THE STATE OF TEXAS \* COMMISSIONERS’ COURT

COUNTY OF KENEDY \* OF KENEDY COUNTY, TEXAS

On the 8th day of March, 2020, 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

Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer

Ramon Salinas, III, County Sheriff

Ruben Hernandez, Maintenance Supervisor

Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector

Allison Strauss, County Attorney

Jennifer Cuellar, County Treasurer’s Office

Jose E. Mendietta, Fire Chief

Thomas Denney, Chief Appraiser

JP Cecilia Schulz

Andy Garza, Kenedy County GCD

Eddie Cruz, Sheriff’s Dept.

Lonnie Brown

Felix Serna

**Absent**:

Petra Hernandez, Administrative Secretary

Daniel Almeida

JP Patti Fain

Gilbert San Miguel, Sheriff’s Dept.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

1. **Receive Public Comments**.

Felix Herrera addressed the Commissioners’ Court regarding the Sheriff’s new Towing Policy; that it was unfair because for 15-20 years, he had invested on a wrecker yard in Kenedy County and Capital Towing did not have a yard inside the County. The Sheriff point out that Mr. Tyson had four qualified towers and did not have a yard in Kenedy County; that Felix and Juan’s brother, son and nephew work tow trucks and did not have a yard in Kenedy County; that a policy which had yard provisions in Kenedy County, Felix and Juan would still continue to create a waiting problem in an accident by having to wait 40 minutes to an hour for a wrecker to arrive to a collision site; that under the new policy, Capital Towing would be limited to operate in the South end of Kenedy County and Felix, Juan, their family and Mr. Tyson would operate in the North end of Kenedy County.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Regular Minutes for February 8, 2021**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III presented the Commissioners’ Court Minutes of the regular February 8, 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 February 8, 2021 meeting be accepted as presented.

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 February 28, 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 February 28, 2021, 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 and that Daniel Almeida be advised to email his report to Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III’s office prior to the Commissioners’ Court meetings.

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 February 28, 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 February 28, 2021, including the success in the residents getting the two Covid vaccination shots and that the National Guard, on Saturday would return to administer the second shot. Also, that Kleberg County had opened a Covid Vaccine Center where anyone could make an appointment for the shot and that the second shot would be administered at the Kleberg Park.

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

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 February 28, 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. There were 2 proposals opened at last month’s Commissioners’ Court. One from Arketekura Development, Inc. with a bid of $129,139 for each home. The second proposal was from RM Quality Construction, LLC with a bid of $124,250.00 for each home. The proposal from RM Quality was approved that day. We now have to wait until TDHCA approves the proposal. This will probably take us to the Fall before we start with construction.

**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. I spoke to Robert from GrantWorks last week and he stated the electrical, generator, and pond plans are close to being finalized. Once we finalize these documents and go out for bids, we are looking at one to 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.

**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 TX Dot 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. I have emailed Jill from Langford Community Management Services and she has copied me on two emails she sent to TX Dot requesting status regarding this grant and has not received a response. As soon as we get a response from TX Dot, we will email you the status and information received.

**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. We were hoping to have several agenda items today regarding proposals for Administrative Services. Unfortunately, we had to start the procurement process all over again. Since we have to advertise twice, email several administrative services, wait for proposals, it is about a month-long process. We asked Kingsville Record to advertise on February 4 and 11 with proposals to be received on February 19. We noticed that the advertisement was done incorrectly. There were supposed to have as a title “Grant Services” but instead they had “Grantworks”. Since this was incorrect, we had to start the process again. With the freeze, that also delayed the process. We asked Kingsville Records to advertise on March 4 and March 11 with proposals to be received by March 18. We will then have several agenda items at next Commissioners’ Court where we will be able to open and score the proposals. There will also be an agenda item to approve an Admin Service along with a resolution. Once this is done, the Admin will help in preparing the selection of an engineer. Having an administrator and engineer, projects that the County may be interested in can be done quickly since announcement of these grants will probably be in October, with application being due in December. Important facts to know is 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. **Receive Report on 2021 Census Policy**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners’ Court that the only items needed to complete the 2021 Census were the maps with new precinct boundaries and the legal descriptions of the metes and bounds of the new precinct boundaries.

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

1. **Receive Report on the Sheriff’s Wrecker Policy**.

Deputy Eddie Cruz presented and provided the Commissioners’ Court with copies of the 2021 Sheriff’s Wrecker Policy. Felix Herrera had made his concerned comments during the Public Hearing session regarding the 2021 Sheriff’s Wrecker Policy.

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

1. **Receive Report on the Cell Tower at the Rudolph Tower Options**.

Melissa Peros with Bearcom informed the Commissioners’ Court of the equipment that was needed on the Rudolph Cell Tower and Vote sights and that if this procedure was successful, the present Armstrong Tower would not be needed. The Commissioners’ Court authorized Melissa Peros to proceed with the Rudolph Cell Tower project and report on the cost of the equipment.

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

1. **Receive Report on Condemnation Proceedings on Uninhabitable Residences**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners’ Court that Tom Denney, County Appraiser, had provided him with the property owners’ cards which had the name and address of the owner of uninhabitable houses in Sarita.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Leo Villarreal is authorized to proceed to send letters to the owners of uninhabitable residences.

1. **Receive Report on AEP Cell Tower Permit Payment**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners’ Court that the County Treasurer had received the $1,500 permit fee from AEP.

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

1. **Discuss & Act on Assisting Kleberg County with $5,000.00 to Fund the Kleberg County COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners’ Court that Judge Rudy Madrid, Kleberg County Judge, had requested assistance/donations regarding the Kleberg County COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Kenedy County contribute $5,000.00 to the Kleberg County COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic.

1. **Discuss & Act on Sheriff’s Boat Barn**.

Sheriff Ramon Salinas informed the Commissioners’ Court that a boat barn needed to be constructed by using Chapter 59 Forfeiture money.

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

1. **Discuss & Act on Enrolling all County Elected Officials and any Government Employee in Cybersecurity Training Course due by June 14, 2021**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary for all County Elected Officials and government employee to enroll in the Cybersecurity Training Course which is due by June 14, 2021.

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

1. **Discuss & Act on Incentive Pay for Monica Gutierrez and Ernesto Lerma for COVID-19 Disinfecting Buildings**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III and Ruben Hernandez, Maintenance Supervisor, informed the Commissioners’ Court that Monica Gutierrez and Ernesto Lerma should receive incentive pay for their work on monthly disinfecting the county buildings from COVID-19.

Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed by a vote of 4-0 with Commissioner Joe Recio abstaining, that Monica Gutierrez and Ernesto Lerma receive $25.00 monthly as incentive pay for their work on monthly disinfecting county buildings from COVID-19.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Timeclock Plus Software Proposal**.

Allison Strauss, County Attorney, as had been requested by the Commissioners’ Court, presented the Commissioners’ Court with the Timeclock Plus Software proposal.

Commissioner Gumecinda “Cindy” Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled until Cynthia Salinas obtained additional information for proper comparison with the existing time-keeping system.

1. **Discuss & Act on Opening Sam Noble Park to the Public**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary to consider opening Sam Noble Park to the public effective March 5, 2021, subject to continuing Covid precautions such as using face masks, washing hands and social distancing.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Sam Noble Park be opened to the public effective March 5, 2021, subject to continuing Covid precautions such as using face masks, washing hands and social distancing and that games be limited to Kenedy County participants and that the pavilion not be rented out for parties.

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

Sheriff Ramon Salinas presented the Commissioners’ Court with the 2020 Racial Profiling Report.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the 2020 Racial Profiling Report be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on VistaCom Nexlog Recorder Upgrade. ($15,768.00 within Budget as Requested during 2020 Budget Hearings)**

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary to purchase a VistaCom NexLog Recorder Upgrade for the cost of $15,768.00 which is within budget as requested during the 2020 Budget Hearing.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the purchase of a VistaCom NexLog Recorder Upgrade for the cost of $15,768.00 which is within budget as requested during the 2020 Budget Hearing be approved.

1. **Discuss & Act on Eforce Continued Access to RMS Data. ($3,223.00 within Budget)**

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that there was a need to pay EForce Continued Access to RMS Data in the amount of $3,223.00, within budget.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that $3,223.00 be paid to EForce Continued Access to RMS Data.

1. **Discuss & Act on Financial Assistance of $75,000.00 Towards Sheriff’s Office Project and other half from Chapter 59 Proceeds**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III and Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners’ Court that the requested $75,000.00 were regarding the Sheriff’s boat barn and foundation; that is was not known if the project had gone out for bids, whether there was a Performance Bond and insurance on the project. The Sheriff informed the Commissioners’ Court that the project was being funded with Chapter 59 funds.

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 Transfer of Equipment from Constable’s Unit to the Sheriff’s Office**.

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that there was a need to transfer the constable’s unit equipment to the Sheriff’s office.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Constable’s unit equipment be transferred to the Sheriff’s Office.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving Travel Expenses for Irma Longoria to Attend the Property Tax Law Training in Austin, Texas on April 5th – 7th, 2021. (total $1,136.83 within Budget)**

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary for Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector to attend the Property Tax Law Training in Austin, Texas, on April 5-7, 2021 and that the County advance $1,136.83 for the costs associated therewith.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector attend the Property Tax Law Training in Austin, Texas, on April 5-7, 2021 and that the County advance $1,136.83 for the costs associated therewith, provided proper receipts are submitted to the County Treasurer.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving Travel Expenses for Irma Longoria to Attend the TACA Coastal Bend 1st Quarter Regional Meeting in Beeville, Texas on March 9, 2021. (total $113.12 within Budget)**

Judge Louis E. Turcotte, III informed the Commissioners’ Court that it was necessary for Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector to attend the TACA Coastal Bed First Quarter Regional Meeting in Beeville, Texas, on March 9, 2021 and that the County advance $113.12 for the costs associated therewith.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector attend the TACA Coastal Bed First Quarter Regional Meeting in Beeville, Texas, on March 9, 2021 and that the County advance $113.12for the costs associated therewith, provided proper receipts are submitted to the County Treasurer.

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 February 28, 2021.

Commissioner Gumecinda "Cindy" Gonzales moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon 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 Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Kenedy County Commissioners’ Court be adjourned at 11:55 o'clock a.m.

/s/ Louis E. Turcotte, III

Louis E. Turcotte, III County Judge

/s/ Veronica Vela

Veronica Vela, County Clerk