



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE June 13, 2011

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Ban declared on outdoor burning and sale of certain fireworks

In a regularly-scheduled meeting on Monday, June 13, Ellis County Commissioners declared a ban on outdoor burning and issued an order prohibiting the sale or use of restricted fireworks in the unincorporated areas of Ellis County. This prohibition includes professional fireworks displays, although individual cities may make different rulings for displays within city limits.

“If we are going to ban missiles with fins and rockets with sticks, we have to do it by tomorrow,” said Fire Marshal’s Investigator Jim Pharr, noting that the KBDI is at 506 today and is expected to continue to rise.

“I have been in the pastures and the fields, and a high wind has dried this grass out,” said Commissioner Bill Dodson. “I was seeing what I normally see in late or mid August. If we have a fire, we are not going to put it out, especially with the wind.”

The order is in effect for 90 days from today. It does not prohibit “common fireworks, small in size, classified as Class C explosives” or “large fireworks devices designed primarily to produce visible or audible effects by combustion, deflagration or detonation and classified as Class B explosives.”

Violation of the fireworks order is a Class C Misdemeanor.

Also during this morning’s meeting, Commissioners finalized the appointment of Alisha Wickens as the County’s new Purchasing Agent.

Wickens is a Certified Public Purchasing Buyer and currently works for TXDOT. She also worked for TXDOT from 1985 through 1999. Additionally, she worked for the North Texas Tollway Authority for five years, and the City of Dallas for four years.

“Everyone had the opportunity to interview Alisha, and she hails from a background as a purchasing agent with TXDOT and has been involved heavily with transportation,” said County Judge Carol Bush. “I think she will be a great asset for the County.”

In other business, Commissioners:

- Removed item A2 from the consent agenda in order to obtain additional information, then approved the remainder of the consent agenda;

- Granted a one-time variance from County of Ellis Rules, Regulations and Specifications for Subdivisions and Manufactured Homes relating to the fire hydrant requirement- one fire hydrant every 450' on a minimum six inch line, three proposed lots, Campbell Road, Pct. 3;
- Approved a preliminary Plat – Allison Addition, three lots, Campbell Road, Pct.3;
- Granted a one-time variance from County of Ellis Rules, Regulation and Specifications for Subdivisions and Manufactured Homes relating to the fire hydrant requirement - one fire hydrant every 450' on a minimum six inch line, Shankle Estates, lot 5, 40 acres, Pct. 2;
- Granted a one-time variance from County of Ellis Rules, Regulations and Specifications for Subdivisions and Manufactured Homes relating to the 150' road frontage requirement – 150' per tract, Vineyard Road, Pct. 3;
- Approved the filing for record of an Easement Agreement Instrument for Morgan Creek Estates, Phase 5 & 6, lots 7R, 8, and 9, Morgan Creek, Pct. 3;
- Accepted the donation of labor and materials necessary to concrete pave a 550 foot section of Ozro Road in Pct. 3;
- Took no action on a contract extension for inmate medical services provided by Correctional Healthcare Management for the term October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012;
- Took no action on proposed personnel adjustments in the Sheriff's Office;
- Approved Electricity Purchase from Texzon, as the lowest bidder, for the period of June 20, 2011 through December 31, 2013, with the option to add new meters;
- Approved the contract for the purchase of Limestone Flex Base Material with both primary and secondary contractors;
- Approved the contract for the purchase of crushed limestone chip seal aggregate;
- Declared one 1999 Ford F150 Pickup, one 1995 Jeep Cherokee Two-Door, and one 1993 Ford F350 Dually Regular Cab as surplus and authorized their sale (pct. 4);
- Approved a Pitney Bowes Claim Settlement Agreement in the amount of \$330 for Ellis County mail that was destroyed in the Pitney Bowes fire at one of their main locations, striking out paragraph 6, an indemnification paragraph.