



Judge Don Pool  
President

Councilmember Mike Thompson  
Vice-President

## **Heart of Texas Council of Governments**

Judge Linda Grant  
Secretary/Treasurer

Russell Devorsky  
Executive Director

### **MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

The Heart of Texas Council of Governments' Executive Committee, in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended, met in regular session, on Thursday, the 23rd Day of April, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. at the Heart of Texas Council of Governments, 1514 South New Road, Waco, Texas, by Telephone Conferencing, **(605) 475-4333, Access Code 524626#** (as approved by the Texas Attorney General).

#### **Members Present**

Judge Don Pool, *President*

Councilmember Mike Thompson, *Vice-President*

Judge Linda Grant, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Judge Jay Elliott

Judge Justin Lewis

Judge Scott Felton

Judge Richard Duncan

Co. Treasurer Jeannie Keeney

Commissioner Kelly Snell

Commissioner Nita Wuebker

Mayor Andy Smith

Councilmember John Kinnaird

Mayor Kyle Deaver

Mayor Johnnie Hauerland

Councilmember Jim Holmes

Bosque County

City of Groesbeck

Freestone County

Falls County

Hill County

McLennan County

Limestone County

Freestone County

McLennan County

Falls County

City of Hillsboro

City of Waco

City of Waco

City of Meridian

City of Waco

#### **Members Absent**

Mr. Calvin Rueter

Councilmember Jimmy Rogers

Special Districts

City of Robinson

#### **Staff Present**

Russell Devorsky

John C. Minnix

Gary Luft

Mary McDow

Dorthy Jackson

Executive Director

Dep Director of Administration

Dep. Director of Health & Human Services

Personnel Manager

Regional Economic Development Manager

**Visitors Present (by tele-conference)**

State Representative Doc Anderson  
Representative from Congressman Bill Flores Office  
Michelle Bobo, Texas Department of Agriculture

I. Call to Order and Determination of a Quorum

President Don Pool called the “tele-conference” meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and determined that a quorum was present at the meeting by roll call.

II. Proof of Posting of notice in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended, known as the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Proof of posting of the meeting was confirmed by Mary McDow.

III. Introduction of Guests

Guests and staff members introduced themselves.

IV. Consideration of and/or action on the following:

A. Approval of the March 26, 2020 meeting minutes

A motion was made by Judge Justin Lewis and seconded by Judge Jay Elliott to approve the March 26, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed.

B. New Business

1. Personnel Policies Amendment regarding Emergency Leave

Mr. Russell Devorsky presented an amendment to the personnel policies regarding emergency leave. Mr. Devorsky noted that as a result of COVID-19, HOTCOG’s Emergency Leave Policy is recommended to be expanded to include a section on “Unexpected or Extraordinary circumstances.” This puts HOTCOG in compliance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.302, 2 C.F.R. § 200.333, and 2 C.F.R. § 431(b)(1)). Staff recommendation is adding section 9.09.03 and 9.09.04 to our personnel policies. Below is the proposed change:

***9.09.03 Unusual and Extraordinary Circumstances. In the event of natural disaster, terrorist attack, pandemic, martial law, government advised shelter-in-place order, or other society disrupting event; emergency leave with pay may be granted to regular employees by the Executive Director for a part or entirety of the event of (1) an illness, injury, or death in an employee’s family; (2) an illness, injury, or quarantine of an employee; or (3) a directive of local, state, and or federal shelter-in-place (or similar) prevents an employee’s ability to work inclusive of work-from-home scenarios.***

***9.09.04 COVID-19 Response. HOTCOG shall comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, including but not limited to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act in effect and applicable at the time of an employee-related action regulated by those laws.***

***In order to track compliance and reporting of the FFCRA the finance and human resource department will formally create pay codes specifically for the funds paid under the act and associated accounting procedures in the HOTCOG Accounting Policies. We acknowledge using these pay codes may exceed budgets for salaries and benefits under some of the funding streams.***

A motion was made by Judge Jay Elliott and seconded by Judge Linda Grant to approve the recommended changes to the HOTCOG Personnel Policies to reflect new language that updates HOTCOG's Emergency Leave Policy into alignment with the changing environment. Motion passed.

2. Area Agency on Aging – Approval of Grocery Distribution Project  
The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) received approximately \$80,000 in funding to purchase **non-perishable groceries** to be distributed at no cost to **financially disadvantaged individuals age 60 and older** living in each of the six counties of the HOTCOG service area. The total project involves the purchase and distribution of approximately \$100 in value of non-perishable groceries to be distributed to approximately 800 eligible individuals. Each county in the region will be allocated 133 units (\$100 in groceries) equal to \$13,300 in value. The purpose of the project is to provide \$100 worth of non-perishable groceries to eligible seniors during the COVID-19 crisis. All efforts will be expedited to get the groceries to the recipients as quickly as possible. The County Judge of each county will work with their constituency and provide relief to seniors (age 60 and older) in greatest need. Guidelines were established to simplify and standardize the project.

Mr. Devorsky gave an update on the Grocery Project stating the first shipment of \$42,000 worth of food, 12 pallets of canned goods and canned meats were received today from HEB. Additional products will be provided in the next week by Sam's, Walmart and Brookshires. Mr. Devorsky noted it was hoped that all of the groceries would be delivered this week, but the supply chain and demand with the major grocery distributors was not anticipated. HOTCOG has been very successful in working with the grocery suppliers.

Mr. Devorsky stated that Judge Justin Lewis of Hill County has provided a facility for central distribution and assembly area for the food. The groceries will be assembled and each of the county judges will be contacted to arrange for pick up and distribution in their counties. Each county will get two boxes of groceries for 133 individuals. Mr. Devorsky stated the project is moving forward. Judge Pool thanked HOTCOG for the hard work in undertaking of this massive project and also thanked Judge Lewis for providing the facility and volunteers to store and assemble the food for distribution.

A motion was made by Judge Justin Lewis and seconded by Freestone County Treasurer Jeannie Keeney to approve the \$100 Grocery Distribution Project -COVID 19 Related and the plan to execute the project. Motion passed.

C. Report of the Executive Director and Staff

1. Department of Administration

a. Financial and Personnel Reports

Mr. Minnix presented the Financial, Personnel and Investment reports to the committee.

2. Health & Human Services

a. Department Activities Report

Mr. Luft presented the Health and Human Services report including the Area Agency on Aging, Heart of Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center, 2-1-1 Information and Referral and Heart of Texas Rural Transportation program activities for the month of March 2020. Mr. Luft noted that 2-1-1 calls have increased dramatically due to the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic

3. Regional Services

a. Department Activities Report

Mrs. Dorthy Jackson gave the Economic and Community Development activity report to the committee. Mrs. Jackson noted that COVID-19 has affected two of the revolving loan recipients as they are shut down due to the shelter in place order and have asked for deferment. HOTEDD's billing procedures give the Executive Director the authority to waive fees if necessary. Mrs. Jackson reminded everyone about the 2020 Census and the importance of being counted.

Mrs. Jackson relayed information from staff member Harold Ferguson regarding notification from the Department of Justice for a grant available for the region in the amount of \$547,000 for assistance with COVID-19 related expenses such as equipment and supplies, overtime, training, medical needs for inmates, personal overtime, etc. Harold sent out the notification to the region and questions can be directed to Harold.

4. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Devorsky discussed the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects on local governments with the committee. HOTCOG staff continues to work at the office with about 20% working from home, communicating with our local governments through telephone and staying in compliance with federal and state orders.

Mr. Devorsky noted that Harold Ferguson, Manager of Homeland Security will be retiring in May. Harold has been at HOTCOG since 2007 and has done an outstanding job working and will be missed by everyone.

V. Other Reports- none

VI. Public Comment – State Representative Doc Anderson voiced his appreciation to HOTCOG for the great effort being done in the Region with the Grocery project as well as other projects taking place.

VII. Adjournment - the Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

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Don Pool, President  
Bosque County Judge

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Linda Grant, Secretary Treasurer  
Freestone County Judge