



DIANE DAY
AUSTIN COUNTY CLERK

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COMMISSIONERS COURT MINUTES

Order #25-170

July 14, 2025 Austin County Commissioners Court met in the 2nd floor Courtroom at the Austin County Courthouse with the following present:

Tim Lapham, County Judge
Greg Mikel, Commissioner, Precinct 1
Robert "Bobby" Rinn, Commissioner, Precinct 2
Leroy Cerny, Commissioner, Precinct 3
Chip Reed, Commissioner, Precinct 4
Diane Day, County Clerk
Allison Gerik, Deputy Clerk

9:00 A.M. OPENING

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

1. Proclamations and Special Recognitions

2. Petitions or Request from the Public.

Bernard Boik stated he lives on a dirt road with bad dust. He has went and visited the Precinct 2 barn to speak with who he thought was the commissioner because nothing had been done to improve the roadway. He is concerned for his health and the condition it has left his vehicles in. He requests the county pave the road.

Bernard Boik also wanted to ensure the county recognized the freedom of speech.

Walter Morrow (Austin County EMS Chief) advised a 2-man crew has been sent to the hill country for a 7–14 day deployment to assist with standby medical support for search teams, responding to 911 calls, and medical transports.

Judge Lapham spoke on the increase of developments entering Austin County. He stated as the developers start to move in we will see an increase in signs being put out for advertisement. The county wants to ensure the signs are not out everywhere obstructing state and county road signs or showing a large amount of signage across the county.

3. Discussion and action regarding FMLA policy.

Tara Wise (HR Administrative Assistant) requests the court support her in ensuring all county departments follow the FMLA policy. An FMLA guide was presented to the court. No changes have been made to the policy.

All departments will receive a copy of the FMLA policy and procedure handout.

4. Discussion regarding F.Y. 2025-26 Budget

Judge Lapham presented the proposed budget to the court.

Each department requesting budget changes was asked to speak on behalf of their change request.

Commissioner Reed asked if his new precinct building is projected in the proposed budget.

Judge Lapham stated it is not due to not having an estimated quote amount to calculate in.

Brandy Robinson (District Attorney) request a major increase in technology and additional training. The District Attorneys office will also be needing to purchase new furniture for a new hire they will have.

Brandy Robinson (District Attorney) also request 2 items not related to the District Attorney's Office. An increase is requested for Child Advocates of Fort Bend for services to Austin County Crime Victims and to adjust and increase the DPS Lab Analyst Contract.

Lt. Donald Darracq and Chief Matt Walls (Sheriff's Office) presented request to the court. The Sheriff's Office is concerned about the turnover rate they are experiencing due to surrounding agency's paying higher salaries. Lt Donald Darracq made a general statement advising 3-4 years ago the Sheriff's Office was experiencing a drastic problem in man power. After working closely with commissioner's court doing small changes they could they are happy to report they are doing extraordinarily well as far as filling positions in the Sheriff's Office. However, the issue now is making sure the people they have hired can be kept on board. Lt Donald Darracq advised we need to show the deputies brought on that we are wanting to work with them to keep them on board. The Sheriff's Office request that the court take the dollar sign request seriously. The letter

presented to the court was reviewed. Chief Matt Walls spoke on the positions needing to move funds. Position title changes within the fund were requested. This allowed for an increase change in funds. Chief Matt Walls expressed the many jobs each position has in the department to ensure the department is operating the best it can. Chief Matt Walls advised this is a funding increase for salaries and not vehicles. Lt. Donald Durracq explained the salary changes for dispatch supervisor and the change in levels to allow dispatchers to have another goal to keep working towards. Lt. Donald Durracq advised they believe they are taking steps in the right direction to keep employees around and not lose the great talent these employees bring to the department.

Kim Rinn (Tax Assessor and Collector) request an increase for training needs.

Walter Morrow (EMS Chief) stated they are having concerns with the increase in pay in surrounding counties and the chance of losing employees due to those increases. The county has grown over the past few years creating higher call volumes. Due to the increase in call volumes and competitive pay in other counties they would like an increase for salaries. Would like to add the man power for additional ambulance coverage during peak time allowing a quicker response time and less out of county request for assistance. There is a need to change out aging fleets and purchase new loading equipment in existing ambulances. The purchase of rescue items is also needed. The purchase of new training equipment for hands on training is also highly requested. Walter Morrow (EMS Chief) request the purchase of blood and blood fridge for transfusing when the need arises and transport times may play a factor in the outcome of the patient due to severity of the patient. They also request the purchase of Gym equipment to keep medics active and healthy when not on calls.

Commissioner Reed motioned to set public hearing on budget for August 11 and to adopt the budget at the August 11 or August 23 Commissioners Court.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

5. Discussion and action to modify DA section of 2024-2025 compensation order.

Brandy Robinson (District Attorney) requested to modify positions on the DA section of the 2024-2025 compensation order. Changes have been made to titles and would like to strike out the part time assistance position. SB22 will fund the one part-time help hired while the training of a new Assistant District Attorney takes place.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

6. Consideration and action to approve FY 2026/2027 Interlocal agreement with the Regional Public Defender for Capital Cases.

This is an agreement done every 2 years.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Rinn, 2nd Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0).

7. Discussion and action to approve Final Plat for Kitchen's Estate at FM 331 and Heron Lane, Pct.1

Per Jonathan Hopko (County Engineer) this plat was tabled while awaiting paperwork. All requirements are now met and approval is requested.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Mikel, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

8. Discussion and action to approve Commercial Development Plan for Fuel Maxx #117 at Hwy 36 and FM 949, Pct. 1

Per Jonathan Hopko (County Engineer) plans meet all requirements and approval is requested.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Mikel, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

9. Consideration and action to set 2026 Sheriff and Constable Fees effective January 1,2026.

Sheriff Jack Brandes request fees remain the same.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Rinn, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

10. Discussion regarding IH-10 Project, Pct. 4, and action as appropriate.

Srienivask Gineni, Bryan Edwards, and Ryan Blair presented a new map to the court in regards to the Masterplan community project. This masterplan community is 1,157 acres.

Commissioner Reed is concerned when the increase in acreage occurred because the map presented to City of Sealy last week showed 929 acres.

Ryan Blair advised the road size increase requested by the county was completed.

Jonathan Hopko stated the court needs to discuss what will be accepted in the agreement.

Sheriff Brandes asked who would oversee patrolling those streets.

Bryan Edwards answered saying the end goal is for the roads to become county roads patrolled by the county once warranty is done.

Commissioner Reed request the county to have a workshop meeting before moving forward.

11. Discussion and action to approve Denali Energy Storage Plans near the intersection of Hwy 36 and FM 1093, Pct. 4

Jonathan Hopko (County Engineer) reviewed the plans and request the court require a replat with 500m distance included.

Commissioner Reed request that every landowner in that area receive certified letters then the court will host a townhall meeting.

On September 8, 2025 at 6pm a town hall hearing will be held.

12. Discussion regarding overtime method payment for newly formed lieutenant and Captain at S.O and action as appropriate.

Lt. Donald Darracq and Chief Matt Walls apologized for the misunderstanding of overtime pay for the newly formed positions.

The new Captain position is eligible for both OCDETF and HIDTA overtime reimbursement. However, such overtime is only reimbursable if accrued while working a specific case (OCDETF) or under the auspices of the West-side HIDTA Narcotics Task Force (HIDTA). Any overtime accrued while not engaged in either task force would be compensatory.

The new Lieutenant position is not a member of any federally funded task force thus any overtime would be accrued as compensatory.

13. Discussion and action to approve purchase of a surveillance camera system, metal detector wand, and caller ID/ Call waiting features for Justice of the Peace 2.

Judge Wesley Peschel (Pct 2) request the purchase of enhanced safety for court security.

Motion to approve: Commissioner Rinn, Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

Addendum to Action Agenda

- 1. Discussion regarding preliminary plat for Herridge & Fontenot Freeland Estates and action as appropriate**

Jonathan Hopko (County Engineer) stated the developer is refusing to follow regulations therefore it is requested that the court deny the preliminary plat.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

- 14. CONSENT AGENDA - items listed are of routine nature and may be acted on in a single motion unless requested otherwise by member of Commissioners Court.**

- a. Approve Minutes:**

- i. May 12, 2025**
- ii. May 27, 2025**
- iii. May 28, 2025**
- iv. June 09, 2025**
- v. June 23, 2025**

- b. Consideration and action to authorize a one-time variance from Subdivision Regulations to divide a 2-acre tract and a 10-acre tract from a 96-acre parent tract on Sycamore Crossing, Pct. 2.**

- c. Consideration and action to approve Right of Way installation by Industry Telephone on New Breman Rd, Pct 2.**

- d. Consideration and action to approve Private Roadway Name Request for Kent Lane to be added to the Austin County 911 Road Map, Pct. 3**

- e. Consideration and action to approve required schooling application for Brandy Robinson, Criminal District Attorney, to be held September 22-25, 2025 in Round Rock, Texas.**

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

Court Recessed at 12:01pm

Court Reconvened at 1:04pm

15. Budgetary and Financial Claims – action as appropriate
a. Payment of Claims

Total: \$1,594,811.00

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

b. Fund Transfers

Total: \$686,224.36 (July 14, 2025)

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0)

c. Budget Amendments

d. County Auditor's review of finances

Review of finances were presented to court.

e. County Treasurer's

1. 06.27.2025

2. 07.11.2025

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

16. Written end-of-the-month reports submitted by County Offices.

a. Constable, Pct 1 – June 2025

b. Jail Population

c. AgriLife- May and June 2025

d. OSSF – June 2025

e. TxDMV – June 2025

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2nd Commissioner Mikel, passed (4-0)

17. Discussion and action regarding personnel policy revisions.

A Policy workbook was presented to Judge Lapham and Commissioners.

Tara Wise (HR Administrative Assistant) is requesting the court to approve the changes made to the Employee Policy Handbook.

The remainder of the Employee Policy Handbook will be reviewed at the next court.

19. Building Projects Update.

Commissioner Reed presented a look ahead schedule provided by Daniel Sanchez (Shellback Construction) on the current projects taking place at the new EMS Building Projects and other County Annex Buildings.

Other project needing to be fixed at Wendt St were discussed.

20. Commissioners Court Inquiry.

Commissioner Mikel inquired where he could purchase road signs due to his local vendor no longer providing road signs. Commissioner Reed and Commissioner Cerny advised they use a vendor out of Eagle Lake.

It was stated the EMS Construction Meeting set for July 16, 2025 will begin at 9am.

Court adjourned at 2:45pm

Motion to Adjourn: Commissioner Cerny, 2nd Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)

**ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ON FILE WITH COUNTY CLERK AS PROVIDED
BY
COMMISSIONERS COURT**

I, Diane Day, Austin County Clerk, attest to the minutes of the Commissioners Court proceedings for July 14, 2025.

Date: July 29, 2025
Diane Day, Austin County Clerk
Clerk of Commissioners Court
Austin County, Texas
By: Allison Gerik
Allison Gerik, Deputy Clerk



FILED

2025 JUL 29 PM 12:56

Diane Day
COUNTY CLERK
AUSTIN COUNTY, TEXAS