

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF FORT BEND

JOINT ELECTION AGREEMENT AND CONTRACT FOR ELECTION SERVICES

THIS CONTRACT made by and between Fort Bend County, a body corporate and politic under the laws of the State of Texas, hereinafter referred to as "County" and the Fort Bend County Water Control and Improvement District No. 3, hereinafter referred to as "Political Subdivision," pursuant to Texas Election Code Sections 31.092 and 271.002 for a joint May 14, 2011 election to be administered by John Oldham, Fort Bend County Elections Administrator, hereinafter referred to as "Elections Administrator."

THIS CONTRACT is subject to the written approval of the Fort Bend County Attorney and shall not be binding on the parties until such written approval is obtained. Upon written approval of the Fort Bend County Attorney and the participating parties, this CONTRACT shall be binding on said parties.

RECITAL

On May 14, 2011 the Fort Bend County Water Control and Improvement District No. 3 is holding a special election (at the expense of Political Subdivision) for the purpose of approving, or disapproving, a fire protection plan with the City of Richmond, Texas.

The County owns an electronic voting system, the Hart InterCivic eSlate and the eScan Voting System, which has been duly approved by the Secretary of State pursuant to Texas Election Code Chapter 122 as amended, and is compliant with the accessibility requirements set forth by Texas Election Code Section 61.012. Political Subdivision desires to use the County's electronic voting system and to compensate the County for such use and to share in certain other expenses connected with joint elections in accordance with the applicable provisions of Chapters 31 and 271 of the Texas Election Code, as amended.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants, agreements, and benefits to the parties, IT IS AGREED as follows:

I. THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA v. FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS; Cause No. 4:09-cv-1058

a. On April 13, 2009, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas approved a Consent Decree, Judgment and Order, hereinafter referred to as "the Decree," whereby Fort Bend County agreed to specific methods of conducting elections, all in compliance with state law, the Voting Rights Act and the Help America Vote Act. Section 2 of the Decree states "whenever Defendant enters into an election services contract with any other entity, political subdivision, or political party to conduct an election on behalf of that entity, Defendant shall require such entity to agree to abide by the terms of this Decree as if such entity were a party to this Decree with the United States, and consistent with the responsibility of each entity to comply fully with Section 4(f)(4) and 208 of the Voting Rights Act and Section 302(a) of the Help America Vote Act." By entering into this contract with Fort Bend County, the Political Subdivision agrees to the terms of the Decree and agrees to conduct this election in compliance with the terms of the Decree.

b. Attached as Attachment A to this CONTRACT is a copy of the Decree and a checklist for the Political Subdivision. It is the sole responsibility of the Political Subdivision to read and understand the Decree and to conduct this election in compliance with the Decree.

II. ADMINISTRATION

The parties agree to hold a "Joint Election" in accordance with Chapter 271 of the Texas Election Code and this agreement. The Fort Bend County Elections Administrator shall coordinate, supervise, and handle all aspects of administering the Joint Election as provided in this agreement. Political Subdivision agrees to pay Fort Bend County for equipment, supplies, services, and administrative costs as provided in this agreement. The Fort Bend County Elections Administrator shall serve as the administrator for the Joint Election; however, the Political Subdivision shall remain

responsible for the lawful conduct of its election. The Elections Administrator shall provide advisory services in connection with decisions to be made and actions to be taken by the officers of the Political Subdivision.

It is understood that other political subdivisions may wish to participate in the use of the County's electronic voting system and polling places, and it is agreed that Fort Bend County and the Elections Administrator may enter into other joint election agreements and contracts for election services for those purposes on terms and conditions generally similar to those set forth in this contract. Political Subdivision agrees that Fort Bend County may enter into joint election agreements with other political subdivisions that may have territory located partially or wholly within the boundaries of Political Subdivision, and in such case all parties sharing common territory shall share a joint ballot on the county's electronic voting system at the applicable polling places. In such cases, costs shall be pro-rated among the participants according to Section XI of this contract.

At each polling location, joint participants shall share voting equipment and supplies to the extent possible. The participating parties shall share a mutual ballot in those precincts where jurisdictions overlap. However, in no instance shall a voter be permitted to receive a ballot containing an office or proposition stating a measure on which the voter is ineligible to vote. Multiple ballot styles shall be available in those shared polling places where jurisdictions do not overlap.

III. LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Political Subdivision shall be responsible for the preparation, adoption, and publication of all required election orders, resolutions, notices, and any other pertinent documents required by the Texas Election Code and/or Political Subdivision's governing body, charter, or ordinances.

Preparation of the necessary materials for notices and the official ballot shall be the responsibility of Political Subdivision, including translation to languages other than English. Political Subdivision shall provide a copy of their respective election orders and notices to the Elections Administrator.

Each party is responsible for making the submission, if any is required or desired, to the United States Justice Department pursuant to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, and no party hereto shall have any responsibility or duty in connection with the submission relating to the election to be held at the expense of any other party hereto.

IV. VOTING LOCATIONS

The Elections Administrator shall select and arrange for the use of and payment for all Election Day voting locations. Voting locations will be, whenever possible, the usual voting location for elections in Political Subdivision. The proposed voting locations are listed in Attachment D of this agreement. In the event a voting location is not available, the Elections Administrator will arrange for use of an alternate location with the approval of the Political Subdivision. The Elections Administrator shall notify the Political Subdivision of any changes from the locations listed in Attachment D.

If polling places for the May 14, 2011 joint election are different from the polling place(s) used by Political Subdivision in its most recent election, Political Subdivision agrees to post a notice no later than May 13, 2011 at the entrance to any previous polling places in the jurisdiction stating that the polling location has changed and stating the political subdivision's polling place names and addresses in effect for the May 14, 2011 election.

V. ELECTION JUDGES, CLERKS, AND OTHER ELECTION PERSONNEL

Fort Bend County shall be responsible for the appointment of the presiding judge and alternate judge for each polling location in accordance with Chapter 32 of the Texas Election Code. The Elections Administrator shall make emergency appointments of election officials if necessary.

Upon request by the Elections Administrator, Political Subdivision agrees to assist in recruiting polling place officials who are bilingual (fluent in both English and Spanish).

The Elections Administrator shall notify all election judges of the eligibility requirements of Subchapter C of Chapter 32 of the Texas Election Code, and will take the necessary steps to insure that all election judges appointed for the Joint Election are eligible to serve.

The Elections Administrator shall arrange for the training and compensation of all election judges and clerks. The Elections Administrator shall arrange for the date, time, and place for presiding election judges to pick up their election supplies. Each presiding election judge will be sent a letter from the Elections Administrator notifying the person of the appointment, the time and location of training and distribution of election supplies, and the number of election clerks that the presiding judge may appoint.

Each election judge and clerk will receive compensation at an hourly rate established by Fort Bend County pursuant to Texas Election Code Section 32.091. The election judge will receive an additional sum of \$25.00 for picking up the election supplies prior to Election Day and for returning the supplies and equipment to the central counting station after the polls close.

The Elections Administrator may employ other personnel necessary for the proper administration of the election, including such part-time help as is necessary to prepare for the election, to ensure the timely delivery of supplies during early voting and on Election Day, and for the efficient tabulation of ballots at the central counting station. Part-time personnel working in support of the Early Voting Ballot Board and/or central counting station on election night will be compensated at the rate set by Fort Bend County.

It is agreed by all parties that at all times and for all purposes hereunder, all election judges, clerks, and all other personnel involved in this election are independent contractors and are not employees or agents of the County. No statement contained in this Agreement shall be construed so as to find any judge, clerk, or any other election personnel an employee or agent of the County, and no election personnel shall be entitled to the rights, privileges, or benefits of County employees except as otherwise stated herein, nor shall any election personnel hold himself out as an employee or agent of the County, unless considered a county employee as determined by the Fort Bend County Human Resources Department. It further agreed by all parties that at all times and for all purposes hereunder, all election judges, clerks, and all other personnel involved in this election are independent contractors and are not employees or agents of Political Subdivision. No statement contained in this Agreement shall be construed so as to find any judge, clerk, or any other election personnel an employee or agent of Political Subdivision, and no election personnel shall be entitled to the rights, privileges, or benefits of Political Subdivision employees except as otherwise stated herein, nor shall any election personnel hold himself out as an employee or agent of Political Subdivision, unless considered an employee of the District by the Board of Directors of WCID No. 3.

VI. PREPARATION OF SUPPLIES AND VOTING EQUIPMENT

The Elections Administrator shall arrange for all election supplies and voting equipment including, but not limited to official ballots, sample ballots, voter registration lists, and all forms, signs, maps and other materials used by the election judges at the voting locations. At each polling location, joint participants shall share voting equipment and supplies to the extent possible. The participating parties shall share a mutual ballot in those precincts where jurisdictions overlap. However, in no instance shall a voter be permitted to receive a ballot containing an office or proposition stating a measure on which the voter is ineligible to vote. Multiple ballot styles shall be available in those shared polling places where jurisdictions do not overlap. The Elections Administrator shall provide the necessary voter registration information, maps, instructions, and other information needed to enable the election judges in the voting locations that have more than one ballot style to conduct a proper election.

Political Subdivision shall furnish the Elections Administrator a list of candidates and/or propositions showing the order and the exact manner in which the candidate names and/or proposition(s) are to appear on the official ballot (including titles and text in each language in which Political Subdivision's ballot is to be printed). This list shall be delivered to the Elections Administrator prior to the deadlines as described in section XVII. Political Subdivision shall be responsible for proofreading and approving the ballot insofar as it pertains to Political Subdivision's candidates and/or propositions.

VII. EARLY VOTING

The participating authorities agree to conduct joint early voting and to appoint the Election Administrator as the Early Voting Clerk in accordance with Sections 31.097 and 271.006 of the Texas Election Code. The participating authorities agree to appoint the Elections Administrator's permanent county employees as deputy early voting clerks. The participating authorities further agree that the Elections Administrator may appoint other deputy early voting clerks to assist in the conduct of early voting as necessary, and that these additional deputy early voting clerks shall be compensated at an hourly rate set by Fort Bend County pursuant to Section 83.052 of the Texas Election Code.

Early Voting by personal appearance will be held at the locations, dates, and times listed in Attachment "B" of this document. Any qualified voter of the Joint Election may vote early by personal appearance at any one of the joint early voting locations.

As Early Voting Clerk, the Elections Administrator shall receive applications for early voting ballots to be voted by mail in accordance with Chapters 31 and 86 of the Texas Election Code. Any requests for early voting ballots to be voted by mail received by Political Subdivision shall be forwarded immediately by fax or courier to the Elections Administrator for processing.

The Elections Administrator shall provide Political Subdivision a copy of the early voting report on a daily basis and a cumulative final early voting report following the election.

VIII. EARLY VOTING BALLOT BOARD

Fort Bend County shall appoint an Early Voting Ballot Board (EVBB) to process early voting results from the Joint Election. The Presiding Judge of Central Count, with the assistance of the Elections Administrator, shall appoint two or more additional members to constitute the EVBB. The Elections Administrator shall determine the number of EVBB members required to efficiently process the early voting ballots.

IX. CENTRAL COUNTING STATION AND ELECTION RETURNS

The Elections Administrator shall be responsible for establishing and operating the central counting station to receive and tabulate the voted ballots in accordance with the provisions of the Texas Election Code and of this agreement.

The participating authorities hereby, in accordance with Section 127.002, 127.003, and 127.005 of the Texas Election Code, appoint the following central counting station officials:

Counting Station Manager:	John Oldham, Elections Administrator
Tabulation Supervisor:	Robin Heiman, Assistant Elections Administrator
Presiding Judge:	Gracie Alvarado, Elections Coordinator

The counting station manager or his representative shall deliver timely cumulative reports of the election results as precincts report to the central counting station and are tabulated. The manager shall be responsible for releasing cumulative totals and precinct returns from the election to the joint participants, candidates, press, and general public by distribution of hard copies or electronic transmittals by facsimile (when so requested) and by posting to the Elections Administrator's web page located at "www.fortbendvotes.org".

The Elections Administrator will prepare the unofficial canvass reports after all precincts have been counted, and will deliver a copy of the unofficial canvass to the Political Subdivision as soon as possible after all returns have been tabulated. All participating authorities shall be responsible for the official canvass of their respective elections.

The Elections Administrator shall be responsible for conducting the post-election manual recount required by Section 127.201 of the Texas Election Code unless a waiver is granted by the Secretary of State. Notification and copies of the recount, if waiver is denied, will be provided to each participating authority and the Secretary of State's Office.

X. RUNOFF ELECTION

Political Subdivision shall have the option of extending the terms of this agreement through its runoff election, if applicable. In the event of such runoff election, the terms of this agreement shall automatically extend unless the Political Subdivision notifies the Elections Administrator in writing within 10 days of the original election.

Political Subdivision shall reserve the right to reduce the number of early voting locations and/or Election Day voting locations in any runoff election. If necessary, any voting changes made by the Political Subdivision between the original election and the runoff election shall be submitted by the authority making the change to the United States Department of Justice for the preclearance required by the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended.

XI. ELECTION EXPENSES AND ALLOCATION OF COSTS

Political Subdivision agrees to share the costs of administering the Joint Election. Allocation of costs, unless specifically stated otherwise, is mutually agreed to be shared among the total number of political subdivisions. Costs for polling places shared by the County, Political Subdivision, and other political subdivisions shall be pro-rated equally among the participants utilizing that polling place.

Any expenses incurred in the rental of polling place facilities shall be attributed directly to the participants utilizing that polling location.

It is agreed that the normal rental rate charged for the County's voting equipment used on Election Day shall be pro-rated among the participants utilizing each polling location.

Costs for Early Voting by Personal Appearance shall be allocated as shown in Attachment C of this document.

Political Subdivision agrees to pay Fort Bend County an administrative fee equal to ten percent (10%) of its total billable costs in accordance with Section 31.100(d) of the Texas Election Code.

XII. WITHDRAWAL FROM CONTRACT DUE TO CANCELLATION OF ELECTION

Political Subdivision may withdraw from this agreement and the Joint Election should it cancel its election in accordance with Sections 2.051 - 2.053 of the Texas Election Code. Political Subdivision is fully liable for any expenses incurred by Fort Bend County on behalf of Political Subdivision plus an administrative fee of ten percent (10%) of such expenses. Any monies deposited with the county by Political Subdivision shall be refunded, minus the aforementioned expenses and administrative fee if applicable.

XIII. RECORDS OF THE ELECTION

The Elections Administrator is hereby appointed general custodian of the voted ballots and all records of the Joint Election as authorized by Section 271.010 of the Texas Election Code.

Access to the election records shall be available to each participating authority as well as to the public in accordance with applicable provisions of the Texas Election Code and the Texas Public Information Act. The election records shall be stored at the offices of the Elections Administrator or at an alternate facility used for storage of county records. The Elections Administrator shall ensure that the records are maintained in an orderly manner so that the records are clearly identifiable and retrievable.

Records of the election shall be retained and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of Section 66.058 of the Texas Election Code. If records of the election are involved in any pending election contest, investigation, litigation, or open records request, the Elections Administrator shall maintain the records until final resolution or until final judgment, whichever is applicable. It is the responsibility of Political Subdivision to bring to the attention of the Elections

Administrator any notice of pending election contest, investigation, litigation or open records request which may be filed with Political Subdivision.

XIV. RECOUNTS

A recount may be obtained as provided by Title 13 of the Texas Election Code. Political Subdivision agrees that any recount shall take place at the offices of the Elections Administrator, and that the Elections Administrator shall serve as Recount Supervisor and Political Subdivision's official or employee who performs the duties of a secretary under the Texas Election Code shall serve as Recount Coordinator.

XV. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

1. It is understood that to the extent space is available, that other districts and political subdivisions may wish to participate in the use of the County's election equipment and voting places, and it is agreed that the Elections Administrator may contract with such other districts or political subdivisions for such purposes and that in such event there may be an adjustment of the pro-rata share to be paid to the County by the participating authorities.
2. The Elections Administrator shall file copies of this document with the Fort Bend County Treasurer and the Fort Bend County Auditor in accordance with Section 31.099 of the Texas Election Code.
3. In the event that legal action is filed contesting Political Subdivision's election under Title 14 of the Texas Election Code, Political Subdivision shall choose and provide, at its own expense, legal counsel for the County, the Elections Administrator, and additional election personnel as necessary.
4. Nothing in this contract prevents any party from taking appropriate legal action against any other party and/or other election personnel for a breach of this contract or a violation of the Texas Election Code.
5. The parties agree that under the Constitution and laws of the State of Texas, neither Fort Bend County nor Political Subdivision can enter into an agreement whereby either party agrees to indemnify or hold harmless another party; therefore, all references of any kind, if any, to indemnifying or holding or saving harmless for any reason are hereby deleted.
6. This agreement shall be construed under and in accord with the laws of the State of Texas, and all obligations of the parties created hereunder are performable in Fort Bend County, Texas.
7. In the event of one of more of the provisions contained in this Agreement shall for any reason be held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision hereof and this agreement shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained herein.
8. All parties shall comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, and codes of the State of Texas, all local governments, and any other entities with local jurisdiction.
9. The waiver by any party of a breach of any provision of this agreement shall not operate as or be construed as a waiver of any subsequent breach.
10. Any amendments of this agreement shall be of no effect unless in writing and signed by all parties hereto.

XVI. COST ESTIMATES AND DEPOSIT OF FUNDS

It is estimated that Political Subdivision's obligation under the terms of this agreement shall be \$2,716. Political Subdivision agrees to pay to Fort Bend County a deposit of \$1,630, which is approximately sixty (60) percent of the total estimated obligation of Political Subdivision to the County under this agreement. This deposit shall be paid to Fort Bend County within 10 days after the final candidate filing deadline. The exact amount of the Political Subdivision's obligation under the terms of this agreement shall be calculated after the May 14, 2011 election (or runoff election, if applicable), and if the amount of the Political Subdivision's obligation exceeds the amount deposited, the Political Subdivision shall pay to Fort Bend County the balance due within thirty (30) days after receipt of the final invoice from the Elections Administrator. However, if the amount of the Political Subdivision's obligation is less than the amount deposited, Fort Bend County shall refund to the Political Subdivision the excess amount paid within thirty (30) days after final costs are calculated.

XVII. RESULT OF NON-COMPLIANCE OF DEADLINES

The Political Subdivision agrees that it shall provide ballot details to the Elections Office not later than the 60th day (March 15, 2011) before the election. It is understood that if the ballot details are not provided to the Elections Office by the 57th day before the election (March 18, 2011) that the Elections Office may impose a penalty fee of \$1000.00 assessed to the total cost. It is also understood that if the ballot details are not provided to the Elections Office by the 51st day before Election Day (March 25, 2011), this contract will be declared null and void and it will be the responsibility of the political entity to conduct a separate election.

IN TESTIMONY HEREOF, this agreement, its multiple originals all of equal force, has been executed on behalf of the parties hereto as follows, to-wit:

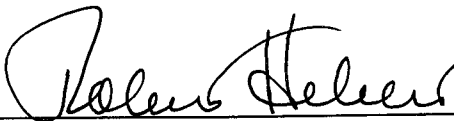
- (1) It has on the 5 day of April, 2011 been executed on behalf of Fort Bend County by the County Judge and the Elections Administrator pursuant to the Texas Election Code so authorizing;
- (2) It has on the _____ day of _____, 2011 been executed on behalf of the Fort bend County Water Control and Improvement District by its Presiding Officer or authorized representative, pursuant to an action by the Board of Directors of WCID No. 3.;

ATTEST:

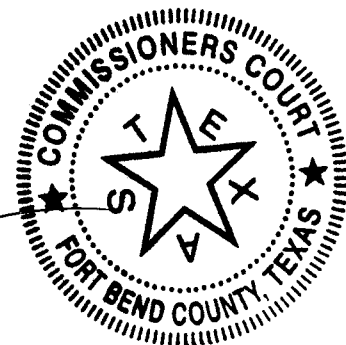


Dianne Wilson, County Clerk

FORT BEND COUNTY

By 

Robert E. Hebert, County Judge



ATTEST:

FORT BEND COUNTY WCID No 3

By 

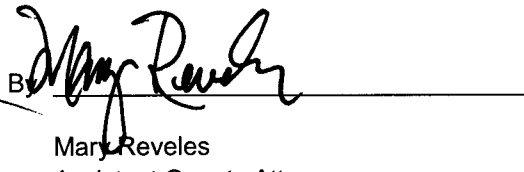
Michael Willis,
Attorney for Fort Bend County WCID No. 3

CONTRACTING OFFICER

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



John Oldham
Elections Administrator



B. Mary Reveles
Assistant County Attorney

**Lamar Consolidated Independent School District
City of Beasley, City of Fulshear, City of Rosenberg,
City of Simonton & WCID # 3
May 14, 2011 Joint Election**

Early Voting Schedule

Schedule for: Lamar CISD Administration Bldg. - 3911 Avenue I, Rosenberg, TX

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Monday – Friday	May 2 – 6, 2011	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday	May 7, 2011	CLOSED
Sunday	May 8, 2011	CLOSED
Monday - Tuesday	May 9 - 10, 2011	7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Schedule for: Irene Stern Community Center - 6920 Fulshear-Katy Road, Fulshear, TX

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Monday – Friday	May 2 – 6, 2011	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday	May 7, 2011	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday	May 8, 2011	CLOSED
Monday - Tuesday	May 9 - 10, 2011	7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Schedule for: Beasley City Hall - 7511 Avenue J, Beasley, TX

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Monday – Friday	May 2 – 6, 2011	9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Saturday	May 7, 2011	CLOSED
Sunday	May 8, 2011	CLOSED
Monday - Tuesday	May 9 - 10, 2011	7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

BRANCH EARLY VOTING

Austin Elementary School - 1630 Pitts Roads, Richmond, TX
Dickinson Elementary School - 7110 Greatwood Pkwy, Sugar Land, TX

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Monday - Tuesday	May 9 - 10, 2011	7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.