

**STATE OF TEXAS:**

**COUNTY OF MILAM:**

**BE IT REMEMBERED, that on Monday, the 12th day of August A. D. 2013, the Commissioners' Court of Milam County, Texas, convened in Regular Session in the Commissioners' Courtroom, Milam County Courthouse, 102 S. Fannin, Cameron Texas, with the following members of the Court present, to-wit:**

**DAVID BARKEMEYER, COUNTY JUDGE**

**CHUCK BALCH, COMMISSIONER PRECINCT NO.1**

**KENNETH HOLLAS, COMMISSIONER PRECINCT NO. 2**

**JOHN FISHER, COMMISSIONER PRECINCT NO. 3**

**JEFF MUEGGE, COMMISSIONER PRECINCT NO. 4**

**BARBARA VANSAN, COUNTY CLERK**

**Others absent, to-wit:**

**John Redington, Legal Counsel**

**And the proclamation having been made the Court was in session, the following business came on to be considered:**

**#1 – CALL MEETING TO ORDER & ESTABLISH QUORUM – All Present**

**#2 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – U. S. Flag. “Honor the Texas Flag”, I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one State, Under God, one and indivisible**

**#3 – MINUTES – Motion by Commissioner Muegge, seconded by Commissioner Hollas to approve the July 26 & 30, 2013 minutes as presented to the court. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**#4 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Larry Rose discussing Roads – handout for review is available in the County Clerk's Office.**

About three month's ago, my commissioner and the county judge came to our house and asked about trimming brush west of the house and I told them to do it if they wanted to. I also had requested several times to get a drainage opened to the west so that my driveway could drain; the gravel and rocks kept out of my frontage and they agreed. The next day or two here came a shredder and shredded the bushes plus two cedar trees south of our house that were inside our fence and not on the side of the road that would block the view of the traffic. The side that would block the view was not touched and

remains untouched yet. Ours was the only frontage done this way on the road.

Our roads are improperly maintained due to the way the graders are utilized, i.e. (blades set wrong).

None of the suggestions that experts advised three or four years ago are followed. I have requested several times that we follow said suggestions because this would crown the roads, clear the drainage ways, and reclaim the materials that have been graded off to the sides for the last twenty years.

We do not have a usable road when it rains even though a large amount of tax is paid on over 100 oil wells in our area. The corduroy effect or ridges remains after grading under the current style.

We do not feel taxes should be raised or tax rates increased until our county has hired or retrained people to maintain the road to a usable condition.

We've heard excuses for twenty years. It is time we see results and improvement in all the above mentioned items.

I've been told about a five million dollar bond idea for the roads. Why? They'd just grade it out to the side and it would probably be more red clay bought from the same people as before.

Twenty five years ago we had bar ditches. Now, we have humps causing the road to be the ditch!! If our elected officials refuse to hear us now they will hear us in a future election. For years our county officials have attempted intimidation,

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ignoring our needs, and increasing our taxes. It is time for a change, not another increase. With all due respect, Larry & Laura Rose County Road 358

**#5 – FINANCIAL / AUDITORS REPORT – Refer to the POWER POINT on the Milam County website.**

**July 31 2013 report - \$746,337 total expenditures – should go in 2014 with reserves – all departments doing great managing budget**

**#6 – TREASURERS REPORT – Refer to the POWER POINT on the Milam County Website.**

**#7 - JP OFFICE FINANCIAL UPDATE – Refer to the Power Point on the Milam County Website.**

**Much appreciated revenue.**

## **#8 – COMMISSIONERS PRECINCT UPDATES –**

**Pct 1 – gravel work on CR 217 & 218; chip seal work; 22<sup>nd</sup> street; regular maintenance**

**Pct 2 – hauling gravel; 133 loop; 235 Minerva; base on Texas St. in Rockdale**

**Pct 3 – parking lot @ Emergency Shelter that we inherited; removing limbs**

**Pct 4 – shredding; spraying blind corners; helping Tank (Pct 1); Texas Road Glue on CR304**

**#9 – COURT UPDATE – Refer to the POWER POINT on the Milam County Website.**

**#10 – COUNTY AUDITOR PRESENTATION – Danica Lara made presentation with handout – WHAT IS A COUNTY AUDITOR? WHY HAVE A COUNTY AUDITOR? DUTY / RESPONSIBILITY with AUTHORITY – handout for review is available in the County Clerk's Office.**

The County Auditor's office was created to provide an independent oversight of the financial transactions of the County. Although the County Auditor is under the direction and appointed by the District Judge, she/he works together with the Commissioners' Court to maintain the integrity of financial administration in County government.

Several functions of the County Auditor's office are – (See attached handout)

- Serves as a check on the financial operations of other county offices including continuous access to all books and records
- Serves as a checks and balances on the Treasurer's office regarding funds deposited into the County treasury
- Approves bills for payment for all depts. – Average 900-1000 invoices/month
- Assists the County Judge in preparing the budget as stated in the LGC
- Handles auto liability, property(bldg & contents), mobile equipment insurances
- Tracks fixed assets, prepares Indigent Defense Task Force Grant report and annual Tobacco expenditure report
- Prepares monthly reports for Commissioners' Court and generates any other reports requested by other depts.
- Provides general information and assistance when requested
- Never a dull moment!!!

Staff includes 1 employee – Tiffany Greene is the Human Resources/Auditing Assistant.

She works very hard and contends with multiple duties. Some of her duties include

- Processes all new employee and retiring employee paperwork
- Answers any employee questions that arise
- Handles all health and voluntary insurance issues
- Prepares and files all unemployment and workers' comp claims
- Helps perform the Accts Payable disbursement cycle of processing invoices – very time consuming. This also serves as a checks and balances with the Treasurer's office.
- Records all vacation and sick leave for employees
- Reconciles multiple bank accounts which also serves as a major checks and balances with the Treasurer's office

Recently, the County decided to convert from cash basis accounting to full accrual basis accounting as of January, 2014. However, due to budget constraints such as the capital murder trial and Luminant issues, we will hopefully switch over in 2015. Also, there are significant costs associated with converting to full accrual. It will cost approximately \$30,000 for the conversion. Some of the expenses include, but are not limited to

- Hiring an outside firm to perform an actuarial study for the County's post employment benefits program
- Annual external audit will be more expensive due to lengthier audit time period and more in-depth fieldwork.
- Increased personnel costs – will require at least 1 part-time employee to perform extra/added duties
- All depts. will need time to prepare for the switch which may include some software upgrades

Full accrual seems to be a more intense reporting process than the County's current cash basis of accounting. Full accrual is used to measure the financial position of an entity and show a more accurate net profit. Revenue is reported when earned, not when cash is paid. Expenses must then be matched for the time period. This type of accounting is used to estimate the revenue and expenses of a given period, to try to determine the amount of profit the entity can expect to achieve.

The County's external audit firm, Pattillo, Brown & Hill are in the process of performing the financial audit for fiscal year 2012. Most of the fieldwork was done during the month of June. They are required to provide the results to the County by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

**JUDGE – bond rating slipped to Triple D; causes higher rate if need to borrow money; hopefully next year we will be better than we are now; “I don’t know how I would get my services done without Danica, she is invaluable to the County”.**

**#11 – REVIEW CALCULATION & PUBLISH EFFECTIVE TAX ROLL AND ROLLBACK RATE – Connie Morrow present; Kolette absent**

**Judge – explaining – take out of 2013 freeze property; Luminant \$80Million less this year than last; 3.55cents more; 63.55 cents this year (line 24); 63cents plan for tax rate for next year; Rollback @ 68.21 cents; “Not a good thing to raise tax rate, I agree with Larry Rose”**

**#12 – 2013 EFFECTIVE TAX RATE & ROLLBACK – Don’t have to vote on it today – vote needs to be September 9 2013**

**#13 – REVIEW 2014 BUDGET PROPOSAL – Displayed at the County Clerk’s Office and on the County Website; most likely could have made it without the tax increase if it weren’t for the murder trial; this is a good budget for 2014.**

**VANSA - Commissioners Court Meeting – August 12 2012**

#13 – Review the status of the 2014 Budget Proposal

If I remember correctly at one of the first workshops where laying off employees was considered I asked “how it would be determined which offices would be letting an employee go & what salary would be taken out and I was told that the “lowest salary” would be taken out of each of the four offices & the court would make that decision”.

July 30 2013 was the Budget Workshop where 9 Milam County Employees were mentioned for “consideration of early retirement if the Court approved temporary changes in our Retirement Policy” –

Out of the 9 employees, Linda Hall was one listed that could take the early retirement - I did discuss the “temporary early retirement change with Linda & she informed me that she was not interested in retirement at this time”.

August 8 2013 the 2014 Budget was filed in my office – I reviewed the salary line item for the Deputies in the County Clerk’s Office, District Clerks Office, Tax Office & JP3 and found that Linda Hall’s salary of \$28500 was taken out – I don’t see her

deciding to retire at the end of this year & I want assurance that she will continue to get her current salary of \$28500 even though it is not in the 2014 budget and NO this is not the lowest salary in my budget.

**“It’s sad that the focus is more on the murder trial than on OUR EMPLOYEES”.**

When does the court plan to approve the “temporary early retirement changes” to the handbook? Why take out a salary of someone who hasn’t committed to retirement? **Judge – ok, we’ll take care of that**

**#14 – PUBLIC HEARINGS – August 26 and September 4 @ 9:00 a.m.**

**#15 – DISCRETIONARY FUNDS –Motion by Commissioner Balch, seconded by Commissioner Fisher to approve the Discretionary Project Applications. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**Monica Stewart explained the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Discretionary Project Application and asked the court for their approval. This would bring more assests to the County; BACKUP GENERATOR which can also be used through the county for other reasons; 10% County funded & can be one of the commissioners housing it; other funding for attending two meetings**

**Patsy Gaines – just because we are asking for it doesn’t mean we will get it**

**Balch – Pct 1 will house it.**

**#16 – VACATE CR378 – Motion by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Muegge to TABLE this item. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**Fisher – Richard Meyer purchased land in this area & the vacating would allow him another form of entry to his property.**

**Judge said John Redington told him there are steps we have to take to make this happen. Judge recommending “tabling”.**

**“LETTER FROM Mr. Meyer to Commissioner Fisher states “I would like to have the road officially vacated so that I can move my entry gate down to County Road 237”.**

**#17 – ELECTIONS / CENTRAL COUNTING STATION (CSS) PERSONNEL – Motion by Commissioner Muegge, seconded by Commissioner Hollas to approve the Order for Establishing Central Counting Station (CCS) Personnel. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**Sherry Mueck, Election Clerk explained – this request is for the November 5 2013 Constitutional Amendment Election – has to be done each year for the election year - only the personnel appointed are allowed in the tabulating office – County Clerk Vansa was not listed because she is the Election Coordinator for the County.**

**#18 – ELECTIONS / JUDGE RESIGNS – Motion by Judge Barkemeyer, seconded by Commissioner Fisher to accept the resignation of Lois Ammerman, Precinct 2 Election Judge. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**Judge asked who is the replacement.**

**Mueck** .....Election Judge is decided by the winner of the last Gubernatorial Race per precinct, and in this precinct that was the Republican party.

**#19 – ELECTIONS / HART EQUIPMENT – Motion by Commissioner Muegge, seconded by Judge Barkemeyer to approve the ABSENTEE PROCESSING SYSTEM FROM HART INTERCIVIC FOR ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

I attended SOS conference a few weeks ago and progress / change is coming. Milam County now has the e-poll books which, if you voted last year you saw the equipment in the polling location. The e-poll books made the voting process quicker and more accurate; now they are offering the Absentee Processing system for our ballot by mail. Milam County does approximately 200 to 750 ballots by mail depending on the election, per election and in an even numbered year that could be as much as 1500. Now I have to hand write all the applications and accompanying paper work and envelopes and then I have to input it into the SOS system/website; this is very time consuming for one person. Hart is offering this system that will print the application, labels and any paperwork and then I can download info to the SOS system/website; this system will cut this process time in half or more. This system can be installed on the computer/equipment that we already have.

**VANSA – This is not mandatory but would be very beneficial to our office and the voters.**

**#20 – PRECINCT 2 FIRE TRUCK – Motion by Commissioner Balch, seconded by Commissioner Hollas to donate the 1987 Ford fire truck back to the City of Cameron. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**The City of Cameron plans to use it for a water truck.**

**#21 – BILLS – Motion by Commissioner Muegge, seconded by Commissioner Balch to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$452,892.56 as presented to the court. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**#22 - ADJOURN – Motion by Commissioner Muegge, seconded by Commissioner Fisher to adjourn @ 11:23 A.M. This motion having been put to vote prevailed, the vote being unanimous.**

**The above and foregoing Minutes examined and approved in Open Court this 26<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2013.**

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County Judge

**State of Texas:**

**County of Milam:**

**I, Barbara Vansa, County Clerk, Milam County, Texas, attest that the foregoing is a true and correct accounting of the Commissioners' Court authorized proceedings for August 12, 2013**

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**County Clerk and Ex-Officio Member of  
Commissioners' Court, Milam County, Texas**

**STATEMENT OF APPROVAL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner of Precinct No. 1

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner of Precinct No. 3

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner of Precinct No. 2

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Commissioner of Precinct No. 4

**Minutes from the August 12, 2013 Milam County Commissioners  
Court meeting ends on**