THE STATE OF TEXAS \* COMMISSIONERS’ COURT

COUNTY OF KENEDY \* OF KENEDY COUNTY, TEXAS

On the 8th day of February, 2021, at 9:00 o'clock a.m., a regular meeting of the Commissioners’ Court of Kenedy County, Texas, was held in the Kenedy County Courthouse.

**Commissioners present:**

Louis E. Turcotte, III County Judge

Joe Recio, Commissioner, Precinct No. 1

Israel Vela, Jr., Commissioner, Precinct No. 2

Sarita Armstrong-Hixon, Commissioner, Precinct No. 3

Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales, Commissioner, Precinct No. 4

**Also present:**

Veronica Vela, County & District Clerk

Leo Villarreal, Administrative Assistant

Ruben Hernandez, Maintenance Supervisor

Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector

Allison Strauss, County Attorney

Petra Hernandez, Administrative Secretary

Jennifer Cuellar, County Treasurer’s Office

Jose E. Mendietta, Fire Chief

Thomas Denney, Chief Appraiser

JP Cecilia Schulz

JP Patti Fain

Andy Garza, Kenedy County GCD

Eddie Cruz, Sheriff’s Dept.

**Absent**:

Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer

Ramon Salinas, III, County Sheriff

Daniel Almeida

**CALL TO ORDER**

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III called the meeting to order.

1. **Receive Public Comments**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III thanked Fire Chief Joey Mendietta, JJ Guzman and Leo Villarreal for all their hard work in conducting and coordinating the COVID-19 vaccine clinic. Justice of the Peace Cecilia Schulz thanked deputy Fidel Gonzalez for his help identifying the body of a deceased person. Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III thanked Judge Cecilia Schulz and Fidel Gonzalez for their effective response.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Regular Minutes for January 11, 2021**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III presented the Commissioners’ Court Minutes of the regular January 11, 2021 meeting.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the minutes of the Minutes of the regular January 11, 2021 meeting be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on Treasurer’s Monthly Report and Transfers**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III presented the Treasurer's Monthly Report and Transfers for the month ending January 31, 2021.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Treasurer's Monthly Report and Transfers ending January 31, 2021, and investments be accepted as presented.

1. **Receive Daniel Almeida and Act on the Sewer & Water System Monthly Report**.

Daniel Almeida was absent, therefore, the Sewer & Water System monthly report was not presented.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled.

1. **Discuss & Act on Sheriff’s Monthly Report**.

Deputy Eddie Cruz presented the Sheriff’s monthly report to the Commissioners’ Court for the month ending January 31, 2021.

This being a report only, no vote was needed and none was taken.

1. **Discuss & Act on Fire Chief’s Monthly Report**.

Fire Chief Jose E. Mendietta presented the Fire District’s monthly report to the Commissioners’ Court for the month ending January 31, 2021.

This being a report only, no vote was needed and none was taken.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Maintenance Department Monthly Repo**rt.

Ruben Hernandez, Maintenance Supervisor, presented the Maintenance Department’s monthly report to the Commissioners’ Court for the month ending January 31, 2021.

This being a report only, no vote was needed and none was taken.

1. **Receive Mary Mora and Act on the Grant Monthly Report**.

Mary Mora presented the Commissioners’ Court with her monthly Grant report. She reported as follows:

**Housing Grant: Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)** - This is the “Homeowner Rehabilitation Assistance”. It is a “no match” for the County with a maximum of $400,000.00, enough to reconstruct four homes. The target households are for those living in the worst conditions, often the elderly and disabled. The homes must be owned and occupied and must agree to live in the house for a certain period of time. We are finally moving into the next phase. We have advertised for contractors. There are a couple of agenda items regarding the proposals that have come in. When a contractor is chosen, it does not have to be approved by TDHCA. It could quite possibly be this fall before we get everything approved and funded by the State to start building.

**Community Development Grant 2019-2020, $300,000.00; Grant #7219220** - Activities: This Grant is for the piping/valve replacement at the WWTP Lift Station, Pumps, and Controls for the WWTP Pond Pumps, replacing pond piping, relining one of the ponds and first-time water & sewer services. We are moving along nicely. Advertisement for bids we thought were going to be done in January. Unfortunately, some of the documents were not completed on time. GrantWorks is working on getting the documents together. We should be going out for construction bids soon. Once we finalize the documents and go out for bids, we are looking at one or two months before we start construction.

**Colonia Grant; Grant for $500,000.00; Grant #7219075; February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2022** - Activities: This Grant is for a generator at the WWTP, the Lift Station will have improvements rehabbing the wetwell, replacing the pond pumps, relining another pond, and new water & sewer services. We are moving along nicely. This grant is on the same time frame as the grant above Advertisement for bids we thought were going to be done in January. Unfortunately, some of the documents were not completed on time. GrantWorks is working on getting the documents together. We should be going out for construction bids soon. Once we finalize the documents and go out for bids, we are looking at one or two months before we start construction.

**CTIF (Road Grant); Grant for $295,360.00** – The Administration for this grant is Langford Community Management Services. The application along with all the Road Reports were submitted to TxDot on May 27, 2020. We received the “award letter” on June 23, 2020. The County was awarded $295,360.00 with a match from the county of 73,840.00 for a total project cost of $369,200.00. We received the contract last week and it was signed and returned to TxDot. We will start the bid process for construction soon.

**Hazard Mitigation Project Plan** – The “Hazard Mitigation Project Plan” was developed for Kleberg County, the City of Kingsville, and Kenedy County. This plan was needed so Kenedy County would be able to apply for HMA (Hazard Mitigation Assistance) Grants. The only way we could apply for Grants is to have a contract with an Admin and Engineer. We advertised on February 4th and will advertise again on February 11, 2021, in the Kingsville Record and sent emails to several Administrative Services for proposals. Proposals need to be received here by February 19, 2021. On the next Commissioners’ Court, I will have the proposals, score sheets, and resolution if the Court decides on an administrator. If you do decide on an administrator, there is an agenda item with a resolution awarding the contract thee Admin chosen. Once this is done, the Admin will help in preparing the selection of an engineer. Having an administrator and engineer, projects that he county may be interested in can be done quickly since announcement of these grants will probably be in October, with applications being due in December. Important fact to know if that there are costs for the application submission. If we get funded, this cost will be reimbursed. If we do not get funded, it will be a County cost.

This being a report only, no vote was needed and none was taken.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving Registration Fee for Leo Villarreal to Attend the 34th Annual Construction Law Conference on March 4th & 5th, 2021. ($500.00) Virtual Conference**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary to approve payment of the $500.00 registration fees for Leo Villarreal to attend the 34th Annual Construction Law Conference on March 4 and 5, 2021 Virtual Conference

  Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the registration fees for Leo Villarreal to attend the 34th Annual Construction Law Conference on March 4 and 5, 2021 Virtual Conference $500 fee be paid by the County Treasurer.

1. **Discuss & Act on Assisting Lebh Shomea with the Buzzard Problem they have**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that Lebh Shomea was having problems with buzzards but was no longer in need of assistance to remove the buzzards from Lebh Shomea because Federal Agents had taken care of the problem.

  Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled.

1. **Discuss & Act on Payment for County Liability Insurance ($37,907.00) Annual**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that the County Liability Insurance annual premium in the amount of $37,907.00 needed to be paid.

  Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the County’s Liability Insurance annual premium be paid in the amount of $37,907.00.

1. **Discuss & Act on 2020 Racial Profiling Report**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III presented the Commissioners’ Court with the 2020 Racial Profiling Report.

Commissioner Gumecinda “Cindy” Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled.

1. **Discuss & Act on New Office Phone System. (Sheriff’s Department)**

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court of the need to purchase a new office phone system for the Sheriff’s Department.

  Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled.

1. **Discuss & Act on Lodging and Meals for One (1) Dispatcher to Attend the South Texas Telecommunicators Symposium February 25th – 26th, 2021 in Aransas Pass. ($400.00)**

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court of the need for one dispatcher to attend the South Texas Telecommunicators Symposium on February 25-26, 2021 in Aransas Pass and the $400 needed to be advanced for the costs thereof.

  Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that one dispatcher attend the South Texas Telecommunicators Symposium on February 25-26, 2021 in Aransas Pass and the $400 needed to be advanced for the costs thereof provided proper receipts are given to the County Treasurer.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving the Bids for the Home Program Grant**.

Mary Mora informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary to approve the bids for the Home Program Grant.

  Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item would be discussed and acted upon in Agenda Item 16 below.

1. **Discuss & Act on Opening and Accepting Bids for the Home Program Grant**.

Mary Mora and Cris Reynolds with GrantWorks informed the Commissioners’ Court that two bids had been received regarding the Home Program Grant as follows: 1) Arkitektura Development, Inc. in the amount of $129,139.00 per home and 2) RM Quality Construction in the amount of $124,250.00 per home.

  Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that RM Quality Construction, LLC, of P O Box 813, Conroe, Texas 77355 be awarded the contract in the amount of $124,250.00 per home.

1. **Discuss & Act on Leasing a Xerox Printing Machine for the Tax Office from Line Item 010-450-480 for a (4) Year Term at $158.32 per Month**.

Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector, informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary for the Tax Office to lease a Xerox printing machine from Line Item 010-450-480 for a four-year term at $158.32 per month.

  Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector, is authorized to lease a Xerox printing machine from Line Item 010-450-480 for a four-year terms at $158.32 per month.

1. **Discuss & Act on AEP’s Cell Tower Permit Application**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners’ Court that AEP had submitted its Application for a Cell Tower permit.

  Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that AEP’s cell tower permit be approved and Judge Louis E. Turcotte is authorized to sign the permit provided the $1,500 fee is paid.

1. **Discuss & Act on Adopting the 2021 Redistricting Plan Based on 2020 Kenedy County Census**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners’ Court that the 2020 Reapportionment/Census Committee had met and recommended that the 2021 Redistricting Plan based on the 2020 Kenedy County Census be adopted as follows:

**From Precinct 2 to Precinct 3**:

Transfer 141 S. Garcia - Gonzalez, Jane – (3 residents) from Precinct 2 to Precinct 3 (3 voting age)

Transfer 671 La Parra – Gonzalez, Gilbert – (5 residents) from Precinct 2 to Precinct 3 (3 voting age)

**From Precinct 2 to Precinct 1**:

Transfer 525 N. Turcotte – Garcia, Robert – (4 residents) from Precinct 2 to to Precinct 5 (3 voting age)

Transfer 551 N. Turcotte – Shugart, William – (4 residents) from Precinct 2 to Precinct 1 (2 voting age)

With the final totals for each precinct being as follows:

**FINAL RESTRICTING**

**ORIGINAL COUNT FINAL PROPOSAL**

**TOTAL VOTING AGE TOTAL VOTING AGE**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Precinct 1** | **74 + 8 62 + 5** | **82 67** |
| **Precinct 2** | **96 - 16 64 - 11** | **80 53** |
| **Precinct 3** | **76 + 8 65 + 6** | **84 71** |
| **Precinct 4** | **82 62** | **82 62** |
| **Overall:** | **328 253** | **328 253** |

  Commissioner Joe Recio moved and Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the 2021 Redistricting Plan be effective March 1, 2021 with William Dieterle providing the new Redistricting Maps.

**From Precinct 2 to Precinct 3**:

141 S. Garcia - Gonzalez, Jane – (3 residents) be transferred from Precinct 2 to Precinct 3 (3 voting age)

671 La Parra – Gonzalez, Gilbert – (5 residents) be transferred from Precinct 2 to Precinct 3 (3 voting age)

**From Precinct 2 to Precinct 1**:

525 N. Turcotte – Garcia, Robert – (4 residents) be transferred from Precinct 2 to Precinct 5 (3 voting age)

551 N. Turcotte – Shugart, William – (4 residents) be transferred from Precinct 2 to Precinct 1 (2 voting age)

With the final totals for each precinct being as follows:

**FINAL RESTRICTING**

**ORIGINAL COUNT FINAL PROPOSAL**

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| **Precinct 4** | **82 62** | **82 62** |
| **Overall:** | **328 253** | **328 253** |

1. **Executive Session: Pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.074, Consider Department Heads, Elected and Appointed Officials and Labor Law Issues**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III announced to the Commissioners’ Court of the need to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.074 regarding personnel matters.

  Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Commissioners’ Court adjourn to Executive Session at 10:38 o’clock a.m. pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code, Section 551.074 to consult regarding personnel matters to consider Department Heads, Elected and Appointed Officials and the compliance of Labor Law Issues.

1. **Open Session: Discuss & Act on Personnel Matters Considered in Executive Session**.

The Commissioners’ Court returned to Open Session at 11:16 o’clock a.m.

Commissioner Gumecinda “Cindy” Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Allison Strauss, County Attorney, and Jennifer Cuellar search for a software for the Department Heads to use to log their employees’ sick and vacation leave; that the forms be submitted to Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer, on the 5th and 20th day of each month, effective February 20th, 2021.

1. **Discuss & Act on Payment of Bills**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court of the need to pay the bills for the month ending January 31, 2021.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the bills be paid as presented.

1. **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners’ Court, Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Kenedy County Commissioners’ Court be adjourned at 11:30 o'clock a.m.

/s/ Louis E. Turcotte, III

Louis E. Turcotte, III County Judge

/s/ Veronica Vela

Veronica Vela, County Clerk