

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

**IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS**

Be it remembered, that on this the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2023, the Commissioners Court of Zapata County, Texas convened in **REGULAR SESSION** of said Court, at the regular meeting place thereof, in the Courthouse of Zapata, Texas, with the following members of said Court, to-wit:

**PRESENT:**

Hon. Joseph Rathmell	County Judge
Paco Mendoza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 1
Pedro Morales	Commissioner, Precinct No. 2
Jose A. Solis	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Roberto Garza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan	County Clerk and Ex Officio Clerk of Commissioners Court

**VISITORS:** Felix Barrera, Mario Reyes, Elsa Hull, Jesse G. Herrera, Pope Gonzalez, Chris Holt, Olga Bruni, Veronica Alanis, Delia Mendoza, Carlos Ramirez, Belinda Chapa, Jose Dodier, Jr., and Manuel Gonzalez, Jr.

**WHEREUPON**, the following Orders and Proceedings were had by said Court, to-wit:

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:00 A.M.**

**ROLL CALL BY MARY JAYNE VILLARREAL-BONOAN, COUNTY CLERK AND EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT**

**INVOCATION BY PASTOR ROGER MILLER, COMMISSIONERS COURT CHAPLAIN  
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Morales stated that kids activities for Halloween are coming up. San Ygnacio will have something on Sunday.

Commissioner Mendoza added that we are looking at bad weather, possibly rain and cooler weather for Halloween.

Judge Rathmell commented on the Halloween Haunted House at pavilion, however, may take a closer look, because it was open to the public, but now there is a fee. The county has an obligation to step in for liability purposes and reconsider. The court agreed to allow them when it was free to the public and they provided insurance. We need to treat them like any other vender and come before the court.

Elsa Hull and Jesse G., approached the court, she stated that she and her two daughters live at the San Ygnacio Viejo Subdivision off Highway 83. They are here to ask for help regarding enforcement of an ordinance passed by the county in March 2021, adopting LGC 7 Chapter 23. The Sheriff's Office has responded to shooting that was reported and have enforced it at the neighbor's property who are having similar issues. The weekend before last, she called to report very close consistent shooting and when she spoke with them, neither the dispatcher nor the deputy seemed to be aware of this ordinance. She was told that it was a hunting area. A deputy did go, but did not

stop to talk to anyone and the shooting continued. A couple of days later, a Game Warden did go to the area and issued a citation to the individual for killing a protected bird species. She thinks that maybe if the deputy would have stopped and talked to them, they may not be aware that they are not allowed to shoot.

Judge Rathmell stated that they need signage, to include the ordinance information.

Jesse G stated that they sounded like rapid fire weapons and you can hear the ricochet.

Chris Holt approached the court regarding his reimbursement of pay for dog food. He has provided receipts to HR director of every time he bought dog food. The process of PO is long, it was easier to purchase his own dog food. There was never an agenda on how they were going to obtain dog food or kennel care. Nellie Trevino is totaling the amounts that are owed. He also addressed the time that is owed to him of 895 days at 30 minutes a day. As per Judge Rathmell, this will be brought up at the next meeting.

Judge Rathmell attended the 70-year anniversary of the construction of Falcon Dam. He spoke there on the benefits of the dam and reminded them of the sacrifice that the residents of Zapata County made and continue to make. He also mentioned that we struggle to draw water from a muddy Rio Grande, that we thought we would never have a problem drawing water for Zapata.

#### **ORDER APPROVING INVOICES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve invoices from October 6 – October 13, 2023, in the total amount of \$591,784.47 as presented by Triunfo Gonzalez.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

#### **ORDER APPROVING CHECKS ISSUED**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve checks issued October 6 – October 13, 2023, in the total amount of \$591,784.47 as requested by Hon. Romeo Salinas, County Treasurer.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

#### **ORDER APPROVING \$31,000.00 FOR THE 2024-2025 BUDGET YEAR FOR ZAPATA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND PRESENTATION ON ZAPATA COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve \$31,000 for the 2024-2025 budget year for the Zapata County Soil and Water Conservation District as requested by Jose Dodier., Zapata Soil & Water Conservation District.

Jose Dodier, Jr. with the Zapata Soil & Water Conservation District reported that the Soil and Water Conservation District #335 is closing in on its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this past year they got some of the funding levels back. We were impacted by the pandemic and had been at around a million per year coming to Zapata for conservation contracts, this past year they closed with 38 applications and were able to fund 20 of them, 11 of them have been completed. They have expended \$496,000 that end up in this county for contractors. Land owners do not make any money, but it is an incentive for them to conserve natural resources. Mr. Dodier is also here to request the same amount of money as last year, \$31,000. It helps keep the local office open and the office in Zapata County is a resource for Jim Hogg, Brooks, and Starr County. Zapata is one of the top 10 counties in the state of Texas.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **PRESENTATION OF ATM AUCTIONS**

Felix Barreras and Mario Reyes made a presentation of AMT Auctions. The company is based out of San Antonio. Ninety percent of their work comes from Laredo to Brownsville to Corpus Christi. The company provides technologies that are on the market and stay up to date with the latest. The two platforms they use are High Bid and Proxy Bid, two of the largest platforms on the internet. AMT has been around since 2012 and is very well versed on Webcast and Live Auctions. They have had a very big success and is versed on everything that you can think can be liquidated. The entire team has over 80 years of experience, combined, and will work with your county at no cost to the county. They set up a website and everything needed.

### **ORDER REAPPOINTING COMMISSIONER SOLIS FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM TO ZAPATA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT BOARD**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to reappoint Commissioner Solis for a two-year term to the Zapata County Appraisal District Board as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT FOR BORDER POOLS MAINTENANCE & SUPPLIES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve payment for Border Pools Maintenance & Supplies in the amount of \$10,760.00, out of the parks budget, as requested by Hon. Paco Mendoza, Commissioner Pct. 1.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **ORDER APPROVING TWO QUOTES FROM MARTINEZ ELECTRICAL SERVICE FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT THE SAN YGNACIO CIVIC CENTER**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve two quotes from Martinez Electrical Services for improvements to the San Ygnacio Civic Center as requested by Hon. Pedro Morales, Commissioner Pct. 2.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **ORDER APPROVING TO HIRE EQUIPMENT OPERATOR**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve to hire an Equipment Operator in 015-422-slot #7 at \$10.48/hour as requested by Hon. Pedro Morales, Commissioner Pct. 2.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

### **ORDER APPROVING PURCHASE OF OFFICE FURNITURE FOR ZAPATA COUNTY SHOP**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve purchase of office furniture, for \$4,161.11, without printer and ink cartridges, for the Zapata County Shop as requested by Hon. Roberto Garza, Commissioner Pct. 4.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PURCHASE OF NEW SCANNER FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND KEYBOARDS FOR TREASURER’S DEPARTMENT FROM NON-DEPARTMENT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve purchase of a new scanner for accounts payable and keyboards for the Treasurer's Department for \$1,109.97, from non-department as per quote from Mr. Rene Garcilazo as requested by Hon. Romeo Salinas, County Treasurer.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER TO TABLE REQUEST BY DELIA MENDOZA TO APPROVE IMPLEMENTATION OF CATALIS PAYMENT SOLUTION FOR TAX OFFICE AND COUNTY CLERK’S OFFICE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to table request by Delia Mendoza, Tax Collector, to approve the implementation of the Catalis Payment Solution for the Tax Office and County Clerk's Office.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF US HWY 83 AND RESOLUTION FOR CHRISTMAS LIGHTING PARADE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve the temporary closure of US Hwy 83 and Resolution for the Christmas lighting parade to be held on December 6, 2023 as requested by Nellie Trevino, Personnel Director.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PROPOSAL FROM INTEGRITY STEEL WORKS FOR SUPPLIES AND INSTALLATION OF DETENTION GRADE DOORS AND FRAMES AT ZAPATA COUNTY REGIONAL JAIL AND ZAPATA COUNTY JAIL**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve proposal from Integrity Steel Works for supplies and installation of detention grade doors and frames at the Zapata County Regional Jail and Zapata County Jail. Total amount of proposal is \$20,806.82, to be paid out of non-department as requested by Carlos Q. Ramirez, Sheriff’s Office.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING INCREASE OF HOURLY RATE OF MARLYNA SALINAS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve to increase the hourly rate of Marlyna Salinas to \$17.00 per hour in the TVC Housing for Texas Heroes, grant funds are available as requested by Pope Gonzalez, Veterans officer.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICES AND REVIEW STATUS OF  
JAIL REPAIRS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve payment of \$11,935.00 to Frank Barragan; and \$1,500.00 to Premier Engineering for repairs made to 10 cells at the jail as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering.

Manuel Gonzalez reported that the repairs to the jail have been completed. Cracks within the cells have been filled; 2” separation on north wall was filled with 5,000 psi concrete also had some fills done on smaller cracks in cells and shower. Submitted invoices for payment.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICE AND REVIEW STATUS OF  
LOS EBANOS ROAD**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve payment of \$3,000.00 to Premier Engineering for work on Los Ebanos Road as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering.

Manuel Gonzalez reported that the work is 95-97% complete. An 8” line was installed for 1,100 feet; it has already has been filled and pressurized. They are doing a bacteriological testing so that it can be used. Subgrade has been put in and compacted. Some places required concrete in a few spots to protect the line. Put in millings provided and did final compacting.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ON  
MIRAFLORES PARK PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve payment for administrative services on Miraflores Park Project only as requested by Carlos Colina-Vargas, Project Consultant. The County will wait for additional information before paying for other projects.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ORDER APPROVING RESOLUTION FOR 2024 INDIGENT DEFENSE  
GRANT PROGRAM**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve resolution for the 2024 Indigent Defense Grant Program as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

**ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, and being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of all members of the Court.

There being no further business for disposition at this term, the Court adjourned.

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JOSEPH RATHMELL, COUNTY JUDGE  
OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

ATTEST:

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MARY JAYNE VILLARREAL-BONOAN,  
COUNTY CLERK AND EX-OFFICIO  
CLERK OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS