**The State of Texas §**

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**County of Edwards §**

**BE IT REMEMBERED** that on this 18th day of August, 2016, at 10:00 o’clock a.m. there came on and was held in the City of Rocksprings, Edwards County, Texas, at the Edwards County Courthouse therein, a Special Open Meeting of the Commissioners’ Court of Edwards County, Texas. The Proposed Agenda for this Special Open Meeting of the Commissioners’ Court of Edwards County, Texas was posted on August 14, 2016 at 9:29 o’clock a.m.

Present were:

Honorable William Epperson, Commissioner of Precinct One

Honorable Lee Sweeten, Commissioner of Precinct Two

Honorable Matt Fry, Commissioner of Precinct Three

Honorable Andrew Barnebey, Commissioner of Precinct Four

Honorable Souli Asa Shanklin, County Judge

Honorable Olga Lydia Reyes, County and District Clerk

1. **Determination of quorum; Call to Order.** The Open Meeting was called to order at 10:17 o’clock a.m. by Judge Shanklin. The roll was called by Clerk Reyes. All Commissioners were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the Court was led in the prayer by Commissioner Epperson.

Also present for this meeting were Reina Perez, Annie Mitchell, and Lupe Enriquez.

Judge Shanklin began by giving a brief overview of today’s Budget Workshop. Bobby Zesch will be here at 10:30 p.m. since a decision needs to be made on the specific vision and dental plans that will be presented to the County employees during open enrollment.

The County Treasurer furnished a proposed budget dated 08/17/2016.

The budget includes the County’s payment of the local Senior’s Center monthly electric bills; this is for the center only and does not include a thrift store.

Next, the Judge gave a brief overview of the County Agent’s budget. He discussed the line item #0335: Trapper Expense. This line item is set at $47,100. Wildlife Damage Management is set at $25,000; these line items will remain as is. These amounts are set by agreement with TDA. This will be in the County Agent’s budget as he is the liaison between the County and the State.

The Judge suggests that we need to take care of the Detention Center and the Sheriff’s Department. As for the employees in the other offices, they will be taken care of during the 2017-2018 budget year. The bottom line is that all of these other offices is staying the same with the exception of the longevity raises. Commissioner Fry would like to approve the department budgets that are not changing and get them out of the way. Shanklin agreed. We need to see what the revenue is.

At this point, the meeting was called to order.

2. **DELIBERATE, CONSIDER and/or TAKE ACTION ON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:**

[Clerk’s Note: Items a and b were taken in reverse order.]

b. **Discuss and/or approve Democratic election workers. – Melissa Martinez.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to approve the Democratic election workers for the 2016 November General Election; Commissioner Barnebey seconded the motion. Noting no opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

a. **Edwards County Budget Workshop. – Judge Shanklin.** Commissioner Sweeten began by addressing the Trapper expense and the Wildlife Damage Management expense. He sees no problem with leaving these amounts as they are. These amounts will still be left in the County Agent’s budget as he is the liaison between the State and the County in these matters.

Insurance agent Bobby Zesch arrived and was recognized to speak by the Court. He disseminated information regarding the Guardian, Principal, and Ameritas – Focus Plan policies. He gave comparison rates for all insurance companies and policies. If the County elects to stay with Guardian, there will be a 5% increase in the monthly rates. If the County renews with Guardian, the employees will have to select whether they want to use out-of-network providers or stay in-network. Commissioner Sweeten inquired if the County were to switch over to Principal, for example, from Guardian, would the employee rewards accumulated also switch over. He was told that they would. He also asked if one company could be selected for dental insurance and a different company for vision insurance. Zesch replied that as a County, this could be done but Guardian was a package deal. Commissioner Epperson stated that it seemed like Principal was a simpler choice. After much discussion and deliberation, it was decided that it would be simpler to remain with the Guardian plan for the employees.

Commissioner Sweeten suggested that the next budget workshop should be scheduled. After discussing several dates, the Court set the next budget workshop for August 23, 2016 at 9:00 o’clock a.m.

**Budgets with No Major Changes.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion, for purposes of the budget workshop, to leave the following budgets “as is” on the Edwards County Proposed Budget 2016-2017, as prepared 08/17/2016: County & District Clerk, County Health Officer, County Agent (add line item for Grants – Revenue and Grants – Payments), Constable (add longevity raise), County Attorney, Court – County & District, Emergency Management Coordinator, Justice of the Peace (he moved funds between line items), Public Facilities, Tax Assessor/Collector (add $2,000 for a part time position and allot only $2475 for office supplies and change the title of line item 0330 to DMV Equipment), County Treasurer (add longevity raise and funds for new lease on a Xerox machine). Commissioner Fry provided the second to this motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

**County Tax Assessor/Collector.** Tax Assessor/Collector Bean appeared to address the Court. He requested part-time help during tax time and election time. This position would be set at $8.25/hour and would be 12 hours a week for 4 months during the stated time periods. Commissioner Sweeten suggested setting the amount potentially awarded for this request at $2500.00; Commissioner Epperson suggested dropping it to down to $2000.00. Line item #0300 for office supplies should drop down to $2475.00 and line item #0330 should instead be titled “DMV/Equipment.” His Deputy Clerk’s 2% longevity raise will be researched by the County Treasurer to see if it should be given.

**Edwards Central Appraisal District.** Annie Smith appeared on behalf of the ECAD. The line item that corresponds to this budget is line item #0610: Appraisal District which is set at $130,907.00. She stated that there was an $85.00 increase in their total proposed budget for this year and this would be evenly proportioned between all of the entities. The Court reviewed the proposed budget. Commissioner Sweeten stated that he would abstain from voting on this item since he is on the Appraisal Board. Commissioner Barnebey made the motion to approve the ECAD Budget; Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 4/0 (in favor) with 1 abstention.

**Edwards County Road Department.**

Judge Shanklin stated that the requirement for the Road Department CDLs were for purposes of obtaining the TxDOT Health Certificates which were required for insurance purposes. The County was having some problems with health issues in the Road Department. He spoke to Robert Pena, Road Supervisor, yesterday about having a construction crew and two maintenance crews. There would also be a service crew. What the County does not have enough of are operators. Shanklin stated that if the Court still wants to require the health certificate, then it can probably waive the CDL requirement for the operators. This is what the County needs the most. The Court then segued into a discussion of County roads and the equipment purchased.

At this point, the County Treasurer came back into the courtroom and stated that the Tax Assessor/Collector’s deputy clerk was not due to receive a longevity raise this year.

The Court went back to its discussion of the Road Department. Commissioner Sweeten and Commissioner Fry began a discussion of safety equipment and road crew positions needed. The proposed crews discussed would be 3 person crews. Equipment that is of no use to the County needs to be listed and sold. The yard needs to be cleaned up. Another discussion of the CDL requirement also took place. Commissioner Sweeten commented that clarification was needed on the CDL/health certificate issue. Judge Shanklin stated that every employee, with the exception of elected officials, could be drug tested. Commissioner Fry stated that he would also like clarification on this issue. Epperson stated that everyone that goes through TxDOT has a CDL.

The Court was called into recess by Judge Shanklin at 12:00 noon for a 45-minute lunch break. The Court was called back to order at 12:49 p.m.

A discussion about line items #0150: Road Employee’s Salary (proposed at $201,240.00) and line item #0151: Road Supervisor’s Salary (proposed at $38,868.00) and the salary structure ensued. Commissioner Fry stated that as of the current date, the County has only paid out $94,853.00 in salaries even though $201,240.00 had been budgeted. The money is there, it has just not been used, in his opinion. He believes that if the Court budgets the same amount, we should be fine this year. This amount budgeted will get the Road Department at least 3 more employees. He doesn’t believe that the Court should argue the bottom line. We’ve got a good amount of money for the employees; we just need to get the employees. New equipment is irrelevant until we get the employees needed. The way that this item has been budgeted, the Court budgeted for 6 people and a road superintendent.

After more discussion, Commissioner Sweeten suggested leaving this topic and moving over to consider the Sheriff’s Office budget. Before concluding, Commissioner Fry just stated that he would like to see more of the surplus funds from the Road Department going into asphalt.

**Sheriff’s Office/Detention Center.**

The first line item discussed was #0395: Repairs and Maintenance (proposed at $13,500.00). This should be transferred to the Detention Center budget. In the 2015-2016 Budget, it was listed under general repair and maintenance. The amount will be transferred between budgets but will remain the same. It was ultimately decided that this proposed amount would be raised to $16,500.00.

The rest of the Sheriff’s Detention Center budget and Sheriff’s Department budget was reviewed.

3. **Set Time and Date.** The Court set the next budget workshop for August 23, 2016 at 9:00 o’clock a.m. The first public hearing on the proposed budget was set for Wednesday, September 7, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.

4. **New Business.** The burn ban was lifted.

5. **Adjourn.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to adjourn this special, open meeting of the Edwards County Commissioner Court. Commissioner Epperson seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 4/0. The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 A.M.

 APPROVED:

 SOULI ASA SHANKLIN

 Edwards County Judge

Attest:

OLGA LYDIA REYES

Edwards County and District Clerk