



To the Citizens of Delta County,

I would like to clear up any confusion regarding the construction of a new courthouse facility with facts and not rumors. Delta County sent out a request for proposals to qualified firms to assess the condition of the current Courthouse. Randall Scott Architects was the only firm that submitted a response and was selected by the Commissioners Court. This assessment was completed and submitted in June, 2019. A copy of the assessment can be found on the County's website. The assessment rated the condition of courthouse a 1 of 10, with 1 being the worst rating. The assessment also strongly advised to consider demolition and reconstruction of a new facility and indicated that this would be more cost-efficient than a remodel of the current building. As a part of our service agreement, Randall Schott Architects then conducted meetings with and sent out questionnaires to all Courthouse staff and elected officials to discuss the facility issues with their respective offices and their needs. After this was completed, Randall Scott proposed a draft plan of a new building that replicated the space of the current building in a two-story plan. The Commissioners asked that this be revised to be a one-story footprint with a pitched-roof. Randall Scott then presented a single-story plan to the Commissioners Court. The Commissioners Court then asked that the footprint size be reduced as much as possible. At this point, no estimated cost had been calculated until the final proposed footprint was determined. Nowhere in this process had the Commissioners Court committed to building the proposed building or to the footprint that was developed by the architectural firm.

During this time, the Commissioners Court met frequently to discuss the location of a new building, if that is the route that was chosen. In order to not jeopardize any negotiations with the seller(s), this was discussed primarily in executive session, as permitted by law, along with other consultations with legal counsel. Currently, the County has no additional land available to build a new facility or annex, so the Commissioners' Court felt that it was necessary to work towards securing land for future facility

needs. The Commissioners Court has authorized the County Judge to negotiate land purchases for this purpose. The County has looked at multiple options for land purchases, including locations own by other government entities. This purchase would be absorbed within our annual operating budgets.

Finally, in a workshop held in open session, the Commissioners Court heard from Randall Scott Architects with a cost estimate of the proposed plan as it stood. Randall Scott also encouraged the County to consult with McCall, Parkhurst, & Horton, L.L.P, a financial advising firm that specializes in municipal and local government financing of capital projects. A representative of McCall, Parkhurst, & Horton, L.L.P addressed the Commissioners Court and discussed the options for financing of a facility. They presented the Court with the options of proposing a bond. They also specified that two types of bonds are primarily used in Texas; a General Obligation (GO) bond and a Certificate of Obligation (CO) bond. The representative stated that 95% of local government entities in Texas issue CO bonds for similar projects. Again, not at any time was it acted upon to commit to any of the proposals or financing options that had been presented. The difference between a CO and GO bond is that the CO bond does not automatically trigger an election to pass the bond unless a 5% of the people who voted in the previous general election request that an election be held; the GO bond process automatically sends the proposal to be voted upon by the County's voters. Despite multiple requests and advisement by the finance consultant to issue the CO bonds, the Commissioners Court never acted upon this advice and instead asked the architect to work to reduce the overall cost of the project and felt that our County could not absorb that sort of a financial burden on the taxpayers.

As a Commissioners Court, we understand your concerns and desire to have your voice heard. I think most people can understand the overwhelming need to address the condition of our County Courthouse and I hope that we all can come to a responsible and efficient plan to address this problem with a solution that will make us all proud. There will be public hearings held before any action is taken, if any is to be taken, to hear your concerns, questions, or comments. Again, there has been no commitment made to a project cost or any commitment to the type or size of building that has been presented

Attest:

*Jane Jones*  
Jane Jones, County Clerk

