

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF CAMERON §

BE IT REMEMBERED on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of September 2006, there was conducted a SPECIAL Meeting of the Honorable Commissioners' Court of Cameron County, Texas, at the Courthouse thereof, in the City of Brownsville, Texas, for the purpose of transacting any and all business that may lawfully be brought before the same.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cameron County Commissioners' Court wishes to dedicate its proceedings in memory of Judge Adolfo G. Betancourt.

THE COURT MET AT:

PRESENT:

1:30 P.M.

GILBERTO HINOJOSA  
COUNTY JUDGE

PEDRO "PETE" BENAVIDES  
COMMISSIONER PRECINCT NO. 1

JOHN WOOD  
COMMISSIONER PRECINCT NO. 2

DAVID A. GARZA  
COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT NO. 3

EDNA TAMAYO  
COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT NO. 4

JOE G. RIVERA  
COUNTY CLERK

Aide A. Trejo Deputy Clerk

ABSENT:  
\_\_\_\_\_

=====  
The meeting was called to order by Judge Hinojosa at 1:30 P.M.

The Court considered the following matters as posted and filed for Record in the Office of the County Clerk on September 15, 2006 at 9:14 A.M.:

## **ACTION ITEMS**

**(1) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2006-2007  
BUDGET AND TAX RATE. (XV-BUDGET OFFICER)**

Judge Hinojosa informed the Court that he met with Xavier Villarreal, Budget Officer, and Mark Yates, County Auditor, to identify the resources available and to determine which budget requests can and cannot be met.

Mr. Xavier Villarreal, Budget Officer, added that he has been reviewing the budget with Mark Yates, County Auditor, Pete Sepulveda, Department of Transportation Director, the Jail and the District Attorney's Offices trying to reach the goal of a \$.01 reduction on the current tax rate.

Commissioner Tamayo asked if this issue was discussed in detail with Mr. Sepulveda.

Mr. Villarreal replied that the reallocation of the \$100,000 was discussed, but the use of the \$300,000 was not.

Judge Hinojosa added that the funds for the Road Materials will be replenished from lapsed salaries.

Commissioner Tamayo noted that the Road Materials budget was increased based on expenses.

Mr. Villarreal added that the District Attorney's Office has agreed to reallocate \$250,000 back to Fund 90 to allow for the \$.01 reduction in the tax rate.

**NOTE: Judge Hinojosa left the meeting at this time.**

Commissioner Wood questioned the amount spent on autopsies.

Mr. Mark Yates, County Auditor, replied that \$410,000 is being spent on autopsies in a 12-month period.

**NOTE: Commissioner Garza joined the meeting at this time and Judge Hinojosa returned to the meeting at this time.**

Mr. Villarreal noted that there is \$250,000 remaining for indigent burials.

Mr. Yates recommended that the possibility of a coroner operation be looked at as \$410,000 was spent on autopsies last year alone.

Commissioner Wood suggested that that only \$250,000 of the \$500,000 requested from the District Attorney's Office remain in the general fund and the rest be reallocated back to Fund 90.

Mr. Villarreal advised the Court that the GIS Department has a slot for the position of support specialist which has been open for a year and could be eliminated at a savings of \$34,000. He added that the budget is \$60,000 short of the \$.01 reduction in the tax rate.

Commissioner Garza advised that Court that he spoke with Pete Sepulveda, Department of Transportation Director, regarding the reduction of the Road Materials budget by \$300,000 and Mr. Sepulveda believes that the vast reduction will cripple operations.

Commissioner Tamayo expressed concern for the Road & Bridge Budget.

Commissioner Garza added that the budget for Road Materials is usually depleted within 5 to 6 months.

Mr. Villarreal informed the Court that \$181,000 has been allocated for energy conservation.

Judge Hinojosa expressed his desire to use SCAAP funds to increase law enforcement salaries by 6%.

Commissioner Wood asked for an overall view of incoming monies.

Mr. Villarreal informed the Court of an issue with the Solid Waste Division. He stated that the County Auditor has presented him with a list of \$130,000 in revenues for operational use of the Solid Waste Division. He stated that there is no funding source for this division.

Mr. Tony Yzaguirre, Tax Assessor-Collector, stated that he originally hired (3) people for this division and since then there have been no complaints.

Commissioner Tamayo commended Mr. Yzaguirre on his cooperation in this matter.

Mr. Villarreal stated that budgeted interest amounts to \$320,000 which leaves a net increase of \$260,000 in the General Fund.

Mr. Yates added that there is \$4 million in the restricted fund balance.

Judge Hinojosa asked if the interest from the fund balance goes into the general fund.

Mr. Yates replied that a 5% interest rate translates into \$200,000.

Mr. Villarreal recommended that the Court use the \$260,000 for maintenance personnel.

Judge Hinojosa commented on the need for (2) full-time magistrates at the jail.

Commissioner Wood noted that the magistrates work every day and have assisted in keeping the inmate population at bay.

Commissioner Tamayo asked if the magistrates have an auto allowance.

Mr. Villarreal replied in the negative.

Commissioner Garza mentioned the discussion last week regarding the JP's taking over the magistration of the jail.

Commissioner Tamayo added that she visited with Richard Burst, Legal Counsel.

Mr. Richard Burst, Legal Counsel, explained to the Court that they do not have the authority to eliminate the magistrate positions as they are appointed by the District Court and County Court at Law Judges.

Commissioner Garza questioned whether legislation dictates if the magistrate positions call for full-time or part-time employees.

Commissioner Tamayo asked for a report on the magistrates

Mr. Remi Garza, Assistant County Administrator, informed the Court that over the last year, the inmate population at the jail has decreased by 10% and the remedial order is close to being lifted.

Judge Hinojosa stated that the Constables are in need of a chief deputy slot.

Commissioner Wood stressed the importance of vehicle maintenance.

Judge Hinojosa proposed that a dollar be added per truck on commercial vehicles and noted that the increase will generate \$130,000.

Commissioner Wood asked if the increase is per axle.

Commissioner Benavides questioned the fee per axle in Hidalgo County.

Mr. Pete Sepulveda, Department of Transportation Director, replied that Hidalgo County charges \$2.00 per axle and Cameron County charges \$3.50 per axle.

Judge Hinojosa stated \$130,000 is guaranteed and added that if funds are drained, lapsed salaries can be used to cover the costs.

Commissioner Garza suggested that the tax rate be reduced by 3/4 of a penny.

Commissioner Garza praised Mr. Xavier Villarreal, Budget Officer, and Mr. Mark Yates, County Auditor, for their time given on finding ways to resolve all the issues.

Mr. Villarreal recommended that (2) maintenance technicians, a custodian, a gardener, 1/2 court master and all the bailiffs be added to the general fund.

**The Documentation is as follows:**

---

There being no further business to come before the Court, upon motion by Commissioner Garza, seconded by Commissioner Benavides and carried unanimously, the meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 2:36 P.M.

---

---

**APPROVED** this 31<sup>st</sup> day of **October 2006**.

---

**GILBERTO HINOJOSA**  
**COUNTY JUDGE**

**ATTEST:**

---

**JOE G. RIVERA,**  
**COUNTY CLERK AND EX-OFFICIO CLERK**  
**OF THE COMMISSIONERS' COURT OF**  
**CAMERON COUNTY, TEXAS**