

September 7, 2017  
Budget Workshop

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of September, A.D., 2017 there was held a Budget Workshop of the Honorable Commissioners' Court of Willacy County, Texas at the County Judge's Office, 576 West Main, in the City of Raymondville, Texas for the purpose of transacting the following agenda:

1. Call to Order.
2. Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum.
3. Budget Workshop.
4. Adjourn.

THE COURT MET:  
PRESENT:

Aurelio Guerra, Jr.,	County Judge,	<b>ABSENT</b>
Eliberto Guerra,	Commissioner, Precinct 1,	
Oscar De Luna,	Commissioner, Precinct 2,	
Henry De La Paz,	Commissioner, Precinct 3,	
Eduardo Gonzales,	Commissioner, Precinct 4,	
Annette Hinojosa,	County Attorney,	
Ida Martinez,	County Auditor,	
Elizabeth Rios,	County Clerk Deputy,	

WHEREUPON, the Court was opened to the following proceedings were had to wit:

PERSONS VISITING THE COURT:  
No one signed in the sign in sheet.

1. Call to Order – Presiding Chairman Commissioner Eliberto Guerra
2. Roll Call/Establishment of Quorum – County Judge, Aurelio Guerra, Jr. - **ABSENT**

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Agenda # 3  
IN REGARDS TO  
BUDGET WORKSHOP

Presiding Chairman Commissioner Eliberto Guerra, states that the County Judge will be coming to the meeting shortly due to the fact that Judge Guerra is in a meeting with District Judge, Migdalia Lopez.

Commissioner Gonzales, asks Ida Martinez, County Auditor if they are like 80% done with all the Departments? Mrs. Martinez, states maybe around 90% to 95% finished.

Presiding Chairman Commissioner Eliberto Guerra, states the County Judge is meeting with District Judge on reference to the Budget and on the County Auditor's requests on reference to her budget to see what final decision can be made.

Motion was made by Commissioner Gonzales, seconded by Commissioner De La Paz that Court Recess until County Judge, Aurelio Guerra, Jr. arrives at the meeting. Motion was put before the Court by the Presiding Chairman. Commissioners De Luna, De La Paz and Gonzales voting AYE. NAYS NONE. Motion was declared carried.

There being no further action,

Court Recessed.

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Court Reconvened at 2:40 p.m. at the County Judge's Office, 576 West Main, in the City of Raymondville, Texas.

THE COURT MET:

PRESENT:

Aurelio Guerra, Jr.,	County Judge,
Eliberto Guerra,	Commissioner, Precinct 1,
Oscar De Luna,	Commissioner, Precinct 2,
Henry De La Paz,	Commissioner, Precinct 3,
Eduardo Gonzales,	Commissioner, Precinct 4,
Annette Hinojosa,	County Attorney,
Ida Martinez,	County Auditor,
Elizabeth Rios,	County Clerk Deputy,

**ABSENT**

**Arrives at 2:44 p.m.**

WHEREUPON, the Court was opened to the following proceedings were had to wit:

PERSONS VISITING THE COURT:

No one signed the sign in sheet.

Chairman Guerra, proceeds with the Proposed Budget on the item of the Department Requests by looking at the bottom there was a difference of \$140,000.00-\$150,000.00 from last year's Budget verses to the Proposed Budget. Also, wanted to keep the Budget the way it was, basically most of them had gone up with the exception of the Administration, Maintenance and Health and Welfare. There was a slight of a higher figure on Administration. The idea is not to increase it and keep it in a two (2) year plan and reads out loud what was provided to the County from the Independent Audit.

The Chairman, states he would like to keep the Budget the same it is, if it has to be increased because of fuel going up, well there is no other option. Now, having said that they have come across some Revenues and some negotiating of the Prison that was sold. So, that has given a little more flexibility; that will let the County pull through this two (2) plan. The sacrifice that was done in order to bring the Budget down to \$7.1 Budget, we must not forget. Chairman Guerra, states he personally would not like to go through that, but it seems the County is on the right track as of Budget purposes.

**Commissioner Eduardo Gonzales arrives at the meeting at 2:46 p.m.**

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Chairman Guerra, states that he would like to let the Department Heads know what some of the wish lists have been granted and which ones have not.

The Chairman, continues by mentioning that one of the biggest request was from the Auditor's Office, about \$130,000.00 by increasing the part-time position hours and another position that was requested, which this was one of the biggest increases. Chairman Guerra, mentions he took the County's phone directory, which has the County Population in alphabetic order to have an idea how many Employees the County has with comparison with the other Counties. The Chairman did some research on some other Counties, more less like this County's Population and seems that Willacy County is the highest percent to Budget and the number of Employees.

Although, the District Judge will be the one presenting this to Commissioners Court and testifying it. Chairman Guerra wanted to do some research because he doesn't want it to affect the two (2) year plan with that considerable amount of change. The Chairman, would like for the District Judge to explain to Commissioners Court the intention why she wants to do this on reference to the increase of the amount of Employees in the Auditor's Office, which he is not agreeable with it due to financially and causing it a big change to the Budget.

Chairman Guerra, continues with updating the Department Heads where the Commissioners are at this point and time considering to approve the Budget.

Discussion continues with Mrs. Martinez on reference to Account Number 401-075 Unemployment Compensation by putting \$55,000.00 into Administration. Health and Welfare reduction on the Revenue on Courthouse Security on the Sanitation Constable moved to Precinct 4 and discussion on the Technology Fund.

Chairman Guerra, continues with discussion on reference to the 2017-2018 Budget Workshop. Discussion continues on reference to the Budget for the following departments:

Chairman Guerra, states that he had done some research on reference to the Veteran Officer's request for a salary increase, for being one of the lowest pay Official. Commissioner Gonzales, states he wants to be fair if increases will be given.

Chairman Guerra, continues on discussion on reference to a list from the other Auditor's Office duties and the number of staff from other Counties. A draft copy is attach.

Chairman Guerra, updates to Commissioners Court about the auditing circumstances the County had back on 2004-2005 and the number of Auditors the County had to go through during that period of time. It was difficult of finding an Auditor to bring up the books and trying to find an Independent Auditor. This made the County to be disqualified on applying for Grants, due to not having an Auditor. The Chairman, states the County had gone through Legislation and was allowed for the Auditor's Salary could make more than the highest paid Election Official. Chairman Guerra reads out loud that it was specific to Willacy County. It mentioned a County with a population of more than 10,000.00 but less than 23,000.00 that borders the Gulf of Mexico.

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The County was able to get an Auditor at a higher pay than the County Judge's pay, but the amount of compensation and allowances of the Auditor in the County subject to subsection previously mention maybe be in an amount that exceeds the limit establish of Subsection A. If the compensation allows them to approve by Commissioners Court. A draft copy is attach.

Chairman Guerra, states the compensation would have to get approve through Commissioners Court, due to the County Auditor being the highest pay. The County Auditor's Salary is \$93,000.00, with benefits it is \$114,000.00.

Commissioner Gonzales, asks here in Willacy County is due to only having one District Judge.

Chairman Guerra, states that the Counties he looked up are providing with the Longevity Program.

Ida Martinez, County Auditor, brings up the Precincts and DA's Office on reference for the taxes that will be charged (mileage) due from IRS purposes on the County Vehicles driven by the Precincts Foremen, Commissioners and DA's Office. The vehicles that are taken to their residence.

Commissioner Guerra, asks Ruben Cavazos, County Treasurer about the Statue he had given to him on reference to the Reconciling. Mr. Cavazos, states he had left it at his office. Commissioner Guerra, states they need to take care of that.

Chairman Guerra, states to District Judge, Migdalia Lopez that he had mentioned earlier to Commissioners Court about the statue and responsibilities at the other Counties on reference to the County Auditor.

Presentation was made by District Judge, Migdalia Lopez on reference to Mrs. Martinez' request on her Budget. Judge Lopez, states that she had talked to Judge Guerra earlier on reference on County Auditor's request. Judge Lopez was going to grant Mrs. Martinez the other person and the second person will be getting the additional five (5) hours. It will be from 24 hours plus the additional five (5) hours, which will still be part-time. Also, states when she started working here in Willacy County, the County already had problems at the Auditor's Office. Some of reasons were the Auditor at that time was stealing money and ended up being convicted. The Border Judges viewed that situation and found out that on 2006 the Auditor was not doing what the Auditor was supposed to be doing. The Auditor was allowing the Commissioners at that time, none of the Commissioners being present, to put pressure on the Auditor; to do things which the Auditor should have not be doing. As of result from this, the County ended up in a big total mess. In between this a total of five (5) other Auditors, only stayed within a year or less. One of the biggest complaints was not having the Staff to take over the situation because things were totally out of control. The Border Judges weren't aware of that, but then they were aware of it. So, finally they talked with the Commissioners that were in place at that time and the County Judge at that time. As per statue, they changed the statue and increase the pay for the County Auditor and increase the number of people at the Auditor's Office. Judge Lopez, states at that time she had formed a Committee of Citizens in Willacy County. They had talked and selected the County Auditor, which Willacy County has of now.

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So, this is when Ida Martinez, County Auditor came in knowing the mess Willacy County was in. Mrs. Martinez had to do three (3) Audits that had not been done because of these; the County was not able to get Grants and the Funding had also stopped. Also, Mrs. Martinez had to do the present current Audit. Mrs. Martinez talked about it with Judge Lopez and asked her if she will allow Mrs. Martinez to do the present Audit and one of the other Audits. Mrs. Martinez had to go back on those years to search for the records, which some of the records did not even exist and others were unable to find. Although, Mrs. Martinez took care of it by staying till midnight hours, until she got everything done.

Judge Lopez, states that she never will like to go through that situation again for Willacy County, nor Cameron County. Since, the years had gone by the District Judge has not given her any more staff, nor any increase than the other employees have not gotten to the County Auditor. It's not like Judge Lopez can't do it, which she has the authority to do it. They have given it to Cameron County, but not here in Willacy County for being very continental about the situation in Willacy County. Judge Lopez, states she always try to look out for the best interest for Willacy County. There are times that the Commissioners are not aware what the District Judge does because she is at the other side of the building doing her work. Also, tries to protect Willacy County in any way on reference to money wise. Judge Lopez, states they have three (3) murder cases that really costs a lot of money, but she is trying to save money to Willacy County. For Example, the District Judge doesn't order any robes for her, traveling expenses, nor education expenses from Willacy; they get paid out from Cameron County. Also, haven't given Mrs. Martinez any additional staff for her office. Judge Lopez says she sees the Auditor's Office need to have a person to do the Audits. So, the Departments may get audited to avoid any thefts. Judge Lopez, says that she already told Mrs. Martinez how she wants the Audit to be done by the Statue. By going to the Department, preparing a report about any findings and then will give the report to the Department Head with recommendations. Also, will report to the County Judge and the Commissioners about his/her findings. The goal is to keep the money of Willacy County safe. The Statue needs to be follow and the Auditor's Office are not following the statue because this person is needed. Judge Lopez told Chairman Guerra she needed to make this decision. Since, she won't be here any much longer. Judge Lopez will like to leave Willacy County in good shape and to leave the Auditor's Office functionally in benefit to the Commissioners Court. Judge Lopez has made her decision about the full-time person and the part-time from 24 hours to 29 hours, plus the 5%. Chairman Guerra asks what was the 5%? Judge Lopez and Mrs. Martinez state the 5% is for Travel and Training and Machinery and Equipment > \$500.00 for the computers. Mrs. Martinez states it stays within her Budget. Judge Lopez, states that the County Judge had told her he had done some research from other Counties; which she had done it as well. Judge Lopez says you can't compare what other Auditors do; which Willacy County does everything. The others Counties don't have Payroll Duties, AP Duties, Bank Reconciliation and Grants. They don't have the responsibilities like this Auditor has.

Commissioner De La Paz, introduces himself to District Judge, Migdalia Lopez and states they appreciate the effort that she has done; also that they know about the Statue. Judge Lopez, states she has made sure she has stayed within the Statue. Commissioner De La Paz, states that they appreciate the fact that Judge Lopez has saved them money and appreciates Mrs. Martinez doing the Audits. Also, assumes that when Mrs. Martinez took over this job she knew about the late hours about doing the Audits. This occurs when someone signs up for a position you know what you signing up for and know what you getting yourself into. Also, there was a question on

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reference to the Payroll Duties by removing it from the Auditor and maybe be given to the County Treasurer, Ruben Cavazos. Commissioner De La Paz, mentions he doesn't know if that will affect less amount of duties for them that they will go inside like from the other Counties and will it affect any type of Judgment on it? If it does, Commissioner De La Paz would like to know if does. Also, asks what are the chances to delay this? Maybe one more year, or maybe until they can balance the budget greater/better opportunities so the County won't be able to feel this affect. Judge Lopez, states that's why she had delayed this for some time, but the decision has to be made sooner or later. Although, her decision has already been made. Commissioner De La Paz says so the decision has been made? Judge Lopez, states she thought about it hard and yes her decision has been made.

Chairman Guerra, states that he had mentioned to Judge Lopez if he would remove some of the County Auditor's responsibilities like he had mentioned to Mrs. Martinez last year maybe like taking over Accounts Payable. Although, won't know if he would later regret it. Judge Lopez, states she would not like the job of an Auditor because it's not easy to do those reports, which is something that it has to be done for the External Auditors. Also, have to follow the Statue and do what it is requested, which there not easy things to do. They might look they are, but it is not easy. It is not easy like balancing your own checkbook.

Commissioner Guerra, states that the County Treasurer had a question on reference to the Statue. Mr. Cavazos, states his question was on reference to the Reconciling there is a Statue that he had checked and also the Commissioners. Judge Lopez, states she hasn't had a chance to look at that, so she is not prepared to answer to that. Also, says she can't respond to something that she hasn't looked at, only came to respond to this. Although, Judge Lopez states she will look into that.

Commissioner Gonzales, states if the Assistant Auditor can be part-time position as for now until next year? Judge Lopez, says you can't get an Auditor for part-time. They won't know how hard it was to get Mrs. Martinez. Also, all the people they went through before they were able to get Mrs. Martinez. The other ones they got back in the years just did not work out. The County won't get a person that can do the auditing for the Departments and the background what they need.

Chairman Guerra, asks Judge Lopez if she has someone in mind? Judge Lopez says No, that she does not have no one in mind. They will need to go through a process like the way it has to be done and also to advertise in the Auditor's Association and Newspaper.

Chairman Guerra reads out loud about the requirements of the District Judge on hiring an Auditor. Judge Lopez says she does what is required and doing it in a format. The same format like the other Auditors.

Chairman Guerra asks about the title of that new position. Mrs. Martinez, states per Statue they are called First Assistant.

Judge Lopez, states they talk about all this with other District Judges when they have meetings and talk among themselves on reference to the Auditors what is being done in other Counties. This is a reason you need to have a strong Auditor. Judge Lopez, states this might be increasing the Budget, but she is really protecting the County.

Mrs. Martinez, states they really not moving too much forward from they were back then due to the fact some Departments are needed to be told to do some corrections. Although, some others really do good, but others they don't do as well.

Judge Lopez, said maybe those Department Heads don't know and need to put in place with this safe guards. Once, they are told and given the report then they need to do it for themselves. At least you can say you put the safe guards in place.

Commissioner Gonzales, tells Judge Lopez that Commissioner De La Paz had also asked if it can be delayed. Judge Lopez had said no. Commissioner Gonzales, asked if it can be a part-time you said no, well is there any money in your Budget; Judge Lopez to say that the County pays 50% this year and pay 100% next year? Judge Lopez says no. Commissioner Gonzales says well I try.

Discussion continues with Jacob Quilantan, County Treasurer Assistant by introducing himself to District Judge, Migdalia Lopez and states one of the most important things is Account Liability is paying checks and balances; which is important anywhere you go. Also, thinks it's important not written on the Statue, but that they supposed to review the Department and hold account them liable because mistakes will be done.

Maybe this will be more for the Commissioners Court, but to hold Mrs. Martinez also accountable to review her work as well aside from the Independent Auditors. Judge Lopez, states the Independent Auditors is the one that reviews Mrs. Martinez' work and accountable for her work. Mr. Quilantan, states more like something in-recorded for an example, something that might be looked at. Judge Lopez says well maybe we might have to increase the Budget a little more, but Mrs. Martinez' work is reviewed from the Independent Auditors.

Commissioner Guerra, states there was a question from the Independent Auditors that who audits the payroll, if Mrs. Martinez doing the payroll that was the question asked? Judge Lopez, asks Mrs. Martinez if the Independent Auditors had said that? Mrs. Martinez says that they hadn't asked her. Also, Mrs. Martinez says that she has one of her Employee imputing the time sheets and the other Employee reviews all that is imputed plus the check amounts. Judge Lopez asks if the External Auditor had put that on their comments because they found the standard accounting procedure. Also, the County may have lot more external things, but costs more money. Sometimes talking from her experience it's not the Department Heads that take the money, sometimes they are the workers you trust the most, which you won't expect.

Chairman Guerra, states that the County had the Independent Auditors for a while, they were going to do this last year wasn't done because they were inform with the situation at the jail/prisons and selling off the bonds. Then Mrs. Martinez had suggested these individuals that the County has right now, which is another Company rejected coming in and the ones doing the audit was a small firm from Edinburg that had the will to take that test and did it. Although, on Mrs. Martinez' request the County had changed that like two (2) years later because the County was almost done to change Independent Auditors. Judge Lopez, states maybe they become too comfortable that they just check yes and just do a thorough job.

Chairman Guerra says hopefully the cost won't be too much. Judge Lopez, states it's never the appropriate time, but felt that she had to bite the book. Also, thanks Commissioners Court and

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appreciates their hard work and states like she had to make a hard decision. Judge Lopez knows the Commissioners have to make hard decisions everyday. Although, we all have to respect each other for the decisions that are being made. Also, apologizes to Commissioners Court that she would been here earlier, but was in District Court all day.

Motion was made by Commissioner Guerra, seconded by Commissioner De La Paz that Court Adjourn.

Motion was Rescind by Commissioner Guerra and Commissioner De La Paz.

Commissioner Gonzales, states then we going to have to increase the Budget. Chairman Guerra asks Mrs. Martinez if she had already put it on the Budget.

Chairman Guerra asks Mrs. Martinez if Judge Lopez had said five (5) hours more? Mrs. Martinez, states from 24 hours it will be 29 hours.

Chairman Guerra asks so what is the 5% increase on the Budget, Mrs. Martinez says maybe a little under, since it will be for the computers.

Chairman Guerra asks that Mrs. Martinez had mentioned Travel and Training. Chairman Guerra tells Mrs. Martinez knowing how Commissioners Court approves Travel and Training, will this decrease your Budget? Mrs. Martinez, states no it will be put in her Budget. This will be so she will have the control to know who or what traveling will be requested besides hers.

Mrs. Martinez, states like for Human Resources they are not trained for Human Resources. They need to get some training to do this, but it's not mandatory by the Statue. Mrs. Martinez, states it was your thing that if it was mandatory by Statue; which that was fine for some, but not for everyone.

Commissioner Gonzales, states that Commissioner Court has set on reference to travel. Mrs. Martinez, states that it also specifically mentions travel on the District Judges. Annette Hinojosa, County Attorney states if Mrs. Martinez is asking for an Assistant Auditor is because that person will assist her. County Auditor will also be needing training when going to similar seminars that the County Auditor will be going to. Commissioner Gonzales, states that they are not denying any travel. Mrs. Hinojosa, states maybe accounts will increase because you might have more people traveling to make sure they maintain the certifications.

Chairman Guerra and Commissioner Gonzales say that is not what Mrs. Martinez is saying.

Mrs. Martinez, states that she wants to have control on her travel and to decide which Employees go where. Also, if it's mandated or not; which by taking payroll they took over Human Resources without realizing what the job was. They are not trained in Human Resources none of them are. So, they need training because Payroll and Human Resources are two (2) different things.

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Chairman Guerra, states if Mrs. Martinez had asked? Mrs. Martinez says she had send some things as suggestions, but had never gotten feedback. The only thing was just like oh might be nice to attend to learn about it, but nothing else only the mandatory were required.

Chairman Guerra reads out loud this to Commissioners Court, "The Judge shall certify this list to the Commissioners Court, which shall order the salaries to be paid on the performance of services and shall appropriate an adequate amount of money for this purpose".

Mrs. Hinojosa, states it's truthful if the person is doing Payroll or Human Resources. Then they need to know what the new Laws are, or of any changes on the Laws. Also, they need to know what they are doing, in order for them to perform their job. Then might fall on the District Judge to say this is the Budget for the County Auditor. So, the County Auditor can perform their job, might not be spelled out, but it will be understood.

Chairman Guerra, states like Mrs. Martinez is saying that she wants control, but the Commissioners are not giving them control if they don't have too. Those Employees will get certified or trained either way. Commissioner Gonzales agrees with Chairman Guerra. So, the question is on the Budget that Mrs. Martinez is proposing on reference to the 5% increase. Mrs. Martinez and Mrs. Hinojosa agrees that Travel and Training is included.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states if it's an excessive Mrs. Martinez is asking from her Budget; then it might have to go through Commissioners Court.

Chairman Guerra, states he had mentioned to Judge Lopez that he had noticed and looked into the Budget that Mrs. Martinez had budgeted for the Independent Auditors. The other Counties he had looked on he couldn't find them or maybe over looked it. The other thing in mind is that Judge Lopez had said that the Independent Auditors audits Mrs. Martinez. Chairman Guerra, says it might be a conflict of interest because Mrs. Martinez has it in her Budget.

Mrs. Martinez, states she had mentioned it to Commissioners Court because they are fixed costs when they go up and down and has no control over it. Then this goes through her Budget, then later on she has to move money around to cover the difference. Although, this would be the Commissioners' responsibilities to hire the Independent Auditors, but it has always been like that in the Auditor's Budget; which is something that Mrs. Martinez doesn't like. Account Number 190- Independent Audit on Auditor's Budget for the amount of \$43,200.00 was transfer to Account Number- 190 on General Fund (Administration). Chairman Guerra, states they need to check into it if it has to be there or maybe be place in the Capital.

Mrs. Martinez, states if the Commissioners want it to be moved then she will have more money in her Budget.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states to build the 5% on a side if it's a possibility because the District Judge doesn't have to ask for this every year; so they might want to leave it at a side every year incase if she asks for it. So, advises to leave it on the side for a little extra cushion, if it will be used on a yearly bases. Mrs. Martinez, said 5% is a 5% the District Judge has never gotten it and had never come before Commissioners Court, which nothing has been done outside of Commissioners Court. Judge Lopez has never taken this Statues and used them, never ordered anything above and beyond what Commissioners Court have.

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Commissioner Guerra, states they used to give Mrs. Martinez everything she wanted. Mrs. Martinez answers to Commissioner Guerra no you all have not.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states just to keep in mind to keep this on the side incase District Judge asks for it in another year or next year because it's an anticipated cost on reference to the 5%.

Commissioner De La Paz, states the District Judge had stated that she will be leaving. What kind of decision would it have on this because if she would stay would Mrs. Martinez would have gotten the 5%?

Mrs. Hinojosa, states that personally her speaking that there are other issues on other Counties. Since, Judge Lopez is the only District Judge here in Willacy County. Judge Lopez, wants to assure that she doesn't like for Willacy County to have the same issues that Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, or Calhoun Counties are going through.

Commissioner De La Paz, states he would also agree to that, but the only thing would be is that Judge Lopez will implement it and then she will be leaving. So, how will she see it through? If, she would like to put it in a better position. She would implement it, follow it through and go from there. So, what affect will it have if she is leaving and why not let someone else make that decision that is going to be here.

Chairman Guerra, states he had talked to her that typically you get a position, approve the position and more apparently ask for a position. Also, that he had asked Mrs. Martinez who had asked for this? Now, he is cleared after talking with Judge Lopez and has warned the Chairman. Eventually, the reason on having this position it fades to the everyday operation, but now the County is back to square one except with a bigger Budget. Also, had asked Judge Lopez how she would assure this after leaving and she had stated that she will assures it will going to continue.

Mrs. Hinojosa added that on the District Judge leaving, which Mrs. Martinez is aware of this not saying something that she is surprise by. Maybe, Mrs. Martinez might be leaving in two (2) years also. So, what if the new District Judge decides to make changes at the County Auditor's Office. Also, doesn't anticipates of Mrs. Martinez hiring someone on October, November, nor December. Mrs. Martinez wants to be sure of hiring the right person for the new position and approved by the District Judge.

Commissioner Guerra, states that he agrees, but the Commissioner Court are in a top situation in hesitating. Also, states that the Chairman Guerra agrees that what Judge Lopez wants to do it's a good idea to audit the Departments. Since, there no audits done at the Individual Audits. Although, after saying that there is no way that he will support it because if you don't support it, there might be a red light. Although, reason being they might say why Commissioner Guerra didn't support it; which personally he will support it. Now the question to Mrs. Martinez why can't you do it with the people you already have? Mrs. Martinez, states because she is over loaded with work.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states like for her office she has Ms. Vela working on her Budget, so she can be aware what is going on in her Budget.

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Commissioner De La Paz, states it happens a lot like both of them that have a full-time job and over sees a lot of Employees. Commissioner De La Paz says he asks his Employees what they are doing and for them to break it down into per hour to see what they are doing. Like for example, if they worked three (3) hours, so then where the other five (5) hours are worked on. That is the way it is worked at his business. Also, he talks to his workers at the precinct and asks how many minutes it takes for them to do a specific duty. The thing is you hold people accountable and you keep up press, to what they are doing. Commissioner De La Paz says he is guilty and not being mean to anybody, but have walked down the halls and have seen every Department taking it easy. Maybe it's not his place to say, but like we say we are overworked; which really we are not. It's frustrating to him because he wants to put Willacy County's interest first and by having a big shortfall. He would like if they can delay this for next year and then have a bigger issue because now it's frustrating.

Commissioner Guerra, states like you said Commissioner De La Paz if we wait one year, what would happened like on couple of years back they went out and had Legislation go through the House and Senate to bring another District Judge and they reported. Judge Lopez was against it, this session that just had went by because she started pursuing that she wanted another District Judge. Then all of sudden she backed out of it. Judge Lopez suddenly said no. So, now wait till the next District Judge takes office and for that District Judge to decide if Willacy County needs two (2) District Judges. Although, getting back into Accountability Commissioner Guerra feels that the County needs at least three (3) District Judges. So, they can have accounts of balances and not have only one (1) District Judge having all the power that she has. Mrs. Hinojosa, states she is going to say no to this. Chairman Guerra, states so she won't sole the responsibility.

Commissioner Gonzales, states that they tried. Commissioner De La Paz had asked the District Judge to delay it, Commissioner Gonzales had asked her for part-time and asked her to budget for their budget; the answer was no. There were a total of three (3) requests that were turned down, so the Commissioners don't know what else to do.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states for the Commissioners to look at it this way that they will be hit this year and will not be hit next year. If the Budget was higher this year, maybe then the Commissioners can adjust for next year. Although, it's the way as far as the Statue goes. At this point, the District Judge will have to post a Public Hearing and then do the appointments after it gets approves for the Budget purposes.

Chairman Guerra, states that he had mentioned to one of the Commissioners that before he had heard Mrs. Martinez' logic; to him there is no way she can convinced him that there is a logic behind this. Chairman Guerra, wanted to put it into Commissioners Court as a line item and just vote in support or against it. Although, it was not for his satisfaction, but for the future Administrations to know there was already a flag as far to there was too many Employees in this particular Department in comparison to similar Counties in the same population. Now after said that, the District Judge provided Chairman Guerra with a report from other ten (10) Counties in comparison in what other Auditor's Office do in comparison to Willacy County. So Chairman Guerra would not be sure if he would propose that to the Commissioners. Chairman Guerra feels strongly, agrees with Commissioner De La Paz that at this time at this juncture, he would rather not do it now; but doing it later. The Chairman, mentions he understands the District Judge's position that Judge Lopez wants to live it like this.

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Mrs. Hinojosa, states that the Public Hearing is for the District Judge's Court Reporter, it's for the Public for the audience so the people can state their comments if they're for it or against it.

Chairman Guerra, says he is not questioning that and is aware about all the procedures on reference to a Public Hearing. Chairman Guerra wanted for the Auditor's request to be in the Commissioners Minutes so it can be file of record what had happened on September, 2017. After, hearing this Chairman Guerra says maybe this is not as bad.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states that maybe they can adopt their Budget to make it part of their discussion. Maybe the Public hadn't gone to prior Public Hearings because there hasn't been increases in the past years.

Chairman Guerra asks Mrs. Martinez why this had to be done by an order and was not introduced to the Commissioners like every other time, what was the difference. Mrs. Martinez, states like every other time there wasn't any requests that they had requested, and they had to wait on the Commissioners for a yes or no answer. This time it was just a no answer from the Commissioners. Commissioner Guerra, states the reason for this time was that they were not going to increase the Budget. Chairman Guerra, states this request should had gone on the wish list, Mrs. Martinez states she had commented about it. Chairman Guerra, states the first time Mrs. Martinez had brought it up he didn't know her Assistants were called First Assistant Auditors.

Commissioner Gonzales, states that if they going to increase the Budget for this year by an order by Judge Lopez and if Mrs. Martinez is the only one getting the increase, but no one else. For Example, like the Veteran Officer, the Elections Administrator and someone else that was asking for an Employee. Commissioner Gonzales says it will be a hollow victory for Mrs. Martinez because the Commissioners will not be increasing anyone else, but only hers. Well if that is ordered, well it is order; which the Budget will be increased. Mrs. Martinez, states that she not planning a victory.

Commissioner De La Paz asks if the sole responsibility of this person will be just to audit the Departments? Chairman Guerra, answers yes that is what Judge Lopez said. Commissioner De La Paz says he guarantees that the audit for the precincts won't take too long, might be like three (3) days. Chairman Guerra says they really don't have a say so. If they run out of Departments midyear what will that person be doing for the rest of the year. Mrs. Hinojosa, states as per her understanding it's an outgoing a long year. Mrs. Martinez, states the main goal is to get the audit done and anything getting approve by the Commissioners like for Grants and AP. So, that individual will be doing several duties not just the auditing. Commissioner De La Paz, says then that person will help Mrs. Martinez and not what Judge Lopez said were this person will be auditing the Departments. Mrs. Martinez, states the primary thing is doing the audit and when that is not being done that; then some other things.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states Judge Lopez had mentioned to her that she didn't wanted the same issue that Cameron County is going through and won't like Willacy County going through that problem.

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Chairman Guerra, states that per Judge Lopez that is the reason she wants this person doing the audits because they haven't been done in the past years. As per the Statue, they should be done, especially in the size of Willacy County that person will need to do multi-task. The Chairman had also recommended if they could have 1-2 task force of Auditors in Willacy County to come guide them at any time and doing Audits. Instead of creating a position that solely is doing that. Commissioner De La Paz, states another question is what does that audit consist of, what is the title? Also, does everyone in the Auditor's Office have a degree? Mrs. Martinez, states Account Payables do not, the part-time is attending college and the others have college hours through high school. Commissioner De La Paz says so their titles are called First Assistant Auditors. Do you need somebody, like for him to investigate he can go investigate on his on and find what it's not right and tell the Departments; which why would I need a degree for that? No I won't.

Mrs. Martinez says there are programs created and also a lot of resources available. The only thing is like someone had mentioned the other day they go to conferences and can/should be doing this and get phonic, like Commissioner De La Paz had mentioned before. There are programs that you have, like if the Commissioners have taken from their public information tray. The collections how they should be collected. The programs for each Department, like there is one for the Treasurer, the Jail Conversely there out and availability on the required duties, which sometimes if there is an error they have to research it and fix it.

Mrs. Hinojosa, states the yearly audit should go faster. Mrs. Martinez, states maybe this will let them catch the errors earlier, instead of catching them later on. Chairman Guerra, states if there is an Auditor hired for specific to go to a particular Department and didn't know Mrs. Martinez was going to do the hiring. That Auditor will tell the Department Head they need to do this and audit themselves. Mrs. Martinez says first they would report it to the Department Head what they found and give them some recommendations. Like a small Independent Auditor, but this will be more in debt/more detailed. Although, if it's something illegal then the Auditor has to get the DA's Office and Police Department involved if that person is breaking the Law. If it's not that bad then it will be up to the Commissioners Court. Chairman Guerra says it goes to the same thing in the real world the Departments might say they don't have time. Mrs. Hinojosa, states for example she has the Hot Check Account that has money into it belonging to the Victims, but doesn't know which cases it belongs to, nor has documentation in her office. The estimated amount is from \$1,200.00 to \$1,300.00. Although, Mrs. Hinojosa states that she needs to find out who it belongs to.

**Commissioner Henry De La Paz leaves the meeting at 5:00 p.m.**

**Elections Department:**

Discussion starts with Mary Hope, Elections Administrator on reference to a salary increase that Mrs. Hope was requesting, which is about \$7,549.00. The done deal approved by the Commissioners was for her Temporary Personnel. Chairman Guerra, states maybe to see next year, where the County Stands. Chairman Guerra, states to hold off on her salary increase.

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Commissioner Gonzales, states the least they can do for the Employees is the Longevity Program.

Mrs. Hope, thanks the Commissioners for giving her the Temporary Personnel, for her new office and for supplying her for the Elections. Mrs. Hope will be checking if the Temporary Personnel can be rewarded from Title-19, so it may be reimbursed to the County. Mrs. Hope, states if Mrs. Martinez gets new computers. If she may have three (3) computers so she may replace her old ones.

Chairman Guerra, states due to expenses that the County had to have the County cannot give salary increases at this point.

#### **Veteran's Office:**

Chairman Guerra, brings up about the Veteran Officer's salary increase. Commissioner Gonzales, states he would also need to hold off for another year. Commissioners did not agree the salary increase.

Chairman Guerra, states due to expenses that the County had to have the County cannot give salary increases at this point.

The Commissioners agree for the \$500.00 Car Allowance for the Justice of the Peace Judges, which it needs to be advertise.

Discussion continues on the changes going over what has been agreed on, which are the following: Community Development Specialist 20% for the \$8,000.00, Longevity Program for the Departments, Courthouse Security monies had run out and put in Sheriff's Department so it may be in the positive, \$500.00 for Car Allowance for the 3-Justice of the Peace Judges. Also, Mrs. Martinez, states that Veronica from District Court had brought up to Mrs. Martinez' attention that since the County works through fiscal year and calendar year for IRS Taxes. If the County starts on October then they get a 1099 /W-2 Form, then it will raise red flag at IRS. So they will start January 1<sup>st</sup> instead for the Visiting Judges, Temporary and Court Reporters. Mrs. Martinez says that she adjusted so it may start on January and left a quarter, reduced these by the amounts that were by quarter and put it back into Contracts and Legal, Interpreters, Fund 40, Election Department requested \$2,000.00 for Election Workers helping for this year, more likely Mrs. Hope will get it reimburse from the Revenues from she generates from, Redistricting Help, the difference for the JP's full-timer; which the full-time position was made mid-year and was only budgeted to finish the year and this makes it equivalent to whole years' worth, Sheriff's Department, Joe Jimenez asks Mrs. Martinez to change his title on her spreadsheets to Chief Deputy and Ernie Garcia to Major, the position about the Jail Sergeant and the Carpel, \$5,000.00 for the Maintenance, Grants and percentage at the Juvenile Department.

Chairman Guerra, states that the Departments who had asked for part-timers, no one will be getting part-timers. Also, states that the District Judge had asked for part-timer to full-timer and wasn't sure if it was talked about. Although, Commissioners Court has control of that. Commissioner Gonzales, states that Judge Lopez had not mentioned that when presentation was done. Chairman Guerra, states that Judge Lopez had mentioned it as a request.

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Chairman Guerra brings up the Library, beside the increases that the Librarian had asked for someone because the plus fifty (50) Employee was leaving. The Chairman, states he needs to check into it if the Library can be operated with two (2) individuals. Although, before the Library had a total of three (3) Employees, but then it was dropped to two (2) Employees then they hired the plus fifty (50) Employee.

Chairman Guerra, asks about what they decided on Sally Velasquez' Contract? Chairman Guerra, states that he had talked to Ms. Velasquez that the County might be needing her on smaller bases/smaller scale. Commissioner Gonzales, states the Commissioners had not approved anything. Mrs. Martinez, states there is nothing budgeted, but the Commissioners can use it from the Contingency for that. Commissioner Gonzales, states it can also be put under Contract and Legal as on needed bases. Chairman Guerra, states maybe put a side \$5,000.00 a year, Commissioner Gonzales states maybe a little more. Chairman Guerra, states it will be coming out from Contingency and put it under Contracts and Legal. Ms. Velasquez was getting paid \$47,000.00. Chairman Guerra, states they will bring it up tomorrow morning.

Discussion continues Mrs. Martinez says the Revenue that has been accounted for is \$7,267,370.00. A draft copy is attach.

Motion was made by Commissioner Gonzales, seconded by Commissioner De Luna that Court Recess for September 8, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. Motion was put before the Court by the Chairman. Commissioners Guerra, De Luna and Gonzales voting AYE. NAYS NONE. Motion was declared carried.

There being no further action.

Court Recessed.