

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

Be it remembered, that on this the 11th of July 2022, 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
Celica A. Rodriguez	Chief Deputy County Clerk

VISITORS: Roger Miller, Nereida Garza, Nellie R. Trevino, Delia Mendoza, Arturo Guajardo, Ralph Trevino, Adolfo Gonzalez, Gabriella Guevara, Bert Medina, Luis Guevara and Joseph Pena.

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 CELICA A. RODRIGUEZ, CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK
INVOCATION BY REV. ROGER MILLER, COMMISSIONERS COURT CHAPLAIN
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

COMMUNICATIONS

Judge Rathmell commented that lake levels are at 257 and are critical as far as being able to supply water to our residents. The raw water intake is having problems because of sedimentation and mud the low levels make it very difficult. TDUM is of the opinion that we declare a local disaster because of the drought condition. The governor may declare a sizeable position of the state a disaster and hopefully Zapata County will be included and make us eligible for grants, loans and any equipment. We are in dire need of backup pumps and generators.

Ralph Treviño addressed the court and stated that lake level is at 256.8 and the majority of the state is going through a drought right now. We don't have much in the water reserve and there is no relief in sight.

Judge Rathmell added that the entire system is at 20%; we are at historic levels and they are trying to urge the water master to release more water from Amistad to keep our lake at least above the 260 levels, but there is not much water at the entire system. We are trying to take appropriate measure on how we can continue to pump water and provide water to our residents. We are below 260 and stage 3 restrictions kick in.

Ralph Treviño explained that stage 3 restrictions have to do with water conservation. One of the main things is irrigation; irrigation is limited to Mondays for water customers with street address ending in 1,2, or 3. Wednesday for water customers with street address ending in 4, 5, or 6; and Friday for water customers with street address ending in 7, 8, 9, or zero. Irrigation is limited to the hours between 12 midnight and 10 a.m. Irrigation is limited to once a week. This will be posted in the newspaper and social media. The water plant is prepared in case of a black out we have reserve for 24 hours which is enough time to get generators.

Other restrictions such as washing vehicles is prohibited except on the designated water days based on street address and is preferably late in the evening. This does not apply to commercial

businesses. It is also prohibited to wash down sidewalks and walkways. Mr. Treviño also urged that if there is a leak at the house please take care of it immediately.

Judge Rathmell stated that currently we have 3 available pumps that are able to meet our requirements for the day. The last resort is our diesel pumps that are on standby.

Judge Rathmell reported on Covid-19, as follows:

Positive cases 2,477 which is +6

Probable cases 1,406 +23

No deaths reported

ORDER APPROVING INVOICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve invoices from June 4 – July 7, 2022, in the amount of \$1,065,049.48, 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 Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, 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 Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve checks issued from June 4 – July 7, 2022, in the amount of \$1,065,049.48, including additional invoice in the amount of \$4,658.47 for grapple trucks 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 \$5,396.16 for the month of June with a year-to-date total of \$113,939.36. Net tax collections were \$283,003.24 with a rate of 89.70%.

Mrs. Mendoza reported on the Texas Home Owners Fund which was established through the American Rescue Plan. Eighty-seven applications have been submitted, 37 have been approved and some have been denied. Taxes from 2016 have to be paid in order to qualify. A total of \$82,856.84 were paid through May; \$41,303.98 have been paid in June for a total of \$123,873.82

REPORT ON GRANT AWARD FROM TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

Adolfo Gonzalez, Zapata County Veterans Service Officer reported that the \$150,000.00 grant award from the Texas Veterans Commission was awarded to Zapata County. This grant will assist veterans with mortgages, auto repairs, medical equipment, and other services for one year.

ORDER APPROVING AN ORDER ORDERING THE ZAPATA COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB AND ALL COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS, TO ACCOUNT FOR ALL MONEY APPROPRIATED BY COMMISSIONERS COURT TO THE ZAPATA COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB AND ALL COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS, FOR THE BUDGETARY YEARS AS FOLLOWS: 2021, 2020, AND 2019, TO PROVIDE ALL BOOKS, RECORDS, ACCOUNTS, WHETHER PHYSICAL OR ELECTRONIC, ESTABLISHING WHERE SAID MONIES WERE DEPOSITED AND HOW THEY WERE SPENT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COPIES OF BANK DEPOSIT RECORDS, MONTHLY BANK STATEMENTS, LIST OF PAYEES, TRANSFERS, AND WITHDRAWALS FROM THE ACCOUNTS WHERE SAID MONIES WERE DEPOSITED

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve an order ordering the Zapata County Chamber of Commerce, Boys and Girls Club, and all county organizations, to account for all money appropriated by the Commissioners Court to the Zapata County Chamber of Commerce, Boys And Girls Club and all county organizations for the budgetary years as follows: 2021, 2020, and 2019, to provide all books, records, accounts, whether physical or electronic, establishing where said monies were deposited and how they were spent, including but not limited to, copies of bank deposit records, monthly bank statements, list of payees, transfers, and withdrawals from the accounts where said monies were deposited by August 1, 2022, 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 TO HIRE CAPEX CONSULTING GROUP TO FACILITATE ABATEMENT PROCESS FOR UPCOMING PROJECTS

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve to hire Capex Consulting Group to facilitate the abatement process for upcoming projects in Zapata County, at the cost of \$30,000.00 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 GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR GRANTING TAX ABATEMENTS IN REINVESTMENT ZONES

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve guidelines and criteria for granting tax abatements in reinvestment zones within Zapata County 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 APPLICATION FORM FOR TAX ABATEMENT AND DESIGNATION OF REINVESTMENT ZONE

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve application form for tax abatement and designation of reinvestment zone 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 TO GIVE TEMPORARY ZAPATA COUNTY EMPLOYEES HIRED WITH GRANT FUNDS MEDICAL CARE BENEFITS

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, to approve to give temporary Zapata County employees hired with grant funds medical health coverage benefits 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 REPAIRS TO COURTHOUSE FIRE CURTAIN LOCATED ON FIRST STAIRWELL

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve repairs to the courthouse fire curtain located on the first stairwell, for the cost of \$4,894.55 as requested by Mari Gutierrez, Maintenance Manager.

ORDER APPROVING REPAIRS ON CHECK VALVE LOCATED ON BACKFLOW BYPASS PREVENTER

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve repairs on a check valve located on the backflow bypass preventer, for the cost of \$900.00, as requested by: Mari Gutierrez, Maintenance Manager.

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

ORDER TO AMEND ANIMAL AND FOUL ORDINANCE

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis to amend the animal & foul ordinance as requested by Guillermo Saenz, Environmental Director.

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 DAVE PETRAKOVITZ OF PYRAMID NETWORK SERVICES TO GRANT AEP TEXAS EASEMENT AND RIGHT-OF-WAY AT LOS EBANOS GOLF COURSE

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to table request by Dave Petrakovitz of Pyramid Network Services to grant AEP Texas a 20 ft easement & right of way at the Los Ebanos Golf Course for the purpose of bringing power to a new AT&T cell power in adjacent property.

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

ORDER APPROVING USE OF SOFTBALL FIELD IN PRECINCT 4 FOR BENEFIT SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve the use of the Softball Field in precinct 4 for a benefit slow pitch softball tournament on July 23, 2022 as requested by Jeanna Jasso, Zapata Resident.

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

ORDER APPROVING REQUEST TO USE ZAPATA COMMUNITY CENTER FOR TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve request to use the Zapata Community Center for the Texas Retired Teachers Association regional conference in October 2022 as requested by Zapata Co. Retired School Employees Association.

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 MENDOZA,
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GARZA,
TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER GARZA,
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SOLIS,
TO RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION**

ORDER ACCEPTING RETIREMENT OF GUADALUPE CASTRO

Motion was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve resignation of Guadalupe Castro effective July 21, 2022 from the Indigent Care Program as requested by Hon. Joe Rathmell, County Judge.

[Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Sub Chapter D, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney).

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

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON THE FOLLOWING ITEM

To discuss easement dispute as requested by Ralph Trevino, Water Plant Director.

[Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Sub Chapter D, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney).

Discussion: Lagoon has been there for many years before it was acquired by Mr. Guajardo. Traffic began on November 2021. County has access if they need to ingress and egress, they have a right. (Sewage, disposal and other service)

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Garza, 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.

JOSEPH RATHMELL, COUNTY JUDGE
OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

ATTEST:

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