THE STATE OF TEXAS \* COMMISSIONERS COURT

COUNTY OF KENEDY \* OF KENEDY COUNTY, TEXAS

On the 5th day of September, 2023, at 1:30 o'clock p.m., a special meeting of the Commissioners Court of Kenedy County, Texas, was held in the Kenedy County Courthouse.

**Commissioners present:**

Charles E. Burns, County Judge

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

Allison Strauss, County Attorney

Leo Villarreal, Administrative Assistant

Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator

Irma Longoria, County Tax Assessor

Seferino Gutierrez, Maintenance Supervisor

Patti Fain, JP

Sandra Guzman, Sheriff’s Office

**Absent**:

Joe Recio, Commissioner, Precinct No. 1

Cynthia Salinas, County Treasurer

Ramon Salinas, County Sheriff

Jana Norrell, JP

Jerry Miller, JP

Cecelia Schulz, JP

1. **Judge Burns Called the Meeting to Order**.

Judge Charles E. Burns called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**.

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

1. **Receive Public Comments**.

James Carr addressed the Commissioners Court regarding the need to spray for mosquitos in Precincts 1, 3 & 4. He further commented on the height of grass that should be mowed, tree limbs hanging over the streets, existence of trees in the alley ways which prohibit fire engines from entering and addressing a structure fire from an alley, and maintenance of the alleys with asphalt for it is an on-going problem. He further requested the status of placing water tanks along Highway 77 and suggested that a budget line item be created regarding the water tanks.

No other comments were made.

1. **Conduct a Public Hearing on the Proposed 2024 Budget**.

Judge Charles E. Burns, at 1:35 p.m., informed the Commissioners Court that the Public Hearing on the proposed 2024 Budget of $7,627,802 was now in session; that the Public Notice regarding the proposed Budget had been published in the Kingsville Record on August 31, 2023.

No member of the public came forward to address the Proposed 2024 Budget; therefore, the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2024 Budget be closed at 1:42 p.m.

1. **Discuss & Act on Adopting the 2024 Budget**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to adopt the 2024 Budget of $7,627,802.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the 2024 Budget be adopted in the amount of $7,627,802 subject to the following revisions:

Increase the County Sheriff’s salary to $75,000 in order for him to be eligible to receive funds under SB22; that the County Attorney and Sheriff add an additional budget line item to comply with SB22 and to increase the District Judge’s attorney fees budget line item from $45,000 to $50,000.

1. **Conduct a Public Hearing on the Proposed 2023 Tax Rate**.

Judge Charles E. Burns, at 1:43 p.m., informed the Commissioners Court that the Public Hearing on the proposed 2023 Tax Rate of $0.553760 per $100 valuation was now in session and that the Public Notice regarding the proposed tax rate was published August 31, 2021 in the Kingsville Record.

No member of the public came forward to address the proposed 2023 Tax Rate; therefore, the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2023 Tax Rate be closed at 1:44 p.m.

1. **Discuss & Act on Adopting the 2023 Tax Rate**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to adopt the 2023 Tax Rate of $0.5563760 per $100 valuation.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the 2023 Rate be $0.5563760 per $100 valuation be adopted as presented.

1. **Discuss & Act on 3-2-1 Tax Discount**.

Irma Longoria, Tax Assessor/Collector and Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to consider whether the 3-2-1% tax discounts for October, November and December with no split payments should be approved.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the 3-2-1% tax discounts for October, November and December with no split payments be approved.

1. **Discuss & Act on Ordering the Constitutional Amendment Election Set for November 7, 2023**.

Judge Charles E. Burns and Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator, informed the Commissioners Court of the need to approve the Order Calling the Constitutional Amendment Election set for November 7, 2023 and that it be posted on the Kenedy County website.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Order Calling the November 7, 2023 Constitutional Amendment Election is approved as presented and be posted on the Kenedy County website.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving the Notice of Election Set for November 7, 2023**.

Judge Charles E. Burns and Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator, informed the Commissioners Court of the need to approve the Notice of the November 7, 2023 Constitutional Amendment Election and it be posted on the Kenedy County website.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Notice of the November 7, 2023 Election is approved and be posted as presented and be posted on the Kenedy County website.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving the Election Administrator to Host a Round Table Discussion on September 22nd, 2023 with a Secretary of State Representative and Attendees from Willacy, Cameron, Jim Hogg, Brooks, Jim Wells, Kleberg, and Duval Counties, along with the City of Kingsville**.

Stephanie Garza, Elections Administrator, informed the Commissioners Court of the need for her to host a round table discussion on September 22, 2023, regarding election matters with a Secretary of State representative and attendees from Willacy, Cameron, Jim Hogg, Brooks, Jim Wells, Kleberg and Duval Counties along with the City of Kingsville in the District Courtroom of the Kenedy County Courthouse.

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 host a round table discussion on September 22, 2023, regarding elections matters with a Secretary of State representative and attendees from Willacy, Cameron, Jim Hogg, Brooks, Jim Wells, Kleberg and Duval Counties along with the City of Kingsville in the District Courtroom of the Kenedy County Courthouse.

1. **Discuss & Act on Approving the Training for the Election Workers on Forms and Responsibilities with a Pay Rate of $15.00 Per Hour, Not to Exceed 10 Hours of Pay**.

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners Court of the need to train Election Workers regarding forms and election responsibilities with a pay rate of $15.00 per hour, not to exceed 10 hours of pay.

Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that a training be held for Election Workers to train them regarding forms and election responsibilities with a pay rate of $15.00 per hour, not to exceed 10 hours of pay.

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

Judge Charles E. Burns informed the Commissioners’ Court of the need to pay the bills presented.

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

1. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, § 551.071, § 551.072, § 551.073, § 551.074**

An Executive Session was not held.

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

There not being an Executive Session, an Open Session was not held.

1. **Adjournment**.

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners’ Court, Commissioner Sarita Armstrong-Hixon moved and Commissioner Israel Vela, Jr. seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed that the Kenedy County Commissioners Court be adjourned at 2:05 o'clock p.m.

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

Charles E. Burns, County Judge

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

Veronica Vela, County Clerk