



**ANDREA CARDENAS**  
*AUSTIN COUNTY CLERK*

265 N. CHESLEY ST., STE. 7  
BELLVILLE, TEXAS 77418

PH: 979-227-3144  
FAX: 979-865-0336

**COMMISSIONERS COURT MINUTES**

**September 9, 2024** Austin County Commissioners Court met in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Courtroom at the Austin County Courthouse with the following present:

Tim Lapham, County Judge  
Mark Lamp, Commissioner, Precinct 1  
Bobby Rinn, Commissioner, Precinct 2  
Leroy Cerny, Commissioner, Precinct 3  
Chip Reed, Commissioner, Precinct 4  
Kimberly Benjamin, Deputy Clerk

**OPENING**  
**CALL TO ORDER**  
**INVOCATION**  
**PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE**  
**ROLL CALL AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM**  
**CONSIDERATION/ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Remove #15 from agenda.

Approve amended agenda.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-243**

- 1. 9:00 AM – PUBLIC HEARING**
- a. Public Hearing on FY 2024-2025 Budget**
  - b. Public Hearing on FY 2024-2025 Tax Rate**

9:02 a.m. Public Hearing opened.

No one chose to speak on Budget or Tax Rate.

9:03 a.m. Public Hearing closed.

## 2. Petitions or Requests from the Public.

Kim Rinn (Tax Assessor-Collector) informed Court of Election Workshops being held around County to educate public on voting process.

## 3. Consideration and action to adopt FY 2024-2025 Budget.

Per Judge Lapham, total General Fund budget is \$24,535,410.

General Fund budget breakdown:

Salary items – \$14,585,579

Non-salary items – \$9,949,831

Estimated revenue is \$24,270,243 for a budget deficit of \$265,167. This is based on a General Fund Tax Rate of .32205. Per Judge Lapham, used .32205 tax rate instead of .32705. Allows Court to lower tax rate a little bit.

Commissioner Lamp asked could homestead exemptions be put in. Per Judge Lapham, can next year. Deadline has passed for this year. This year over 65 exemptions are included.

Commissioner Lamp asked what changes were made to Road and Bridge. Per Judge Lapham, Road and Bridge rates are .075 – F/M & Lateral and .077 – R & B Special. Per Commissioner Lamp, people call daily wanting roads rebuilt. Infrastructure is getting built, but at a slow rate. Costs for materials have increased. If Road and Bridge tax rates stay at .076 (F/M & Lateral) and .078 (R & B Special) and apply to Road and Bridge, it would help. Per Commissioner Reed, if tax rate stays the same will significantly raise funds. Only reason it was suggested was to be able to lower rate. Per Commissioner Lamp, infrastructure in our County is desperately needed.

Per Judge Lapham, increase this year to F/M Lateral account is 8.6% even with 1 cent lower rate. Lowered Road and Bridge and F/M Lateral rates .001 on each account. Can go back to .001 because General Fund is being lowered by .005. Road and Bridge tax rates can go back to original rate of .078 for Road and Bridge Special and .076 for F/M Lateral. Gives total rate of .517700 still lowers it by .003. Propose tax rate for General – .032205, F/M & Lateral – .076, R&B Special – .078, Debt Requirement – .04095 for a total tax rate of .5171.

Approve 2024-2025 Budget.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0).*  
**Order #24-244**

**4. Consideration and action to adopt FY 2024-2025 General, FM & Lateral, Road & Bridge, and Debt Fund Tax Rates.**

Adopt FY 2024-2025 Tax Rate:

General Fund rate	–	.32205
F/M & Lateral rate	–	.07600
R & B Special	–	.07800
Debt Requirement	–	.04095
Total Tax Rate	=	.51700.

Commissioner Lamp – Aye  
Commissioner Rinn – Aye  
Commissioner Cerny – Aye  
Commissioner Reed – Aye

*Motion to Adopt: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-245**

**5. Consideration and action to set salaries and allowances for county officials.**

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Rinn, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Cerny, passed (3-1).*  
*Commissioner Lamp opposed.*  
**Order #24-246**

Per Commissioner Rinn, thank you to Compensation Committee who worked hard.

**6. Consideration and action to approve FY 2024-2025 clothing allowance for S.O. plain clothed personnel.**

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Cerny, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Reed, passed (4-0).*  
**Order #24-247**

**7. Consideration and action to approve FY 2024-2025 meal reimbursement for S.O. transport personnel.**

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Cerny, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-248**

**8. Discussion regarding S.O. replacement vehicle and action as appropriate.**

Per Donald Darracq (Sheriff's Office), Sheriff's office request to trade in 2019 Ford F-150 (VIN#1FTEW1P47KKC16390) to purchase 2024 Ford Expedition. 2019 Ford F-150 is not dependable. Request Court to give Sheriff's Office authority to use 2019 Ford F-150 as trade-in against purchase of 2024 Ford Expedition. Quotes given for 2024 Ford

Expedition with trade-in by Ryan Ford - \$42,487.57, Cavender - \$45,953.92, and Appel - \$46,152. Request to use Ryan Ford bid.

Commissioner Lamp asked if the purchase is within budget. Per Donald Darracq (Sheriff's Office), have received quotes for financing. Welch Bank offered 5.25% plus \$300 documentation fee to be paid in three annual payments. Government Capital is a little more than 6% with a \$600 documentation fee. Vehicle will not need decals. It will be a civilian vehicle.

Per Billy Doherty (County Auditor), asked if Ryan Ford is part of Buy Board. In the past, County has used Caldwell Ford because Ryan Ford has not been part of Buy Board. With cost over \$50,000 to replace vehicle will need to go out for bids. Need to check Ryan Ford is part of a government purchase option.

Per Don Darracq (Sheriff's Office), quote is usually good for 30 days. Can check quoters to see if they are part of any Buy Boards. There is usually an \$800 Buy Board fee. Per Commissioner Lamp, may be able to lease it.

Commissioner Reed asked if one of the dealerships are part of Buy Board, does County have to purchase from dealership. Per Billy Doherty (County Auditor), yes.

Per Judge Lapham, suspend discussion to give a moment to call Ryan at Ryan Ford.

Will come back.

**9. Discussion regarding the purchase of a haul trailer for Pct. 3 Road and Bridge and action as appropriate.**

Approve purchase of trailer from Trailer Place Star Truck Equipment for total of \$29,950.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Cerny, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Reed, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-249**

**10. Open RFQ'S for Acquisition Services for GLO CDBG-MIT Sector 2 and Sector 3 projects.**

Bids received from State Side Right of Way Services, LLC, Pinnacle Consulting Management Group, Inc. and Texas Land and Right of Way Company, LLC.

**11. Discussion regarding bids for Pct. 4 Building and action as appropriate.**

Award to Vacha Services, LLC for \$149,068 to pay with previously received insurance funds and Precinct 4 funds.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-250**

**12. Consideration and action to approve an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Sealy and Austin County for the purpose of drainage easement improvements.**

Interlocal Agreement for Improvements Within a Drainage Easement is in addition to regular Interlocal Agreement between City of Sealy and Austin County. This is about Allen's Creek within easement boundaries City and County have. For Grant purposes need Agreement. Jesse Skinner (Assistant Criminal District Attorney) has reviewed and approved.

Approve Interlocal Agreement with City of Sealy and Austin County for the purpose of drainage easement improvements.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-251**

**13. Discussion regarding concrete crushing bids and action as appropriate.**

Per Commissioner Reed, cost is too high.

Commissioner Lamp suggests to create a crew between Precincts, lease equipment and have crew go to each Precinct to crush concrete.

Reject all concrete crushing bids.

*Motion to Reject: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Lamp, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-252**

**14. Discussion and action to approve Drainage Plans for Three Bells Mission Venue, Pct. 4.**

Per Jonathan Hopko (County Engineer), permit issued for private residential. It is a Commercial venture. Had to go to engineering firm, have calculations done to make sure there is no impact to adjacent residents. Received engineering reports and all is good.

Approve Drainage Plans for Three Bells Mission venue.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Lamp, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-253**

**15. Discussion regarding Pct. 2 uniform contract and action as appropriate.**

*\*Agenda Item #15 removed from Agenda.*

- 16. Discussion and action as appropriate regarding roof replacement on the following Pct. 1 R&B Buildings:**
- a. Storage building**
  - b. Maintenance shop**

Per Commissioner Lamp, need to go out for bids. Damage was caused by multiple storms Bellville had. Received insurance funds to replace roofs.

Approve to solicit for bids for roof repair for main Maintenance shop and Storage building with bids due at noon on October 11, 2024 and open bids on October 14, 2024.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Lamp, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-254**

- 17. 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. Consideration and action to accept a \$30 special donation to Austin County S.O. per Local Government Code 81.032.**
  - b. Consideration and action to accept a \$500 special donation to Austin County EMS per Local Government Code 81.032.**
  - c. Approval of Minutes:**
    - i. July 22, 2024**
  - d. Consideration and action to approve FY 2024-2025 Texas Department of Agriculture, Texans Feeding Texans: Home-Delivered Meal Grant Program.**
  - e. Consideration and action to accept a grant from the Office of the Governor in the amount of \$15,400 to be used on rifle armor plates.**
  - f. Consideration and action as appropriate to declare the following assets as surplus:**
    - i. EMS 2009 Ford Explore (VIN 1FM5K8ARXHGB993851)**
    - ii. EMS Module Trailer**
    - iii. S.O. 2019 Ford F-150 (VIN 1FTEW1P47KKC16390)**

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Cerny, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0)*  
**Order #24-255**

- 18. Budgetary and Financial Claims - action as appropriate.**
- a. Payment of Claims**

Add Apriss Insights LLC invoice received this morning. Need to pay now. Reimbursement deadline is September 20, 2024.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Rinn, passed (4-0).*  
**Order #24-256**

**b. Fund Transfers**

\$1,121,807.81 does include Apriss bill.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0).  
Order #24-257*

**c. Budget Amendments**

Per Billy Doherty (County Auditor), no budget amendments.

**d. County Auditor's Review of finances**

Per Billy Doherty (County Auditor), roughly \$1.4 million remaining in Budget.

**e. County Treasurer's**

**i. Payroll and Escrow Report – 09.06.2024**

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0)  
Order #24-258*

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

- a. Justice of the Peace, Pct. 3 and Pct. 4 – August 2024**
- b. County Court – July 2024**
- c. Constable, Pct. 2 – August 2024**
- d. Constable, Pct. 4 – July 2024**
- e. Library – August 2024**
- f. OSSF – August 2024**
- g. Jail Population – August 2024**
- h. TxDMV – August 2024**

*Motion to Accept: Commissioner Cerny, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Reed, passed (4-0).  
Order #24-259*

Court recessed at 10:15 a.m.

**20. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A closed meeting will be held concerning the following items:

- a. Legal Matter**
- b. Real Estate Matter**
- c. Personnel Matter**

Court reconvened at 12:28 p.m.

**21. Action as appropriate on Executive Session.**

No action.

#8 continued.

Per Judge Lapham, has not heard back from Ryan Ford on whether or not they are part of Buy Board. Suggests approving purchase of vehicle from Ryan Ford at \$42,487.57 providing they are a member of proper government purchasing. If not, will authorize Sheriff's Office to advertise for bids for vehicle and at next Court can decide where to pay from.

Approve vehicle purchase from Ryan Ford for \$42,487.57 if they are a member of an authorized government purchasing. If they are not, authorize Sheriff's Office to advertise for bids.

Bids due 8:30 a.m. to County Judge's Office on September 23, 2024.

*Motion to Approve: Commissioner Reed, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Lamp, passed (4-0).  
Order #24-260*

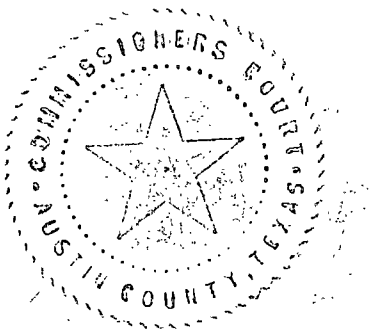
**22. Commissioners Court Inquiry.**

*Motion to Adjourn: Commissioner Lamp, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Cerny, passed (4-0).  
Order #24-261*

Court Adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

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

I, Andrea Cardenas, Austin County Clerk, attest to the minutes of the Commissioners Court proceedings for September 9, 2024.



Date: September 30, 2024  
Andrea Cardenas

Andrea Cardenas, Austin County Clerk  
Clerk of Commissioners Court  
Austin County, Texas

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberly Benjamin, Deputy Clerk

FILED

2024 SEP 30 PM 1:46

*Andrea Cardenas*  
COUNTY CLERK  
AUSTIN COUNTY CLERK