Employment of Isaiah Crowley, Computer Tech, at a rate of \$18.00 per hour, Budget Code 100-503-1106, effective November 19, 2024. Grade 5 Plan General.
- b. Brian Watson, Chief Public Defender - Public Defender's Office:
 - 1. Employment of Veronica Briseno, Social Worker, at a rate of \$30.25 per hour, Budget Code 525-401-1106, effective November 19, 2024. Grade 15 Plan General Tier n/a.
 - 2. Employment of Richard Ramirez, Investigator, at a rate of \$28.54 per hour, Budget Code 525-401-1108, effective November 19, 2024. Grade 14 Plan General Tier n/a.
- c. Justin Marr, Sheriff - Sheriff's Office:
 - 1. VCSO Salary Adjustment Certification for Lethia Clark, to be paid Intermediate Certificate Pay of \$23.08 per pay period, effective November 22, 2024. Certification date for Lethia Clark is November 11, 2024. Budget Coding: Detention Certificate Pay 100-565-1137.
 - 2. VCSO Salary Adjustment Certification for Shirley West, to be paid Advanced Certificate Pay of \$46.15 per pay period, effective November 22,

2024. Certification date for Shirley West is November 8, 2024. Budget Coding: Detention Certificate Pay 100-565-1137.

d. Giani Cantu, HR Director - Human Resources:

1. Resignation of Peggy West, Clerk III, effective November 29, 2024. Other Due: ELIGIBLE FOR LONGEVITY PAY ON 11/27/2024. Other Remarks: PAYOUT PTO AND COMP TIME IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY ON HER FINAL CHECK. Remarks: Eligible for rehire in another county office.

Motion adopted.

- 26. 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.**
(26-58:52)

26. November 18, 2024. The Commissioners Court went into closed session at 11:00 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.

- 27. 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.**
(27-59:31)

27. November 18, 2024. The Commissioners Court returned to an open meeting at 12:03 p.m., pursuant to V.T.C.A. Government Code §551.102, with no action taken.

- 28. Adjourn.**
(28-59:31)

28. November 18, 2024. The Commissioners Court adjourned the meeting of November 18, 2024.