

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

Be it remembered, that on this the 13th day of January 2025, 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
David Moya	Commissioner, Precinct No. 1
Pedro M. Morales	Commissioner, Precinct No. 2
Jose A. Solis	Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Roberto Garza	Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan	Zapata County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of Commissioners Court

VISITORS: Patricia A. González, Jaime A. Guerra, Delia R. Mendoza, Rebecca Y. Gutiérrez, Carl Esser, Roger Miller, Ely Zepeda, Esperanza García, Adolfo González, Jr., Corando Barrera, Daniel Arriaga, Juan R. Molina, Gaby González, and Karran Westerman.

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 HON. MARY JAYNE VILLARREAL-BONOAN, COUNTY CLERK
AND EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF COMMISSIONERS COURT**

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

COMMUNICATIONS

Judge Rathmell extended a welcome to Commissioner Moya and noted that he will be attending his first conference.

Commissioner Solis provided a weather update, noting that colder days are approaching. He encouraged residents in need of shelter to contact either the Sheriff's Office or the Fire Department for assistance.

Becky Gutierrez offered a heartfelt tribute to the late Wilhemina Price. In her memory, a generous \$10,000 donation was made to the public library to support the purchase of new computers.

Sheriff Ramon Montes reported that televisions in women's jails have been repaired. Marshalls will be here this week.

ORDER APPROVING INVOICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve invoices from December 20, 2024 – January 9, 2025, for \$566,376.21, 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 Solis, 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 Solis, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve checks issued from December 20, 2024 – January 9, 2025, for \$566,376.21, 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 for \$4,950.38 for December with a year-to-date total of \$23,383.42. Net collections were \$954,770.66 with tax collections at a rate of 61.26% for 2024.

PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL REPORT FOR ZAPATA COUNTY FAIR

Presentation of financial report for Zapata County Fair by Jaime A. Guerra, ZCFA President. Report attached for the record.

ORDER APPROVING REQUEST OF HOTEL MOTEL FUNDS FOR ZAPATA COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve request of \$30,000.00 out of Hotel and Motel funds for the Zapata County Fair Association as requested by Jaime A. Guerra, ZCFA President.

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

ORDER APPROVING USE OF ROMEO FLORES PARK FOR BORDER FEST CHAPTER 4 TO BENEFIT ALYNNA LOPEZ AND CLOSE DELMAR AND GLENN STREET

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve request to use the Romeo Flores Park for Border Fest Chapter 4 to Benefit Alynna Lopez on April 3-5, 2025, and close Delmar and Glenn Streets between 1st and 3rd on April 5 as requested by Ely Zepeda, Event Organizer.

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

ORDER APPROVING USE OF TOWN PLAZA ON JANUARY 31 TO HOST BRIGHT BEGINNINGS POP UP MARKET AND CELEBRATION

Motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve request to use the town plaza on January 31 to host a Bright Beginnings Pop up Market and Celebration as requested by Esperanza Garcia, Esperanza's Pretty Painting.

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

**ORDER APPROVING ESTIMATE FROM RECORDS CONSULTANTS, INC. (RCI)
TO CONDUCT A FIXED ASSET INVENTORY & MANAGEMENT SURVEY
OF ZAPATA COUNTY**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve an estimate from Records Consultants, Inc. (RCI) to conduct a Fixed Asset Inventory & Management Survey of Zapata County at the rate of \$9,500.00 per year, flat fee – year to year with an initial fee of \$6,650.00 and \$.20 per bar code and options a, b, c, and d, 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 TRANSFER OF GMC SIERRA 1500 FROM COUNTY JUDGE’S
OFFICE TO ZAPATA COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve to transfer GMC Sierra 1500 from the County Judge’s Office to the Zapata Community Center 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 TO SHI GOVERNMENT SOLUTIONS TO COVER
LABOR FOR IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE 49TH DISTRICT COURTROOM**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve payment to SHI Government Solutions in the amount of \$31,830.50 to cover labor for improvements made to the 49th District Courtroom 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 THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS IN PRECINCT 1

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the following positions in Precinct 1:

- a. Atilano Flores, Labor Maintenance in 15-421-slot #3 at \$11.00 per hour.
- b. Edwin Villarreal, Labor Maintenance in 15-421-slot #5 at \$11.00 per hour.
- c. Armando Esquivel, Labor Maintenance in 15-421- slot #2 at \$11.00 per hour.
- d. Juan A. Garcia, Crew Leader in 15-421-slot #1 at \$16.00 per hour.

All changes are within budget and to be effective January 1, 2025, as requested by Hon. David Moya, 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 REMOVAL OF STOP SIGNS IN FLORES DRIVE
AT FALCON SHORES SUBDIVISION**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve removal of stop signs in Flores Drive at the Falcon Shores Subdivision as requested by Hon. David Moya, 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 TO GET QUOTES FOR REPAIRS FOR
ZAPATA COUNTY PUBLIC POOL**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve to get quotes for repairs for the Zapata County public pool as requested by Hon. David Moya, 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 THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS IN PRECINCT 4

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the following positions in Precinct 4, effective January 13, 2025:

- a) Norberto Lozano transferred from Labor Maintenance in 15-424- slot #4 to Water Plant at Distribution in 800-600- slot #6 at \$11.25 per hour.
- b) Carlos Vela as Labor Maintenance in 15-424 slot #4 at \$11.05 per hour.
- c) Jose Luis Salinas, Labor Maintenance in 15-424 slot #5 increase from \$10.48 per hour to \$11.39 per hour.

With no increase to the budget 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.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON THE FOLLOWING ITEM

23. To discuss overtime 40 work week as requested by Sheriff Ramon Montes, County Sheriff. County policy applies to grants.

**ORDER APPROVING PURCHASE OF FURNITURE, OFFICE SUPPLIES,
AND COMPUTERS FOR OFFICES AND LOBBY AT
ZAPATA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve purchase of furniture, office supplies, and computers for offices and lobby at the Zapata County Sheriff's Office, not to exceed \$20,000.00 to be paid out of non-department maintenance as requested by Sheriff Ramon Montes, County Sheriff.

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

**ORDER APPROVING TO AMEND FY2025 BUDGET
TO ADD TWO ADDITIONAL DETENTION OFFICERS
FOR REGIONAL JAIL**

Motion was made by Commissioner Moya, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve to amend FY2025 budget to add two additional Detention Officers for the Regional Jail at \$25,542.00 and \$2,247.70 fringe which has been budgeted under OLS #4372602 Department 10 as requested by Sheriff Ramon Montes, County Sheriff.

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

ORDER APPROVING REQUEST OF \$25,000.00 FROM TOBACCO FUND TO MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve request for \$25,000.00 from Tobacco Fund 67-43800 to Medical Supplies 10-543-42611 due to exhausting funds as requested by Fire Chief Daniel D. Arriaga.

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

ORDER APPROVING TO ADVERTISE FOR SITE MANAGER FOR FALCON NUTRITION CENTER

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve to advertise for the Site Manager for the Falcon Nutrition Center as requested by Berta G. Lopez, Nutrition Center Director.

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

REVIEW OF PROJECTS CONSIDERED FOR CERTIFICATE OF OBLIGATION

No action taken

A list was sent to financial adviser for Certificate of Obligation projects that the county is considering; approximately \$4,000,000.00 are available. The following is a list of some of the items included: Airport improvements, 4 H Arena, Fire Station, EOC, Sheriff's Office, Airport Fuel Farm, boat ramp, golf course trail and purchase, Miraflores Park, Medina drainage and booster station, Falcon Mesa paving project, San Ygnacio Water Plant, Emergency ground water intake, and other Water plant items.

REVIEW OF PROJECTS SUBMITTED UNDER THE EPA GRANT APPLICATION

No action was taken

The County applied for an EPA grant totaling \$19,995,000 to fund a wide array of infrastructure and housing initiatives. The proposal includes upgrades for 10 homes and 2 mobile homes, which would receive green cool roof systems, improved air systems, enhanced insulation, natural gas conversions, solar panels, electrical and HVAC system upgrades, high-efficiency appliances, and modern water heaters. Homeowners would need to meet eligibility requirements to participate. The application also outlines enhancements such as upgraded parking areas, improved streets, walking trail shade canopies, and park developments. The proposal also includes raw water intake upgrades, installation of drying beds, implementation of wind turbines, and additional unspecified improvements. Manhole rehabilitation and the creation of dedicated fire truck filling stations are also included among the proposed initiatives.

REVIEW ON SAN YGNACIO WATER PLANT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

No action was taken

Carl Esser reported that the contractor has made steady and timely progress on the project, with minimal concerns to date. The grant is set to conclude on January 31, 2025, and a final walkthrough and inspection is scheduled for January 28, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. The plant will be fully automated upon completion. Notable advancements include sandblasting of the piping system and installation of new pumps. A backup generator will be included.

**ORDER APPROVING FINAL PUBLIC HEARING FOR CDBG CFC 22-0089 SAN
YGNACIO WATER PLANT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR FEBRUARY 10, 2025
AND APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF INVOICE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve to schedule Final Public Hearing for CDBG CFC 22-0086 San Ygnacio Water Plant Improvement Project for February 10, 2025, at 5:15 PM Zapata County Courthouse and publish notice for same and approval of payment of \$198,673.50 to Mouflon Oilfield Services via Acstar as requested by Carl Esser, Esser & Company Consulting, LLC. Budget wise the project is 75% complete.

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 OF
SHERIFF'S OFFICE PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve payment of Inv. #8 for \$89,870.00 to Acstar (Frank's Construction) for work performed at Zapata Booster project as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Jr., Premier Engineering.

Hydropneumatics tank was received and to be installed this week. Project is 75% complete.

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 OF CONGRESSIONAL
DIRECTED SPENDING COMMUNITY FACILITY GRANT THROUGH THE USDA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ZAPATA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve payment of Inv. for \$2,850.00 payable to O'Conner Environmental for asbestos report as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Jr., Premier Engineering.

Review on Congressional Directed Spending Community Facility Grant through the USDA Rural Development for Zapata County Sheriff's Office stated that they are ready to move on project and go out for bids. During discussions, a question was raised regarding the feasibility of extending the building by 18 feet toward the parking lot. However, current funding does not support this addition. The proposed expansion may be considered in a potential second phase of the project. 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 OF
CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTED SPENDING COMMUNITY FACILITY GRANT
THROUGH THE USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
ZAPATA COUNTY FIRE STATION**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve payment of Inv. #3 for \$48,250.00 payable to JHS Architects for work performed on Fire station project and act on items as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Jr., Premier Engineering.

Review status and take any necessary action on Congressional Directed Spending Community Facility Grant through the USDA Rural Development for Zapata County Fire Station, Chief Arriaga provided plans. The new facility will be located on the west side of the existing building. Old building will be used as storage; once environmental is cleared they will proceed with the project.

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

**REVIEW ON CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTED SPENDING COMMUNITY
FACILITY GRANT THROUGH THE USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT
FOR ZAPATA COUNTY 4-H ARENA IMPROVEMENTS**

No action was taken

Review status and take any necessary action on Congressional Directed Spending Community Facility Grant through the USDA Rural Development for Zapata County 4-H Arena Improvements, all requirements have been submitted to USDA.

ORDER APPROVING STREETLIGHT

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve the following streetlights:

a. 13th and Laredo
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 UPDATE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF
FY2025 OPERATION LONE STAR**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve update Resolution in Support of FY2025 Operation Lone Star 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 RESOLUTION FOR LARGE BRUSH TRUCK
WITH TEXAS FOREST SERVICE**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve Resolution for a Large Brush Truck with the Texas Forest Service as requested by Fire Chief Daniel D. Arriaga.

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 Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, 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