THE STATE OF TEXAS \* COMMISSIONERS COURT

COUNTY OF KENEDY \* OF KENEDY COUNTY, TEXAS

On the 10th day of October, 2023, at 9:00 o'clock a.m., a regular meeting of the Commissioners Court of Kenedy County, Texas, was held in the Kenedy County Courthouse.

**Commissioners present:**

Charles E. Burns, County Judge

Joe Recio, Commissioner, Precinct No. 1

Israel Vela, Jr., Commissioner, Precinct No. 2

Sarita Armstrong-Hixon, Commissioner, Precinct No. 3

Jose Salazar, Commissioner, Precinct No. 4

**Also present:**

Veronica Vela, County & District Clerk

Grace Salinas, Administrative Secretary

Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer

Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector

Allison Strauss, County Attorney

Leo Villarreal, Administrative Assistant

Sheriff Ramon Salinas

Sandra Maltby, Maltby Builders, Inc.

Caleb Maltby, Maltby Builders, Inc.

JP Jana Norrell

JP Cecilia Schulz

JP Patricia Fain

Daniel Almeida, Sarita Sewer and Water

Jose E. Mendietta, Fire Chief

Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator

Tom Denney, Chief Appraiser

Andy Garza, Kenedy County Groundwater Conservation District

Seferino Gutierrez, Maintenance Supervisor

Javier Zambrano, GrantWorks

Capt. Edward Cruz

Deputy Gerardo Rosa

Deputy Fidel Gonzales

Sandra Guzman, Sheriff’s Office

James Carr

Manuel Garcia

Debbie Veschet with Vested Networks

Evan Hugg with Vested Networks

William Dieterle

Denise Rodriguez with John Womack & Co., P.C.

**Absent**:

JP Jerry Miller

1. **Call Meeting to Order at 9:00 a.m**.

Judge Charles E. Burns called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Judge Charles E. Burns led the Commissioners Court and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **Receive Public Comments**.

No public comments were made.

1. **Receive Report from Abdul Kamar with the Texas Department of State Health Services to Address Emergency Preparedness and Program Specific Regional Updates**.

Abdul Kamar was not present.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Regular Minutes of September 11th, 2023, and the Special Meeting Minutes of September 5th, 2023, and September 28th, 2023**.

Judge Charles E. Burns presented the Commissioners Court with the minutes of the regular September 11, 2023, and the special September 5, 2023 and September 28, 2023.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the minutes of the regular September 11, 2023 meeting, the special September 5, 2023 meeting and the special September 28, 2023 minutes be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on Treasurer’s Monthly Report and Transfers**.

Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Monthly Report and Transfers for the month ending September 30, 2023 and that she had $1.5 million to invest in either certificates of deposit and/or Texas Class.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed the Treasurer's Monthly Report and Transfers ending September 30, 2023, be accepted as presented and that $1.5 million be invested with Texas Class.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Sheriff’s Monthly Report**.

Deputy Edward Cruz presented the Sheriff’s monthly report and Chapter 59 to the Commissioners Court for the month ending September 30, 2023.

He also reported the following:

That over 4000 calls had been received so far in 2023;

That DPS and Border Patrol were helping on the waterways; DPS will have a brush crew and Border Patrol will be obtaining a boat; and

Fishing tournament was held during the weekend and that several bundles of cocaine and a dead body washed up on shore during the tournament.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Sheriff’s monthly report and Chapter 59 report be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on Fire Chief’s Monthly Report**.

Jose E. Mendietta, Fire Chief, presented the Commissioners Court with the Fire District report. He reported that the Texas Department of Health will be in Sarita on October 30, 2023, with COVID vaccines; that fliers for smoke detectors will be distributed soon; and that he had met with the Council of Government for training of volunteers; that presently there are nine volunteers; that this month there will be a training with Halo Flight with windfarms; and that the ambulance had made eight calls during September 2023.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Fire Chief’s report be accepted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Maintenance Department Monthly Report**.

Seferino Gutierrez, Maintenance Supervisor, presented the Maintenance Department’s monthly report to the Commissioners Court for the month ending September 30, 2023.

Seferino Gutierrez thanked all of the employees who helped with the National Night Out - that it had turned out to be a great event. He also informed the Commissioners Court that the county had had a lot of stray dogs running around and Commissioner Sarita-Armstrong Hixon stated the policy is to take stray dogs to the vet. Commissioner Joe Recio stated that two dogs were abandoned and causing problems with trash being overturned. Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor/Collector, commented that on her block residents do not comply with the law. Judge Burns stated if they are running out of their yard and chasing people, we need to do something. Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. stated we do not want to wait on a person getting bit for action to be taken. Allison Strauss, County Attorney, stated they do need to call the Sheriff’s Office; however, they are not allowed to set a trap on private property, it needs to be on the street. Commissioner Joe Recio stated that a police report needs to be filed prior to apprehending the dogs.

Seferino Gutierrez further reported that the cement slab should be in place this week at the Norias Substation. Judge Burns asked Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator, whether she had inspected the work and she stated she had and will be going with Seferino Gutierrez to look at it again this week.

Seferino Gutierrez also reported that almost all of the palm trees are trimmed. If the county had had to rent a lift, it would have cost $8,000 to date. Judge Burns said the County needed to purchase their own lift. Seferino Gutierrez stated it would cost approximately $20,000 to repair the County’s present lift because the parts are hard to find.

Regarding the Sheriff’s Office, Seferino Gutierrez stated that the Sheriff’s Office has many electric problems and the cause of damage was some sort of electric issue. TJ Electric stated that the issue is that there is an electric leak coming from the panel and is burning the air conditioning, the blowers and water heater, etc. Trinidad Jasso stated the generator needs to be completely shut down to see if this is the issue and find the problem. Judge Burns stated we need to get the panel replaced because the water heater almost exploded and that many of the appliances have had to be replaced. Trinidad Jasso said the engineer stated to disconnect the generator because the ampage is double what it should be. The water heater had been replaced twice and this time the water heater expanded. Also, the lights on the outside have gone out. Trinidad Jasso said he spoke with Nueces Electric to test voltage and it worked, but it was up and down. Judge Burns stated that the bottom line is that there are electrical problems with the Sheriff’s Office. Commissioner Sarita-Armstrong Hixon stated they should not keep replacing appliances without determining the source of the problem. Trinidad Jasso stated he had the knowledge, experience and equipment to find the problem. Leo Villarreal stated that a priority list of issues needs to be prepared. Trinidad Jasso stated we can test but the voltage goes down to 40 and spikes up to 1200, but this is just a temporary band aid.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon stated we need to get bids and cannot break this up into different components. She asked whether the engineer needs to be relied on and Allison Straus agreed that the engineer must not be circumvented. Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon stated she did not want to move on this without input from a professional engineer and wanted to know the cost. Commissioner Joe Recio stated the engineer will need to state what needs to be done. Trinidad Jasso stated it would take a month and a half to two months. Leo Villarreal stated that the Texas Government Code, Section 252.024 provides an exemption to bids if it is an emergency and further stated that when it comes to professionals, you do not have to go out for bids; that you can hire them on their record, studies, etc. and does what he has to do. Trinidad Jasso does not see the cost exceeding $100,000. Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon stated that if the County has the authority to by-pass the bidding, she does not mind having TJ Electric doing the work since he is familiar with the issue. Judge Burns stated LNV Engineering should come out and own up to their job. Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon further stated that TJ Electric needed to be compensated for their work. Judge Burns stated that a special meeting will need to be called for this Friday. Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon stated we are talking about $100,000 potentially and Trinidad Jasso asked if this will fall under service work. Judge Burns stated it falls under emergency service work and Commissioner Jose Salazar stated this is an emergency repair. Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon stated that an engineer needs to be contacted. Judge Burns stated he will contact the engineer. Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon stated that the County needed to be on solid legal ground to do this. Judge Burns stated the special meeting will be on Friday at 1:30 p.m. Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon stated to get engineering confirmations and establish legal grounds by the special meeting, if possible.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Seferino Gutierrez is authorized to obtain bids for the purchase of a new or used lift.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Maintenance Department monthly report be accepted as presented.

1. **Receive Daniel Almeida and Act on the Sewer & Water System Monthly Report**.

Daniel Almeida presented the Commissioners Court with the Sewer & Water System monthly report. He reported that he had met with the cable contractors regarding completion of the project; scheduled quarterly sampling; sent off annual copper samples; closed out last inspection items, had run the generators to top off the fuel; that he had drafted a customer service agreement to be reviewed by the County Attorney and Judge Burns; had received annual copper results and completed Public Notices to be distributed this week; had created a do to list; had connected a couple of customers with sewer and water problems and had repaired some leaks; and had a final communication with Emergency Preparation Plan and entered the new data.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Daniel Almeida’s report be accepted as presented.

1. **Receive Javier Zambrano with GrantWorks Monthly Reports Regarding Compliance with Colonia Grant #7219075 and Community Development Grant #7219220 and Act if Necessary**.

Javier Zambrano presented the GrantWorks monthly report to the Commissioners Court regarding the Kenedy County 7219220 and 7219075 as follows:

Kenedy County 7219075 Colonia (CFC)

Contract Start Date: 2/1/20

Original Contract End Date: 1/31/22

Extended Contract End Date: 9/30/23

Closeout Documents Due Date: 11/29/23

Phase I & II (Prime: Donald Hubert Construction) Construction Completed

Last month the County agreed to cover Donald Hubert’s balance while work was completed on the Single Audit for the 2022 Fiscal Year. Donald Hubert has been paid their balance of $63,700.82.

State Contract Status in TDA-Go: Delinquent OSCAR FY2022 Single Audit reporting not submitted. Payment in TDA-Go is on hold and will not be able to be submitted until the Single Audit is submitted. Any alerts or questions TDA sends to the County about Contracts 7219330 and 7219075 should still be sent to Robert Davila.

Commissioner Joe Recio moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the GrantWorks report be accepted as presented.

1. **Receive Report on the Construction Progress of the Justice of the Peace Building/Hurricane Shelter & Court House Repairs**.

Caleb Maltby with Maltby Builders, Inc. informed the Commissioners Court that cleaning of the Justice of the Peace Courthouse will be done soon, paint touch ups were being done, toilet accessories were being installed; that hand rails for the outside ramp will be installed today; that the porch should be finished next week; that the back porch pillars were two feet too short; that it was his fault; and that the work on the Courthouse was on hold until the Justice of Peace Building was completed.

This being a report only, no vote was needed and none was taken.

1. **Consent Agenda:**

**(A) Approve Travel Expenses for Israel Vela, Jr to Attend the South Texas Community Summit on November 8th, 2023 in Austin, Texas. ($207.38 within budget)**

**(B) Approve Travel Expenses for Joe Recio to Attend the South Texas Community Summit on November 8th, 2023 in Austin, Texas. ($506.75 within budget)**

**(C) Approve Travel Expenses for Charles Burns to Attend the South Texas Community Summit on November 8th, 2023 in Austin, Texas. ($257.38 within budget)**

**(D) Approve Travel Expenses for Charles Burns to Attend the Judicial Summit on Mental Health on October 18-20th, 2023, in Galveston, Tx. ($912.20 within budget)**

**(E) Approve Travel Expenses for Charles Burns to Attend the 2023 Fall Judicial Education Session on November 14- 17th, 2023, in Boerne, Tx. ($1,037.02 within Budget)**

**(F) Approve Travel Expenses for Irma Longoria, Norma Zavala, and Linda Anderson**

**to Attend the 41st V. G. Young School Conference on November 14- 16th, 2023 in Waco, Tx. ($3,157.66 within budget)**

**(G) Approve Travel Expenses for Allison Strauss to Attend the 2023 Elected Prosecutor Conference on November 29- December 1, 2023, in Frisco, Tx. ($1,515.30 within budget)**

**(H) Approve Travel Expenses for Kirsten Mendez to Attend the 2023 Key Personnel & Victim Assistants Conference on November 14-17th, 2023 in Fort Worth, Tx. ($1,682.09 within budget)**

**(I) Approve Travel Expenses for Tammy Mendez to Attend the 2023 Key Personnel & Victim Assistants Conference on November 14-17th, in Fort Worth, Tx. ($591.50 within budget)**

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court that items A, B and C needed to be withdrawn, however, the following employees needed to attend the below seminars/conferences and be advance/reimbursed their expenses provided that proper receipts are given:

Name: Charles Burns

Seminar: Judicial Summit on Mental Health

Date: October 18-20, 2023

Place: Galveston, Texas

Amount: $912.20

Name: Charles Burns

Seminar: 2023 Fall Judicial Education Session

Date: November 14-17, 2023

Place: Boerne, Texas

Amount: $1,037.02

Name: Irma Longoria, Norma Zavala and Linda Anderson

Seminar: 41st V. G. Young School Conference

Date: November 14-16, 2023

Place: Waco, Texas

Amount: $3,157.66

Name: Allison Strauss

Seminar: 2023 Elected Prosecutor Conference

Date: November 29-December 1, 2023

Place: Frisco, Texas

Amount: $1,515.30

Name: Kirsten Mendez

Seminar: 2023 Key Personnel & Victim Assistants Conference

Date: November 14-17, 2023

Place: Ft. Worth, Texas

Amount: $1,682.09

Name: Tammy Mendez

Seminar: 2023 Key Personnel & Victim Assistant Conference

Date: November 14-17, 2023

Place: Ft. Worth, Texas

Amount: $591.50

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that items A, B and C be withdrawn and that the following employees attend the following seminars/conferences and be reimbursed their expenses provided proper receipts are given to the County Treasurer:

Name: Charles Burns

Seminar: Judicial Summit on Mental Health

Date: October 18-20, 2023

Place: Galveston, Texas

Amount: $912.20

Name: Charles Burns

Seminar: 2023 Fall Judicial Education Session

Date: November 14-17, 2023

Place: Boerne, Texas

Amount: $1,037.02

Name: Irma Longoria, Norma Zavala and Linda Anderson

Seminar: 41st V. G. Young School Conference

Date: November 14-16, 2023

Place: Waco, Texas

Amount: $3,157.66

Name: Allison Strauss

Seminar: 2023 Elected Prosecutor Conference

Date: November 29-December 1, 2023

Place: Frisco, Texas

Amount: $1,515.30

Name: Kirsten Mendez

Seminar: 2023 Key Personnel & Victim Assistants Conference

Date: November 14-17, 2023

Place: Ft. Worth, Texas

Amount: $1,682.09

Name: Tammy Mendez

Seminar: 2023 Key Personnel & Victim Assistant Conference

Date: November 14-17, 2023

Place: Ft. Worth, Texas

Amount: $591.50

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving Window Treatments for the Justice of the Peace Building/ Hurricane Shelter**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to approve window treatments for the Justice of the Peace Building/Hurricane Shelter and that two bids had been received; one from Lowe’s and one from Sunburst.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Sunburst’s bid in the amount of $12,672.00 be approved.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving the Salary Classification for Telecommunicator, Emma Simms, to Full Budgeted Salary Effective October 1, 2023**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to consider approving the salary classification for Telecommunicator, Emma Simms, to full budgeted salary effective October 1, 2023.

Commissioner Joe Recio moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Telecommunicator, Emma Simms, salary classification to approved to full budgeted salary effective October 1, 2023, within budget.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Governor’s Proclamation Renewing the Declaration of Disaster Due to Wildfires**.

Judge Charles E. Burns read to the Commissioners Court the attached September 26, 2023 Governor’s Proclamation Renewing the Declaration of Disaster Due to Wildfires.

See attached Proclamation by the Governor of the State of Texas dated September 26, 2023.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the September 26, 2023 Governor’s Proclamation Renewing the Declaration of Disaster Due to Wildfires be approved as read.

1. **Discuss & Act on FY2024 Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) Formula Grant Resolution**.

Judge Charles E. Burns read to the Commissioners Court the below FY 2024 Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) Formula Grant Resolution:

2024 Kenedy County Resolution

Indigent Defense Grant Program

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the Texas Government Code Section 79.037 and Texas Administrative Code Chapter 173, counties are eligible to receive grants from the Texas Indigent Defense Commission to provide improvements in indigent defense services in the county; and

WHEREAS, this grant program will assist the county in the implementation and the improvement of the indigent criminal defense services in this county; and

WHEREAS, Kenedy County Commissioners Court has agreed that in the event of loss of misuse of the funds, Kenedy County Commissioners assure that the funds will be returned in full to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED and ordered that the County Judge of this county is designated as the Authorized Official to apply for, accept, decline, modify, or cancel the grant application for the Indigent Defense Formula Grant Program and all other necessary documents to accept said grant; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Treasurer is designated as the Financial Officer for this grant.

ADOPTED this 10th day of October, 2023.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the FY 2024 Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) Formula Grant Resolution be adopted.

2024 Kenedy County Resolution

Indigent Defense Grant Program

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the Texas Government Code Section 79.037 and Texas Administrative Code Chapter 173, counties are eligible to receive grants from the Texas Indigent Defense Commission to provide improvements in indigent defense services in the county; and

WHEREAS, this grant program will assist the county in the implementation and the improvement of the indigent criminal defense services in this county; and

WHEREAS, Kenedy County Commissioners Court has agreed that in the event of loss of misuse of the funds, Kenedy County Commissioners assure that the funds will be returned in full to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED and ordered that the County Judge of this county is designated as the Authorized Official to apply for, accept, decline, modify, or cancel the grant application for the Indigent Defense Formula Grant Program and all other necessary documents to accept said grant; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Treasurer is designated as the Financial Officer for this grant.

ADOPTED this 10th day of October, 2023.

1. **Discuss & Act on the Commissioners Court by Order Granting an Exemption Pursuant to Section 262.04 Discretion Exemptions of the Local Government Code Regarding Section 262.032 of the Bidding Code Requirements**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to consider approving the Commissioners Court Order Granting an Exemption Pursuant to Section 262.024 Discretion of Exemptions of the Local Government Code regarding Section 262.032 of the Bidding Code requirements and that TJ Electric had submitted a bid in the amount of $48,640.00 to replace the Courthouse electrical panel.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that this item be tabled to the October 13, 2023 special meeting.

1. **Discuss & Act on John Womack’s Letter Regarding Audit Service’s Billing for the Month of September 2023**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to approve John Womack’s letter regarding audit services billing in the amount of $5,200.00 for the month of September 2023.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that John Womack’s letter regarding audit services billing for the month of September 2023 in the amount of $5,200.00 be approved and that if additional fees for completion of the audit are incurred, John Womack & Co., P.C. will absorb the costs.

1. **Discuss & Act on Amending the 2024 Budget Regarding the District Attorney Budget Line Item, 1000.0442.4001, Supplemental Pay from the County, By Deleting the 3% COLA and Decreasing the Line Item by $1,189.50**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to consider amending the 2024 Budget regarding the District Attorney Budget Line Item, 1000.0442.4001, Supplemental Pay from the County, by deleting the 3% COLA and decreasing the Line Item by $1,189.50.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the 2024 Budget regarding the District Attorney Budget Line Item, 1000.0442.4001, Supplemental Pay from the County, be amended by deleting the 3% COLA and decreasing the Line Item by $1,189.50.

1. **Discuss & Act on Amending the 2024 Budget Regarding the Sheriff’s Budget Line Item, 1000.0560.4001, Full Time, increase by $6,806.22, the Original Budget Used Actual Salaries Paid Instead of the Budgeted Salaries when the 3% COLA was calculated**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to consider amending the 2024 Budget regarding the Sheriff’s Budget Line Item, 1000.0560.4001, Full Time, increase by $6,806.22 because the original budget used actual salaries paid instead of the budgeted salaries when the 3% COLA was calculated.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Sheriff’s 2024 Budget, Line Item 1000.0560.4001, Full Time be amended by increasing the budget amount for Line Item 1000.0560.4001 by $6,806.22.

1. **Discuss & Act on Increasing the Jury Payment for Additional Days, After the 1st Day of Jury Service, from $40.00 to $55.00. (The State, In Accordance with HB 3474, Will Reimburse Kenedy County $14.00 For the First Day and $52.00 For the Additional Days)**

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to consider approving an increase of the jury payment for additional days, after the first day of jury service from $40 a day to $55 a day and that the state, in accordance with House Bill 3474, will reimburse Kenedy County $14 for the first day and $52 for the additional days.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the jury duty payment be increased from $40 to $55 a day.

1. **Discuss Vested Networks Proposal for Lower Phone Bills**.

Debbie Veschet and Evan Huff presented to the Commissioners Court their proposal regarding Vested Networks.

This being a report only, no vote was needed and none was taken.

1. **Discuss & Act on Updating Commissioner’s Court on the September 22nd Roundtable Discussion with Secretary of State and Surrounding Counties**.

Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator, informed the Commissioners Court of the great success of the September 22, 2023 Roundtable; that thirteen County Election Administrators, staff and the Secretary of State representative had attended; everyone had received valuable election data, forms and the knowhow to complete the forms; and the election equipment had been tested.

She further stated that the maintenance department employees had been of great help in setting up and cleaning for the Roundtable and at the Sheriff’s National Night Out. Stephanie Garza stressed that the election equipment must be stored in a locked area and recommended that a wall be constructed to enable locking up the election equipment.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator, is authorized to have a wall constructed in the Election Administrator’s Office to lock up the election equipment.

1. **Report on Healthy County Wellness Health Fair, Friday, October 20, 2023**.

Irma Longoria, County Tax Collector/Assessor, informed the Commissioners Court regarding the success of the Healthy County Wellness Health Fair held on Friday, October 20, 2023; that she is working on securing additional vendors; that HEB had flu shorts and that the Wellness Committee has the events for the year.

This being a report only, no vote was needed and none was taken.

1. **Report on Abandoned Dogs and a Horse in Sarita Townsite**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court that this item had already been addressed in the Maintenance Department report and that perhaps the horses should be added to the abandoned animal list.

No action was needed and none was taken.

1. **Discuss & Act on Replacing Plugs and Lights at the AgBarn**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to consider approving replacing plugs and lights at the Ag Barn and that there is an issue regarding the owners of animals in the Ag Barn not timely paying their fees. Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. stated that the owners of the animals at the Ag Barn told him that the fees would be paid on Friday.

Commissioner Joe Recio moved and Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that bids to be advertised to replace the lights and plugs at the Ag Barn.

1. **Discuss & Act on Advertising for a Maintenance Worker with Special Skills**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court that Omar Gonzalez, a Maintenance Department employee, had resigned from his position; therefore, there was a need to hire a new special skills maintenance employee.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that a notice of employment with special skills to be employed by the Maintenance Department be published in the Kingsville Record.

1. **Discuss & Act on Amending the Kenedy County 2021 Reapportionment Plan by Including the Amended Legal Descriptions of the Four Commissioner’s Court Precincts and Including the Maps Regarding the Sheriff’s Substation Polling Place for Precincts 3 &4 and the Maps Regarding New JP Building Polling Place for Precincts 1, 2, 3, & 4**.

Leo Villarreal informed the Commissioners Court that the amendment of the Kenedy County 2021 Reapportionment Plan included the amended legal description of the four Commissioners Court Precincts, the maps regarding the Sheriff’s Substation Polling Place for Precincts 3 and 4, and the maps regarding the new Justice of the Peace Building Polling Places for Precincts 1, 2, 3 and 4 and was ready to be approved.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the amendment of the Kenedy County 2021 Reapportionment Plan which included the amended legal description of the four Commissioners Court Precincts, the maps regarding the Sheriff’s Substation Polling Place for Precincts 3 and 4, the maps regarding the new Justice of the Peace Building Polling Places for Precincts 1, 2, 3 and 4 be approved as presented and be signed by the Kenedy County Commissioners and Veronica Vela, County Clerk.

1. **Discuss & Act on Payment of Bills**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners’ Court of the need to pay the bills for the month ending September 30, 2023. Allison Strauss, County Attorney, stated she will need a budget amendment to include the new FirstNet phone bill.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the bills and any add-on bills be paid as presented.

1. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, § 551.071, § 551.072, § 551.073, § 551.074- PERSONNEL-Daniel Almeida**

Judge Charles E. Burns called the Executive Session to order at 12:45 p.m.

No action was taken; therefore, no vote was needed.

1. **Open Session: Discuss & Act on Items Addressed in Executive Session**.

Judge Charles E. Burns called the Open Session to order at 1:03 p.m.

No action was taken in Open Session regarding the matters discussed in Executive Session.

1. **Adjournment**.

There being no further business at this time to come before the Commissioners Court, Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Joe Recio seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Commissioners Court be adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

/s/ Charles E. Burns\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Charles E. Burns, County Judge

ATTESTED BY:

/s/ Veronica Vela\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Veronica Vela, Clerk of Commissioners Court