

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
COMMISSIONERS COURT
FORT BEND COUNTY

I, Laura Richard, duly elected County Clerk and Clerk of Court, Fort Bend County, Texas do hereby submit the Official Minutes of Commissioners Court held on the 28th day of August, 2019. (Public Hearing)



LAURA RICHARD, COUNTY CLERK

Now, therefore, be it resolved upon the motion of Commissioner Meyers seconded by Commissioner Murales, duly put and carried, it is ordered to accept as presented for record the attached minutes approved on this the 3rd day of September, 2019.



KP GEORGE, COUNTY JUDGE

MINUTES

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on this 28TH DAY of AUGUST, 2019, Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County, Texas, met at a public hearing with the following present:

KP GEORGE	COUNTY JUDGE
VINCENT MORALES	COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 1
ANDY MEYERS	COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 3
KEN R. DEMERCHANT	COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 4
LAURA RICHARD	COUNTY CLERK

Commissioner Prestage absent.

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

1. Call to Order.

Call to Order by Judge KP George at 5:30 p.m.

2. Conduct a Public Hearing on the proposal to increase the 2019 Tax Rate for Fort Bend County.

Judge George expressed his appreciation for the citizens who attended the public hearing.

Commissioner Meyers stated he is proud, of the fact, the County is reducing the tax rate by 4/10 of a cent. This practice has continued with this Commissioners Court for the last 20 plus years. Commissioner Meyers explained when the County is approving the tax rate it must be approved on the basis the County is increasing the tax rate The County is not increasing the tax rate; but reducing the tax rate. The language for this increase will change in the future to say the County is increasing taxes. When property values go up and the tax rate stays the same, the taxes do go up. What the County tries to do, is reduce the increase in the citizens' taxes. This year the tax rate was reduced to 46 cents.

Commissioner Morales indicated he is pleased the County is able to give back a little something to the taxpayers, because property values do keep growing. With the new revenue caps next year, this will change. Commissioner stated it is good to give back something to the taxpayers and continue to maintain the services that are needed.

Commissioner DeMerchant echoed what his fellow Commissioners said, that it is great the County can lower the tax rate and continue to provide services to the fastest growing County.

Judge George stated the increasing property values is not done by the County, but by the state government, who tells the Central Appraisal District (CAD) to increase/decrease the values.

Item 2 continued - Conduct Public Hearing:

Commissioner Meyers explained the CAD is under pressure to make certain their values are at a level that will not penalize the school district. He encourages citizens to protest their property values if they feel they are overvalued. Citizens do have the right to protest.

Judge George stated he echoes what his colleagues have said and believes the citizens' money is always better with them, the citizens. The County is giving back something and hopefully the County will continue this practice moving forward.

There were four public comments.

Cheryl Stalinsky, 32410 Watersmeet Street, Weston Lakes, thanked the Court for their service and the way they have worked together. She is glad to see a nonpartisan approach when voting on the tax rate. Ms. Stalinsky stated seniors are increasingly taxed out of their homes and ask the Court to think of the seniors when they are voting on the tax rate and use wisdom between wants and needs.

Rodrigo Carreon, 1122 Avenue C, Fresno, TX, stated before the tax rate is changed, he would like to make sure the County has the money to install street lights and maintain them for the community in order for kids to walk safely to school.

Jeff Sorocak, 3622 Wellspring Lake Drive, Weston Lakes, thanked the Court and is appreciative of the tax rate reduction. Mr. Sorocak had a few items he noticed on the Budget Policy. In Section 2 of the Budget Policy, it talks about fund balance of 15%, which is what the County has been running. This year the County will increase the fund balance and possibly get a better bond rating. Mr. Sorocak feels this is not a good idea to gamble the taxpayer's money for the future. He asked Commissioners Court to rethink the fund balance. In Section 5, of the Budget Policy, Staffing and Training, he believes the Court voted on these items without any justification. Mr. Sorocak stated in Section 1.3 of the Budget Policy it states that Fort Bend County is one of the fastest growing counties. With that, he feels the County is still giving tax abatements and setting up TIRZ that probably are not necessary anymore. Businesses are coming to Fort Bend County because the population is coming here and the County should not give away more taxes for businesses and put the burden on the residents.

Pamela Gubbels, Director of Finance and Investments stated she does have calculations for the ARB and has looked back at prior years to see what the trend was and how much it has increased. It has been between 80% - 85%. She usually errs on the side of caution with the 80% in order not to overestimate the revenues. When departments are looking for staff, Pamela indicated she does use a matrix in regards to staff and looks at performance measures.

Tina Thompson, 14826 Armitage Lane, Sugar Land stated the Court needs to consider needs before wants. She asked the County be prudent in the use of its funds and be just as careful as citizens are with their own household funds.

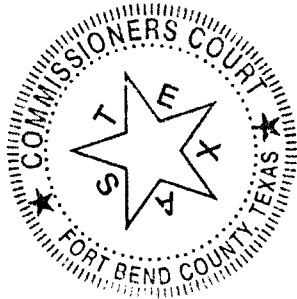
3. Adjournment.

The Special Meeting of the Public Hearing of the Tax Rate adjourned at 5:55 p.m. on Tuesday, August 28, 2019.

Moved by Commissioner Meyers, to adjourn.

August 28, 2019

I attest to the accuracy of the foregoing minutes.



Laura Richard

Laura Richard, County Clerk, Fort Bend County, Texas