

ORDER NO. 12032021

AN ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF HAMILTON COUNTY, TEXAS APPROVING: (1) THE REDISTRICTING OF THE COUNTY'S COMMISSIONER PRECINCTS; (2) ESTABLISHING NEW BOUNDARY LINES FOR SAID PRECINCTS BASED ON THE 2020 UNITED STATES CENSUS DATA FOR COUNTY ELECTIONS; AND (3) PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT.

WHEREAS, Hamilton County, Texas ("County") is a duly organized and operating county of the State of Texas pursuant to the constitution and laws of Texas, and further, the Hamilton County Commissioners Court ("Commissioners Court") is its governing body; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners Court has certain responsibilities for redistricting under federal and state law, including but not limited to: Amendments 14 and 15 of the United States Constitution; section 2 of the United States Voting Rights Act, 52 U.S.C.A. § 10301; article 5, section 18 of the Texas Constitution; § 81.021 of the Texas Local Government Code; §§ 2058.001 and 2058.002 of the Texas Government Code; and other authority; and

WHEREAS, the results of the 2020 federal Census have been considered and indicate that the County's commissioner precincts are sufficiently out of population balance to require redistricting in order to comply with the "one person-one vote" principle established by the United States Constitution and other federal authority; and

WHEREAS, the County engaged the law firm of Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP of Austin, Texas to act as the County's redistricting consultant, including advising and assisting the Commissioners Court in preparation of a new redistricting plan (for county commissioner precinct boundary lines) in compliance with applicable requirements of federal and state law; and

WHEREAS, on November 23, 2021, the Commissioners Court adopted (1) redistricting criteria to assist the County and the public in developing redistricting plans which comply with applicable federal and state law, and the adopted redistricting criteria were applied in the development of the County's new redistricting plan hereafter described, and (2) redistricting guidelines regarding the submission of comments and proposed plans by the public, to ensure the ability of the County to timely receive and adequately consider them; and

WHEREAS, during the redistricting process the County provided notice to the public of its proposed discussions and development of a redistricting plan through meeting agendas posted in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, and through notices posted on the County's website and at the County courthouse regarding public meetings and hearings; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners Court has considered the proposed redistricting plan at (1) public Commissioners Court meetings on November 23, 2021 and this date, and (2) a public hearing on November 23, 2021, and has considered public comments, and reports and comments from the County's redistricting consultants and County staff, regarding proposed plans and issues