COMMISSIONERS COURT OF UPSHUR COUNTY, TEXAS
THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026
9:00 A.M. SPECIAL SESSION

AUDIO

A Special Session of the Commissioners' Court of Upshur County, Texas was held on Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 9:00 a.m., with the following members of the Court being present, to-wit:

Present: Todd Tefteller – County Judge presiding
Gene Dolle – Commissioner Pct. #1
Dustin Nicholson – Commissioner Pct. 2
Mike Ashley – Commissioner Pct. #3
Absent: Jay W. Miller – Commissioner Pct. #4

Judge Tefteller called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
Prayer was led by Commissioner Dolle.

1. **Hear from department heads regarding the 2026-2027 budget. Discuss and take necessary action.**

Upshur County Auditor Connie Williams gave a brief overview of the projected budget. She informed the Court that she has the proposed budget of the general fund and insurance fund at $24,029,374.00. She further stated that she increased the insurance fund by a million dollars. She went on to say that since the courthouse renovation is scheduled to be completed, that does not have to be worked into the FY27 budget. She further stated that the proposed budget includes a $1,200.00 pay increase for employees and elected officials for a rounded cost of $394,000.00. She further stated that she has worked into the budget a proposal to reinstate the 2014 retirement rate to 200%. The cost to do this would be $261,000.00 rounded. She stressed how important the employees are to the County. Of the departmental requests submitted, the Sheriff has the largest request with 2 different options. One request is an increase of $955,000.00 and of that, $524,000.00 could be used from surplus. Option 2 would be an increase of $1.2 million and of that, $722,000.00 would be covered by surplus.

Commissioner Nicholson announced that he is in approval to give the $1,200.00 raise to the employees and the retirement increase. Commissioner Dolle, Commissioner Ashley, and Judge Tefteller were all in agreement.

The following department heads presented requests to the Court:

Billy Byrd, newly elected 115th District Court Judge, presented his requests to the Court. He explained the requested increase in the salary line item for the bailiff. Judge Byrd also requested a new employee for the 115th District Court at a salary of $40,000.00 for a Legal Assistant/Assistant Court Coordinator. He went on to say that he reduced his supplement

line item from the requested $12,000.00 to $5,500.00. Judge Byrd also requested the following increases: $450.00 increase in the bailiff's uniforms; $1,500.00 increase for a service weapon, duty belt, flashlight, pepper spray and ammo; $5,000.00 increase for a sub court reporter. Commissioner Nicholson suggested adding an additional $15,000.00 for the sub court reporter leaving $20,000.00 total. He requested an increase of $2,500.00 to his educational expense for the court bailiff and court staff certification. He also discussed the need for an addition of 2 rooms inside the Justice Center in the courtroom for the lawyers to meet with their clients. He also wishes to change out the tables, seating, and bench to add some technology. Auditor Connie Williams informed the Court that she had spoken with Judge Fowler and he had requested an increase of three months budget for October, November and December for a part time person to train for the Court Coordinator's position at an increase of $2,400.00. Commissioners were in agreement with these requests.

Barry Wallace, Upshur County District Attorney, presented his requests to the Court. He requested an increase in salary of one of his employees that he moved to the Justice Center and has increased her responsibilities. He also requested an increase for another employee in his office who is paid with SB22 money. He also announced the new hire of an Assistant Misdemeanor Attorney. He is also requesting an increase for that position. With his use of dedicated funds for some of these increases, his total requests will increase his budget by $8,784.00. Commissioners were all in agreement with the requests.

Terri Ross, Upshur County Clerk, had only one request of an increase in the bond line item of $1,242.50 for a 4 year bond renewal. Commissioners were all in agreement with this request.

Commissioner Dolle presented the requests of the Veterans Administrator. Commissioner Dolle asked for an increase to Bobby Baker's part time pay from $19.00/hour to $20.00/hour. Commissioners were all in agreement with this request.

Marc Nichols, Emergency Management Coordinator, did not have many requests but brought up what he plans for the future. He advised the Court that he has acquired a mobile command truck with the assistance of the ESD and Volunteer Fire Departments that he feels will be very beneficial for emergencies. He advised the Court that he wants to equip this command center. He also informed the Court that they will need to be thinking about upgrading radios in the future. He did advise that they are looking at grant funding for some of these projects. Commissioner Nicholson suggested adding a one time fee of $1,500.00 to his budget for maintenance if needed for this command vehicle as well as $300.00 increase in his fuel line item. Commissioners were all in agreement with these requests.

Auditor Connie Williams presented a request to the Court for a one-time $155,000.00 increase in the capital murder contingency from $45,000.00 to $200,000.00. She also requested to include in the ongoing, a line item called Non-Departmental Unforeseen Building Equipment Repair/Replacement an increase from the current $10,000.00 in the

budget to $165,000.00. Commissioners were all in agreement with these requests.

County Judge Tefteller presented his request for the addition of a part-time position in his office. Rate to be determined by the County Judge and the Auditor and advise the Court at a later time of what the hourly rate will be as long as it does not exceed the maximum amount that we can pay. Commissioners were all in agreement with this request.

Melissa Chevalier, District Clerk, did not ask for an increase in her budget but did present her request for a new records building to be built on the property across the street from the Justice Center (old bank building) with dedicated funds. She asked the Court for permission to build the building on the property suggested. Commissioners were all in agreement with her request and gave her permission to move forward with her project.

Eddie Turner was present to ask the Court for additional funding for the Historical Commission. The budget is currently set at $2,000.00. The Court had heard from Ms. Jewett at a previous meeting regarding the disrepair of the museum building as well as the condition of the roof. The Court had asked her to come back to them when she was able to get quotes for the repair to the roof. Auditor Williams suggested that the Court might could assist with the repair to the roof after she presents quotes to come out of surplus funds.

Wyone Maynes, JP #1, had a request for approval to hire a part time person through the State "STEP" program at no cost to the County. The Commissioners gave her permission to hire under this program if available. She will check and see if this program is still available. She indicated how busy her Court is and she really needs a part time person to assist her office.

Auditor Connie Williams announced that JP #2 did have requests but was unable to be present. She advised the Court that he is requesting an increase of $500.00 in the educational expense from $2,000.00 to $2,500.00 and increase of $15.00 in the association dues to $300.00. Commissioners were in agreement with these requests.

Brandy Vick, County Treasurer, presented her requests to the Court. She asked the Court for a $5,000.00 increase to her salary line item. After her presentation, Judge Tefteller informed Ms. Vick that they could not approve the request. After discussion, Commissioners agreed to leave her education expense line item remain the same rather than reduce that amount.

Tim Barnett, Constable #1, presented his requests to the Court. He requested an increase to office supplies of $150.00, uniforms and accessories $150.00, guns and ammunition, gasoline, vehicle maintenance, educational expense, and communication equipment. He requested to rename "law enforcement supplies" to "guns and ammunition". Auditor Williams informed Constable Barnett that he had LEOS funds available for educational expenses so he shouldn't need an increase in that line item. Auditor Williams agreed with

the Commissioners that the $4,000.00 should be enough for gasoline expense.

James Casey, Constable #3, presented his requests to the Court. He requested a $30.00 increase in gasoline and $50.00 increase in supplies. He intended for the increase in gasoline expense to $3,000.00. He is concerned about vehicle maintenance and ammunition. Auditor Williams suggested that they increase gasoline expense to $4,000.00 and $800.00 increase to vehicle maintenance. Commissioners were all in agreement to these requests.

Commissioner Nicholson suggested to increase gasoline $500.00 and vehicle maintenance $800.00 for Constable #4. Commissioners were all in agreement to these increases.

Luana Howell, Tax Assessor, presented her requests. She is only asking for a part-time position. Commissioners were all in agreement to adding this part-time position.

Cynthia King, Upshur County Librarian, requested an increase of $3,500.00 for library materials and a raise for her part-time person from $12.00/hour to $15.00/hour. Commissioners agreed to an increase of $3,500.00 for library materials and the raise for her part-time person from $12.00/hour to $15.00/hour.

Auditor Connie Williams went over the building maintenance request. Kevin Crutsinger, Building Maintenance, requested a replacement truck. Auditor Williams informed the Court that he had a quote of $50,000.00 for an F150 truck. Auditor Williams suggested that this expense come from the surplus since it is a one-time expense. Commissioners were all in agreement with the request.

Julie York, Extension Agent, presented her requests. The only request she had was an increase in the Association dues of $100.00. Commissioners were all in agreement with the request.

The Court recessed for lunch at 11:45 a.m.
The Court reconvened at 1:13 p.m.
AUDIO
Sheriff Larry Webb gave a presentation regarding his requests.
Law enforcement division. He requested a $12,100.00 increase for peace officer certification; and a $4,000.00 increase for light bars and sirens. He advised the Court that the new patrol vehicles will be purchased from the profits from housing the out of county inmates.
Jail division. He requested a $930.00 increase total from that budget. $800.00 increase for contracted services and an extra $130.00 for equipment and lease.
Dispatch/Communication. He requested an increase in the salary line item. Auditor Williams suggested to increase excess comp $20,000.00.
New animal control department. To start up this new department, he will need 2 personnel at $46,800.00 base salary for a deputy and $33,600.00 for an entry level clerk.

Other expenses will include office supplies of $2,100.00; equipment of $12,000.00; ongoing equipment expense of $3,000.00. Phillip Williams announced that Williams Furniture will donate a refrigerator. Sheriff Webb said that Chief Hazel has spent a lot of time and effort into putting this together. He presented 2 options for the Court to consider: Option 1 would be a lease option. He went on to say that Spencer Veterinary Clinic has offered to rent a building at the cost of $1,200.00/month. He went on to say that it would take $22,500.00 estimate to get this building up and running after October 1st at an annual lease cost of $14,400.00. Auditor Williams summarized Option 1 for the Commissioners. She said that there would be an ongoing cost of approximately $33,400.00 which the county will have to fund each year. She went on to say that she had already built into the budget the cost of personnel. Auditor Williams advised the Court that the start up one time cost to come from surplus is $43,800.00; $12,000.00 office supplies; $5,000.00 certification pay; $22,500.00 lease hold improvements; $1,800.00 equipment; $2,500.00 for vehicle start up. Option 2 would be for an onsite building purchase of $220,000.00. Sheriff Webb informed the Court that this option would require them to look for property that would be suitable. This would be a more expensive option.
Commissioners are all in agreement with Option 1 and the costs associated for that option.

Auditor Connie Williams summarized the request of Road and Bridge Administrator. She explained the need to move away from leasing equipment as had been done in the past and move to cash purchase options for equipment. She went on to say that after meeting with the employees of the Road and Bridge Department, they indicated to her that their biggest complaint was the issue with equipment. Phil Stegall, Road and Bridge Administrator, had presented a list of equipment that his department needed ranked by most important. Auditor Williams suggested that the Court go ahead and fund an additional $186,000.00 from surplus to the road equipment line item which would bring that line item up to $761,000.00. She went on to say that with that, he could purchase the needed equipment with the approval of Commissioners Court.

Lyle Potter, JP #2, spoke in regards to the JPs need for a translator and the use of the translator dedicated fund. He advised the Court that they currently pay one of the admins in the jail to translate with a stipend of $200.00/month. He informed the Court that he wants to get the translator certified with the funding coming out of his education line item.

Motion by Commissioner Nicholson with a second by Commissioner Ashley to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

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TERRI ROSS, UPSHUR COUNTY CLERK

Attendance sheet placed into minutes for recording purposes only.
Bills previously approved placed into minutes for recording purposes only.

Jury payroll placed into minutes for recording purposes only.