**The State of Texas §**

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**County of Edwards §**

**BE IT REMEMBERED** that on this 8th day of August, 2017, at 9:00 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 Regular Open Meeting of the Commissioners’ Court of Edwards County, Texas. The Proposed Agenda for this Regular Open Meeting of the Commissioners’ Court of Edwards County, Texas was posted on August 4, 2017 at 8:55 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 9:01 o’clock a.m. by Judge Shanklin. The roll was called by Clerk Reyes. The Court was led in an opening prayer by Commissioner Epperson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. All Commissioners were present.

2. **Open Forum.** There were no participants in the Open Forum.

3. **Staff Reports.** Commissioner Epperson asked for a status update on the Oscar Reavis road. Judge Shanklin informed him that this matter would be discussed during the budget workshop in the 11:00 o’clock meeting. Commissioner Barnebey asked about the large repair that was done on a freezer. Judge Shanklin responded that this freezer had problems for some time that were just treated by putting a “band aid” on them; it finally had to have major repairs done to alleviate the problems.

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

a. **Prior Minutes.**

**July 11, 2017.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to approve the minutes of July 11, 2017; Commissioner Barnebey seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

b. **Burn Ban.** We have received abundant rains in the past few days. The Court is of the opinion that the burn ban can be lifted at this time. Commissioner Fry made the motion to lift the burn ban; Commissioner Epperson seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

c. **Discuss and/or take action on dental and vision benefits. – Bobby Zesch, Zesch and Pickett Insurance.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to keep our contract with Guardian Insurance and the dental and vision benefits that we’ve currently got. Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

d. **Discuss and/or take action to amend Mailtrail Valley Ranch, tracts 49B, 51A, and 58A, in Precinct 3. – Bill Cocke.** Bill Cocke appeared to address the Court. He stated that the changes made with regards to this plat were administrative in nature. Commissioner Fry made the motion to approve the amended Mailtrail Valley Ranch plat for tracts 49B, 51A, and 58A; Commissioner Sweeten seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

e. **Discuss and/or take action to approve Interlocal Agreement with Middle Rio Grande for 9-1-1 Regional Planning Services. – Judge Shanklin.** This agreement mimics the one entered into last year between the County and the Middle Rio Grande COG for the 9-1-1 Regional Planning Services. Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement with the Middle Rio Grande for 9-1-1 Regional Planning Services. Commissioner Barnebey seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

f. **Discuss and/or approve of election Judges for Republican Party. – Kathy Walker.** Republican Chairperson Kathy Walker was not able to be present in Court today, but she has previously submitted her list of Election Judges for the Republican Party for 2017-2018. Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to approve the election Judges for the Republican Party as submitted by the Republican Chairperson; Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

g. **Discuss and/or approve any needed changes to the Edwards County Sheriffs’ and Constables’ Fees, as required under Texas Local Government Code Section 118.131. – Olga Lydia Reyes.** Reyes reports that, as far as she knows, there are no needed changes to our fees this year. All fees were updated this year and should remain current. Commissioner Epperson made the motion to leave our Edwards County Sheriffs’ and Constables’ Fees as they currently stand; Commissioner Sweeten seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

h. **Consider and/or act upon all matters regarding a 2017/2018 Colonia Construction Fund Application to TDA identifying the Miller Creek Crossing Drainage Improvements and publish public hearing notice for same. – Carl Esser.** Esser appeared to address the Court regarding the aforementioned fund application. Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to authorize Esser to go forward with all options for funding for the Miller Creek Crossing Draining Improvements project and give him authorization to conduct the public hearings and all other administrative steps that are needed for the submission of the 2017/2018 Colonia Construction Fund Application to the Texas Department of Agriculture. Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Epperson asked for future updates.

i. **Consider and/or act upon establishing a Selection Review Committee to determine scope of service requested, determine written selection criteria to evaluate respondents, and to select a Grant Administrator and Engineer for possible Community Development Block Grant disaster recovery (CDBG-DR) Application and project identification to Texas General Land Office. Proposals to be received September 12, 2017. – Carl Esser.** Esser appeared to address the Court. This matter deals with the flood event from Memorial Day 2015. As a result of that event, there are additional funds that have come down to Texas from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Texas General Land Office is the administrator of these funds. Those counties that were impacted by these FEMA events (nos. 4223 and 4225) will be allowed to be eligible to submit an application for activities that could be identified and/or addressed as a result of the 2015 flood. Miller Creek Crossing could be a consideration. There is also a provision for generators. A county can also submit an application for infrastructure improvements; one could be for drainage and the other could be for generators. What we are considering today is to initiate the procurement process and select a grant writer and engineer to put these applications together; the deadline to submit these applications is November 10, 2017. Sweeten asked if we needed up front money for engineer. Esser responded that it would not; however, any funds expended can be taken out of funds received if the application is approved. Sweeten motion to proceed with the Community Development Block Grant disaster recovery (CDBG-DR) Application process and project identification to Texas General Land Office; Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

j. **Consider Correspondence received from TDEM regarding 2016 flooding event. – Carl Esser.** Esser reported that he attended a meeting with the Texas Department of Agriculture on July 12th of this year. At that time, he was informed that the TDA had received a letter from the Texas Department of Emergency Management requesting resources for Edwards County as a result of the 2016 flood (this letter was dated May 2017, but was received on July 12, 2017). After the flood event, the County put together a Disaster Summary Outline and the County proclaimed the County a disaster area on Sept 24th and 25th due to that wash out. On January 10, 2017, the County authorized the submission of disaster relief application. TDEM came out here and met with Comms. Sweeten and Fry and they drive down White Mountain Road and down Cedar Creek Road and looked at all the damage. After this, the County never received a letter from TDEM. As previously stated, the letter did not arrive until July 2017. Therefore, Thursday of last week, a notice appeared in the local newspaper that the County is going to submit the application on the 11th of August in the amount of $350,000. Esser states that he feels confident that the County will receive an award as a result of that flood event. TDA has asked Esser for a status update on the application; Esser told them that the application will be submitted this week. Commissioner Fry made the motion to submit the application; Commissioner Sweeten seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

k. **Presentation about invasive species Arundo Donax. – Jenni Lawrence, Nueces River Authority.** Jenni Lawrence from the Nueces River Authority appeared to address the Court regarding the aforementioned invasive species. She presented the Court with a pamphlet on developing and protecting water resources in South Texas. The species in question erupted in Montell in the late 1990’s and the River Authority has worked to control it for years. Last year, though, the focus of their attention to Arundo Donax switched from a control effort to a focus on prevention. In furtherance of this effort, they turned to the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife and asked for funding in this regard. They were successful in obtaining funding from Parks and Wildlife to create an Arundo Donax prevention program that could be presented and distributed statewide. They presented a slide show for the Court and asked for commissioner input and suggestions for improvements that could be made to the slide show.

5. **New Business.** No new business was discussed.

6. **Set time and date for next meeting.** The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Edwards County Commissioners Court will be on September 12, 2017 at 9:00 o’clock a.m. There will also be a Special Open Meeting of the Edwards County Commissioner Court at 11:00 o’clock a.m. this morning.

7. **Pay bills.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to pay the bills; Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

8. **Adjourn.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Barnebey seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

 APPROVED:

 SOULI ASA SHANKLIN

 Edwards County Judge

Attest:

OLGA LYDIA REYES

Edwards County and District Clerk

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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 11:00 o’clock a.m. by Judge Shanklin. All Commissioners were present.

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

a. **Discuss and/or consider EMS Budget increaser request. – Paula Epperson.** Laurie Clements, the EMS Director appeared to review the EMS Budget with the Court. She is also the only paramedic that is currently working for our local EMS. They are asking for an increase in funding of $12,000 per year from the Court. Last year at this time their run volume was at 70-80 calls; at this same point this year, they are already at 140 calls. This increases their fuel, supplies, and payroll expenses. EMS is also averaging more medical calls than trauma calls. There are 11-12 medical calls per month vs. 6-7 trauma calls per month. They presented the Court with their Profit and Loss Budget Overview and a copy of their Annual Financial Report for the Year Ended September 2016, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. They report that their collection rate is about 30% due to the fact that a high percentage of their calls are for unfunded patients. Commissinoer Sweeten suggested the coordination of a fundraiser with the Edwards County Fire Department to offset the need for increased funding from the County. Clements responded that she has been in contact with the Fire Department and they are not going to have a fundraiser this year. They will begin with their annual raffle earlier in the year. Shanklin asked if she had already acquired a list of absent landowners from either the Tax Office or the Appraisal District. Paula Kay Epperson, from the audience, responded that she had a list that she acquired when she was preparing their annual mail-outs. There is a preliminary budget that has been prepared that takes into account the requested $12,000 asked for by the EMS, however Commissioner Sweeten and Judge Shanklin made sure everyone understood that there was still a possibility that the County might not be able to fund the entire amount being requested.

**b.** **Discuss and/or consider Preservation of South West Texas Wildlife donation. – Sam Epperson.** Judge Shanklin stated that a $25,000 annual donation has been penciled in to the budget for the County Trappers. They have requested a $1,500/ mo. increase due to an increase in trapper salaries by $500/month. There are three trappers that service Edwards County. This would be an $18,000/year funding request. Commissioner Epperson questioned whether the dues that the landowners paid to the Preservation of South West Texas Wildlife didn’t help to offset the increase in trapper salaries since these had gone up. Shanklin stated that the requested funding increase would not fit within the County’s budget.

c. **Discuss and/or consider Road and Bridge Budget. – Jason Arp.** Arp appeared to present his budget requests on behalf of the Road Department. He presented the Court with a spreadsheet for his proposed budget. He increased his equipment line item from $20,000 to $80,000 to provide for the down payment on a four year municipal lease plan for two pieces of equipment: a dump truck and a water truck. He would, in the future, like to phase out some of the older equipment, which has to be frequently repaired and ties up his resources. Epperson suggested that the County could look into state government programs to assist with the funding of the purchase of this equipment to help offset some of the County’s costs. There was some discussion regarding the employees and tanker endorsements. Shanklin stated that if the effective tax rate was left the same as the previous year, this would provide a slight increase (5% to 6%) in revenue.

d. **Discuss and/or take action to allow landowner to maintain a section of CR650. – Jason Arp, Road Superintendent.** There is a particular landowner that wants to keep us from maintaining this section of CR360. Arp is working on the top section of CR650. He wants to know whether to maintain it. Sweeten suggested that a maintainer be driven up and down the road. Arp is of the opinion that it is still a county road. At one time, Shanklin reports that this person had come to Commissioner’s Court to petition for a closing of this road; that person was told that the Court wouldn’t have a problem with abandoning this County Road if every landowner along that road that drove it past that point would sign an affidavit to this effect. Not one affidavit was ever presented to this Court. No action was taken.

e. **Discuss and/or consider proposed tax rate for FY 18 for Edwards County, if proposed tax rate will exceed the rollback rate or the effective tax rate (whichever is lower), take record vote and schedule public hearings. – Judge Shanklin.** The proposed tax rate for FY 2018 is as follows: General Fund is .5578%; Road & Bridge (LRSM) is .1285%; the Interest and Sinking Fund is .0210%. The combined tax rate is .7073% which is comprised of the General Fund and the LRSM; Interest and Sinking is not included in the combined tax rate. Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to publish the proposed tax rates and the proposed salaries for the elected officials, including adding Jason Arp, Road Superintendent to this list. They must be published for a period of two weeks. Commissioner Barnebey seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 4/0, with Commissioner Epperson abstaining from the vote.

f. **Discuss and/or consider setting Elected Official Salaries (County Clerk, County Attorney, County Treasurer, County Tax Assessor, County Constable,) for FY 18 to be published in local paper. – Judge Shanklin.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to publish the elected official salaries in the local paper; Commissioner Barnebey seconded the motion. No Commissioner noting any opposition, the motion carried 5/0.

3. **Set time and date for next meeting.** A special meeting (public hearing/budget workshop) of the Edwards County Commissioners’ Court will be scheduled, date to be determined. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Edwards County Commissioners Court will be on September 12, 2017 at 9:00 o’clock a.m.

4. **New Business.** No new business was discussed.

5. **Adjourn.** Commissioner Sweeten made the motion to adjourn this special meeting of the Edwards County Commissioner’s Court; Commissioner Barnebey seconded the motion. This Special Meeting of the Edwards County Commissioners Court was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

 APPROVED:

 SOULI ASA SHANKLIN

 Edwards County Judge

Attest:

OLGA LYDIA REYES

Edwards County and District Clerk