

COMMISSIONERS COURT

Truman Dougharty, County Judge
William L. Fuller, Comm. Pct. 1
Thomas T. Gill, Comm. Pct. 2
Prentiss L. Hopson, Comm. Pct. 3
Leonard E. Powell, Comm. Pct. 4
WEBSITE: www.co.newton.tx.us



Edward Shannon, Jr, County Sheriff
Courtney Tracy Ponthier, Criminal DA
Bree Allen, District Clerk
Ginger Siau, Treasurer
Melissa J. Burks, Tax Assessor-Collector
Elizabeth Holloway, County Auditor
Sandra K. Duckworth, County Clerk

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Whereas, Texas statutes provide for the orderly conduct of county business and include provisions addressing staffing for the county and district courts in a county; and

Whereas, the Texas Local Government Code sets forth the process by which elected district, county, and precinct officers may appoint deputies, assistants, clerks, and other employees that are required in the performance of the officer's duties, and requires commissioners court approval of both the creation of, and compensation for, each such position; and

Whereas, the Texas Constitution grants district courts supervisory authority over county commissioners courts that can be invoked only when a commissioners court acts beyond its jurisdiction or when the commissioners court clearly abuses the discretion conferred upon it by law; and

Whereas, there exists almost 90 years of judicial precedent holding that a district court may not invoke its own supervisory authority over a commissioners court, and that a lawsuit challenging an action of the commissioners court is required to invoke such authority; and

Whereas, a district court's inherent power to require the legislative and executive branches of government to provide essential staffing for the court to perform its judicial functions has long been recognized by the courts of Texas to be limited and subject to principles of due process; and

Whereas, the county commissioners courts of Texas, as the sole authority responsible for setting annual budgets and assessing taxes on county residents to fund such budgets, are the appropriate bodies for making decisions of a budgetary nature within each county; and

Whereas, in the matter of *The Hon. Lonnie Cox v. The Hon. Mark Henry*, Cause No. 15CV0583, now pending in the 56th Judicial District Court, Galveston County, these fundamental principles for the orderly conduct of county business are at issue; and

Whereas, any appellate court decision in the case is likely to have statewide impact of profound importance to all counties in the state;

Now therefore, be it resolved, that the Commissioners Court of Newton County, Texas supports the efforts of the Galveston County Commissioners Court to defend: (1) the well-defined authority of county commissioners courts in budget matters within each county; and (2) principles of due process applicable to district court review of county commissioners courts' decisions; and

Be it further resolved, that the Commissioners Court of Newton County, Texas urges other counties to support the Galveston County Commissioners Court through appropriate means, such as resolutions of support and amicus curiae.

Passed and approved by Newton County Commissioners' Court in Newton, Texas on this the 13th day of October, 2015.


William L. Fuller
Commissioner, Precinct 1


Prentiss L. Hopson
Commissioner, Precinct 3

ATTEST: 
Sandra K. Duckworth, County Clerk
Newton, Texas


Truman Dougharty, County Judge


Thomas T. Gill
Commissioner, Precinct 2


Leonard E. Powell
Commissioner, Precinct 4

