

## **Burnet County at the Crossroads: A Six-Month Review of County Judge Bryan Wilson's Tenure**

### **Introduction**

Since County Judge Bryan Wilson's appointment, Burnet County has endured a steady stream of fiscal irresponsibility, legal missteps, and ethical lapses. From deficit spending and a bait-and-switch on deputy funding to judicial overreach and questionable media entanglements, the promises Wilson made during his interview for the position have largely evaporated.

Meanwhile, Commissioners seem content to mostly rubber-stamp "Yes" votes and Burnet County taxpayers are left asking the obvious:

Is this really the leadership we were promised when Luther motioned and Dockery seconded the appointment of this applicant on March 11, 2025?

### **Deficit Spending Delights**

Why balance the budget when deficit spending is so addictingly delicious? The Commissioners Court, indulging in pork-barrel spending, continues to kick the can down the road, ignoring steadily increasing tax revenues that could easily eliminate the deficit. Whatever happened to fiscal fortitude and financial due diligence? Instead, it feels like the commissioners court has become a cheese factory run by mice—gorging on taxpayer dollars while Burnet's honest citizens pick up the tab.

### **Public Safety Undermined: Deputies Denied**

On August 12, After County Judge Bryan Wilson said he did not recommend the 4 new deputies, Commissioner Dockery proposed funding four additional deputies—a practical response to Burnet County's growth and increasing safety needs. Just one week later, on August 19, that proposal was removed from the proposed budget in favor of a symbolic \$20 per \$100,000 tax cut—a move that saves the average taxpayer a few dollars a year but provides a campaign line "I reduced property taxes".

At the same time, Judge Bryan Wilson's office budget ballooned by 70%, adding new staff—including a court reporter, a puzzling hire given his repeated claims that he would focus on administration, not courtroom duties. Whether the goal is to try cases himself (imagine the appeals!!) or delegate them to political allies, the move raises serious questions about priorities and intent.

The message from the commissioners court is clear: bureaucratic expansion now takes precedence over public safety.

### **Legal Confusion & Rule-Bending**

In six months, Judge Wilson has managed to trigger multiple legal missteps—from missed budget deadlines to questionable personnel actions. He's claimed the authority to disarm deputies, asked an employee to "step down" without due process, operated as though the penal code and local rules don't apply to him, got on a soapbox about crimes and laws which don't apply in county government, and spewed inappropriate biblical verse while sitting in his judicial chair. What would the SCJC think about this unjudicial silliness?

Shouldn't a county judge know and follow the laws he's sworn to uphold? Meanwhile, the gaggle of taxpayer-funded lawyers surrounding him stay conspicuously silent, raising the risk of costly lawsuits—paid for, of course, by the taxpayers.

### **Pulpit Politics & Media Favoritism**

A local pastor has become a persistent presence at Commissioners Court meetings, delivering politically loaded invocations—like the August 19 "law enforcement listen to Him" prayer—while quietly campaigning in churches for an unannounced 2026 candidate. Casting stones Pastor?

Is that same pastor connected to partly county-funded media outlets? Does this raise any concerns about media favoritism, taxpayer-funded influence, and the blurring of church and state. Is this open governance—or quiet manipulation of the public narrative?

### **Commissioners' Silence & Symbolic Gestures**

The bookend Commissioners have adopted a choreography of long stares, and blinking Morse-code during public meetings: is it 2 blinks I motion and you second or vice versa? With little to no public pushback, they have rubber-stamped Judge Wilson's most questionable decisions, from bloated budgets to legal improvisations.

### **Accountability Check: Wilson's Broken Promises**

From his interview for the position, here's what Judge Wilson promised—and what taxpayers actually received:

#### **Performance-Based Budgeting**

Promise: Use measurable metrics to ensure taxpayer value

70+% budget increase in his department, no metrics, missed deadlines

#### **Public Safety Review**

Promise: Work with constables and emergency services to prioritize safety

No public review conducted; deputy positions "not recommended"

#### **Transparent Governance**

Promise: Avoid backroom deals; ensure openness and accountability

Secretive media contracts; campaigning pastor-led invocations; procedural missteps

#### **Administrative Focus**

Promise: Prioritize administrative duties over judicial activity

Hired court reporter; assumed judicial roles; attempted to disarm law officers

## **Local Service**

Promise: Serve Burnet County with faith-inspired humility

Apparent favoritism toward religious and media allies linked to campaign interests

## **Six Months of Stumbles**

Judge Bryan Wilson's technocratic promises have failed to materialize. Instead of data-driven leadership and steady administration, we've seen:

Ballooning budgets

Defunded law enforcement

Opaque governance

Legal risk exposure

Cronyism and favoritism

Willy nilly, sua sponte decisions without any basis in law

All in just six short months.

## **What Fun We're Having... Or Not**

From deficit indulgences and court-staged invocations to blinking commissioners and legal overreach, Burnet County is being run like a political circus. The question isn't just how we got here—it's how much worse it will get if the current trajectory continues unchecked.

Burnet taxpayers deserve accountability, not applause lines. They deserve transparency, not theatrics. And most of all, they deserve a government that puts citizens before politics.