



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 14, 2011

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#### Commissioners recognize farm heritage

The Janicek Family Farm and the Walker Creek Ranch, located near Ennis, were recognized in Commissioners' Court during the regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, November 14, 2011.

"Once in a while, we have the opportunity to recognize people in our community who have contributed greatly and who deserve recognition," said County Judge Carol Bush. "We have a family here today that has been in this community for over a century. It is really something to think that in this day and age we have that kind of continuity in our community, and we are proud of it."

The farms were recognized by the Texas Department of Agriculture as part of its Family Land Heritage Program earlier this month. The program has recognized more than 4,400 Texas properties in 235 counties for 100, 150, and 200 years of continuous agricultural operation.

Bertha and Julius Podhrasky and their granddaughter, Tricia Hambrick, were present to receive the Court's proclamation.

Commissioners heard a short presentation from Assistant County Attorney Lee Auvenshine regarding the County's authority to address noise in the unincorporated areas of the County. While Auvenshine did remind the Court that it does not have authority to pass ordinances regulating noise as a nuisance, landowners in the unincorporated areas of the County do have other legal avenues that can be pursued.

For instance, Auvenshine noted the Texas Penal Code addresses noise measured at 85 decibels or greater as a Class C misdemeanor; he recommended calling the Sheriff's Office to report the nuisance so that the noise level could be measured.

"I know it is a frustration for a lot of people in the unincorporated areas," Bush said. "It's good to be able to explain that our hands are tied, but that they have other legal remedies that they may not realize."

Local attorney Joe Gallo also made a presentation to the Court, asking for a security clearance exception to the Ellis County Courts building for the Ellis County Bar Association members.

No action was taken on either of the two items, which were listed as discussion only in the agenda. The Court also took no action on a proposal to enact a ban on outdoor burning, but indicated the item will appear on the next agenda in case of worsening fire danger.

In other business, Commissioners:

- Took no action on proposed changes to election precincts and polling places;
- Approved a resolution designating the County Judge as the Program Director/contact person and the County Auditor as the Financial Officer for the 2012 Indigent Defense Formula Grant Program;
- Approved an amendment to the inmate health services contract;
- Authorized an exempt license plate for a 2006 Chevrolet Silverado pickup;
- Ratified an agreement between the Ellis County Sheriff's Office and Glen Garrison regarding the lease of an all-purpose law enforcement animal;
- Ratified an agreement between the Ellis County Sheriff's Office and Mike McCorkle regarding the lease of an all-purpose law enforcement animal;
- Approved continued participation in the Texas County and District Retirement System as approved in the 2011-12 budget, authorizing the County Judge to sign necessary forms;
- Approved appointment of the County Judge or her designee to the Ellis County Bail Bond Board;
- Approved the renewal of the lease agreement between Ellis County and Edwin Spaniel for agricultural purposes of the property referred to as the Ellis County Farm;
- Approved an interlocal agreement with the Midlothian Independent School District;
- Approved the purchase of three used Tandem Axle Dump Trucks for RB1 subsequent to the bidding process;
- Declared as surplus one Euclid Sheet Foot Roller for RB2, to be sold;
- Convened executive session with no action taken after the session.

