

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF ZAPATA**

IN THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

Be it remembered, that on this 12th day of May 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
David Moya
Pedro M. Morales
Jose A. Solis
Roberto Garza
Celica A. Rodriguez

County Judge
Commissioner, Precinct No. 1
Commissioner, Precinct No. 2
Commissioner, Precinct No. 3
Commissioner, Precinct No. 4
Chief Deputy County Clerk

ABSENT:

Mary Jayne Villarreal-Bonoan

Zapata County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of
Commissioners Court

VISITORS: Arn Ramírez, Joyce Currington, Rodolfo Niebles, Juan Petrissans, Mayra Arévalos, Roger Miller, Jesse Rodríguez, Delia Mendoza, Karran Westerman, Diana Salazar, Juan R. Molina, Luis E. Guerra, Ralph Treviño, Andrew Treviño, Manuel González, and Krystal Cantú.

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

Commissioner Garza congratulated the Lady Hawks softball team on their upcoming game against Ingleside scheduled for Thursday.

Commissioner Solis extended his congratulations to the Hawks for their commendable performance despite falling short in game 3. He also wished all mothers a happy Mother's Day and acknowledged the sheriff's office for their successful arrests.

Judge Rathmell mentioned the celebration of Mother's Day over the weekend. He reported that there was both rain and fire, acknowledging the fire department's efforts in extinguishing the fire. He also announced that Zapata County has received funds and thanked Mr. Esser and the Texas Department of Agriculture. He advised county crews to take precautionary measures with the upcoming hot weather, predicting temperatures as high as 115 degrees.

Joyce Currington addressed the court with regards to a proposed flea market.

ORDER APPROVING INVOICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve invoices from April 25 – May 8, 2025, for \$433,139.21, 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 Morales, 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 Morales, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve checks issued from April 25 – May 8, 2025, for \$433,139.21, 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 \$8,524.35 for April with a year-to-date total of \$49,354.76. Net collections were \$198,508.75 with tax collections at a rate of 84.53% for 2024.

PRESENTATION ON FIBER2GO

Arn Ramirez made a presentation on Fiber2Go, a Texas company that helps people stay connected using fiber optic, mobile, cable, and satellite technology to offer telecom services. They provide virtual data centers and different IT products and services for customers. He explained that a grant would cover infrastructure costs while residents would pay for services. The county would collect a percentage and handle billing. Each country is different, and it is a federally funded program. Fiber2Go has agreed to assist the county. Judge Rathmell would like to focus on areas that lack service.

PRESENTATION ON MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID KIT OFFERED BY BORDER REGION BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER

Presentation on the Mental Health First Aid Kit as requested by Kristal D. Cantu, Border Region Behavioral Health Center. Mental Health First Aid offers classes that teaches you how to spot and help someone with mental health or substance use issues until they can get professional support. The Border Region Behavioral Health Center offers this training, along with other mental health services for all ages. The main goal is to help people feel confident in offering support, encourage seeking help, and reduce stigma around mental health. It is free and after taking an exam you receive a certificate.

ORDER APPROVING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ZAPATA COUNTY AND SCAN

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Zapata County and SCAN, Serving Children and Adults In Need, Inc. 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 FIBER2GO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
AND SUBMIT APPLICATION FOR BROADBAND EQUITY,
ACCESS AND DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

Motion was made Commissioner Moya, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve Fiber2Go Memorandum of Understanding and submit application for Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment program (BEAD) (Fiber Optic) 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 AUTHORIZING RENE GARCILAZO TO CONTINUE
LOOKING FOR OPTION AND PRICES FOR FALCON NUTRITION CENTER
AND SAN YGNACIO FOR USE OF TIME KEEPING SYSTEM**

Motion was made by Commissioner Moya, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to authorize Rene Garcilazo to look for options and prices for the Falcon Nutrition Center and San Ygnacio for the use of time keeping system 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 USE OF ZAPATA COUNTY PAVILION
FOR 8TH GRADE BANQUET**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve the use of the Zapata County Pavilion for the 8th grade banquet on May 28, 2025, 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.

UPDATE OF TXDOT SAFE ROADS FOR ALL GRANT APPLICATION

Update on TxDOT safe roads for all grant application status as requested by Hon. Jose A. Solis, Commissioner Pct. 3. Working on safety action plan for road. Comprehensive Action Plan attached for the record.

ORDER ADOPTING COMPREHENSIVE ACTION PLAN

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to adopt a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan 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.

**ORDER APPROVING A SIX-MONTH AGREEMENT WITH
LONE STAR STRATEGY GROUP TO ASSIST WITH ADMINISTRATION OF
SHERIFF'S OFFICE GRANTS AND OTHER GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve a six-month agreement with Lone Star Strategy Group to assist with the administration of Sheriff's Office grants and other grant applications 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 AUTHORIZING ZAPATA COUNTY JUDGES OFFICE TO SOLICIT REQUESTS FOR PROPOSAL FOR GRANT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to authorize the Zapata County Judge's Office to solicit Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for grant development services 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 AUTHORIZING ZAPATA COUNTY JUDGE TO SOLICIT REQUESTS FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQs) FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES

Motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to authorize the Zapata County Judge to solicit Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for engineering services 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 RENEWING ZAPATA COUNTY AIRPORT LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR 2025-2026

Motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve renewing the Zapata County Airport liability insurance for 2025-2026 as requested by Nellie Trevino, HR Director.

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

ORDER ACCEPTING RESIGNATION OF MANUEL MARTINEZ FROM SLOT #3 CUSTODIAN MAINTENANCE, DEPARTMENT #516

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to accept the resignation of Manuel Martinez from slot 3 Custodian Maintenance, Department #516 as requested by Dioni Hernandez, Maintenance Director.

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

ORDER APPROVING HIRING OF RAMIRO BENAVIDES IN SLOT #2 AS CUSTODIAN MAINTENANCE FOR DEPARTMENT #516

Motion was made by Commissioner Moya, to table request by Dioni Hernandez to hire Ramiro Benavides. Motion dies for lack of a second.

Motion was made by Judge Rathmell, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve hiring of Ramiro Benavides in slot #2 at \$10.48/hour as Custodian Maintenance for Department #516, effective May 12, 2025, with salary set at \$21,800.00 as requested by Dioni Hernandez, Maintenance Director.

The above motion, being put to a vote, was approved by the affirmative vote of Judge Rathmell, Commissioners Garza, Morales, and Solis. Commissioner Moya voted against. Motion carried.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICES FOR WASTEWATER
LIFT STATION PUMPS AND CONTROL PANELS FROM ODESSA PUMPS &
EQUIPMENT, SABLE PUMPS, AND MARTINEZ ELECTRICAL SERVICES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve payment of invoices for wastewater lift station pumps and control panels from Odessa Pumps & Equipment, Sable Pumps, and Martinez Electrical Services in the amount of \$37,559.88 from the Certificate of Obligation as requested by Ralph Trevino, Water Plant Director.

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

**ORDER APPROVING USE ZAPATA COUNTY PAVILION AND OUTDOOR
PAVILION ACROSS THE STREET FOR ZAPATA COUNTY YOUTH AG DAY EVENT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve request to use the Zapata County Pavilion and outdoor Pavilion across the street on May 14, 2025, for Zapata County Youth Ag Day Event hosted by Texas A&M Agrilife Extension and Zapata County 4-H as requested by Jesse Rodriguez, Agrilife Extension.

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

**ORDER APPROVING USE OF ZAPATA COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER
FOR ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH EVENT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve request to use the Zapata County Community Center on May 14, 2025, for annual Mental Health Awareness Month Event as requested by Sandra Maldonado, Border Region.

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 JUAN ANGEL ELICERIO FOR
USE OF FAIRGROUNDS OPEN PAVILION OR FALCON LAKE BOAT RAMP**

Motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to table request by Juan Angel Elicerio for use of the Fairgrounds Open Pavilion or the Falcon Lake Boat Ramp for the Exotic Racing Event as requested by Juan Angel Elicerio, Exotic Racing.

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 #3 OF \$7,500.00 TO
CARLOS COLINA VARGAS & ASSOCIATES FOR WORK DONE ON
MIRAFLORES PARK PROJECT**

Motion was made Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve payment of invoice #3 in the amount of \$7,500.00 to Carlos Colina-Vargas & Associates for work done on the Miraflores Park Project, however payment is not to be released until project is completed, as requested by Carlos Colina-Vargas, Consultant.

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 ON DRAINAGE PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Solis, to approve payment of \$36,674.75, payable to Acstar (Mouflon Oilfield Services) for work performed on Drainage Project as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Jr., Premier Engineering.

Manuel Gonzalez reported the project is 45% complete, covering 700 linear feet of concrete. Crews can continue with our own work as we have the necessary materials. No report was submitted for the record.

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 ON BOOSTER STATION PROJECT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Garza, to approve payment application #12 for \$5,268.07 payable to Acstar (Frank's Construction) for work performed on Booster Station Project as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Jr., Premier Engineering.

Manuel Gonzalez reported that the project is 90% complete, with work ongoing on the control panel and piping. No report was submitted for the record.

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

REVIEW STATUS ON RAW WATER INTAKE PROJECT

Manuel Gonzalez reported that there is a \$1M grant available for areas with low water levels. The grant will provide electrical pumps. However, there is an issue with the control panel in the raw water intake. Efforts are underway to update the control panel. No report was submitted for the record.

**ORDER APPROVING PAYMENT OF INVOICE, OVERTIME PAYMENT
AND REVIEW STATUS ON LOS EBANOS WALKING TRAIL**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Moya, to approve payment of invoices totaling \$3,900 payable to Zapata Feed Ranch and approving overtime payment of overtime to Road & Bridge employees, pending correct amount and approval by county auditor, for work performed at Los Ebanos Walking Trail as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Premier Engineering, and Hon. David Moya, Commissioner Pct. 1

Manuel Gonzalez reported that a 50-foot path was cleared, and drainage pipes were installed. Concrete is needed. No report was submitted for the record.

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

**ORDER AWARDING ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES TO
JHS ARCHITECTS FOR ROPING ARENA**

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to award architectural services to JHS Architects for Roping Arena Project as requested by Manuel Gonzalez, Jr., Premier Engineering.

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

REVIEW STATUS ON BOAT RAMP PROJECT

Manuel Gonzalez reported on Boat Ramp Project; a three-month extension was requested. TxDot requested a twelve-month extension. No report was submitted for the record.

ORDER APPROVING LINE-ITEM TRANSFERS

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the following line-item transfers to meet departmental needs:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	Texas A&M AgriLife Ext.	10-665-42610	General Supplies	\$700.00
TO	Texas A&M AgriLife Ext.	10-665-43580	Travel & Training	\$700.00

as requested by Jesus F. Rodriguez, AgriLife Ext.

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 Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the following line-item transfers to meet departmental needs:

	DEPARTMENT	LINE ITEM	FUND	AMOUNT
FROM	Zapata Water Plant	080-600-43617	Chlorine & Chemicals	\$25,000.00
TO	Zapata Water Plant	080-600-43430	Repairs & Maintenance	\$25,000.00
FROM	Zapata Water Plant	080-600-43440	Rentals	\$3,400.00
TO	Zapata Water Plant	080-600-43530	Repairs & Maintenance	\$3,400.00

as requested by Ralph Treviño, Water Plant Director.

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

ORDER APPROVING STREETLIGHTS

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the following streetlight:

- 1102 U.S HWY 83

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.

Motion was made by Commissioner Solis, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the following streetlight:

- 1109 Kennedy Street

as required 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.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SOLIS,
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GARZA,
TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

**NO ACTION WAS TAKEN IN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS DISCUSSED IN
EXECUTIVE SESSION**

42. To discuss personnel concerns as requested by Hon. David Moya, Commissioner Pct. 1.

Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Sub Chapter D, Section 551.071, consultation with attorney.

43. Update on resolution of David Moya V. Zapata County et al, Cause No. C. A. No.5:22-CV-00117; Southern District of Texas- Laredo Division as requested by Robert L. Drinkard Denton, Navarro, Rodriguez, Bernal, Santee & Zech, P.C.

Executive Session is requested pursuant to Texas Government Code Title 5, Sub Chapter D, Section 551.071, consultation with attorney.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Solis, 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