

State of Texas	§	Court Order
Collin County	§	2021-232-03-15
Commissioners Court	§	

**An order of the Commissioners Court approving the filing of the February 22, 2021 minutes.**

On Monday, February 22, 2021, the Commissioners Court of Collin County, Texas, met in Regular Session in the Commissioners Courtroom, Jack Hatchell Collin County Administration Building, 4th Floor, 2300 Bloomdale Road, City of McKinney, Texas, with the following members present, and participating, to wit:

Judge Chris Hill  
Commissioner Susan Fletcher, Precinct 1  
Commissioner Cheryl Williams, Precinct 2  
Commissioner Darrell Hale, Precinct 3  
Commissioner Duncan Webb, Precinct 4

#### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

10. AI-49878 Winter Storm Response, County Judge.

Bill Bilyeu said Sheriff Skinner and Chief Langan pointed out that the County's biggest risk and liability is at the detention facility. As the storm came in, ERCOT (Electric Reliability Council of Texas) reached out to the County and asked us to take the Justice Center off the grid and we moved it onto our full generation power. There was enough fuel to operate it for many weeks on the generators. Public Works also ordered fuel to be able to refuel as necessary. With the bitter cold, the biggest risk was the fire lines which are the sprinkler systems. These systems are not insulated, and the Justice Center had most of the water breaks. The Facilities Department has been working hard to cut off any breaks with leaks and walking all the buildings looking for issues. One line burst and sprayed directly into a breaker box which shorted out the system and took down 911. Facilities was able to rewire the system and then brought in generators in order to get 911 back up and keep essential operations running. Facilities, backed up by Public Works, worked all through the ten days of the storm to keep things running. Most of the damage was related to the fire sprinkler systems with a cost of \$80,000 to \$90,000 not including overtime. Animal Control was also busy with cattle pushing through fences in the bitter cold.

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) can reimburse costs for the County, cities and the school districts. Several school districts had damage because their water lines were bursting and no one was there. If the accumulated claims for the County, cities and school districts add up to more than \$3 million, a claim can be submitted to FEMA which has a 75/25 percent reimbursement. Because of the disaster declaration, there are many programs available to the public and small businesses. This

information was put on the County's website. FEMA's application is short and easy and can be done online.

Judge Hill expressed his appreciation for the County's departments and staff who continued to work from home and those who had to come in. He thanked them for finding ways to get things done and serve the public.

Jason Browning, Fire Marshal, explained how the public can apply for federal aid available for costs incurred during the storm. The links are on the County's website. There will not be a FEMA site set up as in the past. It will now all be done virtually. Randall Gurney, Emergency Management, explained this is for people who are underinsured or have no insurance. FEMA will determine who is eligible. There is a cap of \$36,000 for housing assistance and \$36,000 for other needs assistance.

Judge Hill said the Commissioners joined him on a call with our state representatives, senators, congressmen, superintendents and mayors from across Collin County as they followed the storm with the National Weather Service and spoke to representatives from ONCOR. This storm showed many vulnerabilities in the Texas systems, and it showed we were not prepared for a storm of this magnitude. The Judge opened discussion on the Court's response and statement regarding this. Commissioner Williams said she repeatedly heard from social media or through phone calls that this will be talked about, but in the end nothing will get done. The Court needs to make a statement on the need to see actual action taken to address this, and it needs to be more than hearings and finger pointing. There needs to be actionable measures that give people confidence. The Commissioner put together a potential resolution that could be sent to the Governor's Office, the chairman of whatever committees will take up this issue, and our own delegation. They need to find out what happened, determine what is needed to get it fixed, and then make sure it gets fixed. Commissioner Webb liked the resolution and appreciated the time Commissioner Williams spent on it. He would like answers, solutions, and to see the solutions implemented.

Commissioner Fletcher said there was one issue not covered in the resolution and that was people who had variable-rate plans for their electricity. Some people do not have options to choose from and have to have the variable-rate plans. The hyper-inflation had rates going from \$50 per MWh (megawatt hour) to over \$9,000 per MWh. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Fletcher agreed to bring this issue back as a separate item. With no further discussion, a motion was made to approve Commissioner Williams' resolution. (Time: 2:49 p.m.)

Motion by: Commissioner Cheryl Williams

Second by: Commissioner Susan Fletcher

Vote: 5 – 0 Passed

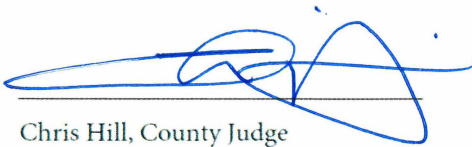
**COURT ORDER NO. 2021-199-02-22**

Judge Hill said, in trying to determine what happened across the state with the power grid and power generation, ERCOT was telling operators they needed to shed more load. ONCOR then had put out a call to possibly drop the NTMWD (North Texas Municipal Water District) from the grid. This would not only have affected the capacity to provide drinking water to North Texas, but also sewers and fire-fighting capacity for the entire region. This would have been catastrophic. NTMWD reached out to the County, and the County reached out to our state representatives and mayors. As a team, they were able to have ONCOR put NTMWD on a list of non-shutoff entities. NTMWD told the County they appreciated what the County had done to make sure they were not dropped from the grid.

They also need to look into getting the smaller water supply companies marked on the PUC's (Public Utility Commission) list of critical infrastructure which would allow them to go back to their provider and mandate that they not be taken down. The County's Emergency Management team will be working with these independent entities to help get them on the PUC list.

Commissioner Fletcher thanked everyone who contributed to getting the information about the warming stations to the public. Judge Hill said every disaster is unique. We need to be prepared and need to be prepared to shift gears if necessary. Commissioner Webb asked Mr. Bilyeu and the Facilities Department to review all of the County's procedures. They should determine what failed and what didn't fail for the future. (Time: 3:03 p.m.)

Judge Hill returned to the regular agenda at 3:03 p.m.

  
Chris Hill, County Judge

  
Susan Fletcher, Commissioner, Pct 1

Not Present  
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Cheryl Williams, Commissioner, Pct 2



  
Darrell Hale, Commissioner, Pct 3

  
Duncan Webb, Commissioner, Pct 4

  
ATTEST: Stacey Kemp, County Clerk