THE STATE OF TEXAS \* COMMISSIONERS’ COURT

COUNTY OF KENEDY \* OF KENEDY COUNTY, TEXAS

On the 12th day of July, 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:**

Charles E. Burns, 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

Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer

Ramon Salinas, III, County Sheriff

Grace Salinas, Administrative Secretary

Jennifer Cuellar, County Treasurer’s Office

Jose E. Mendietta, Fire Chief

Thomas Denney, Chief Appraiser

JP Cecilia Schulz

JP Patti Fain

JP Jana Norrell

Andy Garza, Kenedy County GCD

Eddie Cruz, Sheriff’s Dept.

Sandra Guzman, Sheriffs Dept.

Hector Castaneda, LNV

Randy Maltby, Maltby Builders, Inc.

Steve Zamora, Maltby Builders, Inc.

Luke Womack

Natalie Gonzalez, GrantWorks

**Absent**:

Allison Strauss, County Attorney

Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector

Daniel Almeida

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Judge Charles E. Burns led the Commissioners Court in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **Receive Public Comments**.

No public comments were made.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Regular Minutes for June 14, 2021 and Special Meeting for June 21, 2021**

Judge Charles E. Burns presented the Commissioners’ Court Minutes of the regular June 14, 2021 meeting, the June 21, 2021 special 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 June 14, 2021 meeting and special June 21, 2021meetings be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on Signatures on Kenedy County Local Disaster Declaration Form**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners’ Court that the Kenedy County Local Disaster Declaration needed to be signed by the Commissioners who were not present at the June 21, 2021 Special Meeting.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Kenedy County Local Disaster Declaration be signed by the Commissioners who were not present at the June 21, 2021 Special Meeting.

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

Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Monthly Report and Transfers for the month ending June 30, 2021.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Treasurer's Monthly Report and Transfers ending June 30, 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 the Sheriff’s Monthly Report**.

Deputy Eddie Cruz and Sheriff Ramon Salinas presented the Sheriff’s monthly report to the Commissioners’ Court for the month ending June 30, 2021.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Sheriff’s report be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving the Reconfiguring of the Digital Phone System Recorder and Radio Channels at the Sheriff’s Office at a Cost of $6,970**.

Deputy Eddie Cruz informed the Commissioners Court of the need to reconfigure the digital phone system recorder and radio channels at the Sheriff’s Office at a cost of $6,970.00.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the digital phone system recorder and radio channels at the Sheriff’s Office be reconfigured at a cost of $6,970.00.

1. **Receive Amended 2021 State Forfeiture Account Budget for Sheriff’s Office**.

Sheriff Ramon Salinas presented the Commissioners Court with the Sheriff’s Amended 2021 Forfeiture Account Budget.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Sheriff’s Amended 2021 Forfeiture Account Budge be accepted as presented.

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

Jose E. Mendietta, Fire Chief, was on vacation; therefore, Ruben Hernandez presented the Fire District’s monthly report to the Commissioners’ Court for the month ending May 31, 2021. Ruben Hernandez informed the Commissioners’ Court that the Fire Chief was taking a week’s vacation and that he would be on vacation to serve as Standby for the Fire Chief.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Gumecinda “Cindy” Gonzales seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Fire Chief’s Monthly Report be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Maintenance Department Monthly Report**.

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

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Maintenance Department Monthly Report be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on Addressing All Weather-Related Water Leaks Regarding County Buildings**.

Judge Charles E. Burns and Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners Court of the need to address all weather-related water leaks regarding county buildings, including a new roof for the Elections Building and the separation of the top ledge around the Courthouse and the cost should not exceed $20,000.00 for the Election Building roof and the ceiling of the roof ledges.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Bernie Johnson of Colonial Roofing’s bid for the Elections Office be awarded in the amount of $12,000.00 and pay $6,000.00 now for materials and the total cost of roof and ceiling of the roof ledges that exceed $20,000.00.

1. **Discuss & Act on Repairing the Roof of the Elections Building**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court that a new roof on the Elections Building needed to be installed.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that a new roof for the Elections Building be installed for $12,700.00 and that $6,000.00 be paid now for materials.

1. **Receive Natalie Gonzalez and Act on GrantWorks Monthly Reporting on the Grant Status, Compliance and TxDOT Grant**.

Natalie Gonzalez with GrantWorks presented the Commissioners Court with the GrantWorks monthly report on the grant status, compliance and TxDOT grant.

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

1. **Report Mary Mora’s Name Removed from Sam.gov and be Substituted by Grace Salinas**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court that Mary Mora’s name had been removed from the SAM.gov website and that Grace Salinas’ name had been substituted as the contact person for the SAM.gov.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the removal of Mary Mora’s name and substitution of Grace Salinas’ name as the point of contact for Sam.gov be approved.

1. **Receive Report from Allison Strauss on Kenedy County Sheriff Chapter 59 Funds Issues and Act If Necessary**.

Allison Strauss, County Attorney, informed the Commissioners Court that she was still working on her report regarding the Kenedy County Sheriff Chapter 59 Funds issues.

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

1. **Report on Farmers Insurance Claim Regarding TxDOT Sign in Kenedy County**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court that Farmers Insurance had notified Kenedy County that a Kenedy County/TxDOT sign had been damaged and it was ready to pay. Leo Villarreal informed Farmers Insurance that Kenedy County had no such signs; that the alleged sign was a TxDOT sign placed in Kenedy County and that he gave Farmers Insurance TxDOT’s address in Harlingen and San Benito.

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

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving Proposal from Records Consultant, Inc. for the Processing of 67 Boxes at a Cost of $28.00 per Labeled Box**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court regarding the need to approve the proposal from Records Consultant, Inc. to destroy 67 boxes of county records for the cost of $28.00 per labeled box.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Records Consultant, Inc.’s proposal to dispose of 67 labeled boxes at $28.00 per box be approved.

1. **Consent Agenda**
2. **Approve Travel Expenses for Patti Fain to Attend the Legislative Update in McAllen, Tx on August 29 – 30, 2021. ($287.84 within budget)**
3. **Approve Travel Expenses for Jana Norrell to Attend the Legislative Update in McAllen, Tx on August 29- 30, 2021. ($287.84 within budget)**
4. **Approve Travel Expenses for Cecilia Schulz to Attend the Legislative Update in McAllen, Tx on August 29 – 30, 2021. ($287.84 within budget)**
5. **Approve Travel Expenses for Cynthia Salinas to Attend the 73rd Annual County Treasurers Conference in Boerne, Tx on September 13-16, 2021. ($433.92 within budget)**
6. **Approve Travel Expenses Sheriff Ramon Salinas and Chief Deputy Gilbert San Miguel to Attend the Sheriff’s Association of Texas Conference in San Antonio, Tx on July 31- August 5, 2021. ($2900 within budget)**

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to approve for the below elected officials and employees to attend the below seminars/conferences and advance costs as therein recited:

1. Name: Patti Fain

Seminar: Legislative Update

Place: McAllen, Texas

Date: August 29 – 30, 2021

Cost: $287.84 within budget

1. Name: Jana Norrell

Seminar: Seminar: Legislative Update

Place: McAllen, Texas

Date: August 29 – 30, 2021

Cost: $287.84 within budget

(C)Name: Cecilia Schulz

Seminar: Legislative Update

Place: McAllen, Texas

Date: August 29 – 30, 2021

Cost: $287.84 within budget

1. Name: Cynthia Salinas

Conference: 73rd Annual County Treasurers Conference

Place: Boerne, Texas

Date: September 13-16, 2021

Cost: $433.92 within budget

1. Names: Sheriff Ramon Salinas and Chief Deputy Gilbert San Miguel

Conference: Sheriff’s Association of Texas Conference

Place: San Antonio, Texas

Date: July 31- August 5, 2021

Cost: $2900 within budget

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the above-named elected officials attend the below seminars/conferences and that the costs thereof be advanced by the County provided proper receipts are presented to the County Treasurer.

1. **Discuss & Act on Finalizing Budget Regarding Funding the Centennial Celebration**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to determine the budget of the Kenedy County Centennial Celebration.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Centennial Celebration budget honoring Kenedy County’s history be $25,000 to include tents on the street, meal, dessert, coins and music be approved.

1. **Receive Melissa Peros Report on the Cell Tower Project**.

Richard Flores with Bearcom presented Melissa Peros’ written report to the Commissioners Court regarding the status of the cell tower project.

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

1. **Discuss & Act on TAC Email and Website Agreement Migrating to New Platform, Changes Effective First Week of August, 2021**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court that was a need to renew the contract with TAC regarding email and website agreement migrating to new platform changes effective the first week of August 2021 and that the monthly fee for each email address would be $4.95 per month.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the contract with TAC regarding email and website agreement migrating to new platform changes effective the first week of August 2021 be approved subject to Leo Villarreal and Allison Strauss review.

1. **Discuss & Act on Robert “Buck” Alegria’s request to be appointed to the vacant constable position in Precinct 4**.

Robert “Buck” Alegria requested the Commissioners Court to appoint him to fill the vacant Constable position in Precinct 4.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled until the proposed budget is completed.

1. **Receive Report on Demolition and Removal of Non-Inhabitable Houses in Sarita**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners Court regarding the demolition and removal of non-inhabitable houses in Sarita and that Absolute Waste was ready and capable in assisting Kenedy County with the project.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Absolute Waste be hired to demolish and remove non-inhabitable houses in Sarita.

1. **Report on Negotiating an Interlocal Agreement with Cameron County Regarding the Federal ADA Voting Internet System**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners Court the Interlocal Agreement with Cameron County regarding the Federal ADA Voting Internet System was being satisfactorily prepared for Kenedy County and that the Interlocal Agreement was in progress.

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

1. **Receive Report on the Construction Status Regarding the Justice of the Peace Building**.

Randy Maltby with Maltby Builders, Inc. informed the Commissioners Court regarding the status of the construction of the Justice of the Peace Building that the cost of the furniture should be considered and recommended Patrick Sparks to be contacted regarding the Courthouse foundation effect on the Courthouse cracks in the courtroom.

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

1. **Discuss & Act on Retaining Kevin O’Hanlon to Address the TxDot Drainage Issue and the Erosion on the East Side of the Overpass**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners’ Court of the need to retain Kevin O’Hanlon to address the TxDOT Drainage Issues and the erosion on the east and west sides of the overpass and particularly the drainage regarding TxDOT 77 highway preventing the natural flow of water from the west to the east and causing the water to flow from west to east; the frontage road to the access ramp that goes to La Chata; and the exit ramp and access road to Punta Del Monte.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Kevin O’Hanlon be hired to contact TxDOT regarding the Highway 77 Bypass issues, specifically the flooding under the overpass and the streets; particularly the drainage regarding TxDOT 77 highway preventing the natural flow of water from the west to the east and causing the water to flow from west to east; the frontage road to the access ramp that goes to La Chata; and the exit ramp and access road to Punta Del Monte.

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

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners’ Court of the need to pay the bills for the month ending June 30, 2021.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Gumecinda “Cindy” Gonzales seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the bills be paid as presented, including the $73,000.00 electric bill.

1. **Budget Workshop to Follow After Court**.

The Commissioners Court continued to work on the proposed 2022 Budget with Luke Womack and Denise Rodriguez participating in providing information and that a special meeting would be needed to finalize the proposed budget.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that a Special Meeting be held on July 27, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. to finalize the proposed budget.

1. **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners’ Court, Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Kenedy County Commissioners’ Court be adjourned at 2:55 o'clock p.m.

/s/ Charles E. Burns

Charles E. Burns, County Judge

/s/ Veronica Vela

Veronica Vela, County Clerk