

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

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

Be it remembered, that on this the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, 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
Olga M. Elizondo	Commissioner, Precinct No. 2
Jose A. Solis	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Norberto Garza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan	County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Commissioners Court

**VISITORS:** Nellie Trevino, Roger Miller, Nereida Garza, Daniel D. Arriaga, Delia Mendoza, Joe Pena, Raymundo Del Bosque, and Ralph Trevino.

**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**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**INVOCATION BY REV. ROGER MILLER, COMMISSIONERS COURT CHAPLAIN**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Judge Rathmell communicated that we had the honor of having Ms. Xotchitl Torres Small, who serves undersecretary rural agriculture for rural development at United States Department of Agriculture, visit our county. She is the first in a very long time; she was accompanied by Congressman Cuellar and Roel Gomez, for Rural Development, and his supervisor Michael Canales. They discussed various funding opportunities that will be coming our way with the infrastructure plan that was approved in Congress. They are stressing broad band and high-speed internet to rural communities. Ms. Torres-Small is very receptive to our needs, enhancing our need for medical providers in our area and paid a visit to the Gateway Clinic. Need for good quality water availability was also addressed. Congressman Cuellar did discuss the possibility of dredging Falcon Lake as we move forward as part of the infrastructure plan. She visited Siesta Shores Water District and noted how they are also trying to improve their water plant and was also proactive as to how this funding could be obtained to help them. This bill will allow rural areas to have grant writing applications. Although, the main topic was broad band, the need for FSA (Farmers Service Agency) for farmers and ranchers was also discussed and the need of more staffing to those agencies. Zapata County lost the local office and requested that the local office be brought back to our community, so farmers and ranchers don't have to travel to central offices that are also understaffed and overwhelmed. EMS and Sheriff's Department were also addressed and the need for both departments to better communicate and the trouble we are currently having with the communication towers, funding is coming this way to assist with these issues. Also stressed was the interconnection of water system throughout our county and throughout the state, not necessarily the rush to regionalize us into one, but the ability to be interconnected with Siesta

Shores, there is a beneficial aspect to being interconnected. Home remodeling for seniors is another program that rural development brings. and there will be funding opportunities for our locals. The meeting was a very productive.

Ryan Guillen will be our new Stare Representative.

Danny Arriaga, Fire Chief, reported on Covid-19 as follows:

Vaccines:

1<sup>st</sup> dose – 6

2<sup>nd</sup> dose – 8

3<sup>rd</sup> dose – 3

Booster 224

Overall total Moderna Vaccines 3,189

54 Covid tests were done by the Fire Department.

TDEM informed that they will no longer provide the rapid test kits. DHS will take over testing. Daniel's Pharmacy and Gateway Clinic are still , but have to call for availability. The tests that the county has are expired and cannot be used.

Pfizer has been approved for 5-11 age group; a school drive will be held. PPA clinic and CVS are vaccinating. Appointments can be booked, but walk-ins are also being taken.

Fire Department will continue to vaccinate Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at the community center.

Fire Chief Arriaga also reminded that if anyone needs to be vaccinated at home to reach out and they will go to the home.

Sheriff Del Bosque reported the tower will be disconnected for approximately 2-4 hours for maintenance. MOU's will be necessary to reconnect, they will be reevaluated to see if various entities/agencies still need access. Tower equipment is obsolete and Stone Garden and Lonestar funds will be used for upgrades and repairs.

Joe Pena added that the 911 system is being improved and will soon have virtual 911 callers and will also have texting capabilities.

A significant number of soldiers and law enforcement is present in our county and will be a good economic period for our community. Zapata County has an agreement to allow National Guard to use county property.

Sheriff's Office is reaching out to local ranchers to allow access to property to soldiers and/or law enforcement.

Judge Rathmell commented that two counties are already processing trespassing cases. Grant funding (Operation Lone Star) has been approved, but is still pending particulars.

Commissioner Elizondo stated that USDA will be in San Ygnacio to teach participants how to fill out applications. Volunteers will be at the pavilion.

Judge Rathmell reported on Covid-19 cases as follows:

65+ fully vaccinated – 80.45%

5 + 1<sup>st</sup> dose – 70%

5 + fully vaccinated – 61.26%

Active cases - 4

Deaths - 45

#### **ORDER APPROVING INVOICES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve invoices in the amount of \$912,547.37 for October 22, 2022 – November 4, 2022, 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 TREASURER'S REPORT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve Treasurer's Report 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 CHECKS ISSUED**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve checks issued in the amount of \$912,547.37 for October 22, 2022 – November 4, 2022, 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.

#### **TAX / ASSESSOR COLLECTOR'S REPORT**

Tax Assessor/Collector's office reported Hotel-Motel tax collections in the amount of \$9,592.57 for the month of October with a year-to-date total of \$114,899.83. Total tax collections \$2,222,671.33.

#### **NO ONE PRESENT FOR THIS ITEM**

10. Presentation of The Medicare Store as requested by Rene R. Rivera, Business Representative.

#### **ORDER APPROVING BID FOR HELPING HANDS FOOD PANTRY PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve bid by Tomas Chapa in the amount of \$12,412.70 to be paid out of Non-Department Maintenance Fund for the Helping Hands Food Pantry Project 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 BID FOR ZAPATA COUNTY CEMETERY CONCRETE  
STAND PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Elizondo, to approve bid by Tomas Chapa in the amount of \$2,300 to be paid out of Cemetery Fund for the Zapata County Cemetery concrete stand project 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 MODIFYING EQUIPMENT PURCHASE LIST TO 2 GRAPPLE TRUCKS  
INSTEAD OF 3 AND TO DIVIDE REMAINING PROCEEDS AMONG 4 PRECINCTS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to modify equipment list to 2 grapple trucks, instead of 3, and divide remaining proceeds among the four precincts as requested by Nellie R. Trevino, Personnel Director. (Reviewed and evaluated Certificate of Obligation Series 2021 equipment purchase list and revised said list as per County Departmental needs.)

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

**ORDER TO CANVAS ELECTION RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER 2, 2021,  
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION**

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve to canvas election results for November 2, 2021, Constitutional Amendment Election as requested by Hon. Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan, County Clerk.

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

**ORDER APPROVING INSTALLATION OF STREETLIGHTS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve installation of streetlights at the following locations:

- a. 1309 Lincoln Street
- b. 2013 Cedar Street

as requested by Hon. Olga M. Elizondo, Commissioner Pct. 2.

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve installation of streetlights at the following locations:

- a. 410 Oriole Avenue
- b. 5120 Pena Lane
- c. 5127 Pharr Lane
- d. 151 Madison
- e. 5226 Vicki Lane
- f. 5416 Rio Lane
- g. 5402 Juan Lane
- h. 5208 Pharr Lane
- i. 5325 Betty Lane
- j. 308 Nora Drive

as requested by Hon. Jose A. Solis, Commissioner Pct. 3.

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 Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, 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