

HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION - VIA TELECONFERENCE

April 21, 2020
7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present via telephone: Becky Langston, Susan Andrews, Rob Grant, J. Harry Lange, Andrew Zuerner. Staff Present via telephone: Randy Dowling, County Manager; John Taylor, County Attorney; Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**. Chairman Langston called the Regular Session to order.
2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - A. **Teleconference Meeting**. Chairman Langston announced that in compliance with the Governor's Declaration of Public Health State of Emergency and in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 54-14-1(g), tonight's meeting will be conducted live by conference call to comply with recommended social distancing and public gathering guidelines; that citizens may also listen to the meeting via telephone by calling 408-418-9388, and entering access code 798 045 915#, and the attendee ID 706 628 77#; and that instructions are on the Harris County website.
 - B. **Public Comments Suspended**. Chairman Langston said that in compliance with Governor Brian P. Kemp's Executive Orders and based on recommendations from the President Trump's Coronavirus Guidelines for America to limit social gatherings and practice social distancing, tonight's meeting is being broadcast live, therefore the County's policy regarding public participation (Harris County Public Comment Policy) is temporarily suspended and public comment for the meeting is unavailable. She also said that the invocation and the pledge of allegiance will not occur during tonight's meeting.
 - C. **Voting During Meeting**. Chairman Langston requested that in making motions, seconds, or votes, Commissioners give their name and district number.
 - D. **Responsibilities**. Chairman Langston said that everyone is aware of the difficulties and challenges of maintaining county government support during this historical time; that along those same lines, the Board has done a good job, and some of the decisions are unprecedented. She also said she wanted to clear up a possible misconception that the Board is responsible for all things COVID to include there are many moving parts in this COVID machine; that the Board of Commissioners is NOT the spokesman for any federal agency, state agency, or health agency; that the Board tries its best to share info that is relevant to the County and its citizens; that there are subjects for which they do not have the authority to share or to release statements; and she wanted to make sure there is no misunderstanding.
3. **MINUTES**. The motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2020, Regular Session, and the March 14, 2020, Joint Called Session, was made by Commissioner Lange, seconded by Commissioner Andrews, and passed unanimously. (There was no meeting on April 7, 2020.)
4. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Tourism Event**. Chairman Langston advised the Board there will be an upcoming State DCA Tourism team visiting Harris County from June 16 - 18, to which the Commissioners will be invited to participate in certain portions, and that if they want anything in their district to be seen by the team they need to let Kim Tharp, Executive Director of the Harris County Chamber of Commerce, know.
 - B. **Financial Statement: January 2020**. The motion to approve the January 2020 financial statement was made by Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Lange, and passed unanimously.
 - C. **COVID-19 and Revenue Request**. Chairman Langston requested that the Board be advised about the effects of COVID-19 expenses on the County's revenue. Randy Dowling, County Manager, said that such can be provided to the Board in the May 5 meeting.
 - D. **Hazard Pay During Pandemic**. Commissioner Grant said the Board really needs to consider giving employees some type of hazard pay, perhaps a flat \$500, to show employees the Board appreciates the work they have been doing during the pandemic. Chairman Langston said that while she is in favor of doing such, she needs to see the cost estimates before agreeing to same. Commissioner Andrews agreed and suggested scenarios be presented. Randy Dowling, County Manager, said estimates can be provided, and asked if there was a preference. General consensus was there was not a preference but to provide the estimates for both or more options. Commissioner Grant said that a flat \$500 would cost about \$150,000. Mr. Dowling said that as soon as the comparison is ready, it will be emailed to the Board.
 - E. **Radar List: Roads for Consideration by GDOT**. Chairman Langston said that requests have been made for the Board to consider requesting GDOT to change speed limits or to add roads and set speed limits to the radar list. Commissioner Andrews said that she was contacted by the HOA of Timberland Subdivision regarding two of the roads on the list (Maggie Way and

Ross Road), both of which are rather long, and she made the motion to approve the list. Commissioner Lange said that he was contacted by a citizen in Coca Lake regarding four of the roads (Coca Way, Little Bear Drive, Mink Drive and Otter Drive) and that all of the roads may not meet GDOT standards, but that GDOT would make the decision. Chairman Langston said that she is not in favor of including the SR 1/US 27 section that is on the list and understands that the speed limit will be changed when GDOT widens the road, and Commissioner Lange agreed, said that he understands the widening plans may include a median, which would probably result in a speed reduction, and asked that that road be removed from the list for consideration. Commissioner Andrews amended her motion to approve the list with the removal of the SR 1/US 27 road. Discussion included that the other two roads are Lickskillet Road (to make entire road 45 mph) and the area at Pine Ridge Elementary (to reduce the speed); that GDOT would have the ultimate decision to add roads and set the speed limits or to adjust the speed limits; and that the Board should submit the list of eight roads, all of which were requested by constituents. Following discussion, Commissioner Lange seconded the motion to submit the list of eight roads to GDOT for review and consideration to add to the Radar List. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **COUNTY MANAGER**

A. **Airport Consultant Proposal Award & Agreement.** Randy Dowling, County Manager, said that every five (5) years, the State requires airports to select consultants on a competitive basis; that the agreement with the current consultant, Pond & Company, expires June 30, 2020; that the airport consultant assists in implementing the airports five-year capital improvement plan, preparing funding applications, attending monthly airport meetings, and designing construction projects; that an RFQ was prepared in accordance with FAA and GDOT rules and regulations and distributed in January 2020; that eight (8) responses were received on February 7, 2020; that the four-member selection committee (County Manager Randy Dowling, Airport Manager Ronnie Pendergrass, and Airport Committee members Lynda Dawson and Jim Woods), reviewed the responses and narrowed the eight firms down to three (3), which are Pond & Company, Lead Edge, and Holt; that interviews with each of three firms were conducted on March 11, after which the selection committee unanimously recommended Lead Edge to be the airport consultant for the five-year period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2025; and that a contract had been developed for same. John Taylor, County Attorney, said that he reviewed and revised the contract agreement; and that he recommends approval of same, along with the multi-year addendum. Following discussion, the motion to award the RFQ to Lead Edge, to approve the contract, and to authorize the County Manager and County Clerk to execute the necessary documents, was made by Commissioner Lange and seconded by Chairman Langston. In response to a question from Commissioner Andrews, Phil Eberly, President of Lead Edge, who was on the teleconference, said that the company is located in Woodstock, GA, and John Taylor, County Attorney, said that the contract agreement is much the same as it was with Pond & Company. Commissioner Lange said that Mr. Eberly's previous company, WK Dickson, was the Airport's consultant for quite a few years, and as such, Mr. Eberly is very familiar with the Airport, and Chairman Langston said that Mr. Eberly was the consultant when she became a commissioner and recalls that he did a good job. The motion passed unanimously. (Document can be found in "Contracts & Agreements" file as C&A #20-06.)

6. **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

A. **Court Order re Alternative Location for Court Sessions and Closing of Courthouse.** John Taylor, County Attorney, said that Judge Gil McBride had signed a court order this afternoon regarding an alternative location for court sessions (Harris County High School) and the closing of the Courthouse to the public beginning at 5:00 PM, Wednesday, April 22, to 8:00 AM, Thursday, May 7. Chairman Langston said that along with the closing of the Courthouse, the Commissioners' office, the Community Development office, and the Water Works office will also be closed to the public during that same time period, unless there are objections. There were no objections. (Note: In addition, the Public Works office and Animal Control office were added to the list of closures.) It was also noted that the offices will be staffed to respond to phone calls, emails, etc.

7. **OTHER**

A. **Salary Study by CVIOG.** In response to a question from Commissioner Grant, Randy Dowling, County Manager, said that the CVIOG salary study is underway and should be completed in June; and that in anticipation of the results, he is including \$800,000 in the upcoming budget for same in order to implement the results of the study on July 1.

8. **ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business, the motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Lange, seconded by Commissioner Andrews, and passed unanimously.

Attest:

Becky Langston, Chairman

Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk