

## **ATASCOSA COUNTY JUDGES REPORT**

A few months ago, I wrote about our need for records storage. I went into detail about how our records storage procedures were controlled by state rules and were not what are normally thought of as record storage in a normal business. That is because of court records and the many important documents we keep (deeds and records). We also have all the usual records of a large business (i.e. payroll, etc.).

Our choices have not been good. One was a new building. That price came in at \$800,000 and was not feasible. Two was to move the JJAEP as I explained in previous columns. The only other one was to install the elevator in the Justice Center and locate a future unallocated space. That cost would have been close to \$300,000 and going up and down in an elevator or stairs was not going to be the best option. Fortunately we have found a metal building next to the EMS station in Jourdanton for sale and are in the process of buying it. The purchase price is \$159,450 plus closing costs. We will have to insulate and air condition (and heat) on one side to comply with the climate control regulations. The other side will be the county maintenance shop. Which will only have a window unit in its small office. We are estimating the insulation and HVAC costs to be no more than \$50,000 based on some preliminary quotes. So, the good news is that we will have a records building with possibly doubled future expansion. It should be good for many years to serve the county's needs.

It also meets our goal to have a shop for maintenance work. At the present time the maintenance people repair equipment under a shade tree. This will be much better. This is less than what we have budgeted for the last three years. It is good to get it accomplished, and for less than the budget.

Finally, I want everyone to be aware that the county's COVID-19 positive cases are jumping up. It is only a matter of time before the mask mandate is ordered back in effect by the state for our county. The numbers are jumping up statewide and we are not as bad as some areas that are going off the chart on COVID, but these numbers are getting higher and are concerning. Be safe, socially distance, wear masks and sanitize hands frequently. I continue to pray daily for a vaccine that works – SOON!

Thanks for listening. Let's keep Atascosa County moving forward!

We want you to be proud of your County Government.