

HARRIS COUNTY BAIL BOND BOARD MEETING MINUTES - February 09, 2022

HARRIS COUNTY BAIL BOND BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

1019 Congress Street

Houston, Texas 77002

FEBRUARY 9, 2022

1:35 P.M.

HARRIS COUNTY BAIL BOND BOARD MEETING MINUTES - February 09, 2022

A P P E A R A N C E S

- 1
- 2 Honorable Angela D. Rodriguez, Vice Chairman
- 3 Michael Butera, designee for District Attorney Kim Ogg
- 4 Honorable Elaine Marshall
- 5 Honorable Shannon Baldwin
- 6 Honorable Amy Martin
- 7 Dylan Osborne, Harris County Treasurer
- 8 Troy McKinney, attorney representative
- 9 Kathryn Kase, designee for Lina Hidalgo, County Judge
- 10 Judith Snively, des., for Marilyn Burgess, District
- 11 Clerk
- 12 Sergeant Sisto DeLeon, designee for Sheriff Ed Gonzalez
- 13 Tommy Ramsey, County Attorney's Office
- 14 Deputy David Kern, Harris County Sheriff's Office
- 15 Leslie Rubio, Recorder, Harris County Sheriff's Office

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Ladies and
3 gentlemen, it is 1:35 on Wednesday, February the 9th,
4 2022. I'll call the meeting to order of the Harris
5 County Bail Bond Board.

6 At this time, I would like our Members to
7 introduce themselves starting with Sergeant DeLeon ...

8 SERGEANT DELEON: Sergeant Sisto DeLeon
9 representing Sheriff Ed Gonzalez.

10 HONORABLE MARSHALL: I'm Judge Elaine
11 Marshall, directing presiding judge of municipal courts.

12 MR. OSBORNE: Dylan Osborne, Harris County
13 Treasurer.

14 HONORABLE BALDWIN: Judge Shannon Baldwin,
15 Harris County criminal courts.

16 MS. KASE: Kathryn, Kase, legal counsel to
17 Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo.

18 HONORABLE MARTIN: Judge Amy Martin, Harris
19 County criminal district courts.

20 MS. SNIVELY: Judith Snively. I'm here on
21 behalf of Marilyn Burgess, district clerk.

22 MR. BUTERA: And Michael Butera here for
23 the District Attorney's Office sitting for Kim Ogg.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: We have prior
25 minutes.

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1 Do we have a motion to accept the minutes
2 of that meeting?

3 HONORABLE BALDWIN: Judge Shannon Baldwin.
4 I move we accept the minutes.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Do we have a
6 second?

7 MR. OSBORNE: Second, Dylan Osborne.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All those in
9 favor, signify by saying aye.

10 THE BOARD: Aye.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All those
12 opposed, nay.

13 The ayes have it.

14 No old business.

15 We have new business. I'm going to go
16 ahead and go over the first item of new business at this
17 time.

18 Request for approval to pay Court
19 Reporters Clearinghouse for \$721 from the Harris County
20 Bail Bond Board account for the services rendered on
21 Wednesday, November 10th, 2021.

22 Ladies and gentlemen, do we have any
23 discussion on this matter?

24 Any public comment on this agenda item
25 regarding the Clearinghouse item of \$721?

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1 Hearing none, all those in favor of the
2 request of approval to pay Court Reporters
3 Clearinghouse, signify by saying aye.

4 MR. BUTERA: Judge, I'll make a motion to
5 approve.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

7 MR. BUTERA: Yeah. Michael Butera. I make
8 a motion to approve.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Hearing that
10 motion --

11 MS. SNIVELY: I'll second the motion,
12 Judith Snively.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Recognizing the
14 second by Ms. Snively.

15 All those in favor, signify by saying
16 aye.

17 THE BOARD: Aye.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All opposed, nay.

19 The ayes have it.

20 Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to take a
21 moment of personal privilege. I believe all of our
22 fellow Members would be in agreement. The judges had
23 mentioned it.

24 Last month, we had the extreme privilege
25 of having our Chair present to preside over our meeting.

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1 Today, the Chair position is vacant because we have a
2 death in our Board. Chair Strickland --

3 Glenn Strickland honorably served as
4 Chair for two and a half years. Prior to that, he
5 served for many years on the Board, and we will miss him
6 greatly. At this time, there will be more said next
7 month about our Chair. At this time, the Chair position
8 is vacant.

9 And I would like to add for everyone
10 present and everyone watching the recording in the
11 future to take a moment of silence for this gentleman,
12 Chair Glenn Strickland.

13 (A moment of silence.)

14 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

15 My name is Judge Angela D. Rodriguez, and I
16 am your Vice Chair of the Harris County Bail Bond Board.
17 I represent the justice court known as the justice of
18 the peace court.

19 We're going to move on to Item No. 2
20 under new business. Request for renewal of license. We
21 have Irene M. Villarreal DBA 3-Amigos Bonding, License
22 No. 74409, 1302 Munger Street, Houston, Texas 77023.
23 Original date: March the 10th, 1999. Expiration date:
24 March the 20th, 2022. Phone number: (713) 928-5000.
25 It's for a three-year license renewal, represented by

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1 Counsel Good.

2 Ma'am, would you please raise your hand
3 to be sworn?

4 (Witness sworn.)

5 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

6 We have another Board Member that has
7 welcomed us.

8 Please introduce yourself quickly before
9 we proceed.

10 MR. MCKINNEY: Troy McKinney, defense
11 lawyer representative.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

13 Counsel Good, you have the floor.

14 MR. GOOD: Your Honor, this is a renewal
15 application. Thank you. Thanks to the Board for the
16 kind consideration. If it's any questions, we'll be
17 happy to answer them.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

19 At this time, we will ask for any questions
20 starting with Sergeant DeLeon.

21 SERGEANT DELEON: Yes.

22 So an inspection of the property was
23 complete. The bonds that were viewed were in
24 compliance. The bonding company currently is in ratio.
25 This is a property license which was extensive in its

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1 personal value assessment. We --

2 The Sheriff's Office did ask Ms. Villarreal
3 to try to provide a list in regards to her other assets
4 that were listed, the amounts that were listed. And
5 that list, we provided a copy to the Board because we
6 received it a little late. She itemized items that were
7 on her other assets. The --

8 As I stated, the bonding license is
9 currently in ratio. The Sheriff's Office knows of no
10 past due judgments that are currently owed to the
11 county. We have no other comments in regards to this
12 license.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

14 Any questions?

15 HONORABLE MARSHALL: I have no questions.
16 This is Judge Marshall.

17 MR. OSBORNE: I have a question for the
18 Sheriff's Office on this.

19 So when someone list this extensively
20 additional assets, does anyone appraise this or check
21 for accuracy?

22 SERGEANT DELEON: Well, her license --

23 Her license, itself, is a property license
24 which she has -- she has cash and other property up as
25 collateral. So we re-ask for a financial statement like

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1 this. This money is listed as her personal assets. So
2 that is not (inaudible.) It's just kind of proof of ...

3 MR. OSBORNE: Got you.

4 MR. MCKINNEY: This was -- if this was
5 security for a bond (inaudible.)

6 MR. OSBORNE: Got you.

7 MR. GOOD: Let me just make sure that what
8 he was saying is clear, that she has her financial
9 statement but she also has property or cash up with the
10 county that she's provided. And she -- on cash, she --

11 Well, she's been bonded -- she's been
12 licensed for over 20 years so it should 10 to 1 whether
13 it's real estate or cash. So she -- her writing ratio
14 or her ability to write is determined with the property
15 that she has presented to the county to hold the
16 security and that is cash. And so the county is holding
17 cash and she's writing on a ratio of 10 to 1 to that and
18 she's inside the ratio on that.

19 MR. BUTERA: This is cash and real
20 property, pledged real property as well.

21 MS. VILLARREAL: Yes.

22 MR. MCKINNEY: I've got one comment. It's
23 not so much directed to you as it is to all the property
24 bondsmen. On your financial statement, the outstanding
25 BCs ought to be listed as potential liabilities.

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1 They're listed later but they're not on the financial
2 so ...

3 MR. GOOD: Okay. Thank you.

4 MR. MCKINNEY: Future reference.

5 MS. VILLARREAL: Thank you.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Counsel, do you
7 have any questions?

8 MR. MCKINNEY: No, no questions.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I have no
10 questions at this time. Any --

11 Judge Baldwin ...

12 HONORABLE BALDWIN: No questions at this
13 moment.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All right.

15 MS. KASE: No questions from Kathryn Kase.

16 HONORABLE MARTIN: No questions from
17 Judge Martin.

18 MS. SNIVELY: No questions from
19 Judith Snively.

20 MR. BUTERA: I do have a few questions.
21 Sorry.

22 Ms. Villarreal, do you have your
23 application in front of you --

24 MS. VILLARREAL: I do.

25 MR. BUTERA: -- so we can refer to it

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1 together.

2 It could be me looking at, just not adding
3 things up correctly but I'm going to refer you on
4 page 12 to your personal financial statement and let me
5 know when you're there.

6 MS. VILLARREAL: Okay. I'm there.

7 MR. BUTERA: Okay. And then also, I'm
8 going to reference page 16 just behind that.

9 So on the personal financial statement on
10 the (inaudible.) and that follows, first row there.
11 Notes payable to bank, secured and scheduled to that
12 175-dollar number. I do see that page 16. That's your
13 first two months listed right above the SBA information
14 so that's -- that's very correct. And then so you also
15 account for the two SBA loans a few lines down on
16 page 12 so I see that.

17 But then can you kindly tell me what
18 those four items are to the right on page 16 totaling
19 roughly 178,000?

20 It says real estate, PPP, real estate.

21 What are those four items?

22 MR. GOOD: Where are you talking about?

23 MR. BUTERA: Sorry. So I'm referring to
24 page 16.

25 MR. GOOD: Okay. Over there.

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1 MR. BUTERA: And I'll show you.

2 MR. MCKINNEY: Part of the title is
3 Schedule II Banking Relations.

4 MR. BUTERA: Four items on the top to the
5 right. I was just going over some --

6 Schedule II is both, you know, "deposit"
7 accounts and loans. So page 15 was the ...

8 Yes. So just -- you're on the right
9 page, looking on the right page.

10 Just my question is the columns to the
11 left, PNC Bank and PNC Bank, those two items do add up
12 to the 175,000 accounting for on page 12 so I fully
13 understand that.

14 The two SBA loans are also accounted for
15 on page 12, \$259,000.

16 MR. GOOD: Yes.

17 MR. BUTERA: But the --

18 Put your eyes on the right side of the
19 column there on page 16, those four different items.

20 MS. VILLARREAL: Yes.

21 MR. BUTERA: What are those and where are
22 those represented on this financial statement on
23 page 12? I just didn't see them accounted for anywhere.

24 MS. VILLARREAL: Oh, those are --

25 Those are the balances on these --

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1 MR. GOOD: That was the original loan.

2 MS. VILLARREAL: I think this is the
3 original loan amount.

4 MR. BUTERA: Oh, corresponding to --

5 MS. VILLARREAL: Yes.

6 MR. BUTERA: Oh, okay. Well --

7 MS. VILLARREAL: The original loan amount
8 and then the balance is on the right.

9 MR. BUTERA: Perfect. I didn't know if
10 I was looking at items, those were four additional loans
11 or --

12 Okay. Perfect. That answers my question.
13 That was it. Those are the only questions I have.

14 MS. VILLARREAL: Thank you.

15 MR. GOOD: Thank you for scaring.

16 MR. BUTERA: All right. Thank you.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: At this time --
18 this is Judge Rodriguez.

19 Do I hear a motion to approve?

20 MR. MCKINNEY: Troy McKinney move to
21 approve.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Second?

23 MR. BUTERA: Go ahead.

24 HONORABLE BALDWIN: Judge Baldwin, second.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

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1 Any discussion on this item?

2 Hearing none, all those in favor, signify
3 by saying aye.

4 THE BOARD: Aye.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All those
6 opposed, nay.

7 The ayes have it.

8 Congratulations, Ms. Villarreal.

9 MS. VILLARREAL: Thank you. Thank you,
10 Judge. Thank you Board; thank you, Board.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Next up, we have
12 a request for renewal of license by International
13 Fidelity Insurance Company. Voir dire incomplete, ago
14 Judy Grandmason-Warren, License No. 74322 DBA Access
15 Bonding Service, 4803 Katy Freeway, Houston, Texas
16 77007.

17 I noticed the presence of our commissioner,
18 Adrian Garcia. Welcome. (Inaudible.)

19 Original date: March the 10th, 1993.
20 Phone number: (713) 223-3101. Expiration
21 date: 2/20/2022 for a three-year license.

22 Could you please raise your right hand to be
23 sworn?

24 (Witness sworn.)

25 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I

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1 recognize (inaudible.).

2 Do we have any questions starting with
3 Sergeant DeLeon?

4 SERGEANT DELEON: Just comments.

5 The Sheriff's Office inspected the
6 property and found it to be in order. We reviewed some
7 files and files were also in order. The application is
8 complete and the Sheriff's Office knows of no past due
9 judgments owed to Harris County as of 2/8/22. No other
10 comments.

11 HONORABLE MARSHALL: Judge Marshall, no
12 comments, no questions.

13 MR. OSBORNE: No questions.

14 MR. MCKINNEY: Troy McKinney, no questions.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: No questions at
16 this time.

17 HONORABLE BALDWIN: Judge Baldwin, no
18 questions.

19 MS. KASE: Kathryn Kase, no questions.

20 HONORABLE MARTIN: Judge Martin, no
21 questions.

22 MS. SNIVELY: Judith Snively, no questions.

23 MR. BUTERA: Michael Butera. Everything
24 appears to be in order so I don't have any comments.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Is there anything

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1 else you have?

2 MR. GOOD: No, ma'am.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

4 On this request for renewal of license,
5 congratulations.

6 MS. WARREN: Thank you all.

7 MR. GOOD: Thank you.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Moving on Item
9 No. 4. New business. Notice for nominations of the
10 surety representative of the 2022 Harris County Bail
11 Bond Board.

12 I don't believe we need a vote on that.

13 MR. MCKINNEY: Actually, I think -- Troy
14 McKinney. I think we've got to --

15 Does the Sheriff have proposed dates and
16 times?

17 SERGEANT DELEON: The next item is the
18 proposed date and time.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Providing
20 Item No. 4, the notice for nomination of the surety
21 representative of the 2022 Harris County Bail Bond Board
22 is hereby acknowledged.

23 Counsel Ramsey, so it's my understanding
24 that we don't need a vote on this and we can move on to
25 the next item; is that correct?

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1 MR. RAMSEY: I don't need to take action on
2 this individually.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

4 MR. RAMSEY: Take action to announce it.
5 It's all --

6 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Sure.

7 MR. OSBORNE: For the record, Chair, just
8 ask is there going to be a transcript of this item,
9 we'll accept nominations from February 21st till
10 February 25th, essentially next week.

11 Correct, Sergeant?

12 SERGEANT DELEON: Yes.

13 MR. OSBORNE: So you've got the record?

14 SERGEANT DELEON: We've got them, yeah.

15 MR. OSBORNE: Thank you.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Sergeant DeLeon,
17 is there any other details that you would like to share
18 before we move on to Number 5?

19 SERGEANT DELEON: On the nominations, the
20 County Treasurer stated it will be accepted beginning
21 Monday, February 21st till February 25th. And again,
22 these nominations are because of the sudden passing of
23 our bond representative, Glenn Strickland. So we're
24 trying to -- or we are working to fill that position.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

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1 MR. BUTERA: Judge, I have a --

2 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Yes, sir.

3 MR. BUTERA: Michael Butera.

4 So Sergeant DeLeon, I just noticed -- I
5 looked at it earlier. I think on this first letter
6 dated January 27th. It's titled nomination of bail
7 bonds representative.

8 In the last paragraph, I think that should
9 be (inaudible.) after the February Bail Bond meeting; is
10 that right? It's the first letter in my packet after
11 Judy's application.

12 SERGEANT DELEON: No. The actual results?
13 Are you talking about the result findings?

14 MR. BUTERA: No, sir.

15 It says complete election information will
16 be released -- I guess that's my question.

17 Does that mean results or does that mean
18 like what we're going to do eventually on Item No. 5,
19 approve the time of the election?

20 SERGEANT DELEON: Right, right. It's
21 referencing -- it's referencing the results.

22 MR. BUTERA: Okay.

23 SERGEANT DELEON: Yeah.

24 MR. BUTERA: Very good.

25 SERGEANT DELEON: It corresponds with the

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1 next item.

2 MR. BUTERA: Okay.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: So the place and
4 time and instructions are -- I mean, with
5 Sergeant DeLeon, they're in line of what we've done in
6 the past; is that correct?

7 SERGEANT DELEON: Yes. We --

8 They're in line with what we've done in the
9 past, Chair, and we outlined the times. After the
10 nominations, the Sheriff's Office will then have a
11 ballot on --

12 Are we going into the next item, Chair?
13 When we ...

14 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Well, we can --

15 SERGEANT DELEON: Because this is -- what
16 I'm about to --

17 What I'm about to depict is the next item.
18 So if we're good, the notice of the nominations, then we
19 can move on from -- from item -- from the nomination
20 item into the election.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Sure.

22 SERGEANT DELEON: Yes, okay.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I'm interested in
24 hearing the details.

25 SERGEANT DELEON: All right.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Number 5, request
2 to approve the place, time and instructions for the
3 upcoming election for surety representative of the
4 Harris County Bail Bond Board.

5 We will start the discussion --

6 SERGEANT DELEON: Okay.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: -- on that
8 starting with Sergeant DeLeon.

9 SERGEANT DELEON: So after the nominations
10 are complete, then the Sheriff's Office will have an
11 election for the bonding community to come and vote.
12 And that election will happen at 700 North San Jacinto
13 on Tuesday, March 8th between the hours of 9:00 "a" and
14 1:00 "p". And then Wednesday, March 9th between
15 8:00 "a" and 11:00 "a".

16 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

17 SERGEANT DELEON: So after the nominations
18 or after the elections are complete, the Sheriff's
19 Office does a tally and then we will -- again, that goes
20 into the last part of this when we get the results on
21 next month's March 9th meeting.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

23 And by the time we convene again, we should
24 have an answer, some progress on that.

25 SERGEANT DELEON: Yes, ma'am.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All right.

2 MS. KASE: I actually have a question,
3 Chair. So our next meeting --

4 Today's the 9th. Our next meeting is March
5 9th.

6 Does that mean we won't be able to have
7 the Bail Bond Board representative be sworn in to sit?

8 SERGEANT DELEON: I will pose that question
9 to the Count Attorney in regards to if that position,
10 once it's filled, will be able to represent at next
11 month's meeting. The election will be complete.

12 MR. RAMSEY: Yeah, it will. If the
13 election is complete, essentially depending on happens,
14 if there's more than one nomination, there's a full
15 election. As long as the process is complete, it seems
16 reasonable and (inaudible.).

17 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: So depending upon
18 how many people are nominated, it may or may not get
19 filled by next month then.

20 MR. RAMSEY: Correct.

21 And I'm not sure. I don't have the --

22 When is the election date?

23 SERGEANT DELEON: The election date is --

24 The election date is actually on the 8th
25 and 9th of March.

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1 MR. RAMSEY: Okay.

2 SERGEANT DELEON: And than after the
3 elections, the Sheriff's Office will do a tally. And
4 then have the nomination or the elected official named
5 by the beginning of the meeting --

6 MR. RAMSEY: Okay.

7 SERGEANT DELEON: -- in March.

8 MR. RAMSEY: I don't see an issue.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Well, they'll at
10 least be named unless something else comes up.

11 MR. MCKINNEY: On March the 9th, the voting
12 closes at 11:00 a.m. So nobody (inaudible.).

13 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: We're going to
14 move on to Judge Marshall, if you have any discussion
15 regarding this item.

16 HONORABLE MARSHALL: No discussion on this
17 item.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Treasurer
19 Osborne ...

20 MR. OSBORNE: I have a question, Sergeant.

21 Why is -- is there a --

22 Is the 8th and 9th of March we're voting
23 in, is that meeting in the (inaudible.)?

24 SERGEANT DELEON: No. It's just historic.
25 In our election prior to after having a special

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1 election, that's the way it's always been conducted, to
2 where we have the lengthy election prior to the meeting
3 that we announce (inaudible.).

4 MR. OSBORNE: In the odd hours that we
5 we'll be accepting the votes on the 8th and 9th, is
6 there a particular reason why those hours were chosen
7 the way they are?

8 SERGEANT DELEON: We just wanted it --
9 We just wanted to give two days for the
10 bonding community to come and cast a ballot.

11 MR. OSBORNE: All right. Thank you.

12 MR. MCKINNEY: And traditionally, we've
13 had -- the elections has been over two days for election
14 so more people will have opportunity to vote
15 (inaudible.).

16 I do have a question. I'm assuming that
17 shortly after 11:00 a.m. on that -- on that Wednesday,
18 you know who is the winner is, and that winner will be
19 notified (inaudible.) So they will be able to attend
20 the meeting --

21 SERGEANT DELEON: Yes, sir; yes, sir.

22 MR. MCKINNEY: Okay. (Inaudible.).

23 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Judge Baldwin ...

24 HONORABLE BALDWIN: No questions.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Kathryn Kase ...

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1 MS. KASE: No questions.

2 HONORABLE MARTIN: Judge Martin, no
3 questions.

4 MS. SNIVELY: Judith Snively, no questions.

5 MR. BUTERA: Michael Butera, no questions.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: We are going to a
7 vote, but before we take a vote on this last agenda
8 item, we will open up the floor for any public comment
9 hoping that this will be the last agenda item. We will
10 fit all remaining public comments before we finish with
11 Agenda Item Number 5 and then after that, we can be
12 adjourned then.

13 So I will call three times.

14 Is there any public comment?

15 We recognize Commissioner Adrian Garcia.

16 You have the floor, sir.

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Thank you, your Honor
18 and thank you Members of the Bail Bond Board. I
19 appreciate your service.

20 I'm here simply to make sure that you are
21 aware that the Commissioners Court took a unanimous vote
22 on a resolution that reads: "Whereas the criminal case
23 backlog is exacerbated by the nominal percentage of bail
24 bond amounts, bondsmen collect from defendants. And
25 whereas investigations conducted by stakeholders in the

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1 criminal justice system show records outlining that
2 there are bail bondsmen in Harris County that do not
3 collect the customary 10 percent required to post bonds,
4 some collecting as little as one percent of a bond set
5 by a (inaudible.) And whereas the Harris County Bail
6 Bond Board has been given regulatory authority by the
7 Texas legislature evidence in the Texas Occupations
8 Code. And whereas the Texas Occupational Code,
9 Section 1704.101 allows the Board to supervise and
10 regulate each phase of the bonding business in the
11 county. And whereas Texas Occupations Code,
12 Section 1704.101 allows the Board to adopt, and post
13 rules necessary to implement this chapter. And whereas
14 allowing violent offenders to pay less than 10 percent
15 of a set bond does not consider constituent safety. Be
16 it resolved, the Harris County Commissioners Court urges
17 the Bail Bond Board to take action requiring a
18 10 percent minimum bond payment by defendants," and this
19 was adopted at Commissioners Court.

20 Now, I know that this is not on your
21 agenda for today; however, I would encourage this be
22 placed on the next agenda and a vote be taken. I have
23 also shared with you a copy of the County Attorney's
24 opinion that indicates in the County Attorney's opinion
25 that this Board does have the authority to take such

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1 action.

2 And let me just also say that I know that
3 this is not a indictment on the entire bonding industry.
4 However, with any outliers that may exist, it's
5 important to have a standard set across the industry.
6 And so this is very important. Constituents are, you
7 know, hoping that this Board will take an action that
8 will, at a minimum, break all players of the criminal
9 justice system under a level of scrutiny.

10 I've been very vocal about our members of
11 the judiciary asking for the highest amount of work to
12 done to move dockets along so that jury trials can be
13 held. I have been the one that has checked in a
14 dashboard on our dockets. I have been "avid" about
15 ensuring that all officers have the resources necessary,
16 proud of the fact that they're getting a historic pay
17 increase that they rightly deserved with their valuable
18 work. But this is just one additional level of evening
19 out the playing field.

20 And so I'm here to say thank you for your
21 work, but I hope that you will give this all of your
22 attention and hope that you will seriously consider
23 voting in favor of this 10 percent minimum. I will just
24 close with this point.

25 In my days as a law enforcement, I have

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1 heard from families who had a love one who had been
2 incarcerated for different reasons. Many of them, dumb
3 mistakes. Those families would call crying for some
4 consideration that they could possibly get for their
5 love one starting with -- their conversations always
6 starting with, "I'm going have to sell our car. I'm
7 going to have to mortgage the house. I'm going to have
8 to clean out the bank accounts because the bondsmen want
9 10 percent at a minimum upfront cash in hand". That's
10 no longer the case now, especially -- and it does make
11 sense when it comes to violent offenders.

12 And so this is the focus of this
13 resolution. And so again, I'm here to ask for your
14 support in considering this item. The victims of crime
15 and constituents across the county will greatly
16 appreciate you being in support with Commissioner's
17 Court as well as Mayor Turner of the City of Houston.

18 Thank you. If there's any questions,
19 I'll be happy to answer them.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for
21 your comments, Commissioner Garcia.

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Thank you.

23 Thank y'all very much. You have a good
24 afternoon.

25 MR. OSBORNE: Commissioner ...

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: It's not on the
2 agenda.

3 MR. OSBORNE: It's my understanding from
4 talking with the County Attorney that this is not on the
5 agenda, we can't discuss this.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Sir ...

7 MR. OSBORNE: I only comment to having an
8 item potentially --

9 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: One moment. I
10 don't recognize you at this time. If I may say --

11 If I suggest, if you would direct your
12 question more to Counsel Ramsey. At this time, there
13 are certain constraints. We have strict notice
14 requirements regarding what is to be meaningfully
15 considered during this meeting and we will be fully
16 addressing that before too long.

17 I'll take a moment -- thank you very much
18 for being here. And we appreciate all of the input of
19 the entire community regarding anything having to do
20 with the Harris County Bail Bond Board and our duties.
21 Through history, this Board has considered adjustments
22 and today, 2022 is no different than the 70s, 80s and
23 90s but at the same time, we must respect the rule and
24 we'll move forward with anything that we need to do in
25 order to address what is required of this Board.

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1 That being said, we have any question
2 going back and forth about this --

3 If you have a question, I would just
4 suggest that you first, if I may, if you could ask
5 Counsel Ramsey and then we'll go from there if you have
6 any further questions, whatever you want to do. But at
7 the end of the day, this Board is an independent body
8 and we all work in a collaborative way to make sure that
9 everything is addressed in a reasonable matter, in a
10 timely matter.

11 I'm so sorry. You have the floor, sir.

12 MR. OSBORNE: Tommy, it's my understanding
13 that we can't discuss the material of his comments but
14 we can acknowledge that he's here and that we cannot
15 necessarily admit it but to acknowledge that we will
16 potentially discuss this at next month's meeting,
17 correct?

18 MR. RAMSEY: That's correct. The Open
19 Meetings Act essentially limits the Board's ability to
20 respond to public comment to two options, that either
21 with a pure statement back to policy or requesting that
22 the item be placed on a future agenda for discussion.
23 But beyond that, the Board Members are limited in terms
24 of the questions essentially deliberation on items
25 that's on the agenda.

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1 MR. OSBORNE: Well, then I leave with this
2 statement fact. I'm going to request that an agenda
3 item next month on this item and we will discuss it
4 further then.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Is there anything
6 else you would like to share, Commissioner, with us?

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No. Just that I
8 applaud the leadership. This is important.

9 It's timely. And I will just say I'd been
10 here sooner if I thought about the role that this
11 particular industry has in regards to public safety.

12 So again, Treasurer, thank you for your
13 leadership, and I look forward to being back when this
14 item is on the agenda. Thank y'all very much.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for
16 your comment, Commissioner.

17 Is there anyone else that has a public
18 comment before we vote on our last item?

19 You have the floor, Counsel.

20 MR. GOOD: I'll make a couple of brief
21 comments. My name is Ken Good. I'm an attorney.

22 (Inaudible.)

23 This is really a nonpolitical Board who are
24 made up of so many different elected officials -- a
25 spectrum of judges and county commissioners, District

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1 Attorney's Office and bondsman and Sheriff's Office.
2 And I've been coming here for many, many years. I've
3 been here where we've had problems that we had to
4 address but we worked together to address those issues.
5 And you know, as this issue has come up, we're
6 researching it as well.

7 So I want to point out just a couple of
8 facts to you. And as we go forward, I'll be -- I want
9 to continue to do what we always do, work with the
10 Board. One of the facts that I feel like I need to
11 point out is there no other Bail Bond Board in the state
12 that has a local rule that does what is being asked of
13 you to do. And my question is: I will ask you why?

14 I think there is a reason why, but we can
15 address that as we go forward if we work together. I
16 know it's a political season. I know we have a prior
17 coming up. And sometimes politics leads into other
18 areas, but I would also just point out that we had a
19 very important case just decided by the circuit called
20 "Dave" case which overturned O'Donnell and nothing has
21 happened since then to try to bring that fact to
22 anyone's attention in Harris County. It's been pretty
23 much normal.

24 We've got people attending forums saying
25 their hands are tied on misdemeanor cases and I would

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1 say their hands are tied by themselves. And the circuit
2 has given them a way to (inaudible.) and nothing has
3 happened and I would just point that out.

4 I am not here to point fingers at anyone
5 because I've been coming here for many, many years and I
6 consider this Board full of people I know. I don't
7 personally attack people like that. I don't personally
8 attack people period. I will be here as a resource. I
9 will show you the law that we have, that we think
10 governs this and I know that you were already have seen
11 some of it. But I will point out that we're not dealing
12 with just individuals. We're dealing with agents for
13 insurance companies and we're dealing with property
14 licenses.

15 When you have agents for insurance companies,
16 that adds a whole 'nother layer dealing with the
17 Department of Insurance. And when we talk about
18 regulating bail, criminal appearance bonds, the
19 Department of Insurance used to be involved in that and
20 the legislature has taken a position on that. And I
21 believe that position is detrimental to what you're
22 being asked to do and I will be happy to provide that
23 information to the Board.

24 Thank you for your time, consideration
25 that you've always given us on issues. Y'all always

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1 haven't agreed with me, but you've always considered my
2 position. And all I would ask is that this high
3 political season that we're in that we continue to work
4 together to do what is best for the bail industry and
5 the county, all the different groups that are here
6 before the Board.

7 That's all I can ask. Thank you very
8 much.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for
10 your comments, Counsel Good.

11 Does anyone else have public comment?

12 Could you please state your name, please?

13 MS. GRAVATO: Yes. Christina Gravato, and
14 I am --

15 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: I'd like to ask
16 for you to remain with your mask on.

17 MS. GRAVATO: Oh, okay. Sure. No problem;
18 no problem, okay.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: And where are you
20 from?

21 MS. GRAVATO: So I'm actually Katy's
22 Domestic Victims Violence -- Violence Victims advocate
23 -- excuse me. And I am a -- I'm just here to give my
24 comment on the effects of low cost bonds and how they're
25 affecting people in the community.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

2 MS. GRAVATO: Thank you.

3 Again, my name is Christina Gravato and
4 I'm a mother of two daughters, "double distance", three
5 sisters, a friend and an advocate and I'm here to
6 discuss with you some of the effects of these low cost
7 bonds for these violent offenders.

8 Over my lifetime, I've had multiple
9 encounters with domestic violence. I've watched family
10 members struggle and escape and I've lost friends to
11 their domestic abusers who were out on bond under
12 protective orders as well as -- and as well as
13 restraining orders.

14 Recently in a neighboring county, I
15 nearly lost a friend to her abuser who had not only
16 assaulted her but had attacked another young woman by
17 attempting to drown her the pool. This violent offender
18 had multiple violations of bond conditions and probation
19 and still repeatedly was given another bond.

20 These women and their families look to the
21 courts to abide by the law. And when they see bonds as
22 low as one percent for violent offenders and violent
23 criminals who either tried to or taken the life of their
24 loved ones, in these moments -- those moments, it is as
25 if their loved ones and their families had been

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1 victimized all over again.

2 I understand that our judicial system has
3 due process, including an individual's right to request
4 a bond. However, previous legislation from what I
5 recall clearly states that lower bonds are granted to
6 nonviolent offenders. This brings up a question.

7 Why do we continue to see repeat violent
8 offenders including those violating their probation
9 being granted low cost bonds? Not only is this allowing
10 violent criminals to re-victimize their targets and
11 others, but it puts our officers at a higher risk of
12 injury and death dealing with domestic abuse calls, one
13 of the most -- if not, important -- dangerous calls in
14 which an officer can respond to.

15 We have seen an increase in gun violence
16 since the pandemic in our last legislative session and
17 in recent months, you have lost officers and officers
18 injured regularly. If we were to investigate the
19 criminal history of each of these violent criminals,
20 we'd see a pattern. One major component in these
21 patterns is that these violent offenders have almost
22 always been granted bond, have continued to violate
23 these bonds; and ultimately, they've been given another
24 one at very low cost.

25 I'm urging this Board to truly take into

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1 consideration the effects of these low cost bonds and
2 what effects they have had on our communities and will
3 continue to have on our communities in the future. I
4 urge you to look to these families of these fallen
5 officers, look to the surviving members of the families
6 of these domestic violent victims who have been stolen
7 from them and I ask you to hear my plea.

8 As I count the days cherishing every
9 moment that I have with my love ones and my friends, I
10 pray that their abusers do not attempt these violent
11 acts again, that they are not successful this time and
12 that they are put away for an extended period of time
13 without access to another low cost bond allowing them to
14 hurt another person again.

15 I thank you for allowing me to speak to
16 you this afternoon. I appreciate the work that each of
17 you do every day to attempt to keep our families and
18 communities safe. It is my hope that we continue to
19 push for victim's right and not those of the criminals
20 who create them. I thank you all for your time today.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very
22 much for your comment.

23 MS. GRAVATO: Thank you.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Is there anyone
25 who has a public comment before we make a vote on our

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1 last agenda item? I'll call again.

2 Any further public comment at this time?

3 Thank you.

4 MR. MCKINNEY: I move we approve the
5 following agenda item (inaudible.).

6 HONORABLE BALDWIN: Baldwin. I second.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All those in
8 favor, signify by saying aye.

9 THE BOARD: Aye.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: All those
11 opposed, signify by saying nay.

12 The ayes have it.

13 Hearing a motion to adjourn.

14 HONORABLE BALDWIN: Judge Baldwin, I move
15 that we adjourn.

16 MR. OSBORNE: Dylan Osborne, second.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

18 It's 2:17 and we have officially
19 adjourned.

20 (Meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.)

21

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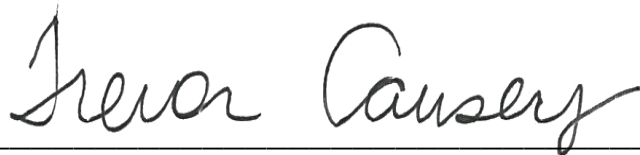
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1 STATE OF TEXAS)
2 COUNTY OF HARRIS)

3
4 I, Trevor Causey, do hereby certify that the
5 facts as stated by me in the caption hereto are true;
6 that the above and foregoing transcript of the
7 proceedings was taken in stenograph, reduced to
8 typewriting under my direction, and is a full, true and
9 correct transcript of the proceedings.

10 I further certify that I am not, in any
11 capacity, a regular employee of the party in whose
12 behalf this transcript was taken, nor in the regular
13 employee of any attorney; and I certify that I am not
14 interested in the cause, nor of kin or counsel to any of
15 the parties.

16 GIVEN UNDER MY HAND, on this day, 11th day of
17 July, 2022.

18 

Trevor Causey
Notary Public in and for
The State of Texas
My Commission expires 5/24/2025
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