

## MINUTES

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on this 15th DAY of MAY, 2014, Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County, Texas, met at a special meeting with the following present:

ROBERT E. HEBERT	COUNTY JUDGE
RICHARD MORRISON	COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 1
GRADY PRESTAGE	COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 2
ANDY MEYERS	COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 3
JAMES PATTERSON	COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 4
SHERRY FISK for DIANNE WILSON	COUNTY CLERK

When the following were heard and the following orders were passed:

**1. Call to Order.**

Call to Order by Judge Hebert at 8:02 a.m.

**2. Workshop to discuss planning issues for the Fort Bend County Justice Center.**

Don Brady, Facilities Director, discussed the current layout of the Justice Center. Space is available for 2 additional courtrooms on the third floor and expansion of the Law Library. The buildout for the courtrooms is estimated at \$3 million and the Law Library \$25-30 thousand.

Commissioner Prestage asked how many people are in the courtrooms during trials and hearings. Commissioner Prestage also wants an efficiency survey of the complete justice system.

Judge Shoemaker, 434th District Court, answered questions about seating in the courtrooms. Judge Shoemaker explained the need for another Family Court and CCL Court and explained the different agencies that use the courtrooms. Judge Shoemaker also complimented the County Clerk and District Clerk on using eFiling.

Judge Hebert discussed the Justice Center being all courtrooms and building a new office building across the street with additional parking at the parking garage. Judge Hebert wants the Law Library buildout handled internally and a survey conducted to prove the need for expansion. Judge Hebert also stated that Commissioners Court would notify the State Legislature to create the new courts if needed.

Commissioner Morrison wants to keep all the courts in the same building.

**Item 2 continued - Workshop to discuss planning issues for the Fort Bend County Justice Center:**

Commissioner Patterson suggested having a floating Judge. Commissioner Patterson wants to know if cases are being held everyday in all courtrooms. Commissioner Patterson also wants a total cost of the buildout including staff.

Judge Childers, CCL 1, invited Commissioners Court to visit his courtroom. Judge Childers stated that the Office of Court Administration allows Fort Bend County to have two more courts that would be created by the Texas Legislature. Judge Childers also wants to have more workshops about the new courts and additional expenses that would be incurred. Judge Childers gave members of court a chart showing the increase of cases in the last 12 years.

Judge Pope, 328th District Court, stressed the need for another Family Court.

Attorney Leigh Love, Criminal Bar Association, supports the Judges request for more courtrooms.

Attorney Scott West also wants more courtrooms due to crowded conditions.

Attorney Sarah Springer, Bar Association, also supports the Judges.

John Healey, District Attorney, will need more staff if new courts are created.

Commissioner Meyers wants specific needs from the CCL and District Judges for the courtrooms.

Judge Hebert thanked everyone for attending.

**3. Adjournment.**

The special workshop meeting adjourned at 9:04 a.m. on Thursday, May 15, 2014.