

## **COMMISSIONERS' COURT**

The Honorable Renato Cuellar, County Judge, called the Commissioners' Court meeting to order whereupon the following proceedings were had to-wit:

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

#### **ITEM 1. APPROVAL OF FEE REPORTS**

- A. Sheriff's Department - \$ 41,965.70 - June 1997
- B. Anzalduas Park - \$ 8,912.00 - May 1997
- C. Anzalduas Park - \$ 11,616.00 - June 1997
- D. Law Library - \$ 651.75 - June 1997
- E. JP Arnaldo Corpus - \$ 2,136.92 - June 1997
- F. JP Jesus E. Morales - \$ 9,752.00 - June 1997
- G. JP E. Speedy Jackson - \$ 12,002.20 - June 1997
- H. JP Charlie Espinoza - \$ 25,860.80 - June 1997
- I. JP Rosa E. Treviño - \$ 18,668.71 - June 1997
- J. JP Gilberto Saenz - \$ 12,548.40 - June 1997
- K. JP Dario L. Martinez - \$ 7,162.17 - June 1997
- L. JP Ismael "Melo" Ochoa - \$ 16,711.80 - June 1997
- M. JP Rene O. Torres - \$ 11,916.80 - June 1997
- N. District Clerk - \$229,238.51 - July 1997

(See Exhibit A)

#### **ITEM 2. PERMITS**

- A. Southwestern Bell Telephone - Pct. #3

(See Exhibit B)

#### **ITEM 3. PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

- A. Plat Approval
  - 1. Lion King Two - Pct. #1
  - 2. Boomtown II Subdivision - Pct. #4
  - 3. Windsor Place at the Lakes Phase I - Pct. #4

(See Exhibit C)

#### **ITEM 4. URBAN COUNTY**

- A. HOME "First-Time Homebuyer Contract Agreement" and Letter of Commitment to Mortgage Company (3 families)
- B. HOME/Homeowner Occupied Housing Rehab Application (1 family)

(See Exhibit D)

**ITEM 5. INTERNAL LINE ITEM TRANSFERS**

- A. Reproduction - \$1,225.00
- B. County Judge - \$3,400.00
- C. County Treasurer - \$291.00
- D. Hidalgo County Health Department (TB Control) - \$7,975.00
- E. Sheriff's Department - \$500.00
- F. Constable Pct. #1 - \$1,620.00
- G. Constable Pct. #3 - \$276.76
- H. Constable Pct. #5 - \$400.00
- I. District Attorney (State Supplement) - \$2,174.73
- J. Juvenile Probation Department (Title IV-E) - NO ACTION
- K. Juvenile Probation Department (General Fund) - \$30.00
- L. Commissioner Pct. #1 - Lateral Roads - \$22,500.00
- M. Commissioner Pct. #3 - Landfill - \$700.00
- N. Commissioner Pct. #3 - Paved/Unpaved Roads - \$19,000.00

(See Exhibit E)

The County Judge introduced the Consent Agenda and asked if there were any changes. Loura Etnire, Chief Administrative Assistant to the County Judge, indicated that Urban County had requested that item 4/A be moved to the Regular Agenda. She also reported that no action would be required on Item 5/J. Valde Guerra also mentioned that the approval of bills was inadvertently left out and Mrs. Etnire asked legal counsel if it could still action on it. Steve Crain, the County Legal Counsel indicated that they could not take action on an item that was not posted on the agenda. A motion was then made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Handy to approve the Consent Agenda with the change.

MOTION CARRIED.

## **EXECUTIVE AGENDA**

**ITEM 1. CLOSED SESSION**

Commissioners' Court may go into Closed Session pursuant to Chapter 551, Texas

Government Code, Section 551.071 to discuss the following matter:

A. Litigation:

1. Consultation with attorney

The County Judge and Commissioners went into Executive Session accompanied by Steve Crain, the County Legal Counsel.

MOTION CARRIED.

**ITEM 2. OPEN SESSION**

A. Litigation

1. Discussion and possible action regarding Civil Action Cause C-1799-96-G, Maria De La Luz Valdez vs. Hidalgo County et al

A motion was made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Handy to reject the settlement offer in reference to Civil Action case C-1799-96-G.

MOTION CARRIED.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

Commissioner Arcaute then went back to the issue of the payment of bills and asked who was responsible for placing this item on the agenda; whether it was the responsibility of the Purchasing Department or the Auditor's Office. The County Judge asked the County Auditor if he turned it in and Manuel Cavazos, the County Auditor, replied that they turned it in for the packet. Mrs. Etnire indicated that it was the responsibility of the Auditor to turn in the claims register but it was the responsibility of the County Judge's Office to put it on the agenda. Judge Cuellar indicated that there has recently been a change in the people that prepare the agenda and it may have been an oversight. Commissioner Garces recommended that they possibly place it on the agenda for Thursday, as they would be meeting for a Workshop and take action on it then but no further discussion was held on this matter.

**ITEM 1. TAX ASSESSOR/COLLECTOR**

A. Tax Refunds:

1. Emma McCoy - \$1,467.87
2. Griffin & Brand - \$4,662.65
3. Pedro Sotuyo - \$582.79

A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve the tax refunds, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit F)

**ITEM 2. ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATOR**

A. Approval to Canvass Special Constitutional Amendment Election held on August 9, 1997

Oscar Cantu came before the Court and reported that a Special Constitutional Amendment Election had been held on August 9, 1997. He stated that a total of 9981 votes with 9447 votes in favor of school property tax relief and 535 votes against. A motion was made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Handy to approve the canvassing of the Special Constitutional Amendment Election as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.

(See Exhibit G)

**ITEM 4. URBAN COUNTY (CONSENT AGENDA)**

A. HOME "First-Time Homebuyer Contract Agreement" and Letter of Commitment to Mortgage Company (3 families)

Anthony Covacevich, Urban County Director, explained that this was on the HOME "First Time Homebuyer contract agreement" and letter of commitment to mortgage company. He stated that they had three families and the reason that it was pulled out of the Consent Agenda was that the third family, as listed on the exhibit, was the Program's five hundredth family under the "First-Time Homebuyer" Program and they wanted to do a presentation on this item. A motion was then made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.

(See Exhibit H)

**ITEM 3. URBAN COUNTY**

- A. City of Edcouch - Approval of a Professional Service Agreement (Engineering) with Quintanilla, Headley and Assoc. (FY 1995)
- B. City of Edcouch - Approval of a budget amendment under FY 1996
- C. Precinct #3 - Approval of a Construction contract, (PFI - Street Improvements) FY 1996 with Mission Paving Co., Inc.
- D. Formal action approval submittal of a \$10,453,000.00 grant application for a Continuum of Care System to address homeless

3/A

The City of Edcouch was requesting the approval of a professional service agreement for engineering services with Quintanilla Headley and Associates. The amount of the contract is \$5,315.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Handy and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit H)

3/B

The City of Edcouch was requesting approval of a budget amendment under their FY '96. The amendment called for an increase under their Street Improvement line item and completely eliminating their Rehab/Single Family Unit Residency. They are also reducing the General Administration line item and creating a new line item for Land Acquisition and increasing their Landfill Closure line item to \$112,713.08. A motion was made by Commissioner Handy and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit H)

3/C

Precinct Three was requesting the approval of a construction contract with Mission Paving Co., Inc. This contract was for street improvements, out of their FY 1996 and the amount of the contract is \$253,920.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit H)

3/D

Mr. Covacevich indicated that this next item was for a Continuum of Care Strategy for the homeless whereby they would take a homeless person from the street and run them through a series of emergency shelters, then supportive housing and finally through affordable housing. This was in hope that they could turn a homeless person into a self-sufficient resident. He added that HUD had written the Urban County Program up in that they did not have the supportive component of that strategy because they did not have the funds to do it. He added that this item required no action in that it was the submittal of an application by the County Housing Authority in the amount of \$10,453,000.00. This application would fulfill the County's commitment to the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide a strategy for continuum care in Hidalgo County. He then went on to explain how these funds would be utilized if granted. Mr. Covacevich introduced Mr. Mike Lopez, from the Housing Authority, who spoke on behalf of the application.

NO ACTION.  
(See Exhibit H)

**ITEM 4. COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE****A. Discussion and possible action on revision to the Hidalgo County Travel Policy**

Manuel Cavazos, the County Auditor, was requesting a possible revision to the Hidalgo County Travel Policy. He stated that they have experienced several problems, one of them being that they currently advance the employees 80% of the estimated cost of trips. Some employees are not able to finance the 20% and his request was that the policy be changed to advance the trip 100% of the estimated travel expense. Commissioner Rosel asked if there was a per diem in the policy and Mr. Cavazos replied that there was not one presently. Mr. Cavazos indicated that this was being done basically because of the Sheriff's Department who traveled constantly and being that they were more concerned with safety they often did not request receipts for meals. This would include the cost of the room, any registration and a per diem on meals only. A discussion then ensued with regards to the issue of the per diem for meals with comments from Mrs. Etnire, Mr. Cavazos and the Commissioners' Court. During this discussion, Mr. Cavazos noted that he was proposing a \$8.00 for breakfast, \$10.00 for lunch and \$12.00 for dinner on any day that a person was on a County-sponsored trip. He was also requesting \$10.00 for incidentals for any prisoners who were transferred. Commissioner Arcaute noted that the current policies were never approved by this Commissioners' Court; they were established by the Auditor at that time. He then explained a change that had been done previously where the per diem was changed from \$25.00 per day for elected officials and \$20.00 for County employees to a 100% reimbursement as long as receipts were submitted. A discussion then ensued with regards to whether they would be paying per meal or per day during which Commissioner Arcaute recommended that they remain with the current reimbursement procedure but that they set a cap of \$30.00 per day. Commissioner Rosel stated that he did not mind the 100% reimbursement but he was concerned about the request for \$10.00 for incidentals for the prisoners. This resulted in additional discussion with comments from the County Auditor, Lt. Fidel Jasso and the Commissioners on the need for this expense. After further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Arcaute and seconded by Commissioner Handy to table this item.

MOTION CARRIED.

(See Exhibit I)

**ITEM 5. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT****A. Approval to operate a non-profit organization - Hidalgo County Crime Stoppers, Inc.**

Lt. Fidel Jasso came before the Court to request approval to operate the Crime Stoppers Program in the County. He stated that it was a non-profit organization and it would be funded by private organizations. Commissioner Garces informed him that he may want to look into possibly acquiring some funding from the Adult Probation grant

monies from the Board of Judges. A discussion ensued with regards to how the members of the Crime Stoppers Board were selected and who would be handling the funds that would be coming in to the organization. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Arcaute to approve the participation of the Sheriff's Department in the Crime Stoppers Association.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit J)

## **ITEM 6. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

### **A. Approval of adjustments in salaries**

Raul Hernandez, Buildings & Grounds Superintendent, came before the Court requesting the Court's consideration in the adjustment of salaries for twelve employees. The slots to be adjusted are #3, #6, #9, #17, #19, #23, #24, #26, #29, #35, #37 and #39. The total amount required for the adjustments is \$5,499.95 pro-rated for the remainder of the year. He indicated that these funds were available within his 03 category and he would be utilizing same for this request. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve the adjustments in the Buildings & Grounds salaries utilizing a total amount of \$5,499.95 pro-rated to the end of the year. Commissioner Arcaute had a question under discussion and he listed that on the exhibit he only had twenty-eight slots listed. Mr. Hernandez indicated that on the exhibit the employees were not listed as per slot numbers. A question came in whether a system could be used to pay on the basis of seniority and Mr. Hernandez replied that he did not know. He also added that these "merit" raises had been approved by civil services and he felt that they are under paid. Commissioner Arcaute noted that this County does not have a "merit" system in place, when this issue had been presented before it was declared a "cost of living" increase and it had to be done across the board. After further discussion the motion was put to a vote and it carried.

MOTION CARRIED. (COMMISSIONER ARCAUTE VOTED AGAINST THE MOTION)  
(See Exhibit K)

## **ITEM 7. COMMISSIONER PCT. #1**

### **A. Road & Bridge/Parks**

1. Authorization to obtain (2) mobile phone units and connect service for Administrative Asst. and Park Manager

Raul Lozano, Administrative Assistant for Precinct One, came before the Court requesting authorization to obtain two mobile phone units and to connect service for the Administrative Assistant and the Parks Manager for Precinct One. He added that they

presently did not have any mobile phone units paid for by the County. A motion was made by Commissioner Handy and seconded by Commissioner Garces to authorize to obtain two mobile phone units and service for the Administrative Assistant and Park Manager for Precinct One.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit L)

**ITEM 8. COMMISSIONER PCT. #3**

A. Approval of change order - Mission Paving Co.

Commissioner Rosel indicated that he was requesting approval of a change order for Mission Paving Company. The change order is for a decrease of \$14.16. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit M)

**ITEM 9. PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

A. Subdivisions

1. Villa-Rama East Phase III - Pct. #3

Emilio Garcia, Chief Planner, came before the Court requesting approval of Villa-Rama East Phase III Subdivision. This subdivision is in Precinct Three located on the corner of Expressway 83 and Buckhorn Drive. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Handy to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit N)

**ITEM 10. APPROVAL OF UNEMPLOYMENT DEFICIT BILLING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$26,626.10  
1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER**

Loura Etnire, Chief Administrative Assistant to the County Judge, informed the Court that a budget amendment of \$26,626.10 was required in order to take care of a deficit for unemployment claims. This money had to be paid to the Texas Association of Counties. Steve Crain, the County Legal Counsel, noted that the item on the agenda did not reflect a budget amendment. It was then recommended that this item would be brought back next week for action.

NO ACTION.  
(See Exhibit O)

**ITEM 11. PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**

- A. PCT. #3
  - 1. Bid award for "Crushed Caliche East of Abram"
- B. WIC PROGRAM
  - 1. Bid award for "One (1) 1998 H.D. Cargo Van" to sole bidder
- C. Sheriff's Department
  - 1. Requesting exemption from competitive bidding requirements for the purchase of one (1) 1988 step cargo van from the Texas Department of Public Safety
  - 2. Requesting authority to purchase one (1) 1988 step cargo van from the Texas Department of Public Safety
- D. HIDALGO COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
  - 1. Approval of contract with Amigos Bibliographic Council
- E. Hidalgo County Constable Pct. #4
  - 1. Request to declare various items surplus for auction
- F. HIDALGO COUNTY TASK FORCE
  - 1. Request to declare various items surplus for auction
- G. PCT. #3
  - 1. Requesting extension of current contract for Ambulance Service with Edinburg EMS for a 60/90 day period so as not to have lapse in service during the procurement process
  - 2. Request authority to advertise for ambulance services for Precinct #3
- H. PCT. #1
  - 1. Award of bid for "Build/Lease Project"

11/A

Martha Salazar, the Purchasing Director, came before the Court requesting the awarding of a bid for "crushed caliche east of Abram". She reported that she had received three bids: Frontera Materials at \$2.25 per ton; Valley Caliche Products at \$2.05 per ton and Redland Stone Products at \$2.35 per ton. Her recommendation was for the low bidder being Valley Caliche at \$2.05 per ton. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/B

Mrs. Salazar stated that she was requesting that no action be taken on this item for the WIC Program.

NO ACTION.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/C/1

The Sheriff's Department was requesting an exemption from the competitive bidding requirements for the purchase of one 1988 step cargo van from the Texas Department of Public Safety. Mrs. Salazar indicated that this was a crime lab van and there was more information in the backup. A motion was made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/C/2

A motion was made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to authorize the purchase of one 1988 step cargo van from the Texas Department of Public Safety for an amount of approximately \$7,000.00.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/D

A motion was made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to approve a contract with Amigos Bibliographic Council for cataloging services for the Hidalgo County Library System.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/E

A motion was made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to authorize the declaration of various items from the Precinct Four Constable's Office as surplus for auction.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/F

A motion was made by Commissioner Garces and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to authorize the declaration of various items from the Hidalgo County Task Force as surplus for auction.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/G

Mrs. Salazar reported that on this next item she was requesting for an extension of the current contract for Ambulance Service with Edinburg EMS for a sixty to ninety day period so as not to have lapse in service during the procurement process. Commissioner Rosel indicated that he did not feel that they should take action on this item. His reason was that they should not be asking for an extension if they had no money to pay for it and a budget amendment was not indicated on the agenda item. He therefore asked that no action be taken on this item at this time.

NO ACTION.  
(See Exhibit P)

11/H

Mrs. Salazar opened by stating that she had received only one bid for Precinct on a build/lease project. Bids were opened on August 6<sup>th</sup> and the bid came in at an amount was \$1.10 per square foot and the County is requesting 30,000 square feet. She went on to state that she was still receiving information on this particular bid that was needed to make a more informed recommendation. She indicated that she was not in a position to make a recommendation at this time. She is asking that the Court take this under advisement at this time. Commissioner Rosel asked legal counsel that if they were to take this under advisement, would this obligate the County in any way and Steve Crain, the County Legal Counsel, stated that this would allow the Commissioners' Court to bring this item back at some point and time and take a vote. Commissioner Garces agreed with Mrs. Salazar in that more information needed to be gathered to make a better decision. His reasoning for this is because he has received many calls from department heads in which they mentioned to him that they were also concerned with all the numbers, such as square feet needed, number of staff members needed and any possible addition costs regarding this project. There was some confusion concerning the numbers but it was clarified that it was \$1.10 per square foot for 30,000 square feet, which would amount to \$33,000.00 per month and that is without any other numbers, such as utilities, being considered. During this discussion, Judge Cuellar pointed out that the County Clerk would like to make a few comments.

Eloy Pulido, the County Clerk, asked to address the Court at this time and he stated that there was an emergency meeting called back in March by Judge Ruiz. He stated that they were advised of this meeting on a Friday and the meeting was on Monday. During this meeting, they had met with Paul Vazaldua and they discussed this proposed building. It was during this meeting, Mr. Pulido said, that he had asked about the needs of the County Clerk's Office with regards to staff and equipment. Part of the discussion was that the department heads would have to move people from the main office to the sub-station. He went on to state that at that meeting the majority of the

people there at the meeting decided that they could not do that. Subsequent to this meeting the department heads had been advised that they would be told how this building was going to be staffed. He has since received word that they were allocating 374 square feet for the County Clerk's Office, 12,000 square feet for the Adult Probation and so on. At that time, they asked him what he needed and he stated that he needed a minimum of 1000 feet and he went on to indicate that this office performed fourteen functions as opposed to two functions of the Tax Assessor-Collector and one function for the Adult Probation Department.. Judge Cuellar asked Mr. Pulido when this discussion took place and Mr. Pulido responded by stating that this had taken place about a month to a month and a half prior to this present meeting and there has not been a follow up meeting to the one in March to address his needs. He stated that about this time, he had seen Valde Guerra on the second floor and proceeded to ask him how the personnel needs were going to be met, whether they were going to be budgeted or allocated. Mr. Pulido stated that if this building is built in two or three months, unless the issues of personnel, equipment and adequate room are addressed he cannot staff this building. Judge Cuellar stated that he wanted it to be on the record that this discussion had taken place before he came on as County Judge and Mr. Pulido stated that it had. Mr. Pulido stated that he felt that the budgetary and personnel needs should be addressed as well as maybe have a needs assessment done before they go forward with this project. Commissioner Handy asked Mr. Pulido what types of services would he be able to provide in this sub-station. He stated that he would be able to do marriage licenses, death records and birth records, as well as others. This is where the assessment would come in so that they can tell how many people from that area visit the County Clerk's Office. Commissioner Handy then asked if 750 square feet would not be enough and he stated that the figure he was told was 374 square feet but she stated she was looking at 750 square feet. Mr. Pulido stated that this was just an arbitrary figure that he mentioned when he was called by phone and told about 374. He stated that he recalled saying that he would require at least 1000 square feet. Mr. Pulido then reverted back to the original meeting back in March where they had talked about the discrepancy about the 12,000 square feet for Adult Probation and 12,000 square feet for the Tax Assessor and then just 374 square feet for the County Clerk's Office. He also added that some of the ensuing discussion was regarding a waiting area. Commissioner Garces felt that this was loosely done and he felt that there should be a public workshop in order to have the departments come in and say what they need and also if they are willing to relocate to other areas. He added that until they have this type of meeting it would be premature to get into any type of commitment. Commissioner Handy then stated that there were several workshops the previous year before she came in because they wanted to do these projects in Precincts One and Three to better service the areas furthest from the County seat. She continued by saying that she knew that all department heads were advised of these workshops and at the first workshop that they had, a lot of the department heads did not show up or participate because there was no interest in having an office in those areas. After more workshops, the interest was built up a bit more and she did not know if there was a miscommunication with the department heads as to who wanted some space and what

amount of office space was needed, but there were several workshops held. It was during this time that it was decided to try it in Precinct One as a pilot project. Commissioner Rosel stated that the intent was good and that the Commission supports her but he brought the issue of the Sullivan City Health Clinic where the County Health Clinic was supposed to staff it and when he checked with the Health Department, he was told that they did not have any staff for this clinic. He also felt that the main issue to be discussed was the staff that would be utilized in this project and then they could come back and look at how much space was needed. Mr. Pulido also agreed with Commissioner Rosel and again emphasized that a needs assessment had to be done, but he felt that his office is the one that probably provides the most for the public. Commissioner Handy asked Mr. Pulido if anyone from his office had participated in these workshops and Paul Vazaldua stated that Jerry Farias had come to the meeting and each department was allowed to communicate with Mr. Ed Alcocer, who is the architect, on a one on one basis to identify the number of square feet that were needed for each department. Mr. Vazaldua clarified that it was not an emergency meeting but a mandatory meeting. If anyone wanted their department to be at this sub-station then they needed to be at this meeting because the architect had advised him that he had not been receiving all the numbers from the departments. Upon receiving this information, Mr. Pulido and Mrs. Pauline Gonzalez, the District Clerk, expressed concern regarding the staffing needs and at that time, they were reassured that these issues were going to be brought to the table when the time came. This according to Mr. Vazaldua. Commissioner Garces then asked Mr. Vazaldua if anyone had attempted to give them a breakdown as far as staffing and equipment to facilitate 30,000 square feet. Mr. Vazaldua responded by stating that the only two departments that requested additional staff were the County Clerk's Office and the District Clerk's Office. It seemed that the Probation Department was just going to move people over from the main office, same for WIC. Mr. Vazaldua stated that he believed that Mr. Pulido had asked for only two additional staff persons for the 750 square feet. Judge Cuellar asked who Mr. Farias was and Mr. Pulido stated to him that he was his chief deputy. Mr. Pulido then stated that he had asked Mr. Farias about the meeting they attended and the response was that the only participation they had was via telephone and not by meeting because they were never invited to attend these meetings because he wanted to make sure that the only meeting they had attended was the one that was called for by Judge Ruiz. He stated that Mr. Farias had assured him that they had never been advised or invited to participate in these meetings. He again reiterated that his only concern was the staffing and equipment needs. He felt that this project was on a fast track to nowhere. Commissioner Garces stated that in previous workshops, they had discussed purchasing an existing building or maybe the City of Weslaco trading a building to relocate the Precinct One offices and possibly to provide some additional services. They also discussed going out on an RFP to lease to see what type of offer they could get from the private sector. Now there is an offer from the private sector and they should now take all the numbers into consideration to make a better decision. Commissioner Rosel stated that he talked to some departments and that they all discussed how much it would cost to run this facility with all costs included. They came

up with a figure of about \$1.5 million per year. If this is the case, they will have to raise taxes by about two cents to cover this additional cost, and if not that way then they do it from the present budget which it cannot handle at this time or they will have to dismiss 120 employees to fund this project. Commissioner Handy stated that the way this whole problem had started what that she would be moving out of her present location because they would be building an Albertson's on the property. So, what they had originally wanted to do was to put all the County's government officials together that are presently situated in Precinct One, the two JP's, the Constable, the tax office and create a "one-stop shop". They were trying to look at was maybe moving into a bigger building to house all existing services in Precinct One. From there, other departments were saying that they would also like to join in and this was seen as a possible means of alleviating some of the overcrowding of the Courthouse parking lot. Mr. Pulido did agree with everyone in that they need to extend county government closer to the people but he felt that there was a conflict when they plan this facility and the architect is involved in the planning of a building that he is going to design and that he can somehow oversize the facility to benefit him. He again reiterated that the staffing and equipment needs be addressed before this project is approved. Judge Cuellar asked if anyone questioned the departments that are currently out there, how much it is costing them to be out there now and if maybe they can all pull their resources into one building. Commissioner Rosel stated he had requested this information and he felt that there was some additional information that Mrs. Salazar was waiting on. The County Judge asked Commissioner Handy if she had any information as to the cost of operating a substation and she mentioned that presently the Tax Office had an auto license sub-station out there, but they were wanting to add a tax collection office, so she felt that the costs would differ from department to department. Judge Cuellar also agreed that there was more information that needed to be gathered to figure into this picture. Mr. Vazaldua stated that he was in possession of sign-in sheets, who attended, what was discussed and what were the original requests for space. He also had the documentation from a subsequent meeting where the breakdown of the space and the feasibility study from the architect had been discussed. Judge Cuellar then asked if this was the meeting where Mr. Farias was present and Mr. Vazaldua stated that he believed so but he would have to check the sign-in sheet. Judge Cuellar instructed Mr. Vazaldua to do so to make sure that Mr. Farias did have authorization from Mr. Pulido to attend. Mr. Pulido stated that he always has his authorization. Judge Cuellar asked Mr. Pulido again that if he was aware that Mr. Farias was there and Mr. Pulido stated that he had asked him if they had had any other meetings aside from the one he had attended and Mr. Farias said no that the rest of the communication was via telephone. He went on to state that if they had been advised, they would have been there because this was important to them. Perhaps he might have been there and he didn't remember but he could not say. Commissioner Arcaute asked Mr. Pulido that if they were to get 750 square feet would they be providing full services like at the Courthouse, because he did not feel that they should go over there and provide only a partial service. Mr. Pulido responded by saying that if he had space the size of the Commissioners' Court courtroom, he could probably do so. Mr. Vazaldua stated that there were no

hypothetical numbers provided for the design of the building, it was just recommendations of the departments. Commissioner Garces felt that they needed to meet again with everyone there so that all this can be addressed once and for all. Commissioner Arcaute then asked Mrs. Salazar about the wording on the RFP with regards to the five or ten year lease. Mrs. Salazar stated that after they received no bid the first time at five years, it was requested that they opt for a ten year lease with a five year option to renew. Her assistant informed her that the Commissioners' Court had decided to stay at five years with a five year option to renew. Commissioner Arcaute questioned the fact that the proposal said five years with an automatic five year renewal. Mrs. Salazar stated that they faxed the bidder a request for clarification to make sure he understood the specs and he responded that he understood that they were bidding for five years with a five year option to renew if the County so wishes. The Commissioner agreed that five and five was a bit short and that could have contributed to only one bidder submitting a proposal.

Commissioner Rosel then brought up the request by the Sheriff's Department and the possibility of a substation in order to alleviate some of the overcrowding at the jail. Commissioner Garces indicated that he knew what his idea was but that it could not be done since there was a procedural problem with it, as had been acknowledged by the District Attorney at a prior meeting. Commissioner Rosel asked Tilman Welch, a bail bondsman, that of the people that are booked in jail, what percentage are bonded out and Mr. Welch replied that he was unable to answer that question. He discussed with the Judge a scenario concerning emptying the jail right now and 100 people come in a week and 90 are bonded out, the jail will still become overcrowded over time and there is a variety of reasons why this will happen. During further comments with regards to the issue of accountability, Mr. Welch stated if they were computerized and housed at this sub-station this could possibly help the overcrowding. Judge Cuellar asked Mr. Welch if he could call the bail bondsmen to meet with him to discuss the issues of overcrowding. At this time Commissioner Handy made a motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Rosel to take Item H, award of the bid of the lease build project, *under advisement*.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit P)

There being no further business to come before the Court, a motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Handy that said meeting of Commissioners' Court be hereby adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED.

**DRAINAGE DISTRICT #1**

The Honorable Renato Cuellar, County Judge, called the Drainage District #1 Board meeting to order, whereupon the following proceedings were had, to-wit:

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **ITEM 1. PERMITS**

- A. City of McAllen
  - 1. Northridge Park Phase VI
  - 2. Madison Park Phase IV

(See Exhibit Q)

### **ITEM 2. INTERNAL LINE ITEM TRANSFER - \$5,900.00**

(See Exhibit R)

The County Judge introduced the Consent Agenda and there being no changes, a motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve.

MOTION CARRIED.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **ITEM 1. EXEMPTION FROM BIDDING PROCESS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES - HINOJOSA ENGINEERING**

Godfrey Garza, Drainage District Manager, came before the Board requesting an exemption from the bidding procedure, under professional services, for Hinojosa Engineering. This was for a project in the Precinct Three area which entailed the extending of the Mission Inlet into the Palmview Lateral Inlet. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Garces to approve the request as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.

### **ITEM 2. AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH HINOJOSA ENGINEERING**

A motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Handy to approve a contact with Hinojosa Engineering for the above referenced project.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit S)

**ITEM 3. PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**

A. Approval to declare items surplus for auction

A motion was made by Commissioner Handy and seconded by Commissioner Rosel to authorize the declaration of items from the Drainage District #1, as surplus for auction.

MOTION CARRIED.  
(See Exhibit T)

**ITEM 4. APPROVAL OF UNEMPLOYMENT DEFICIT BILLING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$918.31 - 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER**

It was recommended that no action be taken on this item at this time.

NO ACTION.  
(See Exhibit U)

There being no further business to come before the Drainage District #1 Board, a motion was made by Commissioner Rosel and seconded by Commissioner Handy to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED.