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VIA EMAIL: ctyjudge@wilcotx.gov
The Honorable Steven Snell, County Judge
Williamson County Texas
710 S. Main Street
Georgetown, Texas 78626

RE: Correctable Violation of the Texas Open Meetings Act Regarding
Purchase of Property for a County Jail Facility

Dear Judge Snell,

I represent James Headrick regarding this matter. On March 24, 2026, the Williamson County Commissioners Court deliberated and approved this Agenda Item #38:

Discuss, consider, and take appropriate action on an Assignment of Commercial Contract – Unimproved Property between Scott Stribling, as Assignor, and County of Williamson, as Assignee, relating to the assignment of that certain Commercial Contract – Unimproved Property, bearing the effective date of March 9, 2026, between Scott Stribling, referred to therein as Buyer, and Lera B Hughes Properties, LP, referred to therein as Seller, relating to the purchase of approximately 248 acres of real property (WCAD R038820, R519352, R432645 & R519356) located in Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas; and authorize the County Judge to execute the Assignment of Commercial Contract – Unimproved Property and all other documents and instruments that may be necessary to close the transaction and convey the real property to the County of Williamson.

The matter of “special interest to the public” that is missing from this meeting notice is that the property—located a couple of miles from a school—is being purchased to be the site of a *jail!* Thus, the public did not get the necessary advance notice and opportunity to be heard on this important subject of the Commissioners Court deliberation. The first public disclosure that this agenda item was to purchase

property specifically to be used for the jail came only after the Agenda Item #38 was deliberated by the Commissioners Court.

<https://williamsoncountytexas.new.swagit.com/videos/379068> (see opening comments by County Commissioner Valerie Covey.)

This letter is not a threat of litigation, but it is intended to provoke you to place the item back on the next Commissioners Court meeting agenda to correct this omission by including words such as “to be used for a jail” (or words to that effect) so the public has advance notice and the opportunity to testify on the item and, only thereafter, have the Commissioners Court vote again.

The Texas Open Meetings Act (TOMA) requires a governmental body to give notice of the “subject” of each meeting. Tex. Gov’t Code section 551.041. “The notice ... must be sufficiently specific to alert the general public to the topics to be considered at the upcoming meeting.” *City of Laredo v. Escamilla*, 219 S.W.3d 14, 19 (Tex. App.—San Antonio 2006 pet. denied). “The notice must be more specific if the public has a special interest in the topic under discussion.” *Markowski v. City of Marlin*, 940 S.W.2d 720, 726 (Tex. App.—Waco 1997, no writ). The Texas Supreme Court has been clear about this TOMA requirement:

Our prior judgments should have served as notice to all public bodies that the Open Meetings Act requires a full disclosure of the subject matter of the meetings. The Act is intended to safeguard the public's interest in knowing the workings of its governmental bodies. *A public body's willingness to comply with the Open Meetings Act should be such that the citizens of Texas will not be compelled to resort to the courts to assure that a public body has complied with its statutory duty.*

Cox Enterprises, Inc. v. Bd. of Trustees of Austin Indep. Sch. Dist., 706 S.W.2d 956, 960 (Tex. 1986) (emphasis added).

The people of Williamson County are entitled by TOMA to advance notice and opportunity to be heard on a subject of such special interest as property being purchased at a price multiple times more than its tax appraised (market) value to be used for a jail which would daily be releasing arrested persons from a location relatively close to a school. We hope you and the Commissioners agree with that.

Should the Commissioners Court not respond positively to this letter and repost the item, it makes the action approving the purchase—taken in violation of TOMA—subject to a district court order to reverse the Commissioners Court action and enjoin the closing on the property. The TOMA violation is also grounds for the Texas Attorney General to refuse to approve any issuance of public securities for the purchase.

We will be looking forward to seeing the meeting notice for the upcoming Commissioners Court meeting and will be hopeful that the Jail Property item will be on it for a vote.

Respectfully submitted,



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