

**NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING AND AGENDA
THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF AUSTIN**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN of a regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Austin County Appraisal District, to be held Thursday, **February 18, 2021** at 8:30 am at the Appraisal District office located at 906 E. Amelia St., Bellville Texas, for the purpose of consideration and possible action on the items of business on this notice and agenda under Section 551.041.

**The meeting will be available to members of the public and allow for two-way communications for those desiring to participate via videoconference or teleconference means. To attend the meeting via videoconference, please follow the link to <https://zoom.us/j/96079232395?pwd=R2ZkY0FQVDIOeIExb1M3RFJDWnJFdz09>. To attend the meeting via teleconference, please use the following number: Meeting ID: 960 7923 2395, Passcode: 873575. Location # 1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

AGENDA ORDER OF BUSINESS

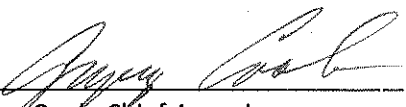
1. Pledge of Allegiance and invocation
2. Declaration of quorum and call to order.
3. Oath of office
4. Approval of minutes of the January 21, 2020 regular called meeting.
5. Receipt of public comments
 - A. Each speaker addressing the board will be limited to five minutes
 - B. Each speaker must state name and nature of comments
 - C. The board may not deliberate on non-agenda items.
6. Approval of Current Budget Disbursements
7. Discussion and possible action on
 - A. Take action to approve a contingent fee contract with Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins and Mott, LLP pursuant to Section 6.30 of the Tax Code, said contract being for the collection of delinquent government receivables owed to Austin County Appraisal District and the taxing jurisdictions for which they collect and notice of said contract is posted with the agenda in accordance with Section 2254 of the Government Code.
 - B. PVS preliminary results
 - C. 2020 Annual Report
 - D. Presentation of internal salary comparisons
 - E. Presentation of Public Relations Plan
 - F. Presentation of Customer Service Policy
 - G. Discussion with BIS on internet service
8. Open Discussion
 - A. As stated in HB 402
9. Chief Appraisers Report
 - * Organizational
 - * Litigation
 - * Education and Training
 - * Collection report (Tina)

Adjourn to Executive session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Convene in closed session under Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, section 551.071 for private consultation with Austin County Appraisal District's attorney regarding legal issues and confidential legal advice specifically related to homestead exemptions and deferral limitations under Tax Code Sections 11.13 and 33.06.

10. Reconvene regular called meeting.
11. Consideration of and possible action on items discussed in Executive Session.
12. New Business
13. Consideration of and action on place, date, time, and agenda for next meeting.

Adjourn

This notice was posted for public in the Austin County Courthouse Friday, February 15, 2021, by 4:15 pm as well as the Austin County Appraisal District Friday, February 15, 2021 by 5:00 pm.



Gregory Cook, Chief Appraiser

*Communication from the public (limited to five minutes) in accordance with the Texas Attorney General opinion, any public comments that is made on an item that is not posted on the posted final agenda will only be heard by the Austin County Appraisal Districts board of directors. No formal action, discussion, deliberation and/or comments will be made by the Austin

**** If an individual wishes to speak during the video conference during public comments, that individual must request by email or in person forty-eight hours prior to meeting. All rules and decorum will be expected as directed by policy and will be governed by the Chairperson of the Austin County Appraisal District.**

Public Notice:

NOTICE PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SEC. 2254.1036

WHEREAS, the Austin County Appraisal District ("District"), will consider entering into a contingent fee contract with the law firm of Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P. ("Firm") and hereby posts this notice pursuant to Sec. 2254.106 of the Government Code.

WHEREAS, this notice shall be posted before or at the time of giving the written notice required by Government Code Sec. 551.041 for a meeting described by Sec. 2254.1036(2) of the Government Code and shall announce the following:

- A. The District is pursuing a contract with the Firm for the collection of delinquent ad valorem taxes owed to the District and through this contract the District seeks to increase recovery of its delinquent debts in as expeditious a manner as possible. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(A).
- B. The District believes the Firm has the competency, qualifications, and experience necessary to fulfill this contract. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(B). The Firm has collected delinquent government receivables for 50 years, including the collection of delinquent ad valorem taxes. The Firm currently has 13 primary offices and multiple satellite offices throughout Texas, Oklahoma and Florida. It employs more than 400 individuals, including 55 attorneys. It uses a multi-office, fully integrated team approach allowing the District access to all its offices and resources. Its collection team consists of long-term Firm employees, including attorneys, call center associates, paralegals, law clerks, legal secretaries, collection support personnel and information technology experts. The Firm utilizes proprietary collection software that can be tailored to meet any special need the District may have. This proprietary software also automates many aspects of the collection process, such as: account/debtor research, mailings and phone calls, return mail and address updates, payment notification and processing and workflow.
- C. The nature of any relationship between the District and the Firm is as follows. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(C). The Firm has represented the District since 2007 in the collection of delinquent ad valorem taxes.
- D. The District is unable to perform collect its delinquent ad valorem taxes. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(D). The District currently does not have adequate support staff, computer software/programming, or experience to internally conduct these collection services and acquiring these will result in substantial expense to the District.
- E. These collection services cannot be provided for an hourly fee. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(E). The Tax Code allows the assessment of a percentage-based fee to recover the costs of collecting delinquent ad valorem taxes. This percentage-based fee is assessed only against the debtor and not the District or taxpayers of the District. The collection of delinquent ad valorem taxes is a high-volume practice, requiring a significant amount of research, mailing, and handling of outbound/inbound calls. An hourly fee for such work will likely exceed amount of delinquent ad valorem taxes due. Moreover, the District will bear the cost of these hourly fees and not the

debtor, because the Tax Code does not expressly authorize the District to pay for collection services based on an hourly fee.

F. The District believes this contingent fee contract is in its best interest. GOVT. CODE § 2254.1036(1)(F). Under the contingent fee contract, the Firm will be paid the amount of the percentage-based collection fee, regardless the number of hours the Firm spends researching, contacting and mailing to collect the delinquent debt. Additionally, the percentage-based collection penalty is a pass-through expense to the debtor and not an expense to the District or taxpayers in the District.