

PUBLISHER'S AFFIDAVIT

THE STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF FORT BEND

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared who being by me duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the publisher of **Fort Bend Independent** and that said newspaper meets the requirements of Section 2051.044 of the Texas Government Code, to wit:

1. It devotes not less than twenty-five percent (25%) of its total column lineage to general interest items;
2. It is published at least once each week;
3. It is entered as second-class postal matter in the county where it is published; and
4. It has been published regularly and continuously since 2008.

Publisher further deposes and says that the attached notice was published in said newspaper on the following date (s) to wit:

August 18, 2021

Notice of meeting to vote on tax rate



Seshadri Kumar

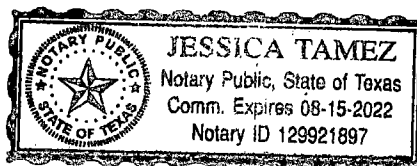
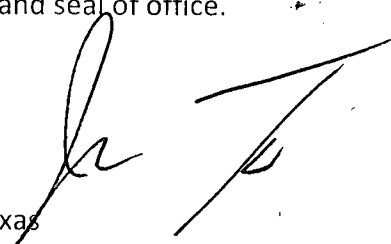
Publisher

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN BEFORE ME by Seshadri Kumar who

- (a) Is personally known to me, or
- (b) Provided the following evidence to establish his/ her identity,

On this the ^{18th} day of August, 2021 to certify which witness my hand and seal of office.

Notary Public, State of Texas



Fort Bend County politics muddies water board appointment

By **SESHADRI KUMAR**
Former Sugar Land Councilman Russell Jones, photo right, has been replaced by former Sugar Land City Manager Allen Bogard as director on the board of the Gulf Coast Water Authority.

There are no Republican potholes or Democratic potholes and flood waters don't look for Republican homes or Democratic homes, politicians say often, meaning roads, bridges and water are beyond politics. But, this does not hold water, especially when it comes to water issues in Fort Bend County.

The three-member Democratic majority of Fort Bend County Commissioners Court last Tuesday replaced Russell C. Jones, long-time county representative to the Gulf Coast Water Authority and current president of the body.

Meadows Place Mayor Charles Jessup and Sugar Land Mayor Joe Zimmerman urged the commissioners to reappoint Jones and conveyed the unanimous support of Fort Bend County Mayors and City Council Association for Jones' re-appointment.

Ignoring the impassioned plea of the mayors, the commissioners court appointed former Sugar Land City Manager Allen Bogard to the GCWA on a 3-2 vote.

There was no explanation available for replacing Jones, an attorney and former Sugar Land City Councilmember, who has been on the GCWA board since 2011.

Galveston County gets five representatives, Brazoria County gets three and Fort Bend County only gets two on the 10-member GCWA. And one of those two sits

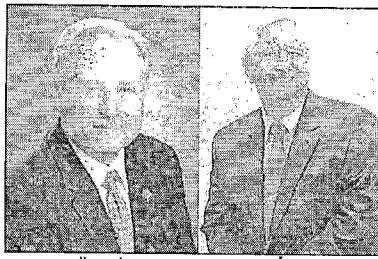
on top of their flowchart, one, being the representative of county at-large and one being representative of municipalities, the position that Jones held.

"President Russell Jones represented all cities large and small in Fort Bend County, not just a small cities as the county said in the agenda item," Jessup said.

"As chairman of the Fort Bend County mayors and city council association, I sent a letter to all my all members of the commissioner's court, expressing the mayor's unanimous support for Russell Jones, as a municipal representative. I believe that the removal of the sitting president can only weaken Fort Bend County. I question the wisdom of this action. Furthermore, I hope you're taking into account the impact on Fort Bend County in your decision," Jessup told the commissioners court.

Zimmerman said, "I'm here to ask you to consider reappointing Russell Jones to the Gulf Coast Water Authority. Russell not only is president of the board, he's the chair of the contract review and facilities committee and a member of the water resources committee. Clearly Russell has served with distinction. I've talked to fellow county judges in the other counties. They like I believe that Russell served with distinction and deserves to be reappointed."

"Couple of the facts that we might want to consider. Back after Hurricane Harvey, Russell led the upgrade, actually, the replacement enlargement of Shannon pump station. He's also been a voice of reason for adequate



Bogard

Jones

water supply and improved drainage along Oyster Creek," Zimmerman said.

"Oyster Creek is one of the two main drainage pathways, two main watersheds that are the Brazos River and Oyster Creek. Not only in Sugar Land, but in Fort Bend County he's been a voice for water resources and infrastructure planning to assure the long-term surface water rights," Zimmerman said.

Two years ago, after KP George became the county judge, he wanted to make his own appointment to the GCWA. Jones would have been a casualty at that time, but the other director, Mike McConnell, was asked to resign.

Trisha Frederick, P.E. was appointed by the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court to the Gulf Coast Water Authority Board of Directors in August 2019. She holds the Fort Bend County At-Large Position No. 1. Ms. Frederick is a member of the Long Range Planning, Capital Project Review, and Contract Review committees.

Now, Russell Jones' term came up for renewal. The Fort Bend County

and is a member of the Water Resources Committee.

GCWA provides water for industry, agriculture, and municipalities in Brazoria, Fort Bend, and Galveston County. The GCWA Canal Division operates out of its office located in Alvin. The division owns and operates the American, Briscoe, and Juliff Canal systems. This includes approximately 400 miles of main-line canals and laterals, and about 400,000 acre-foot of water rights. Municipal customers served include the cities of Sugar Land, Pearland and Missouri City, as well as Fort Bend WCID #2 and Pecan Grove M.U.D.

Several years ago, GCWA had only five members, all from Galveston County. Around that, GCWA renewed on its water supply contract with the City of Sugar Land. Sugar Land council members and some others from the Houston area, approached the

Texas Legislature to increase the directors' position in GCWA. Two positions were added, one for Brazoria County and the other for Fort Bend.

Ten years ago, the legislature increased the number of directors to ten, and gave two more seats to Brazoria and one more to Fort Bend County. Jones has been on the board since then.

Though the directors are appointed by politicians, the GCWA itself did not run its operations on political basis.

The purpose of replacing Jones is not because of his performance or qualifications, but because KP George can make his own appointment.

After all, Jones was appointed by a Republican-controlled Commissioners Court and Jones himself is known to be a Republican.

The question remains: Does it matter if the GCWA director is a Republican or Democrat?

Unions criticize decision by Fort Bend ISD to ignore school public safety guidance

MISSOURI CITY - Unions representing working people throughout Fort Bend County, including Fort Bend ISD, criticized Fort Bend ISD's decision today to ignore public safety guidance by not enforcing a mask mandate for schools and district facilities.

Texas Gulf Coast Area Labor Federation Executive Director Hany Khalil said, "The CDC, local and state public health officials, and the entire medical community have made it clear: During the delta surge masks are vital to keeping our kids, co-workers, and communities safe. Judge KP George showed guts by mandating masks in schools and government buildings in Fort Bend County despite Governor Abbott's attempt to sabotage local officials' ability to keep schools safe. We're disappointed that Fort Bend ISD's Board has failed this test of leadership."

Fort Bend AFT President Glenda Macal said, "Every student in Fort Bend ISD deserves a safe learning environment, and every worker - teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, all of us - deserves a safe working environment. We're disappointed that our leadership in Fort Bend ISD have decided to ignore the concerns of the community and the safety of our kids."

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of \$0.438300 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of Fort Bend County General Fund.

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$0.438300 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE	\$0.425081 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE	\$0.448325 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2021 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for Fort Bend County General Fund from the same properties in both the 2020 tax year and the 2021 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Fort Bend County General Fund may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Fort Bend County General Fund is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2021 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON September 14, 2021 AT 1:00 PM AT the Fort Bend County Historical Courthouse, 401 Jackson St, Richmond, TX 77469.

The proposed tax rate is not greater than the voter-approval tax rate. As a result, Fort Bend County General Fund is not required to hold an election at which voters may accept or reject the proposed tax rate. However, you may express your support for or opposition to the proposed tax rate by contacting the members of the governing body of Fort Bend County General Fund at their offices or by attending the public hearing mentioned above.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

$$\text{Property tax amount} = (\text{tax rate}) \times (\text{taxable value of your property}) / 100$$

The members of the governing body voted on the proposed tax increase as follows:

FOR the proposal: Judge KP George, Commissioner Vincent Morales, Commissioner Grady Prestage, Commissioner Andy Meyers, Commissioner Ken DeMerchant

AGAINST the proposal: NONE

PRESENT and not voting: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by Fort Bend County General Fund last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by Fort Bend County General Fund this year.

	2020	2021	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.435876	\$0.438300	increase of 0.002424, or 0.56%
Average homestead taxable value	\$241,367	\$248,251	increase of 6,884, or 2.85%
Tax on average homestead	\$1,052.06	\$1,088.08	increase of 36.02, or 3.42%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$329,982,015	\$347,020,763	increase of \$17,038,748, or 5.16%

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for Fort Bend County General Fund at 281-341-3710 or fbctax@fbctx.gov, or visit www.fbctx.gov for more information.

NOTICE OF MEETING TO VOTE ON TAX RATE

A tax rate of \$0.014500 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of Fort Bend Co Drainage District.

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$0.014500 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE	\$0.016863 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE	\$0.016299 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2021 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for Fort Bend Co Drainage District from the same properties in both the 2020 tax year and the 2021 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Fort Bend Co Drainage District may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate.

The proposed tax rate is not greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Fort Bend Co Drainage District is not proposing to increase property taxes for the 2021 tax year.

A PUBLIC MEETING TO VOTE ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON September 14, 2021 AT 1:00 PM AT the Fort Bend County Historical Courthouse, 401 Jackson St, Richmond, TX 77469.

The proposed tax rate is also not greater than the voter-approval tax rate. As a result, Fort Bend Co Drainage District is not required to hold an election at which voters may accept or reject the proposed tax rate. However, you may express your support for or opposition to the proposed tax rate by contacting the members of Fort Bend Co Drainage District at their offices or by attending the public meeting mentioned above.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

$$\text{Property tax amount} = (\text{tax rate}) \times (\text{taxable value of your property}) / 100$$

The members of the governing body voted on the proposed tax decrease as follows:

FOR the proposal: Judge KP George, Commissioner Vincent Morales, Commissioner Grady Prestage, Commissioner Andy Meyers, Commissioner Ken DeMerchant

AGAINST the proposal: NONE

PRESENT and not voting: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by Fort Bend Co Drainage District last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by Fort Bend Co Drainage District this year.

	2020	2021	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.017331	\$0.014500	decrease of -0.002831, or -16.33%
Average homestead taxable value	\$241,367	\$248,251	increase of 6,884, or 2.85%
Tax on average homestead	\$41.83	\$36.00	decrease of -5.83, or -13.94%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$13,271,036	\$11,634,842	decrease of -1,636,194, or -12.33%

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The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Fort Bend Co Drainage District may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate.

The proposed tax rate is not greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Fort Bend Co Drainage District is not proposing to increase property taxes for the 2021 tax year.

A PUBLIC MEETING TO VOTE ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON September 14, 2021 AT 1:00 PM AT the Fort Bend County Historical Courthouse, 401 Jackson St. Richmond, TX 77469.

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YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount= (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property)/100

The members of the governing body voted on the proposed tax decrease as follows:

FOR the proposal: Judge KP George, Commissioner Vincent Morales,
Commissioner Grady Prestage, Commissioner Andy Meyers,
Commissioner Ken DeMerchant

AGAINST the proposal: NONE

PRESENT and not voting: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

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